



MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL
INNOVATION FOR TECHNOLOGY

ORIGINS OF SLAVES THROUGH STUDY- HISTORY, MEMORY AND IDENTITY

Final Report

MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL

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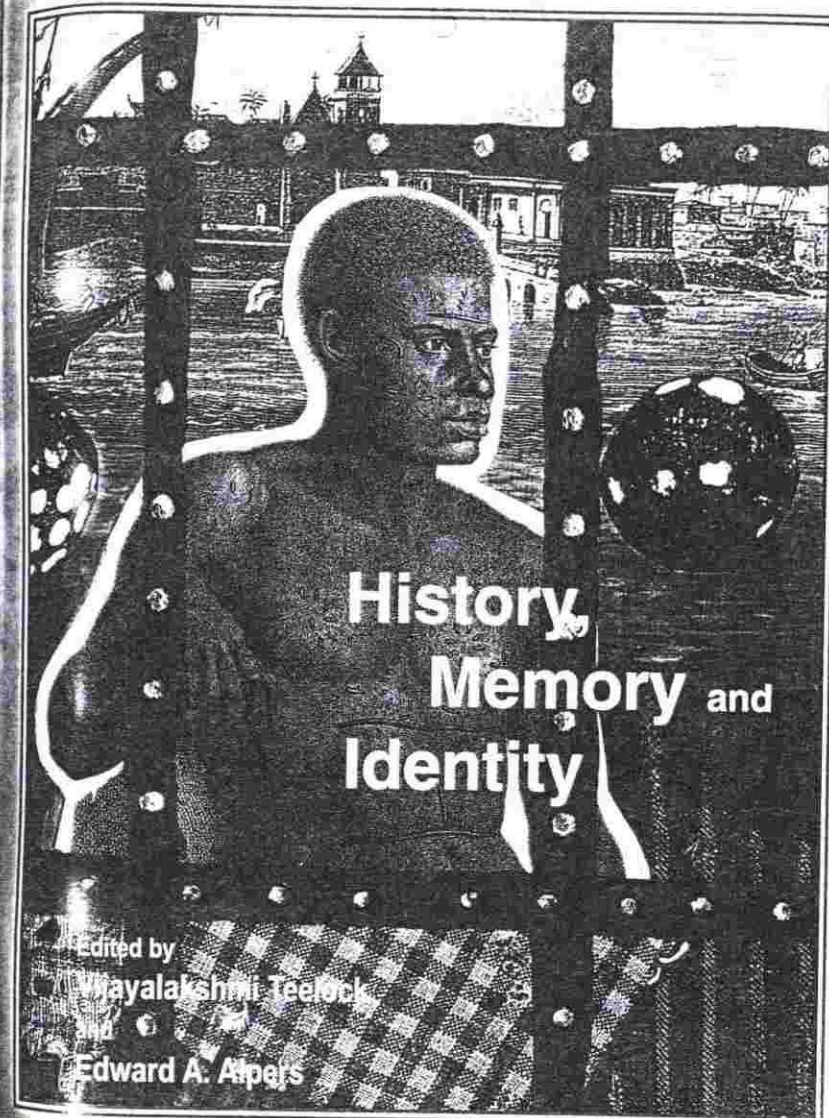
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History, Memory and Identity

Edited by

Vijayalakshmi Teelock and Edward A. Alpers

Nelson Mandela Centre
for
African Culture



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Message from the Honourable Minister of Arts and Culture

History is a dialogue between man and his past. The dialogue is unending, new questions arise and new answers have to be sought. This is why history is a perpetual 'renouveau en question'

It is in this perspective that this new publication sheds new light on an important aspect of slavery, namely the construction of identities and consciousness in the eighteenth century and early nineteenth centuries. Consciousness of our identities is partly based on the notions and understanding of where we come from, in other words, our origins. The project 'Origins' which started at the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture tried to find precisely this: where did slaves come from? What was their linguistic, geographic and cultural background? For these influences too, shaped the subconsciousness of slaves as much as the experience they endured under slavery in Mauritius.

On the occasion of the commemoration of the 166th Anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery, I am therefore pleased to support this publication of the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture. This publication will serve as a guide for those who wish to trace their family ancestry as well as for researchers to be acquainted with some of the latest research in the field of the slave trade and slavery. Although the project ended in 1998, the momentum created was great and stimulated so much interest on the part of the Mauritian public that the team has continued working. My Ministry fully intends to support the continuation of this project. Contributing to the funding of this publication is the beginning of this support, particularly in the light of Government intention to restore the history of slavery and its study to its rightful place in Mauritius.


Vimee Ramdass
Minister of Arts and Culture

Message from the Chairman of the
Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture

It is a great pleasure for me, as Chairman of the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture, to associate myself with the launching of 'History, Memory and Identity', a publication based on an on-going project at the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture. I avail myself of the opportunity to point out that this is one in a number of publications of the NMCAC dedicated to promote artistic and cultural activities and to foster the traditions of our forefathers.

This book will no doubt encourage the population of Afro-Malagasy descent to trace its family history and get a better sense of its roots. It will provide teachers, students and researchers with the kind of information they need to study the ethnic origins of the ex-slave population of Afro-Malagasy descent. I seize this opportunity to convey my congratulations and best wishes to the editorial team.



Roger Gattam Gungaram
Chairman

Introduction

Why Origins?

To many people, the search for origins is a fruitless and unnecessary venture. They question the need to delve into one's past and the purpose this might serve us today.

Unlike the French, Indian and Chinese populations of Mauritius, the Afro-Malagasy population, having for the most part slave origins, does not seem to have retained any direct memory of HS origins. To some extent, this loss is an inevitable consequence of the nature of the oceanic slave trade and the process of creolization that occurred in all slave societies. This has led to a lack of knowledge about the background - cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and geographic - of Mauritians of Afro-Malagasy descent. Without an identifiable origin, there has occurred a loss of identity beyond that of Mauritian Creole. Consequently, the loss of an identifiable origin led authorities in the past to legally label the Afro-Malagasy population of Mauritius under the category 'General Population'. This designation compounded the official obliteration of African cultural traits that followed on the forced Christianization of liberated slaves during the mid-nineteenth century, as this term gives no indication as to one's geographic or cultural origin.

No study of language, culture, religion, social organization of slave and post-slave society can be "scientific" unless it is underpinned by accurate empirical information about the origins of slaves. This view is shared by other historians who study former slave societies, such as Robert Shell writing about slavery in the Cape Colony of South Africa: "without knowledge of the slave's origins, we cannot make meaningful assumptions about the social, cultural, linguistic and religious

behaviour of any Cape slaveholding household."! Thus, if we are ever to appreciate and understand the past of Mauritians of Afro-Malagasy background, we must thoroughly research all evadable sources concerning the ongms of the slave populanon of Mauritius.

The search for origins is therefore of crucial necessity. Today "new directions" in histoncal methods of inquiry that have radically transfonned the discipline of history m the last two decades have made this goal possible. Accordingly, in 1997 knowledge of these new methodologies led to the development of the "Ongms Project" at the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture.

The methods used to detennine the origins of slaves are varied. When the "Origins Project" started at the NMCAC, it concernared on two methods. The first was to determine origins by examining oral and written documems and the second was to study the slave trade and slave demography. Other methods such as the study of Bantu and Creole linguistics, and the use of human genetics were considered beyond the competencies locally available.¹ In a few years, a simple blood test will be able to provide immediate genetic information about an individual's human populaon ongins. For the immediate future, however, the reconstruction of family histories and the collection of census data, civil status records, and oral history form the bulk of historical evidence being used in this project. One local source that has not thus far not been made available to Mauritius, although they have been elsewhere (for example, in Angola), and that we very much hope will become open to legnimate family and scholarly research is that of the Roman Catholic Church, whose parish records of birth, baptism, and death have the potential to answer many questions that are not addressed in the civil archives.

In the papers by Teelock, Faron, Merite, Papeche and Fortune, we begin this collection of essays with several short examples of what individual Mauritians have been able to learn about their family ongins through a combination of careful research in local archives and oral interviews with members of their families. The collection of data will permit the study of the demographic and spatial distribution of the slave and ex-slave populaon. An example of the possibilities that are opened up with the collection of statistical data can be seen in Barbara Valentine's paper. Jim Armstrong's paper shows however the inherent difficulties in trying to trace geographical origins through Malagasy names found in the registration returns.

The Slave Trade

After having been neglected for so many decades, research into the slave trade has been renewed with much vigour as a result of the establishment of UNESCO's Slave Route Project. Although the output has been voluminous, very few studies concern the ndian Ocean, fewer still, the Mascarene Islands, while even fewer concern Mauritius. Despite official Mauritian adhesion to the Stave Roule project, no serious smdy of the slave trade has been undertaken except by the NNICACC and a few historians working independently.

The study of the slave trade has taken on new dirnensrons. If two decades ago historians relied almost exctusrvety on written documents, trwaiy srudres of the slave trade incorporcre linguistic, archaeological and ethnographic evidence. This multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary trend must be reinforced in hrstoncal studies in Mauritius.

As far as the slave trade with Mauritius is concerned, many earlier studies are in the process of being revised. Earlier studies include the works of J. M. Filliot and A. Toussaint.¹ More and more accurate data, new methods of analysis, faster computing, and opening up of new sources have allowed for a revision of figures. The most important task concerning the slave trade is the disaggregation of figures for Mauritius and Reunion, which have up to now been treated together. Richard Allen's chapter for this collection of essays represents an outstanding example of just how these new sources and new methods of analysis can yield important new results, results that in this case indicate that the slave trade to Mauritius was significantly larger in volume than we had previously acknowledged.

To take a more detailed example, in his recent book and his chapter for this volume, Pier Larson has disaggregated the Malagasy slave trade figures for the period 1810 to 1820 and this effort has led him to revise upwards the numbers of slaves arriving in Mauritius.² Thus we know now that a very large number of Mozambicans did not travel directly to Mauritius but transited through Madagascar. The total number of slaves arriving in the Mascarenes has also been revised. Over 225,000 slaves are now believed to have come to the Mascarenes of which some 113,400 from the east coast of Madagascar.

We also have a better idea of where exactly slaves came from. For Madagascar, Larson's work, expanding upon Filliot's groundwork, shows that the origins of slaves were constantly changing. For the 1770-1820 period, for example, slaves were taken, at first from a 50-km radius around Antananarivo. By the end of the 18th century, the origins of slaves were from further away, from the region known

today as Vakinankaratra. The Vakmankaratra from 1800 were brought to Antananarivo, then taken to Tamatave and Foulpointe to board ships to Mauritius. From 1809 to 1820, slaves came from even further into the interior. Few were Merina by then and most were Antsihanaka and Betsileo. According to Larson, the names of exact villages and areas of these slaves can be traced by studying the routes taken by Radama's expanding armies.

What determined the origins of the slaves that were brought to Mauritius? Despite popular belief, slave-owners' preferences counted for very little. Rather, it was changing ship patterns, the rise and fall in trade in particular areas and the shifting commercial alliances between traders, the suppliers and colonial powers. Researchers of Mauritian slavery and slave trade in the future must examine and find these patterns and movements and also estimate the numbers which arrived to be able to estimate the influence that each group may have had on 18th century pattern of settlement of slaves and the extent and nature of 'creolization'. In her chapter for this collection and the larger project of which it is a part, Megan Vaughan probes the fluidity of colonial identities and raises important epistemological questions about how we define identity. Were these identities embraced by Mauritian slaves themselves, were they simply imposed by colonial society, or are they only the reflection of modern scholars' research? In other words, even when we can identify what appear to be specific ethnic groups among enslaved Afro-Malagasy at Mauritius, to what extent had these identities already become creolized by the historical process of enslavement?

"Creolization" is believed by many slave historians to begin when the local born (creole) outnumber the foreign-born i.e. when Creoles form over 50% of the

population. For Mauritius, the period when this is supposed to have occurred has not yet been determined. From the 1826 census it would seem that this point had already been reached. The 1826 slave census does not take into consideration the large number of freed slaves. This number may be counterbalanced by the number of slaves illegally introduced who may have not been declared in the slave registration returns.¹

One must agree with Barker that it is difficult to estimate origins by using solely the census. To overcome this weakness in the evidence, it is necessary to look at sources of the procurement of slaves, i.e., to examine the slave trade on the "Origins" side which gives a more accurate picture. There have been few studies incorporating both Mauritian and Mozambican/Malagasy sources. For example, Filliot and Barker have concentrated on the host side (Mascarenes) and on traders. By way of contrast, Alpers has in the past concentrated on the origins side, i.e. Mozambique, although in his chapter for this volume he explores the entire process of the slave trade from Mozambique to Mauritius. In this chapter he also addresses the process of creolization among so-called "Mozambiques" that Vaughan discusses more broadly for the eighteenth century. The construction of identities as also earned out by colonial authorities and European travellers. Daniella Police's paper analyses 18th and early 19th century travel writing and travellers' representation of the *sega*.

Finally, it is vitally important to retain an 'open' mind in the study of one's origins. The 'Mauritian' of today is made up of multiple origins despite the fact that many Mauritians seem to want to hang on to some exclusiveness, racial or otherwise. Colonial society forced peoples of different nations and religions together and

'message' did occur. Sada Reddy's article on Indian slaves in Mauritius breaks the myth that slaves were solely derived from Africa and Madagascar and that Indian slaves, although in a minority, were an important factor in the economic, social and cultural life of the island in the 18th century. The first *Mauritians* were of European, African, Malagasy and Indian origin. In this perspective, the aim of the 'Origins' project was to contribute to the study of the process of identity formation by examining the origins of slaves, who formed the bulk of the population in the 18th and first half of the 19th century.

The "Origins" Project at the NMCAC

Several tasks were identified to reach some of the objectives in this project, namely the examination of the demographic and spatial distribution and movement of the slave and ex-slave population, the reconstruction of family genealogies and community history; and the location of exact sources of slaves in Africa and Madagascar. All of these tasks require an immense amount of data. This project concentrates on the collection of several types of data, including the recovery of

- slave census and registration data for the British period i.e., 1815, 1819, 1823, 1826, 1832, 1835, 1839 and 1846
- the collection of civil status data such as births, deaths and marriages
- records of sales, transfers of slaves and of the estates they lived on
- manumission records found in the Civil Status Office and the Mauritius Archives
- marooning records

So far details about almost all the rural slaves in the last slave registration to be carried out in 1835 have been collected and inputted in an electronic database. We still have to collect information for Port-Louis slaves and for some 15,000 'unattached' slaves. The latter are slaves who were not attached to any particular plantation. The NMCAC have also completed the collection of 1823 census which contain lists of plantation slaves only. The 1826 slave registration returns which are to be found in the Public Record Office in London have also been rapped, but funding was sufficient for only one district, Plaines Withems. The 1826 collection of the remaining districts remains a priority for the NMCAC as these returns also contain drawings of scarification marks of the slaves. These drawings are not only unique but can help us locate the exact villages and ethnic group slaves came from.

We hope to input all these data collected over the years into a central database which will be available to researchers and to the Mauritian public at large for consultation. Several technical and methodological problems need to be first resolved. So far only the 1835 registration returns have been inputted and will be available to the public through the South African Data Archive (SADA). The task of creating this dataset is the initiative of Dr. Robert Shell, who has been collaborating in the 'Origins' project since 1997 and is currently Head of the Population Unit at Rhodes University. The interns and students at the Population Unit are correcting and 'cleaning' the original database. We are also seeking help to add additional censuses as well as to add information about the estates the slaves lived in. We hope to add longitudinal and latitudinal co-ordinates for toponyms and plantations to enable the dataset to be used in GIS.

A Mauritian tracing his slave ancestry will in the future not only be able to locate his or her family name in this database, but find information about the area and estate his or her ancestors lived on and the names of other slaves living on it. In the U.S.A. such reconstruction have enabled family reunions to be held on former estates and have helped many in reconciling with their past. For the historian, the dataset will further and deepen his or her understanding of the slave diaspora, of Mauritian slavery and thus redress imbalances in international research which have tended to focus on the Atlantic.

The project has adopted an interdisciplinary approach and has combined historical, oral and statistical data. It has also depended on the support of academics (historians, anthropologists and geographers), social workers, demographers, computer programmers as well as the Mauritian public. Whatever has been achieved is the result of a team effort and a group of people with one ambition in mind to help reconstruct that part of our history which some would like to see forgotten forever. History cannot be suppressed. In Mauritius we live with the consequences of our past and Mauritians have yet to be reconciled with their past. Suppressing parts of our history only serves to delay further the process of reconciliation and increase the social fragmentation that is so apparent in Mauritius today.

Finally, as Principal Investigator in this project, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to those who selflessly gave their time to help launch this project and set it off on a sound start. I would like to mention in particular students of the University of Mauritius who compiled the 1835 and 1823 registration returns, the women of Ciel Mivoie: Mrs Nicole Papeche, Ermlienne Faron and the other

members of the Family History Unit: Mr Guy Merite, Paul Sabet and Mrs Fanfan. Our overseas collaborators have given much sound advice: Edward Alpers, Pier Larsson, Barbara valentine, Nigel worden and last but not least, Robert Shell who came to conduct a Demography workshop in June 1998. The Mauritius Research Council must be given the last word for having had the courage to fund what must have seemed a most unusual project.

¹ Robert Shtill - Children of Bondage, 10

² See for example, R. Hewitt, A. Krause, A. Goldman, G. Campbell and T. Jenkins suggest through B globin Haplotype Analysis that a major source of Malagasy ancestry is derived from Bantu-speaking Negroids, American Journal of Human Genetics, 58 (1996).

³ I.M. Fillim, *La Trane des Esclaves vers l'Asie, l'Inde et l'Australie* (Paris, 1974).

⁴ Pier Larson, *History and memory in the Age of Enslavement: Becoming Mtrina in Highland Madagascar, 1770-1822* (Ponsmouth, NH: Oxford: Cape Town, 2000).

⁵ For a reassessment of the illegal slave trade, see Richard Allen, "Licentious and Unbounded Proceedings: The Illegal Slave Trade to Mauritius and the Seychelles during the Early Nineteenth Century," forthcoming in *Journal of African History*.

Part One

Family and Demographic History

"Origines": Ebauche d'un Projet"

Colette Lechartier

En tant que responsable de l'Unité Documentation et Recherches du Centre Nelson Mandela pour la Culture Africaine, lorsque le projet "Origines" a été ébauché, j'étais invitée à donner un avis sur un tel projet pour le Centre. Je me suis posée pas mal de questions (i) sur l'opportunité pour le Centre de s'engager sur un projet d'une telle envergure connaissant les ressources financières et humaines limitées dont le Centre dispose ; (ii) sur le bien-fondé d'un tel projet pour la société mauricienne ; (iii) sur l'accueil qu'il recevrait.

Le pari était grand : le défi immense. Le projet était retenu par le Mauritius Research Council pour le financement, le Centre s'y est engagé. Les collaborateurs éventuels étaient identifiés en rapport avec la structure du projet, les contacts ont été établis avec divers organismes gouvernementaux pour l'obtention des données nécessaires : le Bureau d'État Civil, le Ministère du Logement, le Bureau des Statistiques, les Archives de Maurice. Ce projet était le premier de ce genre entrepris à Maurice : aussi avons-nous au départ, lors de nos premiers contacts avec ces bureaux, rencontré un certain étonnement mais jamais de refus. Après maints contacts et vu notre assidue, les renseignements nous ont été donnés dans la mesure où ils étaient disponibles.

Nous avons employé des jeunes à temps partiel pour les recherches aux Archives : pour la création d'un programme informatique en vue de retracer les liens familiaux. La aussi, nous avons trouvé de l'enthousiasme vu l'originalité du projet. Je citerai le témoignage de ces jeunes informaticiens qui nous ont déclaré que pour

eux cette recherche qui débouchait sur le social et l'histoire révélait que l'informant ne se contentait pas seulement de faire des compilations chiffrées mais pouvait aussi avoir un accent humain. Ce projet nous a conduit aussi à agrandir notre

collection de livres sur l'esclavage. Ses contacts ont été établis avec le

Smithsonian Institution et d'autres maisons d'édition étrangères pour l'obtention des documents. Ces publications peuvent être consultées au Centre Nelson Mandela pour la Culture Africaine.

À travers ses contacts, le C.C.A. a identifié quelques travailleurs sociaux habitant diverses parties de l'île pour conduire des entretiens avec certaines familles afro-mauriciennes qui étaient disposées à apporter leur contribution à ce projet.

Nous avons respecté le non-désir de certains à ne pas remonter vers leur passé : nous avons aussi respecté la confidentialité de certains secrets familiaux. Nous avons permis à plusieurs de fouiller dans leur mémoire et avons été témoins de fortes émotions. Les actes de naissance, de mariage, de décès ont une importance. Grand plaisir de voir que dans certaines familles (rare il faut le préciser) ces documents étaient conservés précieusement comme signe tangible de la durée de leur lignée. Malheureusement, dans de nombreux cas, l'essentiel des documents n'existait pas.

Ce qui se dégage de ces rencontres, est que pour beaucoup, la recherche des liens familiaux était un moyen de se situer dans le présent sans la moindre rancœur concernant les vicissitudes que leurs ascendants avaient pu rencontrer dans leur existence. L'essentiel pour nos interlocuteurs était de se situer dans une lignée et de renforcer ainsi leur identité. Le passé était assumé comme tel.

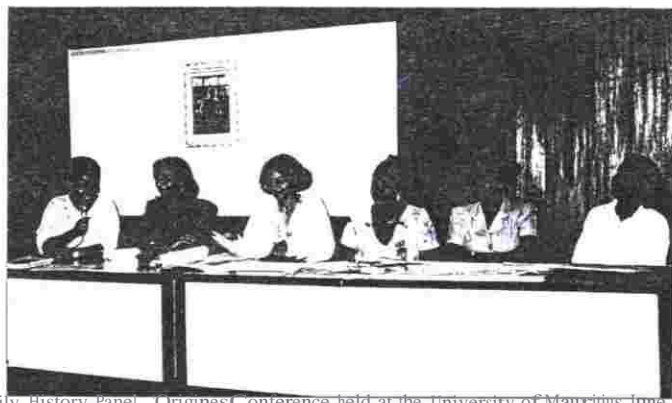
À partir de cette étude, le C.C.A. se met à la disposition de ceux qui prendraient l'initiative de réunir ce qui est disponible de l'histoire de leur famille. Il est

nécessaire toutefois de préciser que dans de telles enquêtes, notre rôle sera de

suggérer une méthodologie et d'agir en tant que facilitateur, la tâche de mener à terme l'enquête incombant au demandeur.

Depuis la publication des résultats nous avons reçu la visite de Mauriciens vivant soit à Maurice ou ailleurs et désirant reconstruire l'histoire de leur famille. Dans certains cas les personnes étaient munies de nombreux documents indiquant que des efforts de recherche avaient été faits pour reconstituer les maillons de la chaîne familiale. Parfois il manquait un maillon pour compléter la chaîne. Nous avons alors fourni les renseignements nécessaires quand ceux-ci étaient disponibles. Précisons que les recensements d'esclaves que nous avons pu jusqu'à présent soit aux Archives de Maurice, soit au Public Record Office de Londres sont ceux de 1823, 1826 (Plaines Wilhems), 1835 (régions rurales). Nous devons compléter cette collection en nous appropriant les recensements des années 1835 pour Port-Louis, 1815-1820 et 1826. Toutefois, l'acquisition de ces données ne pourra se faire que si les finances adéquates sont mises à la disposition du Centre.

Cette étude sur les origines des esclaves est une façon de présenter une facette de l'histoire de Maurice. Il s'agit maintenant d'accepter cette facette en toute sérénité et d'y puiser des éléments pouvant enrichir le tissu social et en assurer son harmonie durable.



Family History Panel. Origines Conference held at the University of Mauritius June 1999

Searching for the Slave Family: Problems and methods in researching family history

Nicole Papeche, Emilienne Faron, Guy Alirite, Vijaya Teelock

Nicole Papeche, Emilienne Faron and Guy Alirite were all interested in compiling their family histories and spent several months with the MNCAC interviewing members of their families, going to the Civil Status Office and Mauritius Archives. Although they are far from having completed their family tree, the experience has proved invaluable and will help other people in their search for their family tree.

The Alirite Family

Mr Guy Merite has over the years collected a very large number of documents relating to his family history. He has been able to trace his family ancestry on both sides of the family. His mother's family is the Minator family and his father's, the Merite family. Both families, going back several generations, have lived in the northern districts of Pamplemousses and Rivallere du Rempan as well as Flacq district. He was able to trace the Minator family upto the 1860s. His great grandfather worked for the Leclezio family. His wife, Eliza Tranquille's family was traced back to the estate of Francois Tranquille Allendy where she was born to Clarisse Tranquille, (born 1809) a dressmaker and Azor Dambel (born 1800) a mason from Madagascar (see genealogical chart 1)

The Merite family, a slave family was also traced back some 7 generations to the estate of Dr. J.P.P Castera in Flacq where Cecile Merite lived. Her son Ferdinand

was born in 1825 on that estate. This information is derived from the 1826 slave registration returns for Flacq, the only one for 1826 available at the Mauritius Archives. We do not know the ethnic origin of Cecile Merite but by the end of the 19th century, her grandchildren (Mr Georges Merite's grandparents) are listed as an Indian basket hawker/charretier on the Couve estate in Riviere du Rempan. Guy Monte feels that his grandfather may have taken on this identity to be able to obtain land. Guy Merite's grandfather also bought land on the *Schoenfeld* Estate in Riviere du Rempart and grew sugar cane, land which is still in the possession of the Merne family.

Guy Monte's paternal grandmother was Mrs Marie Lucie Marouvane (1858-1913) whose family was traced, through slave returns to the estate of '*La Gaïéri*' in Flacq. Joseph Marouvane, age 39 is described as a Malagasy, '*raroui sur les îpaufes*'. Mr Guy Monte is far from having completed his family history but his origins seem multiple from Pondichery, Madagascar, Bengal ... Tracing his family history was possible because of the existence of slave registration returns for Flacq for 1823, 1826, 1835; civil status records as many family members were civilly named and property deeds as they were land-owners, can owners etc.

The Papeche Family

Nicole Papeche lives in Cité EDC, Mivoie, Riviere Noire. Like Guy Monte, she was keenly interested in the history of her family. She has retained many stories relating to her family history recounted to her by her mother and other members of the family. There are, however, far fewer documents in her possession, which made the task of reconstructing the family much more difficult. It cannot be stated at this stage that Mrs Papeche comes from a slave family as there was no trace of the various family names in the slave registration returns - such as Botnos, Amas,

Boon, Ohvene. Mrs Papeche remembers her father mentioning that her sisters and herself had got the 'Malgache skin'. She has also been told that her grandmother had 'long hair' and spoke in a 'strange language'. Both her maternal grandparents, Ivanoff Botnos (1897-1957) and Elizabeth Laridaine, (1901-1927) were born in Moka Mountain, Chamarel. Nicole's mother Marie Madeleine Botnos, stayed near a river in the area known as 'L'Embrasure' (see genealogical chart 2).

Her attempts to find Ivanoff Botnos' origin led us to an isolated spot in Maka Mountain. Nicole had no idea where it was and it was only after several months that we were able to locate a map of 1910 where a feeder (canal) named 'Feeder Botnos' was located. But there were no traces of the name Botnos in civil status records or slave registration returns prior to 1870s. Did Bernos give his name to the feeder or did he take the name of the feeder? Since Ivanoff Botnos remarried after the death of his wife, the land was farmed by his new family.

On the Papeche side of the family, the family was traced back to Poste de Flacq. Nicole's great grand father was traced through civil status records: Louis Gustave Papeche was born in Poste de Flacq in 1849 and named Ctemenne Manon, a seamstress and moved to Chamarel Mountain. The family has not been traced further back than the 1840s and we cannot say whether it was an 'slave' family or not. Neither is it possible to trace slave origins for Nicole's paternal grandmother, Marie-Leoncine Lamoureux, also born in Maka Mountain. Her parents were both living in Chamarel but seems to have originated from Port-Lours. Louis Augustin Lamoureux was born in Champ Delort in 1867. His wife was Marie Leomde Olivette and her father, St Louis Olivette was a sailor.

As with the other members of the family, there seems to be no information for the period before the late 1840s. Different ways of spelling names also have caused confusion: was Boon, Boule, Bouch and Booth the same family or different? Do Papeche and Papesse belong to the same family? What about Bernice, Bomus, Bothms, Bethniss, Bormice? These are some of the problems encountered by family historians.

Tracing My Family History: The Clementine and Fortune families

Joyce Forllllli

University of California - Los Angeles

I became interested in tracing my family history in my first year as an undergraduate after a trip to the Mauritius Archives. At the time two of my classmates and I were working on an essay competition on the theme of slavery in Maunuu. I found the Archives very shabby and dusty, but because the staff was always helpful its deplorable aspect did not deter me from coming back. During my subsequent visits I found among the slave registries of censuses available very precise information about a slave family. The details of their relationships were clearly stated as well as the year in which they were emancipated and their former occupation before being freed. I diligently copied the document and with the help of my teammates I transferred it on to hard drive.

Our essay seemed to have pleased the jury and we were awarded first prize. It was much later that I learnt that the reason why the essay was considered better than others was because we gave an example of slave classification and the use of census data. Personally, that slave census gave me a glimpse into the lives of slaves. I realized that they had day-to-day lives harder than our own and far less romantic than depicted in Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*. Their lives were also very different from the way in which the Abolitionists portrayed them as helpless and dull victims of slavery. By asserting that slaves in Mauritius possessed historical agency I do not, of course, wish to condone slavery, nor to suggest that slavery was less harsh here than anywhere else. I mean to say that

slaves were social beings like all of humanity and they knew how to perpetuate knowledge and social, filial or any types of cultural links. To be sure, they suffered from being cut from their respective native societies, but this does not mean that they were culturally dead and were malleable like clay. They had their own will and desires even though the masters always tried hard to curtail that. These thoughts had a great impact on me because I have African ancestry and like most Mauritians of my ethnic group I have slave roots.

In conducting this research I came to realize that slaves certainly had ambitions, dreams of family life like any one of us when I stumbled upon evidence that emancipated slaves would buy their own relatives so as to be reunited again. They were more than mere helpless channels or history book subjects. The insight I got from reading such documents was more profound to me and presented the slaves more accurately than any history books I had read so far.

But I did not decide to trace my family tree right away. The occasion came when my mother started researching on a familial property. She asked me to accompany her and I soon found myself involved in the genealogy of my family on my mother's side. It was very interesting and challenging and soon we had most of her family tree traced back to 1856. She could ascertain that her family could establish a claim on that property and hopefully will be able to get their possession back.

There was a second opportunity, which came during my final year as an undergraduate at the University of Mauritius, where all students had to write a 8.A thesis as a partial requirement for graduation. My previous experience in tracing my family history had helped me a lot to understand the cultural life of the Mauritian of African descent. I was acquainted with a lot of people who were not

part of my family, but formed part of an extensive network of friends that has been maintained over the years and distance. These people were relatives of my grandparents and my great grandparents' acquaintances and they became part of my research sample.¹

After my graduation I decided to undertake research on my own family history through the ownership and sale of properties that my family owned. I used notary deeds, surveyor's reports, transcription registries and censuses, all housed at the Mauritius Archives, Coromandel, as well as oral history. The censuses can give a lot of information, but they are not enough by themselves to complete the picture. A particular year may yield more information than another one that depended on how much information the respondent was willing to give to the clerk. The latter had to have a good dose of diligence to transcribe all this information, but one can never know how the process was done.

This is where notary deeds become significant because they give clearer information about the familial relationships or other links that have existed between certain people. Transcription registries of land sales helped in filling the gaps that the notary deeds may have left: I learned, for instance, that an owner of vacoas left to his former slave and her four children a plot of land. The former slave, named Marie Eulalie Clementine,¹ was described as a seamstress, mother of three daughters and one son. The baby boy of Eulalie was named Jean Bapiste after the owner and soon after his birth, she received a share of the property he was selling. The clerk also described the vendor's wife as childless. One can infer many possibilities: for instance, Eulalie had children by her former owner, or the latter must have been a caring, generous slave owner indeed for he donated 1/2 arpents of land to his slave.

I had no trouble retracing my mother's family partly because the notary deeds are in quite good shape, but I did not have so much luck retracing my father's family. In his case I could only go back to the 1880's, whereas on my mother's side I went as far as the 1820's. I even know her slave ancestors. I know for a fact that Eulalie and her siblings had for their mother an Indian slave called Marion Clementine.

My father's family comes from Chamarel village situated in the district of Black River. They, too, owned several plots of land in that place until they moved to Pon-Louis. My father's uncle, Willy Novinsky Vallot, who died in January 2001 at 96

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years of age, said that he visited Chamarel after the Second World War. He did not know why the other relatives moved from Chamarel and the outcome of their property. I could not get any further with the Fortune side of the family, going back as far only as my great-grandfather Charles Evariste Fortune, born in 1885. And no other registries of birth/marriages or death from the Registrar offices could yield more information. There are other potential sources for this kind of family history, such as the church archives, but the public does not have access to the *registres des baptêmes* kept at the Bishopric of Pon-Louis.

I enjoyed very much retracing my family history and reconnecting with some long lost relatives or acquaintances. The experience was personally rewarding and intense because I got to meet and interview people. It brought my parents, siblings and myself closer to each other and every time I went to interview someone they would want to accompany me. Actually the presence of my own mother on the scene helped a lot, as people seemed to confide more when she would ask them the questions I wrote on my notebook. Sometimes I found her carrying on the interview by herself, asking her own questions and clarifying certain points. My

parents go to meet older members of their families and heard from them anecdotes concerning their parents and grandparents' lives. As a result, they know more about their families than they did before I began my project. My father told me that in a certain way he felt richer. A few days after he told me this I overheard him tell a bedtime story to my little nephew Jeffrey, in which my great grandfather Joseph Vallot was the principal protagonist. Then I understood what he meant by being richer.

¹ See Joyce Fonunc. *The Social and cultural of Afro-Mauritians from oral history-1890 to 1910*, B.A. thesis, University of Mauritius, 1998.

: Mane Eulalie Clemennne, mother of 5, was 30 years old at the time of manumission in 1835. The eldest child of the family was Mane Laure aged 15 (in 1835). The link between the Bigaignon and the Clementine family is confirmed by the contract established by Max Poupmet de Valence, December 1902, Mauritius Archives, NA 140/32. The Clemennne family seems to be rather extended. Several young women bearing the name of Clementine were distributed among the relatives or siblings of the Bigaignon family transcribed in volume 41/570 Registry Office, Pon-Louis, establishes family links between Virginie Bragagnon, mistress of vicomte Clemennne, and Jean Baptiste Bigaignon, the owner of Eulalie. There were also several other Clementine women living in the vicinity, for instance, Uranie, listed as 19 years old in the census of 1835 H-series, and Melanie. Both young women lived close to each other; actually they were neighbors. Uranie and her baby boy, Jean Baptiste Ernest Clemennne, were former slaves of Dr. Francois Martin. Moreover, the neighbors Frimoids Manin and Rene Manin were cited as witnesses to the birth of Melanie's son, Henry Furey, on 4 December 1834. The 1835 census of freemen in the H-series mentions that Melanie was enfranchised from the same owner as Uranie.

: Interview taped at Roche Bors, 10 February 1997. Willy Novinsky Vallot was born of Mane Rosetenne Niclarr and Joseph Vallot, in the village of Quarener Milaree, Moka, 13 November 1905.

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Slaves in Mauritius at Emancipation in 1835

Barbara valennne

Rhodes Umversuy

Over 62 thousand Mauritian slaves were emancipated by the British Government on 1 February 1835. Emancipated, of course, did not mean quite that—slaves were apprenticed to their former owners for a number of years, partly for their own good and partly to compensate their owners for the loss of their former property. The slaves were expected to benefit from the years of apprenticeship by learning the habits of industry that they had not learned in a lifetime of slavery. In addition to the free labour of their ex-slaves, the slave-owners received financial compensation from the British government, while the ex-slaves were required to work six days out of seven with no pay except their food rations. They were, however, allowed to buy their freedom by saving any money they could earn in their free time. This offer, it was reckoned, would promote the ethic of hard work in the ex-slaves. The idea seems to have misfired — the ex-slaves deserted the plantations in droves when the period of apprenticeship was over. The plantation owners subsequently imported indentured labour from India and to a lesser extent from Madagascar, China, the Comoros and Africa. The influx of mainly Indian immigrants has defined the population of modern Mauritius, so that over two thirds of the 1.2 million people are Indo-Mauritian, and about 27% is described as Creole, that is, of African origin (CIA, 1999).

At the time of the Emancipation Act in 1833, Mauritius had the third largest slave population in the British Empire. Only Barbados and Jamaica had more slaves. There were several methods for counting Mauritian slaves, all of which conflict

and all of which are unreliable to a greater or lesser extent. Consequently, data about the Mauritian slave population are plentiful but inconsistent, with little agreement on the size of the population from one year to the next. It seems, though, that there must have been between 60 and 70 thousand slaves on the island during the last few years of slavery, many more than the approximately 8 thousand white colonists and the 16 thousand free coloured people.

By its nature, the system of slavery suppresses the individuality of the slave. We know little of the individual Mauritian slaves themselves, except what the slave registrars entered on the various censuses, and the records of slave complaints to the Protector of Slaves. The census records do tell us broadly where the slaves came from. Many were listed as "Mozambique" — a carry-all term for slaves shipped from East Africa. Some were listed as from "Madagascar", and still others as "Indian" or "Malay", and there was a small sprinkling of slaves from other places, for example, Anjouan or West Africa. Slaves who were born on the island were called "Creole", irrespective of their parentage. Some of this detail may be suspect. An illicit slave trade to Mauritius went on long after the British abolition of the trade in 1807 and the capture of the island in 1810. The owners may well have thought it in their interest to lie about the origin and ages of some of their slaves to disguise their illegal acquisition.

We do have some useful data about individual slaves and their families, though. For example, Dr Vijaya Teelock and her students in Mauritius have collected data about approximately two thirds of the rural slave population in 1835, from the *Greffes de l'Enregistrement des Esclaves* (IG series) in the Mauritian Archives, and uploaded them to a statistical computer program. The original documents from which the data were collected are certified registers of slaves per owner.

drawn up for compensation purposes in 1835. Each certificate of ownership gives the name of the owner, the claim number, the district, and a list of the slaves for whom the owner claimed compensation. The slaves are listed by name and surname, usually in family groups, with details of age in a previous census year (usually 1826, 1832 or by default in 1835), height in feet and inches, and origins. Children born since the previous census year were listed at the end of the register, with their dates of birth or age in months.

Of the over 27 thousand slaves listed in the as yet uncompleted data set, over 16 thousand were described as "Creole de Maunce", 662 as "Indren", 70 as "Malars", nearly four thousand as "Malgache" and nearly six thousand as "Mozambique". Such cold statistics soon become more human on closer examination of individual details. For instance, one wonders about the life and experiences of Tritonne Cendrillon (Cinderella), who was imported from Mozambique and was aged 45 when she was set free. She was one of 59 slaves of Melle Marie Victoire Laval of the district of Riviere Noire, in the south west of the island. Tritonne was listed with Paul (aged 23), Nicholas (21), Germaine (14) and Adrien (11), all designated "Creole de Maunce", who were probably her children, but there is no indication of who their father may have been. There are eight other slaves with the surname Cendrillon in the data set, belonging to various other owners, but possibly the common surname was co-incidental. Certainly there are no men of the same name old enough to have been Tritonne's consort. On the other hand, the family of Riou, belonging to Mons Jean Marie Gaud of Riviere Noire, appears to have had a father, Jasmin Riou, who was of Indian origin, was 51 years old in 1835. He is listed with Celeste (44) presumably his wife, who was from Mozambique, and their children, Philogene (26), Fanchette (24), Sylvestre (22), Jossehn (17) and little George, aged 30 months.

Most imported slaves, according to the censuses of 1826 and 1835, were from Mozambique. There was an enormous increase in the East Coast slave trade during the nineteenth century, partly because of demand from the Mascarenes, but also because of the demand in Brazil, the Persian Gulf and India. Brazil accounted for many East Coast slaves as it became more difficult to acquire slaves from the West Coast during the nineteenth century, and more cost-effective to import slaves from the East Coast. According to Patrick Manning, the export trade from the Eastern Coast of Africa reached nearly 30,000 per year in the first half of the nineteenth century (Manning, 1990: 53). Many of these slaves were apparently illicitly sent to Mauritius to supply labour for the expanding sugar market.

Mauritius was in a difficult situation: it was governed by the British, who had abolished the slave trade in 1807, but was dominated by a French plantation and slave-owning elite who favoured, indeed depended on, slave labour. In addition, the sugar market was expanding rapidly, especially after the equalisation of sugar tariffs in 1825, yet there was no indigenous labour to work the plantations. Mauritius was in a cleft stick. Either it had to import more slave labour or the existing slaves had to work harder. Both solutions were applied — the slaves worked long and cruel hours, and illegal imports of slaves continued well into the twenties. The numbers of slaves illegally imported is unknown, but the Commission of Eastern Inquiry (1828-1829) apparently approved a figure of 30,000 illicit imports since 1810 (Reddi, 1989: 108), although the trade was the subject of great controversy at the time.

Mauritius, like the New World slave system, preferred male slaves to women. An examination of the sex ratios of adults in 1826 is instructive:

Table 1
Origins of adult slaves in 1826

Origin	Male	Female	Sex ratio	Total Slaves
Creole	8,400	8,422	100	16,822
Mozambique	15,193	3,550	428	18,743
Madaeascar	8,120	4,313	188	12,433
Indian	1,383	883	157	2,266
Malav	116	96	121	212

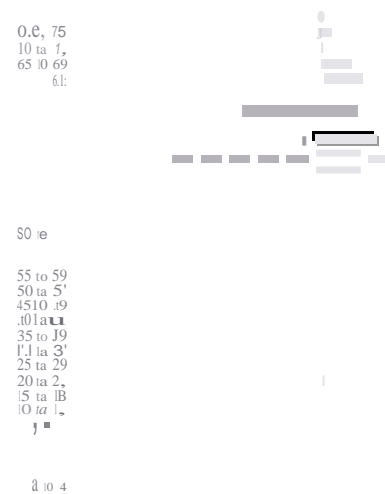
Source: Barker A. Slavery and Anti-Slavery in Mauritius (1996), 178.

The sex ratio of Creole adults (who were born on the island) is normal, but perhaps a little high for an adult population. One might expect rather more women to survive than men, particularly in the harsh conditions in which slave populations lived. The sex ratios of the other groups are strongly skewed in favour of males, particularly in the case of slaves of Mozambican origins. This census was taken 16 years after the imposition of British rule in 1810, when the trade to Mauritius had ostensibly been banned. If slavers preferred young males between about 15 and 30 years of age, many of the Mozambican slaves in Mauritius must have been relatively old by 1826. One expects a greater attrition of males than females in an older adult population, so the Mozambican sex ratio at capture must have been high indeed.

These high sex ratios are supported by a remarkable picture of a slave ship, showing how 400 slaves from the East Coast of Africa were stowed aboard a 200

ton slaver. There are 278 men, 57 women and 65 children - a adult sex ratio of 488. This picture was drawn by C. Montembert to illustrate the evidence of C. Letord to the Commission of Eastern Inquiry in 1826. Lerord was a pseudonym for Charles Dorval, a notorious slave dealer turned state witness, who allegedly had suspicious links with the first British Governor of Mauritius, Sir Robert Farquhar, and Charles Telfair, a wealthy plantation owner and Private Secretary to the Governor.

Mozambique slaves in Mauritius in 1835



An analysis of the nearly six thousand Mozambican slaves in the 1835 data set still



shows an abnormally high sex ratio of 252. In addition, nearly 43% of these slaves are below 40 years of age, which means they must have been less than 15 years old in 1810 when the British took over Mauritius and abolished the trade. Perhaps some of these people were captured as young children, but it also seems likely that many were imported after the British occupation. In addition, 153 Mozambican slaves in this group were not yet born in 1810. Had they been born on the island they would have been designated "Creole" rather than Mozambique.

In sum, the lives of slaves in Mauritius were hard and brutal. They were trapped between a growing demand for slave labour and an expanding sugar economy, and a diminishing supply of fresh slaves. The misery of harsh working conditions must have been compounded by the huge imbalances in the sexes, many of the men being doomed to a lonely bachelor life, and the women exposed to the abuses likely in such a situation. One cannot know the feelings of people such as Truonne Cendrillon and Jasmin Rieu, their families and the other 62 thousand slaves as they waited for emancipation in 1835, but one can speculate that they were not unmixed

with joy.

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Part Two

Slavery and Identity

Aspects of Indian Culture in Ile de France during the period 1803-1810

Sadasivam Reddi

University of Maunuu

The implantation of Indian culture in Mauritius is usually associated with the coming of Indian immigrants after 1834. Although it is well known that Indians had been present in the island from the early years of French colonial rule, their cultural contribution has been completely ignored because they were deemed to have been completely assimilated in the Creole population.¹ It is true that immigrants in the nineteenth century because of their numbers, their status and a more liberal administration, were in a better position to preserve their culture. Yet a closer look at the Indians in Ile de France - even before British rule, shows that Indians had retained important aspects of their culture. They were also to exercise a decisive influence on at least a segment of the Indian population in later years.

Indians were introduced in Ile de France as slaves and free workers in 1729¹ and since that time, especially during the rule of Labourdonnais and Poivre, more and more slaves and skilled workers came to the island. In 1735 there were 485 Indians, both slaves and free in a population of 2,123¹. Milbert By the end of French rule, there were 6,000 Indian slaves in a population of 60,000 (Milbert), and there was approximately about 400 Indians in the 'Coloured' population of about 4,000. Analysis of the census of 1803 does not permit one to reach precise conclusions. The section in the census dealing with coloured people also included people who can be identified by their Indian names. However there are also many who are described as 'Topaze' who are the offspring of Indian and European

parents, born in India. There are many persons born in India who carry European names: they could be Europeans born in India or Indians converted to Christianity and who had adopted European names. For all these reasons it is difficult to determine the size of the Indian component within the Coloured category. In the

camp de Malabar, the Indian suburb of Pore-Louis, about 37% Indians can be identified in the census of 1804 on the basis of their names and other available information. Thus they constituted a minority element in the Free and Coloured population of Pore-Louis.

Free Indians consisted of different cultural and linguistic groups - mainly Bengalis and South Indians, with the latter in the majority. Slaves were divided into several groups - Malabars, Indians, Bengalis and Talingas. The two first names being generic names for Indians, one does not know how the various groups were distributed. If one goes by the number of manumitted slaves in the period 1796-1800, 118 out of the 316 manumitted adult slaves were Indians. A further breakdown describes 46 as Indians, 35 as Bengalis, 9 Talingas and 28 Malabars. The high number of manumitted Indians is due to the fact that there was a high proportion of women among Indian slaves and many later became concubines of the settlers and more likely to be manumitted as they bore the children of settlers. This is not very helpful to get an idea of the size of each ethnic group, except to emphasize that Indian slaves, like free Indians, were a heterogeneous group.

While the free Indians had been introduced as skilled workers for the construction of Pore-Louis and its shipyards, there is as yet little information about the slave traffic from India to Ile de France. It is known that both in the north and south India, there was a brisk slave trade. In times of chronic scarcity and famines, the slave traffic swelled and Europeans made huge profits from it. The diarist Pillai

wrote that one slave dealer Parmanandan was cast into prison at Pondicherry in 1743. "He was commissioned by Mr Soude to get slaves. By using unfair means like intoxicants and spells he inveigled many boys under his clutches. He used to kidnap them in batches of 50 and 100 from villages, their heads were shaved, black

cloth were given them to wear and each individual had a fetter placed on one leg." Travellers' accounts show that in states like Bihar and Assam, a great number of slaves were being sold, but we have very little knowledge about how many of these slaves were to be sold outside of India. In 1812, half of the population of Sylhet consisted of slaves-descendants of insolvent debtors.¹ Given the volume of slave traffic in India, many were probably brought to Ile de France. In 1785 several Indians testified before the police in Pore-Louis calling for the liberation of Odia Padam who had been kidnapped by Jean de Silvas.¹ There were also prisoners of war and there may have been cases of free Indians introducing their dependents or their relatives under the status of slaves in order to settle in the island for a short period. In the year 12 according to the French Revolutionary Calendar, Ramedou left a proxy to Ramcheuy Petigon to free Julie, slave and sister of Ramedou and to permit the latter to return and join him in India before her liberation if she so wished.² There were many cases where manumitted slaves set free their parents and relatives, but in the case of a free Indian selling free his relatives, one suspects that the practice of introducing dependents as slaves might have been very common. It also seems that a good proportion of the Indian women slaves might have been specifically introduced to provide concubines for the Whites and the Free Coloured: hence the conclusion that the greater number of mulattoes were the offspring of Whites and Indian women.³

The Indian slaves lived among the other slaves of the island while the free Indians, who were mostly masons, carpenters, plumbers, cabinet makers, and sailors went

assigned to the eastern suburb which was the "black" suburb (i.e., the free, non-white population) of Port-Louis. The centre of the town was reserved for the whites. French society was rigidly stratified; and the presence of free Blacks and manumitted slaves led to a legal policy of racial segregation, designed specifically to enable the French preserve their racial purity and their culture. Further, a residential area for the Black could be subject to more stringent control and closer surveillance. However, not all divisions in society can be attributed to colonial legislation. Ethnic antagonism and conflicts were common. Slaves and freed slaves, being a heterogeneous group, were all willing to group together in their different groups for security and protection in a foreign land. Hence 'Camp Yolloff' for African slaves emerged. On the other hand, the Indians were named 'Matabars' by the whites, a name which they accepted and used to define themselves. So gradually there was a 'Camp de Malabars' to describe the Indian area. The 'Camp de Malabars' had emerged long before it was officially recognised. It was only on the 25 October 1803 that General Decaen issued a general decree allocating the 'Camp de Malabars' to the Indians. Likewise the term 'Lascar' was originally used for sailor, but since most sailors were Muslims, the term 'Lascars' was being used increasingly to describe both a sailor or a Muslim. For example, Cader was chief of the Lascars on the ship *Marengo*", while in the documents the term is also used to describe an Indian Moslem. The 'Camp de Lascars': though never officially recognised might have emerged much more earlier than we think. The change of appellation of the 'Camp de L'Est' into the 'Camp des Noirs' and ultimately into 'Camp Yolloff' and 'Camp des Malabars' and 'Camp Lascars' represent successful assertion of slave cultural identities by the end of French rule. Thus the official recognition of the 'Camp de Malabars' represents the successful assertion of the presence of Indian cultural identity by the end of French rule.

Though the term Malabar was a generic name for all free Indians, gradually the Muslims, mostly Bengalis began to detach themselves from that term. Among the slaves the different linguistic groups were always emphasized by slave-owners, in order to hinder the development of a greater social solidarity. Indian slaves were categorized as Malabars, Bengalis, Tahngas and Indians. They were acutely aware of their distinctive identities and readily asserted so when questioned.

The free Indians, besides their diverse ethnic origins, were internally stratified with respect to wealth. In the camp de Malabars, many Malabar Indians owned slaves. Seventy-five per cent did not own more than 3 slaves while a small minority owned more than 6 slaves.¹² A minority of Indians owned a plot of land in the Camp de Malabars and a few of them had received large grants of land in the rural areas. We know nothing about the caste system as it existed in that period, except that the Talinga women were thought of Milbert to be of high caste.¹³ The castes of a few free Indians can be identified; except for these but of information we have not come across evidence on the operation of the caste system: it is reasonable to think that its rigours must have been seriously modified in Ile de France.

As to the relationship between free Indians and Indian slaves, the slave-master relationship did not deviate from the prevailing pattern as the laws regarding slavery were uniform for all slaves irrespective of their ethnic group. But the fact that Indian slaves were drawn generally from the poorest classes of Indians and had an inferior legal status, must have sharpened the cleavage between the two groups.

The religion of the Indians can be identified by their patronyms or first names. The significance of names among the Indians has never received great attention. Names can throw a lot of light on beliefs and attitudes although nothing can be said with

absolute certainty on Indian names until deeper investigation. It appears that among the Malabar Christians, several distinctive patterns in their names may be detected. There were those Indians who had Indianised Christian patronyms, possibly indicating that some of their ancestors had been Christians of an Indian Christian church long before the advent of French colonisation. Such names were Chavrymootoo, Arokeum, Kittery, Rayepa. On the other hand, there were those who had Hindu petronyms, but with European Christian names like Pierre Narayana, Catherine Pragassa and Denis Pachen. although by that time, the adoption of European Christian names had become widespread for both groups. So there were many Indians who were already Christians in Pondicherry before they came to the island. Louis Nachelson, born in Pondicherry was the son of Joseph and Mane. Others had to adopt Christianity and take Christian names because Roman Catholic religion was the official religion of the country. Only children who were baptised could be registered on the parish register or the only marriage that was recognised was Christian marriage. Many Indians evaded registration of birth of their children to avoid baptism.

¹ K. Hazareesingh, *History of Indians in Mauritius* (Macmillan, (1997) J.

² M. Jumeir, *Les Affranchis et les Indiens Libres à l'île de France au XVIII^e siècle*.

³ R. Chaudenson, 'A Propos de la Genèse du créole mauricien: le peuplement de l'île de France' in *Etudes créoles*, Ouawa (1979), 45.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ MA: Census of 1804, KK3.

⁶ *IIA, A41*. Registre pour servir à l'enregistrement des actes d'affranchissement accordés aux esclaves de Port-Louis. Mémorandum de Port-Louis. 1796-1800, fol 253.

⁷ Raghuvanshu (U.P.S) *Indian Society in the 18th Century*, New Delhi, (1969) 304

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ MA. OSS. Bureau de Police (Indirection Royale). Journal pour la Consignation des Rapports de Police, 15 Avril 1785 - 31 Mars 1787, ff288

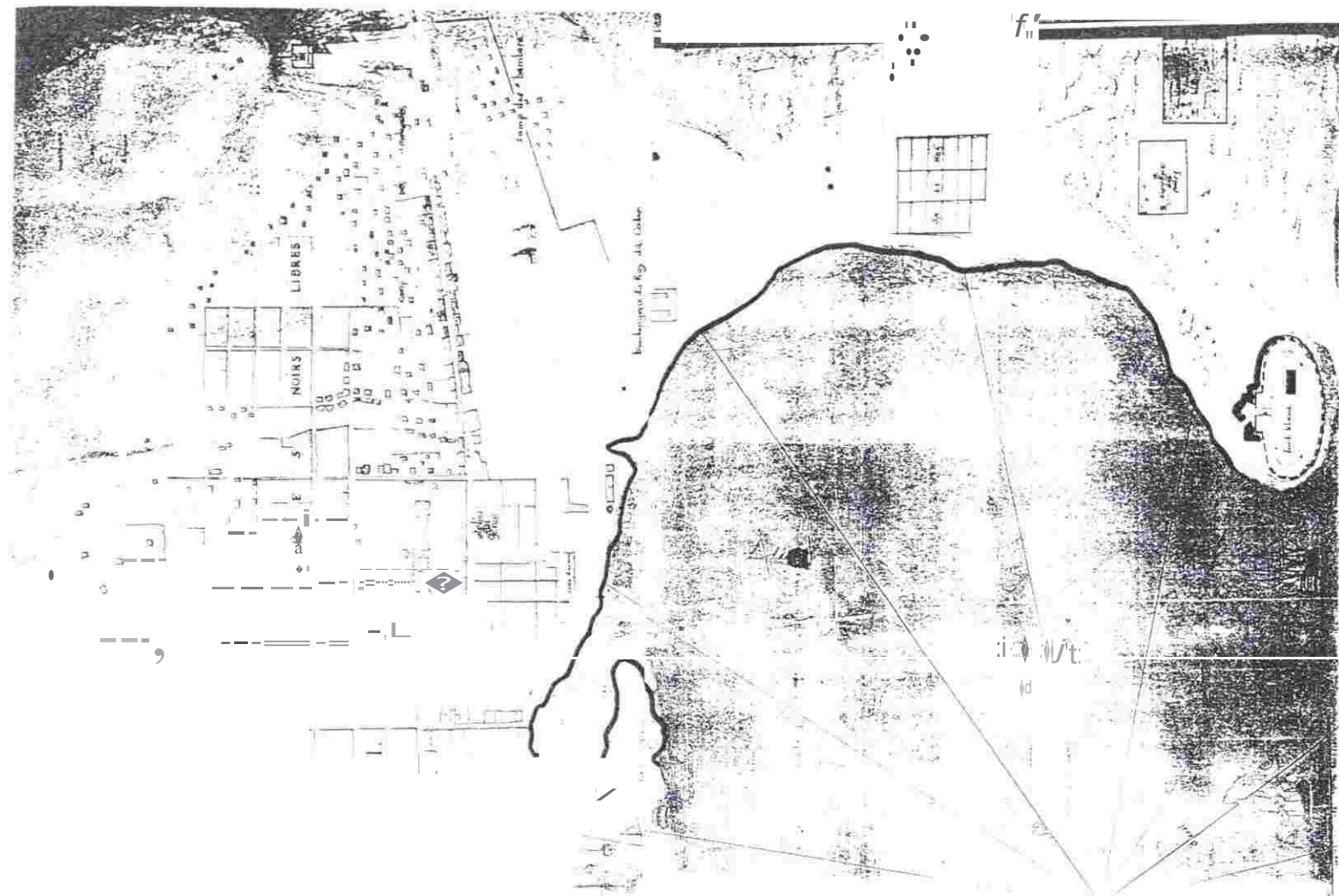
¹⁰ R. Allen, 'Creoles, Indian Immigrants and the restructuring of Society in Mauritius 1767-

1885', PhD Thesis 1983, University of Illinois.

¹¹ MA: ZJ28 No. 20 (Indirection Royale), 2^e Décembre 1773 - 15 mars 1780.

¹² MA: Census of 1804, KK 3.

¹³ Milbert, *Voyage Pittoresque à l'île de France* ... 172.



Slavery and Colonial Identity in Eighteenth Century Mauritius

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On the 25th of May, 1785, a M. Lousteau arrived at the Police Stanon in Port Louis, Isle de France (now Mauritius) to complain that his slave Jouan, had been abducted.' He described Jouan as an '*Indien*', '*iAscar*' and '*Malabar*', and said that he had learned that he had been smuggled onto on the Royal ship, *U! Brillant*, bound for Pondicherry in southern India, by one Bernard (whom Lousteau describes as a '*creol fibre*' (but who later is described as '*Malabar, soi-disant fibre*' and '*Topa Libre*'). The story of the escape had been told to him by a '*Bengalie*' slave called Modeste, who belonged to the '*Lascar*' fisherman, Bacou. A number of people had apparently assisted Jouan's escape in other ways - most importantly his trunk of belongings had been moved secretly from hut to hut before being embarked with him, on the ship. Lousteau was a member of that ever-growing professional group of eighteenth century France and its colonies the lawyers. He was clerk to the island's supreme court, the Conseil Supérieur.' He supported a large family, he said, and the loss of Jouan represented a serious loss to their welfare. Jouan, it turned out, was no ordinary slave. He was a skilled carpenter who earned his master a significant sum every month, he was highly valued, and Lousteau had refused an offer of 5,000 livres for him. What is more, he could be easily recognised, for he was always exceptionally well turned out, and groomed. To facilitate in the search for his slave, Lousteau provided the following description of him:

H!! declares that his fugitive slave is of the *Loscarcaste*, a *Alalabar* dark black in colour, short in height, with a handsome, slightly thin face, a

gentle appearance with long hair that he is very well dressed,

abundantly endowed with clothes, such as jackets and shorts, wearing small gold earrings, a pin with a gold heart on his shirt, and on the arm a mark on the skin which he thinks reads DM. He can be easily recognised by his gentle demeanour and cleanliness. (emphasis in original).

Lousteau, like any attentive slave owner, knew intimately the qualities, physical and otherwise, of one of his most valued possessions. The story, however, deepens. For this we must thank the obsessive attention to detail, and prurient interest in gossip, which the court officers of Isle de France so often displayed. Not that the gossip was irrelevant to the case, far from it. For Lousteau to have any chance of either recovering his slave, or of receiving compensation for the loss of his slave, it was necessary to find out where, exactly, he had gone, and who, exactly, had incited or facilitated his escape. Plenty of Jouan and Bernard's erstwhile friends appeared more than willing to provide information.¹ Modeste, for example. She was summoned to the police station on the 27th of May, two days after Lousteau had made his initial complaint. Before Modeste is interviewed, her exact identity must be established, and so we are given the following description of who she is:

Bengalie negress (*negresse*) concubine of Jouan and so-called slave of Bacou Caremy, free black, Lascar, to whom she pays each day a sum of two livres, despite the fact that she claims to have bought her freedom with the help of a certain sailor.

If this were not complicated enough, Modeste is said to live in the house of her former master, Sieur la Vasseur. Modeste confirms, 'purely and simply' Lousteau's

complaint. Indeed, it was Modeste who had alerted Lousteau in the first place. She says that she had been arguing with Jouan for some days and had separated from

him, but she wanted to get back from him various clothes and jewellery which were

in his trunk in her house, but which was removed, in her absence, the previous Tuesday. She adds that she is certain that Jouan escaped on the *le Brillant* because he was very close to (*'tres lié avec'*) Bernard, a free black, Topa, cook by profession, whom she believes was as a servant to one of the vessel's officers. And his (Bernard's) departure had been confirmed by the butcher, Bellegarde, who was the former master of the negress Louise, whom he had married to Bernard.

Five months later, in October, Jouan is still missing. Lousteau reiterates his complaint. 'My slave, the carpenter Jouan, escaped on the King's vessel, *Le Brillant*, which left port on 20 May, and this Jouan is living in intimacy (*en liaison intime*) with one Bernard, noir Topas' Lousteau gets specific. This Bernard, he says, has 'debauched' (*debauché*) or led astray Jouan and arranged his escape on the vessel by passing him off as free, and by saying that they were brothers. Jouan, he understands had been known aboard ship as Joseph, and had been taken on as a servant by one of the officers of the Regiment of the Isle de France, with whom he had disembarked at Pondicherry, the French possession in southern India. Bernard, meanwhile, had returned to the island and could be seen around town wearing a hat, a shirt, and a handkerchief, all of which Lousteau recognised as belonging to Jouan, a fact which, in his view, went to prove the great intimacy (*grande intimité*) which existed between the two men.

Other witnesses corroborate this story. Pierre Moussa, a 'Bambara' slave, belonging to the King, who had been involved in the smuggling away of Jouan's trunk, says that the two men had lived for some time in '*intelligence et d'amour*

and that they called each other 'brothers'. Modeste, too, has elaborated her story. She says that Jouan and Bernard had been involved 'mimerely' for some time. Furthermore, she has seen Bernard, since his return, sporting Jouan's shirt, handkerchief, and even the hat which he had had bordered with gold. Sure sign of their great intimacy. Lindor, another slave, had known Jouan on the island, and had also been on the same ship, the *le Brillant*. He had recognised Jouan on board and asked him what he was doing. He had replied that he was going to find his liberty. Lindor says that Jouan and Bernard lived together intimately and ate together on board ship, and called each other brothers. Lindor had asked Bernard if they were really brothers, to which Bernard had replied that they were indeed, from birth. Jouan had given Lindor a blue shirt, in the pocket of which he had found a golden pin with a heart on it.

On the 18th October Bernard is arrested. On the 9th of November he is interrogated by the court. Described as 'black, 'so called free' (*soi-disant libre*) Malabar, and 48 years old, Bernard (who is literate enough to be able to sign his name), says that he usually lives in the area of Port Louis called the Quai des Yolofs. Asked if he knows how Jouan had managed to board the *le Brillant*, Bernard replies that about a month before the ship's departure, Jouan had expressed a wish to embark. Bernard had replied that he could organise it if Jouan obtained permission from his master. ¹ Lousteau. Jouan had replied that his master would never give him permission, and asked Bernard if he could come aboard as his brother. Bernard had asked him if he had a ticket, to which he had replied, No, but that he could get one by selling some merchandise. Bernard is asked why he had not reported this to the Bureau de Police, to which he answers that he was not acquainted with the ways (*usages*) of this colony. He is then asked if it is true that he is '*tres lié*' with the said Jouan, and that they sometimes refer to each other as 'brothers', to which Bernard

says that they do sometimes call each other brothers, but that he had only known Jouan well for two months, during which period he had let his house to Jouan. The case stagnates. Lousteau renews his complaint on the 16 December 1785, having now received information on the whereabouts of Jouan. He is, apparently, in the employ of a lieutenant of the Regiment of Isle de France, one M. Brousse, who had employed him on board the *Le Brillant*, and who now continued to employ him in Pondicherry. No doubt, says Lousteau, the Lieutenant had believed that Jouan was a free man but, 'on this island, no black can call himself free who does not have proof of that condition, and it is impudent of him to believe the word of a black whom he does not know .. and thus to compromise the property of the 'habitants''. For this reason, Lousteau believes that Brousse is obliged to pay him damages. In September 1786, Bernard is still in prison and he writes to the Judge protesting his innocence and asking to be freed for the rest of the duration of the case, promising that he will present himself to the court whenever required. On the 17th of October he is freed. The case appears to have fizzled out. Lieutenant Brousse writes to Lousteau saying that he is distressed to discover that Jouan had deceived him into thinking he was a free man, and he would willingly return Jouan to his rightful owner, but he lacks the means to do so. Bernard, meanwhile, has also said that Jouan is not happy in Pondicherry, that he is unable to practice his profession there for want of tools, and that he would willingly come back to the island, but lacks the means to do so.

The 'evasion' of Jouan is a minor and incomplete footnote to the history of the Indian Ocean in the eighteenth century. But in some ways it seems a good place to start a discussion of colonial identities. To begin with, it challenges us. I think, to examine what we mean by 'identities' in the first place. A commonplace of social historical writing, and perhaps particularly of recent analyses of the colonial and

the post-colonial world, the term 'identity' allows us to hang certain narratives together, and yet its meaning is often implicit, assumed. When I employ the term 'identity' in any attempt to reconstruct the social history of eighteenth century Mauritius, I may be using it in a number of different ways. It may refer to what appears in the historical records, to be consciously affirmed identities on the part of historical agents, their self-representations, and changes to these over time. It may refer to the ascription of identities by one group of people to their contemporaries. Or it may refer to my retrospective reconstruction of identities which contemporaries themselves may never have articulated, my piecing together of the components (language, dress, social behaviour, religious practice) which seem to me to have constituted some kind of meaningful demarcation between one group and another: identities which are perhaps 'lived' in the body, but which do not have a discursive equivalent. And what if we place the term 'identity' next to some other

categories frequently used by social historians: 'mentalite', for example, or 'community'?

It would be possible to focus our analysis of the case on issues of sexuality and write Jouan and Bernard's relationship and attempted escape to 'freedom' as a chapter of a gay history of the Indian Ocean. Certainly their former friends and acquaintances appear to have noted a degree of closeness which they considered unusual between men. Not all were convinced by the cover of kinship or brotherhood. Lousteau, the Frenchman, is more articulate on this point, than any of the witnesses of Indian or African origin, claiming that Jouan had been 'debauched' by Bernard. Yet the term 'debauchery' was a loose and wide one in the eighteenth century. Historians of France argue that it was only in the nineteenth century, that the concept of the 'homosexual' came into being in France, yet there were many other terms which Lousteau could have used if he had wished to be

more explicit about the physical nature of Jouan and Bernard's relationship. He chose instead an ambiguous term. And although the prosecutor, in his interrogation of Bernard on the nature of his relationship with Jouan, seems to be pushing him to 'own up' to something, that something is never defined. It may well be that Jouan and Bernard were not only close friends, but were involved in a sexual relationship. It is also possible that they possessed no term, either in an Indian language, or in the French creole spoken on the island, to describe this relationship to themselves. 'We might nevertheless decide to ascribe to them the term 'homosexual' (or, given the evidence for their relationships with women, 'bisexual'), since our reconstructions to the terms which contemporaries applied to themselves would certainly make for a limited kind of social history. Or we may decide that the central message of this story is ambiguity, and ambiguous it must remain. These issues of identity and definition have been well rehearsed by historians of

sexuality, but in fact, they may be equally relevant to other social categories and designations, as the history of slavery and of creolisation demonstrates.

For it is not only in relation to questions of sexuality that both contemporaries and historians may experience some confusion. Though the evidence brought to bear in the case of Jouan and Bernard is unusual in some respects, in others it is quite typical of cases in this period. Eighteenth century Isle de France, and particularly in its capital, Port Louis, was a fluid and complex place: one in which, despite the rigidities of colonial life, the binary divisions between slave and free, black and white, was not always easy to know just who everyone was.

Contemporary French observers perceived colonial identities to be closely connected with economic functions and activities.⁶ The precise role of the colony of Isle de France had been a subject of considerable discussion amongst

administrators in the *Maison de la Manne* in Paris, since the moment it was first occupied by the French in 1721.⁷ Its main function had always been as a strategic base in the Indian Ocean and as an entrepot for trade, initially governed by the *Compagnie des Indes*. The dissolution of Company rule, the introduction of free trade in the 1760s, and the wars with England over India, brought wealth to the island, but further emphasised the transitory nature of much of the population. Though a small French elite had established itself under Company rule as landowners and merchants, in general, the 'white' population of the island was an unsettled and unsettling one. Amidst the small numbers of nobles and bourgeois, who kept houses in *Pon Louis* and *habitations* in the country, there were larger numbers of French men and women of much lower origins – sailors, craftsmen and labourers from poverty-stricken rural Brittany being the most evident. The social hierarchies imported from the metropole, though important, were inevitably modified, challenged and compromised in this colonial setting. Here, as elsewhere in the colonial world, the term, 'creole' was first used to describe the identity of those whose ancestry lay in the metropole, but who had been born in the colonies: in this case, those permanent settlers on Isle de France who both looked to France for their political and cultural bearings, and simultaneously kicked against this distant authority, its corruption, venality and monopolistic economic exploitation.

In the eighteenth century there was no shortage of commentators on the society of Isle de France. The Enlightenment produced a string of more or less famous philosophers, geographers, astronomers, and botanists passing through or stranded for longer periods of time, with a passion for comparative social commentary.⁸ Their accounts of 'idyllic' eighteenth century Isle de France can be read both as evidence for the nature of identities as complex lived realities, and simultaneously as evidence of the compulsion to order a less than orderly world.

Some like the botanist Pierre Poivre (who was later to become Intendant of the island), heavily influenced by Physiocratic thought, were distressed by the island's dependence on trade and its lack of attention to agriculture. For Poivre, this obsession with the world of goods as opposed to the 'virtue' of agriculture, was bound to produce an inferior society, and he employs the idiom of slavery to make his point – men who do not practice the arts are 'enslaved', he wrote.⁹ Many compared the 'white' society of Isle de France with that of the neighbouring Isle Bourbon. This island, settled from the seventeenth century by a group of colonists from Madagascar and later from France, had evolved into a sleepy agricultural backwater next to its fast-moving trading neighbour. Whilst the colonists of Isle de France were described as largely concerned to get rich quick and move on, those of Isle Bourbon were settled, relatively small-scale agriculturalists whose families and slaves were employed on the land. The constant flow of people, goods and news in and out of *Pon Louis*, meant that the elite of that city (and some of the lower orders) could at least attempt to keep up with the 'manners and fashions' of the metropole, and indeed, of other parts of the world. By contrast, major shipping traffic by-passed Isle Bourbon, where the colonists were in any case too poor even to pretend to be replicating the changing fashions of Paris. Some commentators admired the 'simplicity' of the Bourbon creoles, their rustic ways and their established family lives, and though their origins in the French possessions and princely communities of Madagascar meant that all were of '*sang melle*', yet they were apparently eager to profess their loyalty to France. As one missionary wrote in 1732, 'despite the fact that both their hair and their manners resemble those of the blacks, they have a distinct aversion to the latter and call themselves French'.¹⁰ Though eighteenth century visitors inevitably patronised these distant and dark French men and women, in general they compared their society favourably with

that of Isle de France, more commonly described in terms of the social disorder which trade, money and war could bring. Opinions certainly differed on the merits and demerits of free trade, but many shared the view of one missionary that "in according freedom of commerce they had also accorded freedom to all sorts of depradations." Though the colonists of Isle Bourbon might be recognised as less than 'white', this 'mélange' had at least arrived at some kind of stability. Bourbon creole women were described as 'well built, well-made and beautiful' despite being 'brown'. On Isle de France, by contrast, the moral consequences and context of sexual relations between the 'races' were perceived as far more dangerous:

It causes great disorder on Isle de France to see men of a certain rank publicly associating themselves with negroes whom they treat as wives and with whom they have children who will one day become a bastardised and dangerous race. This shameful *mélange* has been introduced by the *sejours* of troops and sailors. In this respect it is not so much the established residents who were the most guilty but a vice once introduced by outsiders, does not leave with them, but stays and grows larger."

Attempts to stabilise 'white' family life had been made on Isle de France almost since its birth as a colony. Girls from religious communities in Brinany had been shipped out in the 1730s with the intention that they would *marry* the single working men who had signed up for a few years in the colony, and whom the Company hoped would stay and settle on the land. The experiment ended quickly, when serious doubts were cast on the health and morality of the girls. Concubinage would remain common throughout the century, giving rise, as the missionaries and others warned, to a small community of *metis* who would find a voice during and

after the Revolution. Meanwhile, commentators such as Bernardin de St Pierre (who was to go on to write the best seller, *Paul et Virginie* which was set on the island) romanticised and idealised the role of the 'white' creole woman whom he erected as an emblem of colonial simplicity, and whose attachment to her children, closeness to nature, and creation of an ordered household (all these tasks, in fact, performed by her slaves), stood in contrast to the disorder of port life.

Of course, the discourse of immorality and disorder which so permeated observations of life on Isle de France, must be treated with caution. - the trope of the dissolute colonist was a well-worn one - yet it does appear that the constant comings and goings of troops and sailors, of slave ships and merchandise, produced a place which was simultaneously very small and very large, which was parochial in the extreme in some of its politics, but which also stood in the middle of an immensely cosmopolitan world. In this way it was both possible for Jouan to escape on the *Le Brillant*, and for him to be traced to Pondicherry. Though he was wealthy enough to indulge his taste for fashion, for gold-trimmed hats and jewellery, yet he was still a slave. In this world social categories were no sooner invented than they were strained at the seams, but the invention of those categories went on nevertheless. For the colonial administration here as elsewhere, it was important to continue to struggle to determine a method of knowing who, exactly, everyone was, in part because 'race' was such an unreliable marker. Jouan had no doubt appeared to be very plausible when he presented himself on board ship, with his fine clothes and gentle manners. A slave was not always recognisable as a slave which is why, as Lousteau surrounded Lieutenant Brousse, skin colour, if not definitive proof of social and legal status, was nevertheless a kind of warning sign: 'no black can call himself free who does not have proof of that condition'. Here, as elsewhere in the colonial world of slavery, though the binary divisions of black and

white, slave and free, formed the backdrop, the basic contours of the social landscape, in practice many more sub-divisions, differentiations and compromises of principles if the place were to function at all. Some of these elaborations, of divisions of labour and of ethnicity, were to become more than mere colonial labels and to endure as lived identities, whilst others were overtaken by the constant process of change which characterised the creole world. The invention of social categories and characterisations was not, of course, solely the domain of the authorities - otherwise their task would have been easier, their world less uncertain. Slaves, for example, were well aware of the divisions which existed within the 'white' society of the island and when they designated white sailors as 'Ti negres blancs', they alluded both to the fragility of the category 'white' and to the potential breadth of the category 'slave'.

The complexity of social categories and identities on the island, as this example indicates, and as contemporaries observed, derived in some part from the nature of the economy. Isle de France did not become a major plantation economy until it became Mauritius under the British in the nineteenth century.¹⁷ Slavery, then, was a differentiated sort of affair, with many slaves trained and employed as skilled workers and artisans whose function was to build the infrastructure of the island, to build the quay of Port Louis, to build and repair ships, to service the transient white

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population. Nor all were as successful as Jean, but many, both men and women, had undertaken apprenticeships through which they had acquired highly marketable skills as masons, carpenters, seamstresses, wig-makers, domestic servants and cooks. Mobility of employment and of residence was common amongst this slave elite, since it often made economic sense for a smaller slave owner to 'hire out' a skilled slave for a period, or to put a slave in charge of a small business enterprise such as a bar or canteen. This practice is probably what made

the court suspicious of Modeste's claim that she had bought her freedom, for if that were so it would be unlikely that she would be paying Bacou the sum of two livres per day. Slaves, 'free blacks' and poor whites lived in close proximity in the narrow streets of Port Louis, and to a lesser extent on some rural *habitations*. Urban planning throughout the century had attempted to assign certain groups of people to certain urban spaces¹⁷ - there was a Camp des Yoloofs and a Camp des Malabars,¹⁸ for example - but the people of Port Louis were not so easily ordered, at least not unless they had acquired their own pieces of property." We have seen that Bernard, a 'Matabar', was living in the Camp des Yoloofs. Surviving daily diaries of the Port Louis police station give us a sense of life on the street - the disputes between neighbours who might be technically 'free' or enslaved, and the uncertainty attached to both of these labels: the fights occasioned by newly arrived soldiers and sailors drinking and sleeping in the brothels, or simply renting rooms from 'free black' women; the abandoned babies (about which more later); the frequent arguments about money.¹⁹

Legal categories of the person were hard to enforce, and ethnic and 'racial' categories often slippery. Yet it was not the case that 'anything goes' in eighteenth century Isle de France - there were some enduring patterns to social interactions and the disputes occasioned by them. To begin with, ethnic labels, though

frequently inaccurate, were not always meaningless, particularly when they functioned to reinforce divisions of labour. The extent to which slaves of Indian origin formed an elite within Isle de France slave society may have been exaggerated,²¹ but there is nevertheless substantial evidence that certain occupations were more common amongst them than in the slave body as a whole." So, a female 'Bengalie' slave, such as Modeste, or one designated 'Malabar', was very likely to be employed as a domestic servant. The frequency of sexual

relationships between them and their masters may have led in turn to higher rates of manumission,¹⁵ and so women of Indian origin came to form an important core of the small 'Free black' population of the eighteenth century.¹⁶ This kind of evidence from Poll Louis reminds us that 'globalisation', and the complex social identities created by it, has a long and varied history.

The extent to which ex-slaves of Indian origin retained any cultural identity deriving from their backgrounds is hard to discern in the records. Some of the free 'Malabar' living in that part of Poll Louis designated as 'Camp Malabar' married within their community. 'Malabar' was a broad colonial label used to refer to Indians from the Malabar south-west coast of India, but also to South Indians in general. Some 'Malabar' families appear to have retained this identity over generations: others were absorbed into a more general 'free black' population of mixed African, Indian, Malgasey and European origin, and might appear in the colonial records of property transactions and marriage as '*noir fibre creole*', or simply '*creole libre*'.¹⁷

Evidence presented in the case of Jouan and Bernard points to the diversity which may have existed within the population of Indian origin in Isle de France. In order that Jouan might be recognised, Lousteau supplies a number of terms to describe him. He is, firstly, an 'Indien'. Secondly, he is a 'Malabar', from south, or south-west India. Thirdly, he is a 'Lascar', a term also used in this case to describe the owner of Modeste, the fisherman, Bacou. In early eighteenth century Isle de France, 'Lascar' was both an occupational and a religious category. The first 'Lascars' to arrive on the island were not slaves, but technically free Moslem sailors imported by Governor Labourdonnais in the 1730s as skilled alternatives to more expensive French labour. Their insistence on practising their religion caused

deep offence to the clergy on the island, but Labourdonnais (and subsequent governors) valued them highly and defended their right to a degree of religious freedom.¹⁸ As the century wore on, the meaning of this category undoubtedly shifted. The 'Lascar' Bacou, was both free and a fisherman, whilst the 'Lascar' Jouan was a slave and a carpenter. Perhaps they still had in common some degree of Moslem identity - we cannot be sure, but Lousteau insists that they conspired together, speaking what he calls the 'Lascar' language. 'Lascar' was one of those categories, or identities, which earned real meaning, though that meaning was never stable. Behind it lay a longer history of cultural change, of 'creolisation' in the cultural sense. 'Lascar' was in fact a category originating in an earlier period of

interaction between the peoples of India and Europeans, in this case the Portuguese. Arab traders and navigators, supported by west Asian trading peoples had spread the Sufi tradition of the Islamic faith along the southern coast of India from the eighth or ninth century AD, while elite groups of Sunni Muslims dominated the maritime towns and trading centres of the region.¹⁹ When, from the late fifteenth century, the Portuguese founded their trading stations and settlements on the coast of South India, they found Asian Moslems dominating trade, in conjunction with ruling Hindus. Groups such as the 'Lascars' were the product of this and earlier interactions - they arrived into the new context of French eighteenth century colonialism with a long and varied history behind them. In addition to the Moslem Lascars, there may well have been Christians amongst the early Indians recruited or enslaved to work on Isle de France.²⁰ Christianity in South India also pre-dated the Portuguese by many centuries, and these 'Synan' Christian communities were obvious, though contested, allies for the Portuguese.²¹ More straightforwardly the product of earlier Portuguese influence in south India were those who, like Bernard, were described as 'Topas'. The 'Topas' or 'Topasses

were a 'Eurasian' population, mostly Catholic, and mostly of mixed Portuguese and Tarrul origin:

These Eurasian Christians are rarely thought of as a group with a distinctive identity or status in south Indian society: it is usually assumed that they were a 'degenerate' and marginalised appendage of the European powers. In fact, though, the Tamil and Topasses constituted a remarkably large part of the region's military population during the pre-colonial and early colonial periods. They too had a reputation for martial prowess, and like the Synans, they were widely recruited into the armies or the south Indian regional powers."

These two ethnic labels - 'Lascar' and 'Topa', in addition to the wider categories referring to geographical origin - 'Malabar', 'Bengali', 'Talinga' and so on - indicate that the religious, cultural and occupational distinctiveness of different groups of people of Indian origin was at least acknowledged on Isle de France, by administrators, by slave owners like Lousteau and by the people themselves. For slaves like Jouan, the label 'Lascar' may well have added to the value he represented to his master." It also appears to be the case that some groups of Indians - the 'Lascars', the 'Cabras', the 'Tepas' - were in fact the product of earlier waves of immigration, of colonisation and of cultural interaction resulting from the ancient trading systems of the Indian Ocean.

An important and enduring feature of the colonial system on Isle de France was that cultural and religious differences amongst slaves of African origin were rarely recognised or commented upon. Differences amongst Africans from different sources on the continent were largely described in terms of physique and supposed suitability for certain types of manual work. Whilst Indians, even those who were

enslaved, were recognised as having a culture of some sort, one could say that Africans were thought to possess only bodies of varying degrees of usefulness. There were some exceptions, however. Bernard, though a Malabar, lived in that part of Port Louis which is still designated 'Camp des Yoloofs'. In the early part of the eighteenth century the 'Wolof' or 'Yolof' slaves, imported from the coast of west Africa, were highly valued, particularly by the Company itself, and were described in terms of an 'unstable' of Africans. They came from the Company's possessions on the coast of Senegal, and although one should be careful not to read too much into this ethnic designation (since 'Wolof', like other terms used to label slaves was undoubtedly somewhat inaccurate), nevertheless the evidence for the role of this group is interesting, and suggestive of some similarities with the situation in eighteenth century south India. As in south India, so on the West coast of Africa, the French were by no means the first outsiders to make their impact felt. The Portuguese had traded here long before the French and English chartered companies came into existence in the late seventeenth century. A creolized group, which Philip Curran refers to as the 'Afro-Portuguese', had come into being, acting as a trade diaspora in the region." But there were other factors at work in this region too. The 'Wolof' people of the Senegal river valley in the seventeenth century, were partially Islamised, had developed a centralized monarchy and lived under what one historian has described as 'aristocratic despotism'. They also had a highly developed system of slavery, with an elite of royal slaves at court being used as advisors and administrators, and later as warriors. The Wolof also had a 'caste' system - a subdivision of the people into free persons, hereditary occupational groups (notably blacksmiths and 'griots') and slaves, and rules of endogamy designed to maintain social divisions. By the late seventeenth century the Wolof polity and system of slavery was being influenced by the new demands of the Atlantic slave economy, and by the increasing influence of the French as

opposed to the Portuguese. The trading diaspora was now not so much 'Afro-Portuguese' as 'Afro-French' or 'Franco-wolof', operating from the island of Goree.¹⁷ The French in Senegal at this time relied heavily on a range of intermediaries in order to pursue the trade in slaves. An elaborate diplomacy of trade existed between them and local political leaders. Markets were controlled and the sale of slaves was taxed. One important group of intermediaries for the French was that of the *laptors* (from the wolof word *lappa* 'to buy'). In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century most of this group were free rather than enslaved. They were skilled sailors, but also interpreters and intermediaries, who worked alongside French officials and sailors on the river fleets. On Isle de France the role of the Wolof (in this case slaves rather than free persons) exhibited some continuity with that on the West African coast. In 1753 administrators on Isle de France emphasised the importance of the 'noirs de Senegal' for the island, particularly for the 'marine' where they could 'substitute to a large extent for the sailors and carpenters of Europe, and for the Lascars of India'.¹⁸ In some of the documentation on Isle de France the terms 'Wolof' and 'Guinee' are used interchangeably, though in theory the latter came from an area extending from the Senegal River eastwards to Cape Paimas (now on the Liberia/Ivory Coast border). Slaves described variously as 'Guinee' and 'Wolof' were employed on a privately-owned forge on the island in the 1750s and much valued for their skills.¹⁹ This is suggestive given the existence of a 'caste' of blacksmiths amongst the wolof people. In a 1761 census of slaves owned and employed by the Company, those of 'Guinee' continued to dominate as blacksmiths, carpenters, and in many related activities such as caulking.²⁰ Though in general the proportion of West Africans on the Isle de France slave population had declined by mid-century, they still formed a majority within the slave elite created by the Company.

The 'Wolof' and 'Guinee' of West Africa, then, though enslaved rather than free, were not unlike the 'Lascars' of south India, in terms of the specialist roles accorded to them in the slave system, and in terms of the traditions of their original societies. Of course, the coasts of West Africa and of South India were very different places in this period, but nevertheless there were some similarities. Against the ancient trading systems of the Indian Ocean, the trade of coastal west Africa seems relatively shallow, but both regions had experienced interaction with the Portuguese, and the creation of creolized groups (the 'Topas' in India: the 'Afro-Portuguese' in Senegambia, as a result). In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, French colonial and commercial ventures operating through a succession of chartered companies reproduced this pattern and extended it inland as the influence of the Atlantic slave trade made itself felt. The French needed intermediaries. Just as had the Portuguese, and so the 'Lascars' of South India, were recognised by French administrators as indispensable allies in their commercial and political confrontation with the British: on the coast and up the river valleys of Senegambia, the 'laptors' performed a similar function as skilled sailors and as intermediaries with powerful and sophisticated African rulers. In both regions Islam was a powerful force - established for centuries in South India, its populist character and incorporation of qualities helped ensure its survival there, while in eighteenth century Senegambia the ravages of the slave trade, civil war, and a crisis of subsistence paved the way for a powerful and enduring Islamic revival movement beginning at the end of the century. By then, few if any West African slaves were being imported into Isle de France, the newer and nearer markets of the East African coast and of Madagascar now provided the major sources of slaves.

Musleem Jumeer has shown that some 'Lascars' continued to play an important role in the Indian and 'free black' communities throughout the century." On the continuum of creolization" at one end were the those who preserved as much as they could of their cultural and religious origins: at the other were those who had converted to Christianity, and had been absorbed into the 'free black' population. Most probably lay somewhere in the middle. Evidence for the continuity of a

Vo[of ethnicity is so scant as to be almost non-existent. Given the high mortality

rates amongst slaves in Isle de France, it seems unlikely that even a slave elite would have managed to pass on their culture and traditions in the face of the dramatic decline in slave imports from their region of origin." It is generally thought that when the court artist M.J. Milbert noted, at the turn of the century, a distinct group of 'Wolof' on Isle de France, he must have been mistaken - imports of West African slaves having long dried up. Yet it remains possible that a small group of West African slaves maintained their privileged role within Government service and their status within the slave economy, as well as some modified and creolized form of their ethnicity. Milbert's description is perhaps a little fanciful, but in some details appears quite plausible:

Les Africains sont les plus propres au travail de la terre. Les Yolofo sent plus grands, plus forts et ruerux fairs: ce sent les negres par excellence; ils ont plus d'intelligence que tous ceux qui viennent de Mozambique ou de la cote adjacente. Un grand nombre d'Yolofo sont menuisiers, charpeniers, ou exercent d'autres professions mecaniques. Le gouvernement possede plusieurs centaines d'hommes de cette espece: ils se font remarquer au tatouage bizarre par lequel ils s'imaginent decorer certaines parties du corps: ainsi, par exemple, ils se dessinent sur le

ventre un large soleil qui le recouvre tout entier, et ressemble à une espece de cuirasse.¹

If it were the case that a distinct, if small group of West Africans survived to the turn of the century on Isle de France, they would have done so, not because they had managed to preserve some elemental or originary identity, but rather because

they were, like the 'Lascars', already a creolized group, adapted to the

circumstances of colonialism, who had created for themselves a specialised role and occupational niche within the slave economy. The story of the 'Wolofo' of Isle de France, then, is not one which traces the survival of what are sometimes called 'Africanisms', but one of the uneven and unequal processes which went to make a new creole culture on the island.

Many of the factors at work which had gone to create these specialised groups were also present in other areas from which Isle de France began increasingly to source its slaves from the middle of the century - that is the coast of East Africa, and the island of Madagascar. Slaves who had been exported from either the Portuguese controlled area of the east coast of Africa (running roughly from Detegoa Bay to Cap Delgado), or from those ports controlled by the Arabs (from Cap Delgado to the Gulf of Aden) were known generically as 'les Mozambiques', and although they came from a wide range of east and central African societies, cultural and ethnic divisions amongst them are rarely remarked upon in the documentation. There was no equivalent of the 'Wolof' slave elite amongst the East African slaves, despite the fact that the coastal societies of East Africa had a history not dissimilar to some respects to that of coastal West Africa, or indeed to that of the south coast of India. East African slaves, whose numbers in Isle de France rose rapidly in the 1770s and 1780s moved into a society which, though still fluid, had developed

some degree of stability and identity of *its* own. The creole language, for example, though still evolving, had acquired some basic features by this period" though East African slaves certainly contributed to its vocabulary." In the hierarchy of the slave economy 'les Mozambiques' lay at the bottom. Valued not for their skills, but for the strength of their bodies. French commentators and administrators did not recognise them as having any distinct culture. If we think of the process of creolization as one of losing and learning, but an unequal one, then we can imagine that, despite their numbers, 'les Mozambiques' lost more than others and had to learn fast the ways of this already established island colony. Meanwhile, slaves of Malagasy origin occupied an ambiguous position in the evolving creole culture of Isle de France. The relative proximity of Madagascar and the history of French interests and influence there made it an obvious choice as a source of slaves for Isle de France. Although early governors placed a high value on the services of West African slaves, they also recognised that much could be gained from exploiting a nearer market - not least a lower rate of mortality in passage. As on the coast of West Africa, so in Madagascar, the French relied heavily on intermediaries to negotiate the terms of the slave trade. Madagascar had a long history of interaction with 'outsiders' (Arabs, Portuguese) some of whom had traded in slaves. In the seventeenth century, however, a new set of foreigners (the Dutch, English and French) began to make their influence felt, stimulating the trade in slaves and offering firearms in return. In the same period three movements towards state formation took place within Madagascar, the most successful being that of the highland Merina who, between 1780 and 1820 came to conquer most of the island. The French had tried unsuccessfully to colonise Madagascar in the seventeenth century from their base at Fort Dauphin, and in the process developed a healthy respect for Malagasy rulers. 'La grande ile' was vitally important to the development of the French Indian Ocean islands, not only as a source of slaves, but

also as a source of foodstuffs the fleet of boats which made the journey to Madagascar from Isle de France came back loaded with men, cattle and rice. They also exhibited a grudging respect for the slaves of Malagasy origin who were transported to Isle de France. Though in general 'les malgaches' or 'madecasses' were treated as one group within the slave economy, French administrators and observers recognised divisions within them, particularly between the 'light-skinned' highlanders and the more 'African-looking' lowlanders. It was particularly noted that those from the highland population had straight, rather than curly hair, a face which apparently led some to classify them, occupationally, as one group with slaves of Indian origin." The 'malgaches' certainly captured the somewhat feverish imaginations of the white population. Some wore talismans, reinforcing their reputation for sorcery. Even when not numerically dominant amongst the population of escaped 'maroon' slaves in the mountains at the centre of the island, they were always thought of as having a particular propensity to both violence and flight. Indeed, every year some Malagasy slaves escaped the island altogether in stolen boats, or ones they had secretly manufactured themselves. In some cases they were recaptured in Madagascar and sold again, re-appearing in Isle de France. The determination of the Malagasy to escape was understood to have been linked to their particular attachment to their ancestors, and a dread of dying away from home.

Very occasionally in the case of runaway slaves, or 'maroons', we find evidence for what might be called cultural resistance amongst slaves of Malagasy, and to a lesser extent, African origin. Escaped slaves of Malagasy origin sometimes testified that they had reverted to their pre-slave names. In a case of 1746, for example, a captured slave of Malagasy origin, known as Lourson, when asked if this is her real name, replied that her Malagasy name is Fonovola and that this is

the name she used with other maroon slaves, but that she was known to her various slave masters as Lomson.¹ In a case of 1750 the Malagasy slave Magdalene Marena, who had been a member of the 'Bance de Grande Barbe' says in reply to questions that she practices the 'religion of her country'.²⁰

As this brief discussion has made clear, delineating the nature of 'identities' on Isle de France in the eighteenth century is a far from straightforward task. All identities are the product of cultural work, and all are thus in some sense continually coming into being. This is more true of places such as Isle de France in the eighteenth century, where the rigidities of the ideology of slavery came up against the fluidity of a society in the making. This was clearly a highly unequal process in which some groups (notably the French colonial elite) retained much of their history, culture and language, albeit transformed by the experience of being colonists, whilst others (most notably the slaves of East African origin) were rarely recognised as having any culture to lose. The task is of course made doubly difficult by the nature of the evidence at our disposal. Any account of slave identities must be read against the grain of the representations of certain groups produced by French observers, supplemented by whatever fragments of evidence survive in the legal documentation, often produced as asides to the central narrative. In contrast, the colonial elite, though deeply divided, was deeply self-conscious endlessly reflecting on its own identity.

That the identity of this elite was centrally influenced by their ownership of slaves, is not only a retrospective observation, but was frequently remarked upon by contemporaries. In the course of the eighteenth century, the belief grew that slavery was an 'unnatural' state, and one which had the potential to corrupt or barbarise the

slave owner. Within Isle de France 'white' society, even as it was by social tensions, jealousies, and rivalries, 'reputation' was all important. Cases in which reputation was at stake can tell us something about the limits of identities, the boundary markers which social groups placed between themselves and others in an often vain attempt to present to the outside world the picture of themselves which they cherished within. Such cases often revolved around issues of sexuality, of family life, and of the treatment of slaves. Though slaves who attempted to bring their masters and mistresses to book for ill-treatment were rarely successful, nevertheless, the alleged ill-treatment of slaves was a powerful weapon with which one slave-owner could insult another. As the eighteenth century progressed, so 'respectable' people held the view that the survival of the institution of slavery depended on it moving more definitively from the private to the public domain. Though the institution of slavery had in theory been regulated since 1723 by a version of the Code Noir, in practice the treatment of slaves on the island was largely a private affair. Slaves were private property and many slave owners guarded jealously what they regarded as an inviolable right to do what they would with that property. But as the eighteenth century progressed, and as the view that slavery was an 'unnatural' state became more widespread, so also did the argument that the punishment of slaves must be removed from the private domain and regulated by public authority. Reason was to be applied to this very unreasonable institution. Allegations of ill treatment of slaves were much like allegations of wife beating: they only came to the fore under certain circumstances, either because the ill-treatment has caused public disorder, or because there was already some underlying resentment or jealousy against the slave-owner on the part of another. More frequent were charges by a slave owner against a third party for beating or mistreating a slave belonging to the complainant. One such case from 1777 is revealing, not only of norms around the 'proper' treatment of slaves, but also of the

degree to which male slaves were regarded as having some right to respect, even from whites, when it came to their own sexual and familial relations.

In November 1777, one Sieur de Clonard, who was a Lieutenant in the King's navy, complained to the police of the 'exces' committed by a woman 'white' against his slave, Joseph, a Malagasy domestic servant, who had received a blow to the head resulting in a great deal of bleeding." Sieur de Clonard presents his complaint in the following terms, arguing that such excessive acts are all the more worthy of the attention of the law and all the more reprehensible since, being committed against a slave, they cause the latter to forget, in the first moments of pain and sensibility, the singular respect which they must show to whites. De Clonard's argument was a familiar one - that there were limits beyond which it was not reasonable for a slave to maintain the appropriate respect for whites, and that excessively harsh or provocative treatment therefore threatened the whole institution of slavery. In Joseph's case, the original provocation appears to have been an insult or at least an unwarranted intrusion into his private life. Joseph, when interviewed by the examining Judge, gives the following account. The

previous day he had been in the Rue des Limiers with Perrine, a slave belonging to Sieur Bellerose, when a white man, whom he did not recognise, accosted him and demanded to know if this woman was his 'wife', to which he replied that she was his 'wife'. At this the white man said - 'So you sleep with her then', to which he had replied, 'yes'. At this point the white man told him to stand back, but Perrine had stopped him from doing this, saying 'don't' and held him by the shirt. The next thing he knew was that the white man had raised the parasol he had in his hand and had begun hitting him hard on the head, neck and left arm. He had then gone to report the matter to his master. Perrine, when asked to recount the event, adds that in response to the white man's questions Joseph had replied that 'ce que cela

lui fait...' and that it was at this point that the man (whom she names as La Poëze) lifted his parasol against him. La Poëze, described simply as an employee of the King's and 26 years old, is brought in for questioning. He has himself simultaneously brought a case against Joseph, accusing him of insulting and menacing him on the street and arguing for the danger represented by blacks who dare to insult whites, causing 'disagreeable scenes on the street every day'. His case against Joseph is merged with that against him. He denies that he ever asked Joseph whether he was married to, or slept with Perrine. The interrogator persists: 'Was it not the case that Joseph's indecent and improper response was not in fact a reply to his own improper question when he had asked Joseph if the woman was his wife and if he slept with her?' La Poëze continues to deny that he ever asked such a question. As was usual in these cases, no action was taken against him and, Joseph was reminded of his duty to pay respect to whites, but the message of the proceedings was already clear - that slaves were persons enough to experience insult.

Such cases were rare. More common were those involving the reputation of 'free

blacks' and free persons of colour, or 'meus'. Amongst this small group a self-conscious awareness of the rights, and a demand to be recognised as equal to 'whites', becomes more evident towards the end of the century and is further enhanced by the Revolution.¹ These cases remind us that, in the complex melting pot of people and identities which was eighteenth century Isle de France, 'race' could still act as the ultimate arbiter, the bottom line. Though, as I have argued, 'race' was never a reliable or sufficient marker of social difference, neither was it far beneath the surface and could be appealed to at any moment. 'Race' was far from irrelevant when it could be connected to property and inheritance, for example, as many women knew. Cases of abandoned new-born babies were

frequent in *l'Asie de France* as they were in France itself at the time. Investigations into the circumstances of abandon ment sometimes revealed that the baby had been left by its slave or 'free black' mother at the door of a white man, the supposed father, in the early hours of the morning. Though an illegitimate child would have no formal claim to support from the father, a degree of moral pressure could nevertheless be exerted, sometimes with success. In episodes of high tragic-comedy, surgeons were dispatched to examine the new borns and to determine whether they might be in any degree 'white' ('blanchâtre').

There were also moments of high drama on the streets of and bars of Isle de France even before the Revolution, when the mythology of 'freedom' could be seen in head-on collision with the reality of racism, in which identification by others was radically at odds with the identity which individuals had created for themselves and which they held internally, in which the simple question 'who are you?' could reveal the both the power and the fragility of an entire society. The fragile, revealing nature of colonial identities, I shall end this paper with a final thought on such case.

In Port Louis in August 1777, a crowd gathered to watch the hangings of a man named Benoit Giraud, also known as 'Hector the Mulatto'.⁵⁴ Giraud was described as a 'free born black' from another island on the other side of the French colonial empire, Martinique. More proximately he came from Paris where, after a spell in the notorious Chatelet prison, he had been, to his immense outrage, exiled to Isle de France by order of the Ministère de la Marine. Arriving on the island in May 1777, Giraud was immediately placed in chains and imprisoned. On the 15th of August, in the late afternoon, he and another prisoner, a young boy named Cezar, were digging a trench close to the island's administrative headquarters. Benoit

Giraud and Cezar were chained together. At about 5 o'clock senior government officials crossed the square in formation, passing as they did so close to the trench where the two men were digging. Amongst them were the Intendant of the zone, M. Maillart Dumesle, and one M. Foucault, the Intendant-elect, due shortly to replace Dumesle. As they walked passed in a group, so a number of witnesses Benoit Giraud hurl an object in the direction of M. Foucault, the force of which was deflected by M. Dumesle's cane. Having apparently missed his target, Giraud then leapt at Foucault (dragging the unfortunate Cezar with him), and attacked him both physically and with insults. Words in this eighteenth century world, as we have seen, were barbed weapons. The precise words of the insult reported by witnesses varied somewhat, but most recalled hearing something along the lines of 'You fucking villain, you are the cause of all my misfortunes and you will pay for it'. Finally Giraud was removed by the other officers and he and Cezar were returned to jail, where his ranting and raving could be heard by all. In his testimony the jailer, M. Blancheste, reported that on being returned to the jail and admonished for the terrible thing he had done, Giraud had replied: 'I have only one thing to say - I promised myself that I would do what I did - let them hang me'. The next day he stood trial.

Giraud's first examination by the judge followed the prescribed form. His answer to the question 'Who are you?' was critical. Giraud stated that he was 37 years of age, that he had been a domestic servant in Martinique, where he had been born, and in Europe, in the service of M. Foucault. He was, he emphasised, of free birth. Asked if he had ever been convicted of a crime, Giraud answered that he had never been subject to a '*punition infamante*',⁵⁵ but that he had spent fifteen days in the Chatelet prison in Paris following a quarrel with the person with whom he was boarding. Admitting readily that he had thrown something at M. Foucault, he

disputed the evidence that this was a stone. In his fury, he said, he had picked up whatever was to hand, and that had been mud. In fact, he went on, he was not entirely sure what he had done the previous day because as he set eyes on Foucault his blood had boiled so much that he had not known what he was doing or saying. But, yes, he had called him a number of names - that he did recall. Asked if he had intended to kill M. Foucault he replied that he had not, but that given the terrible things that Foucault had done to him, he had wanted to humiliate him.⁵⁶ He was certain, he said, that his imprisonment had not been *arbitraire* of the Ministère de la Marine. He demanded justice.

On the 18th of August Giraud was examined: *interrogé* with the witnesses. Asked if he had not insulted and menaced M. Foucault after having hurled a rock at him, he replied that he had hurled earth and not a rock, and that he had indeed insulted Foucault, but only in response to Foucault's own insults, for Foucault had referred to him as a slave. Asked whether he did not know that M. Foucault had been named by the King as the successor to M. Maillart Dumestre as Intendant of the colony, Giraud replied that he had not known this, and even if he had been told it he would not have believed it, since Foucault had been dressed in plain grey and not in uniform. Asked whether he was not aware of the laws which ordained that free blacks and liberated slaves should have particular respect to whites, Giraud responded that he was familiar with the Code Noir, and he had seen the chapter which said that '*noirs mulâtres*' enjoyed the same rights and privileges as other free persons.⁵⁷ His own case, he went on, was that of a free person who had insulted a '*bourgeois*', for M. Foucault could not be regarded as anything but a '*bourgeois*', having been dressed as one, and not in uniform.

Giraud was found guilty of assault and hanged on the same day. In this case like de France justice worked fast - in most other cases people stayed festering in jail for months, if not years. Writing after the event to the Ministère de la Marine, Maillart Dumestre expressed something of the sense of scandal which this case had occasioned. Imagine, he wrote, that even in his last interrogation, this man admitted that he knew M. Foucault, that he had indeed intended to hit him, but that as far as he was concerned this was just a quarrel between one free individual and another. 'You can well see', he went on, 'how these small pretexts can serve as excuses'. The case only served to underline how important it was that officers of the state should bear marks of distinction, especially in this island where the streets were 'continually full of slaves, of free blacks and mulattoes, of workers and foreigners, such that under the pretext of not recognising an official, anything might be thought permissible'.

Giraud's defence had rested on his identity. He knew that as a '*free*' he was entitled, under the Code Noir, to the same rights and privileges as any other free person. His blood had boiled at the sight of his former employer, not because he attributed to Foucault the injustice of his imprisonment and exile, but because he had heard Foucault refer to him as a 'slave'. He was not a slave, and so he insisted that his dispute with Foucault was merely a dispute between one free-born person and another. When told that Foucault was much more than a '*bourgeois*', Giraud's defence was one of mis-recognition. How was he to know that he was the Intendant-elect (and thus about to become a kind of embodiment of the King) when he wore no uniform, no marks of office? Giraud had read the Code Noir and had believed in the myth of freedom. He had failed to grasp that freedom, truth and culpability were all relative concepts in this eighteenth century world - everything depended on *WHO* you were, and who you were was a great deal more

complex that the interdependent ideologies of freedom and slavery implied. Indeed, under Ancien Régime criminal law the importance of who you were in determining the severity of a crime was formally recognised. There were, for example, seven circumstances of the person which could be held to aggravate an offence, a number of which could have been applied in this case.⁵⁴ What Giraud had also failed to grasp, or was refusing to recognise, was that who he was still ultimately rested on the colour of his skin. Whilst correctly identifying M. Foucault might, as Giraud argued, depend on what M. Foucault was wearing, in Giraud's own case his identity was written on his body; it was his non-whiteness which set the limits of his freedom in the colonial world. But for Giraud this identification of him as 'black' was a mis-recognition, and it was this which made his blood boil. Nearly two hundred years later, another citizen of Martinique would experience a similar sense of fury as a result of the gap between his own sense of identity and that attributed to him by whites. This was Frantz Fanon.

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- ¹ National Archives of Mauritius (hereafter NAM), JB 47, *Procédure Criminelle*, 1785: Eviction of Jouan, slave of M. Lousseau.
- ² Archives d'Ouverture-Mer, Aix-en-Provence (hereafter AOM), E293 (Personnel); Lousseau, contains further information on Lousseau's career.
- ³ Of course in analysing such court cases we cannot exclude the possibility that some or all of the witnesses were pressured, intimidated or otherwise persuaded to give evidence - particularly in this slave holding society.
- ⁴ Chronologies differ. See Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1 (Harmondsworth, 1981); Lynn Hunt discusses homosexuality in the writings of Sade in

The Family Romance of the French Revolution (London, 1992), 45-46; Robert A. Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France* (New York and Oxford, 1993); Roddy Reid, *Families in Jeopardy: Regulating the Social Body in France, 1750-1910* (Stanford, 1993).

⁵ This raises the question of whether an 'identity' can exist without contemporaries possessing a term for it. For this debate as it relates to sexuality see John Boswell, *Revolutions: Universals and Sexual Categories* in *Hidden From History: reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. Martin Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey Jr (New York, 1989), 17-36; Nye, *Masculinity*, Introduction.

⁶ For a more detailed discussion of this see Megan Vaughan, 'The Character of the Market'.

⁷ Isle de France was first appropriated by the French in 1715. In the seventeenth century it had been briefly colonised by the Dutch. In 1810 it became the British colony of Mauritius.

⁸ Amongst whom were the Abbé de la Caille, Bernardin de St Pierre, Pierre Poivre, M.J. Milbert, Guillaume le Gentil, J. Bory de St-Vincent, M. Sonnerat.

⁹ M. le Poivre, *The Travels of a Philosopher, being Observations on the Customs, Manners, Arts, Agriculture and Trade of Several Nations in Asia and Africa* (Trans. London, 1769), 4.

¹⁰ *Congregation de la Mission* (Paris), recueil 1504, f171: *Voyage des trois missionnaires*, 1732.

¹¹ *Congregation de la Mission*, Recueil 1504, f 195, Gaultier(?), 1765.

¹² *Congregation de la Mission*, Recueil 1504, f189, Tasse, 1764.

¹³ For discussions of gender and sexual politics in Paul et Virginie see Hunt, *Family Romance*, 29-32; Reid, *Families in Jeopardy*, 101-136.

¹⁴ M.J. Milbert, *Voyage Pittoresque à l'Île de France, au Cap de Bonne-Espérance et à l'Île de Tenerife* 2 vols (Paris, 1812) vol. 1: 274.

¹⁵ Though the production of sugar did begin to expand in the 1790s M.D. North-Coomes, 'Labour problems in the Sugar Industry of Ile de France or Mauritius, 1790-1842' (M.A. Thesis, University of Cape Town, 1978) Chapter 1

¹⁶ On the history of slavery on Isle de France and Mauritius see R.B. Allen, 'Creoles, Indian Immigrants and the Restructuring of Society and Economy in Mauritius' (PhD thesis, University of Illinois, 1983); Muslim Jumeir, 'Les Affranchis et les Indiens Libres a l'île de France au XVIII^e siècle' (These pour le Doctorat de 3^eme cycle, Université de Poitiers, 1984); Vijaya Teelock, 'Bitter Sugar: Slavery and Emancipation in Nineteenth Century Mauritius' (D.Phil. University of London, 1993); M.D.E. Nwina, 'The History of Slavery in Mauritius and the Seychelles, 1810-1875' (London and Toronto, 1981); Anthony Barker, 'Slavery and Antislavery in Mauritius, 1810-33' (Basingstoke and New York, 1996).

¹⁷ A. Toussaint, *Port Louis, Deux Siècles d'Histoire* (1735-1935) (Port Louis, 1936)

¹⁸ 'Yolof' or 'Wolof' referred to slaves of West African origin who had been imported in the early part of the eighteenth century (of which more later), while 'Malabar' referred to those, slave or free, who were of South Indian origin.

¹⁹ On the acquisition of property by manumitted slaves, see especially Allen, 'Creoles, Indians'.

²⁰ NAM, OA 58; Bureau de Police, Journal pour la consignation des rapports de police, 15 avril 1785-31 mars 1787, Z2B/6; Journal de police, 1^{er} juillet 1790-29 juillet 1791

²¹ Marina Carter, 'Indian Slaves in Mauritius, 1729-1834', *Indian Historical Review*, XV (1-2): 239

²² Indian slaves were always a small minority within the slave population as a whole. In 1761 they formed 7 per cent of the slave population; Carter, 'Indian Slaves' 233-4; D. Nèpal, *Les Indiens à l'Île de France* (Port Louis, 1965)

²³ Though Carter argues that the large free 'Malabar' community (rather than 'white' masters) may have been responsible for the growth in manumitted Indians, Carter, 'Indian Slaves', 240

²⁴ This is documented by Richard Allen in 'Creoles, Indians'. This property-owning class of women of Indian origin was, on a very small scale, not unlike the more famous and enduring 'signares' of eighteenth century Senegal, also under French Company rule. The origins of this latter group, however, lay in an earlier period of Portuguese influence. See James F. Searns, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce: the Senegal River Valley, 1700-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

²⁵ This issue is discussed by Benjamin Moutou in his history of the Christian population of Mauritius. Moutou refers to this Indian free population of the eighteenth century as the 'Pondichériens' and takes issue with Hazaretsingh's claim that they became completely Christianized and Europeanized. The documentary evidence is, in fact, contradictory, indicating perhaps that within the population of Indian origin different responses existed to the circumstances of life on Isle de France. Benjamin Moutou, *Les Chrétiens de l'Île Maurice* (Port Louis, 1996, 160-161)

²⁶ See the entry in Governor Dumas' diary in 1768: 'There are, on Isle de France, several Asian families of the Moslem religion, from two different nations - the Malabars and the Lascars - the former are workers, the latter fishermen'. The Prefet Apostolique (M. Igou) had complained to Dumas about their public practice of the Moslem religion. Dumas observed that 'these Asians are connected by bonds of blood, of nationality and of religion to the peoples inhabiting the coasts of Coromandel, of Malabar and of Orissa and asked whether it might not be impolitic to remove from those who come to Isle de France their freedom to practice their religious ceremonies'. Archives Nationales, Paris [AN] C/4/21

²⁷ Susan Bayly, *Saints, Goddesses and Kings: Muslims and Christians in South Indian society, 1700-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 73-79

²⁸ Carter, 'Indian Slaves', 242

- ²⁹ Bayly, *Saints, Goddesses and Kings*, Chapter 7
- ³⁰ Bayly, *Saints, Goddesses and Kings*, 395
- ³¹ Carter, 'Indian Slaves', 246
- ³² Philip Curtin, *Economic Change in Pre-Colonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975; Chapter 3.
- ³³ James Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce: The Senegal River Valley, 1700-1860*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973
- ³⁴ Curtin, *Economic Change*, 107
- ³⁵ Searing, *West African Slavery*, 71-72
- ³⁶ M. David, Governor of Isle de France in the 1750s, had in fact been director in Senegal in the 1740s
- ³⁷ AOM, C47: Lozier-Bouvet, 31 decembre 1753
- ³⁸ AOM, C486: Diary of M. Magon, Governor, July 1756, referring to the forge owned by M. M. Rostaing and Hermans
- ³⁹ In the latter case, this group included more women than men; AOM, G1505, piece 7: recensement general des noirs, negresses et enfants appartenant a la Compagnie, existant au 20 avril 1761
- ⁴⁰ Muslem Jumeet, 'Les Affranchis et les Indiens Libres a l'Île de France au XVIII^e siecle', These doctorat, Universite de Poitiers, 1984
- ⁴¹ I have taken this way of conceptualising creolization from the very illuminating work of Richard Burton: *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition and Play in the Caribbean*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997
- ⁴² In any case, as we have noted, the term 'Wolof' and that of 'Guinée' as used to describe slaves in Isle de France was a broad one which was likely to have incorporated and blurred other West African identities. Although in the court case on Jovan we are introduced to a witness, Pierre Mousa, who is described

- as 'Bambara', it is also the case that many ethnically Bambara slaves were counted amongst the 'Wolof' and 'Guinée. Fear of Wolof insubordination and disloyalty led the French on the island of Goree to rely for some purposes on slaves who came from further up river, most notably those known as 'Bambara'; Searing, *West African Slavery*, 29, 60. An additional complication is the presence on Isle de France of slaves exported from the French post of Ouidah on the Bight of Benin. These slaves were likely to have been culturally very different to those exported from Senegambia and the Guinée coast. Evidence for the presence of slaves from Ouidah in the first half of the eighteenth century is provided by Philip Baker and Chris Corne in their study of the evolution of a creole language on Isle de France: *Isle de France Creole: Affinities and Origins*, Ann Arbor, Michigan: Karoma, 1982, 180-181. On the French slave trade see also J.M. Fillion, *La Traite des Esclaves vers les Mascareignes au XVIII^e siecle*, ORSTROM, Paris, 1974 and Robert Louis Stein, *The French Slave Trade in the Eighteenth Century: an Old Regime Business*, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979
- ⁴³ M.J. Milbert, *Voyage Pittoresque a l'Île de France, Au Cap de Bonne Esperance et a l'Île de Teneriffe*, Paris: A. Neveu, 1812, vol 11: 163. Milbert's observations were made in 1801. Gamble's ethnographic study of the Wolof makes no mention of any tradition of body tattooing, though this is noted as a feature of Serer culture - the Serer being an ethnic group partially incorporated by the Wolof, David P. Gamble, *The Wolof of Senegambia*, London, 1957: 103.
- ⁴⁴ Though once again it was Milbert who noted that "Parmi les Mozambiques, il y en a qui sont originaires de l'establissement portugais de ce nom; d'autres de Querimbas, sur la meme cote; d'autres de Quiloa et de Zanzibar, parmi lesquels se trouvent quelques Abyssins. Cette classe, selon M. de Cossigny, forme quinze

divisions de peuples qui ne s'entendent point. et qui etarent destines à se combattre". Milbert. Voyage Pittoresque, vol 11 : 162. In the records of the ships which transported East African slaves to Isle de France the ethnicities of slaves were noted, though no doubt they were very rough categories. See for example NAM: OC71 Bureau de Comrole de la Marine: Pieces relatives aux operations de traice de la flute Roi. *Les Bons Amis* sur la cote orientate de l'Afrique. 1779-85

⁴ Baker dates the first identification of Maunuan creole in an advertisement of 1773: Baker and Come. Isle de France Creole :248

¹⁶ See entries of 'Bantu' denvanon in Philip Baker and vinesh Y. Hookoomsing, Diksvoner Kreol Morisven Paris: Editors L'Harnattan. 1987

⁴⁷ At least this is what Milbert seems to imply: 'La populanon de Madagascar s'etam formee par le concours de plusieurs nations. ii en resulte que ces insularres n'om pas tous. a beaucoup pres. les meme caracteres physiques; leur couleur est tres variee. tous n'om point les cheveux crepes. Ces msulaires font. avec les Indrens. un uer des esclaves de Ile de France. Quoiqu'ils apprennent facilement route espece de metiers, on prefere les employer comme domesuques.". Milbert. Voyage Pittoresque, vol 11: 164

⁴⁸ On Malagasy veneration of ancestors and burial practices see M. Bloch. Placing the Dead. Tombs Ancestral Villages and Kinship Organisation in Madagascar Seminar Press, London. 1971. For an overview of the complexity of Malagasy history and culture see John Mack, Madagascar: Island of the Ancestmsr London: Bnush Museum Publications. 1986

⁴⁹ rfAt1 : JB 4: Procedure Criminelle. 1746

♦ NAJ-t. JB 6: Procedure Criminelle. 1750-S1

¹⁰ NAM. JB 29. Procedure Criminelle 1777. cases agamst Joseph and against la Poeze.

¹² There are many such exampls : eg in 1784 that of Louis Bergincourt. a 'free black' carpenter. who complains to the police that two brothers (the brothers Sieurs le Goy) have composed a song which defames his family and have pinned the text of this song to the door of his house.

¹¹ My impresson (but this is only an impression) is that cases involving the reputations of 'free blacks' increased in the Revolutionary years. This would nor be surpsning given the imponance of the issue of 'free blacks' in Revolutionary politics and the debate which led to the abolition of slavery in 1794

^{8.1} NAJit, JB 27 Procedure Crirunelle. 1777 No 14

⁵⁵ A *punition infamante* was one which involved the loss of civtl nghts. In using this term Giraud demonstrates thatnot only is he well versed in French law, but that he is a free man with rights which could be lost.

⁵⁶ Unfortunately I have not been able to discover from the surviving documentation what had gone on between Giraud and Foucault in the past, through details on Foucaults career can be found in AOM: E Series (Personnel Colonial Ancien): E 190.

¹¹ Here Giraud appears to be emphasising. not only his legal status as a free person. buc his 'racial' origins as a 'mulatto'.

⁵⁸ There were seven circumstances of the person or of the offence which could aggravate culpability and penal seventy. These included 'rank or social condition, if the offended was infamous ...', 'if the victim was an illustrious personage. 'if the crime was committed m.. a public square. 'if the crime

was committed by assault or surprise or with blatant scandal'. Andrews. Law,

— vol L. 98 National Archives of Maunuu (hereafter NAI\1) JB *it*, Procedure
Cnminelle.1785 : Evasion of Jouan, slave of M. Lousteau

Les pratiques musicales de la population servile puis affranchie de Maurice dans les écrits francophones des XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles.

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Dans le contexte multiethmique de la société mauricienne, le sega est sans doute un domaine où les pratiques sociales des Créoles de milieu populaire se sont développées au niveau national voire régional de l'Océan Indien alors que celles des autres groupes se sont imposées sur le plan politique et économique. En effet, même si le sega reste encore méprisé pour ses textes apparemment vils et méchanciers, les connotations sexuelles de sa danse. Il n'est pas moins considéré comme un trait culturel national par l'ensemble des Mauriciens. Les facteurs fondateurs du sega sont sans doute à chercher dans sa structure rythmique, le ton cocasse et burlesque de ses paroles, l'emploi du parler créole mauricien pour évoquer les scènes du quotidien ou les problèmes sociaux. Tout comme le blues, le jazz, le calypso, le sega mauricien est né dans le contexte des sociétés coloniales de plantation au sein d'une population servile à 90% importée du continent africain et de Madagascar.

Ce papier se propose de faire un exposé de quelques descriptions saillantes sur les pratiques musicales de la population servile puis affranchie de Maurice, disponibles dans les textes francophones des XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles. Ces témoignages sont nécessairement ceux de colons établis dans l'île, de voyageurs ou missionnaires originaires de France. Par conséquent, les informations qu'ils fournissent demandent à être explicitement révisées dans la perspective de leurs

auteurs, des paradigmes predominants dans la culture française de l'époque. Ces documents seront présentés ici dans l'ordre chronologique de leur édition, ce qui permet en même temps de les regrouper selon le profil social de leurs auteurs.

Les données sur les pratiques du XVIII^e sont tirées de textes de lois, en particulier des *Lois Pénitentielles* édictées en 1713. Elles avaient pour objectif de réglementer le traitement des esclaves dans les îles de l'Océan Indien et comprennent des articles qui touchent aux pratiques musicales chez les esclaves. Les témoignages de la fin de la première période coloniale sont plus conséquents : il s'agit de récits de voyage, celui de Bernardin de Salm-Pierre publié en 1773 et celui de Milbert (1812) où les auteurs brossent un tableau de la colonie à partir de leur regard de métropolitains de passage. L'intérêt de ces deux textes est qu'ils sont d'auteurs contemporains empruntant des perspectives opposées et qu'ils mettent en évidence l'impact de l'idéologie dans la perception des pratiques culturelles, en l'occurrence musicales, des esclaves. Le récit de Jacques Arago (1822) complète la série d'observations conséquences rapportées dans les écrits de voyageurs de la fin de XVIII^e et du début du XIX^e siècle.

Les pratiques musicales de la population servile deviennent objet du discours littéraire ou savant des anciens colons établis à Maurice, à partir de la mise en place de la nouvelle administration britannique. Les textes principaux qui seront retenus ici sont : *Les Essais d'un Soliste Africain* de François Chrescien, recueil de chansons créoles composées par l'auteur (1822-31) ; la description de d'Umenville dans ses *Études statistiques sur Maurice* (1838) ; la typologie de la chanson créole mauricienne de Barssac publiée en 1888.

I. Les textes de loi du début de la colonisation

Les *Lois Pénitentielles* du Roi Louis en 1723 sont en fait une extension du Code Noir à Bourbon et à l'île de France à partir des premières expériences de la vie des colonies. Les articles 12 et 13 du Code font mention d'assemblées festives qui étaient perçues comme une menace par les administrateurs de l'ordre établi :

« Article 12 : Défendons pareillement aux esclaves appartenant à différents (sic) maîtres de se rassembler le jour ou la nuit, sous prétexte de nocce (sic.) ou autrement, soit chez l'un de leurs maîtres ou ailleurs, et encore moins dans les grands chemins ou lieux écartés, à peine de punition corporelle qui ne pourra être moindre que du fouet ou de la fleur de lys, et en cas de fréquentes récidives et d'autres circonstances aggravantes, pourront être punis de mort, ce que nous laissons à l'arbitrage des juges : enjoignons à tous nos sujets de courir aux contrevenants, et de les arrêter et conduire en prison, bien qu'ils ne soient officiers et qu'il n'y ait encore contre lesdits contrevenants aucun décret »

« Article 13 : Les maîtres qui seront convaincus d'avoir permis ou toléré de pareilles assemblées, composées d'autres esclaves que ceux qui leur appartiennent, seront condamnés, en leur propre et privé nom, de réparer tout le dommage qui aura été fait à leurs voisins à l'occasion desdites assemblées et en dix piastres d'amende pour la première fois, et au double en cas de récidive ».

Les textes cités nous permettent de comprendre que les réunions festives des esclaves sur une propriété donnée attiraient tous les autres esclaves du voisinage, qu'elles étaient tolérées par certains maîtres et contrôlées par d'autres, que les dirigeants étaient méfiants quant aux motifs réels de ces réunions.

On pourrait se demander si ces articles s'agit de mesures preventives ou se referent à des pratiques deja existantes en 1723 dans la nouvelle lie de France -c'est-à-dire 3 ans seulement apres le debut de sa colonisation-. En effet, on imagine mal des esclaves importes dans le denuement le plus total menant sur pied des pratiques culturelles festives telles que decrites dans les articles mentionnees ci-dessus. Toutefois, pour ces pratiques comme pour la genese du creole martiniquais, il est bon de se rappeler qu'à ses debuts, le peuplement de l'île de France s'est fait essentiellement à partir de l'île Bourbon. En effet, de 1721 à 1735 la nouvelle colonie est formee de quelques habitations creoles qui constituent le noyau social à partir duquel va se faire l'integration des nouveaux arrivants colons, libres ou esclaves (Lagesse, 1973).

Quand il en sou, en mars 1759 et août 1762 d'autres textes de loi sont promulgués attestant de l'existence réelles de pratiques musicales au sein de la population servile de l'île de France. Ces textes laissent entendre que les articles du Code Noir prévenants ou pas, n'ont pas beaucoup d'impact. Le contenu de ces textes est ainsi résumé par Karl Noel (1991 : 77) :

« Un arrêt (n.172 du registre 9 du 1er mars 1759) qui réédite la défense contenue en l'article 11 du code noir, menace les contrevenants du fouet, de la fleur de lys et même de la mort. Il est rendu sur le réquisitoire du procureur général du Roi qui expose à la Cour qu'il se fait fréquemment des assemblées de Noirs et de négresses, sous prétexte de danses et de bals, que même les Blancs se trouvent dans ces assemblées ... que cette pratique est opposée aux bonnes mœurs, blesse l'ordre et la police de cette colonie. L'arrêté 22 du règlement du Conseil Supérieur du 11 août réitere la même défense ... ».

Pour l'historien Karl Noel, ces lois visaient :

... à réprimer surtout les bals où les Blancs se rencontreraient avec les Noirs sur un terrain d'égalité et non sur ceux, comme les Sais de Nouvelle Anse aux Pins, où les Blancs se paraient sur un piédestal en protecteurs et en patrons bienveillants ».

Les pratiques musicales étaient donc perçues comme une menace par les autorités dans la mesure où elles provoquaient un effet contraire à l'ordre économique établi : elles faisaient non seulement tomber les limites des propriétés entre la population servile mais tendaient à rapprocher maîtres, libres et esclaves que l'ordre économique avait séparés et hiérarchisés sur le critère racial.

2. Les récits de voyage

2.1. La vision romantique de Bernardin de Saint-Pierre

Dans son récit de voyage, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre retient surtout la pratique musicale des esclaves malgaches (1986, 1773 : 175, 177) :

... Ils aiment passionnément la danse & la musique. Leur instrument est le tam-tam (2) ; c'est une espèce d'arc où est adaptée une caquebasse. Ils en tirent une sorte d'harmonie douce dont ils accompagnent les chansons qu'ils composent. L'amour en est toujours le sujet. Les filles dansent aux chansons de leurs amants, les spectateurs battent la mesure & applaudissent. ...

... Quelquefois ils se donnent rendez-vous au milieu de la nuit. Ils dansent à l'abri de quelque rocher, au son lugubre d'une caquebasse remplie de pois : mais à la vue d'un Blanc ou l'abolissement d'un chieff dissipe ces assemblées nocturnes ».

La passion de la musique soulignée par l'auteur est en concordance avec l'aspect particulièrement attrayant des assemblées festives évoquées implicitement par les textes de l'ouvrage plus haut. La musique et la danse semblent avoir une importance

primordiale pour les membres de la population servile qui les conduisent jusqu'à la transgression de l'ordre établi.

Par ailleurs, il est aussi important de relever la touche romancée du témoignage de Bernardin de Saint-Pierre écrivain influencé par le courant littéraire de son époque. De toutes les pratiques musicales, il retient celle plus mélodieuse tirée du bobre instrument qu'il confond avec le tamram'. Sa description des « Noirs » est surtout positive, selon le mythe du Bon Sauvage du courant romantique du XVIII^e siècle à l'inverse de Milbert dont le regard est plus condescendant et négatif.

2.2. Typologie ethnocentrique de Milbert

Le voyage de Milbert se situe à 33 ans d'intervalle de celui de Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. La différence fondamentale entre ce récit de voyage et le précédent réside fondamentalement dans le fait que le deuxième auteur a voulu faire œuvre de scientifique en collaboration avec les colons de l'île : il s'agissait de redresser la balance que Bernardin de Saint-Pierre avait fait pencher en faveur des esclaves. Si

Milbert publie son ouvrage en 1810, en l'an de son séjour à l'île de France se situe entre 1801 et 1803. Sa description des pratiques musicales est sans doute la plus conséquente de la période française. Milbert décrit toute une variété de pratiques en fonction des différentes ethnies qu'il distingue au sein de la population servile : les « Indiens », les « Nègres », les « Madécasses » ou « Malgaches », les « Stotais » et les « Ctinois ». L'ensemble de ces pratiques sont présentées dans le texte comme ayant une valeur récréative puisque l'auteur les situe aux « jours de repos ». Le tableau ci-dessous est une réécriture de la description de Milbert qui permet de mettre en évidence la hiérarchie qu'il établit entre les différences ethniques selon leurs pratiques musicales et sa propre échelle de valeurs culturelles.

2.2.1. La danse des « Indiens »

Aspects décrits	Attributs notifiés	Attributs positifs
"air"		"de gravité"
		" noble et douce "
« Mouvements »	« Concombre mazarin » « Une espèce de pantomime » « d'apparence religieuse » l'œuvre l'auteur doute	

2.2.2. La danse des « Nègres »

Aspects décrits	Attributs notifiés	Attributs positifs
"gestes"	« d'une lascivité extrême qui ne laisse aucun doute »	
"dances"	« les plus libertines » [passer cynique pour les femmes] « lubriques » « Mise en scène burlesque d'oiseaux » « avec des attitudes grotesques l'œuvre peuples sauvages » « [qui se terminent par] « berce de l'arak »	
« instruments »	« ... des grelots ou peurs bouts de bords et de tuyaux de bambous qui font du bruit » « ... tambour fait de tronc d'arbre creusé ou vieux baril sur lequel ils tendent une peau de chèvre » « ... [en guise de] violon, un fil de métal tendu sur un long bâton l'œuvre d'une calabasse l'œuvre fait office de chevalet »	
« Chants »	« des chants (de joie) »	« Louange du maître et de sa famille lorsqu'on a la possibilité de leur faire distribuer un petit verre d'arak »

2.2.3. La danse des « *Malgaches*, et des « *Malais*,

Aspects décrits	Attributs musicaux	Attributs visuels
Le chant	« Ils chantent avec méthode »	
Leur instrument	« une ha d'accompagnement »	

2.2.4. Les « *Chinois* » : pas de pratique musicale

Aspects décrits	Attributs musicaux	Attributs visuels
	« Ils ont des réserves et peu de communication. Ils sont libres, ne fréquentent point les esclaves, et recherchent la société des blancs. Ils passent dans les cafés, fumer leurs pipes tout le temps. Ils n'est pas; Madame PM les affaires. Ils sont naturellement doux; et enclins à la malancolie... »	

L'échelle de valeurs culturelles de Milbert est caractéristique de la perspective ethnocentrique de l'époque coloniale: en haut de l'échelle, les « *Chinois* » bénéficient d'une perception positive pour leur absence de pratique musicale, leur apparence réservée et peu communicative ainsi que leur activité commerciale, au bas de l'échelle, les « *Nègres* » cumulent toutes les pratiques rejetées par l'ordre colonial de l'époque: le rythme, les danses symboliques de la sexualité ou mettant en scène des animaux. Entre les deux pôles se situent le groupe de « *Madagasses* » ou « *Malais* » et celui des « *Indiens* ». La hiérarchisation des différents traits musicaux permet de rendre compte de la valeur péjorative de l'expression corporelle et du rythme pour l'ordre moral de la culture dominante de l'époque. Toutefois le paradoxe dans la perception de Milbert est que les formes musicales qu'il rejette sont celles qui occupent le plus de place.

2.3. Perception de la sexualité mise en scène dans les danses

Une des danses « *negres* » qui choque le plus la sensibilité du visiteur européen de l'époque est sans doute celle qui met en scène la sexualité. Les textes de Milbert et d'Arago laissent entendre que les danseurs s'adonneraient à l'acte sexuel sous le regard des spectateurs. Là encore les données rapportées par les auteurs européens de l'époque qui sont en plus de sexe masculin, demandent à être

nuancées par rapport aux tabous culturels européens de l'époque qui commandent leurs perceptions de la sexualité. Les témoignages disponibles sur ce type de danses aux Caraïbes partent explicitement de mimes.

2.3.1. Dans sa description qui se veut valorisante des esclaves, Bernardin de Surville Pierre se garde d'évoquer ce type de danse alors que la peinture condescendante de Milbert s'y attarde (Milbert 1810: 182):

« La danse des nègres proprement dite est très significative: ils font des gestes d'une lascivité extrême, et qui ne peuvent laisser aucun doute. Ils exécutent de préférence les danses les plus libertines. Leur passion pour les femmes est extrême, et ne peut être comparée qu'au cynisme étonnant avec lequel ils s'y livrent. Le mystère, qui fait le charme de l'amour leur est étranger. »

De son séjour à Maurice du 5 mai au 16 juillet 1818, le journaliste Jacques Arago reuendra lui aussi pour son récit de voyage, cette forme de danse à connotations sexuelles parmi les esclaves (1822, Tome I, 223-224, in: Benoit, 1998):

« On désigne généralement leurs danses sous le nom de Chaga ou Tsega (Chica du Brésil), danse Mozambique qui a quelque rapport avec le *Fadango*, et ne serait pas vue avec moins de plaisir si elle était exécutée par d'autres acteurs, et si la volupté qui y régnait ne débordait vers la fin en

une licence revoname. On peut comparer la Chiga à un pent drame renfermant tous les degrés, toutes les nuances d'une passion amoureuse, depuis la déclaration première jusqu'au triomphe de l'amant inclusivement. Il y a moins d'abandon parmi les acteurs lorsqu'ils sont au port : mais à la campagne, au milieu d'un cercle nombreux et au son du tantam, s'élancent un Noir et une Nègresse : leur figure est animée, leurs gestes sont d'abord sans expression : ils marchent l'un vers l'autre, s'observent, tournent successivement sur eux-mêmes, s'éloignent et se rapprochent à différentes reprises. Bientôt leur regard s'illumine et leurs mouvements sont à la fois (sic) plus rapides et plus tendres, et ensemble tous deux finissent par arriver à un état d'ivresse amoureuse donc les spectateurs blancs les moins chastes ne peuvent manquer d'être blessés. L'ardeur de l'amant, la coquetterie de sa belle se peignent sur leur figure avec plus d'énergie : ils se boudent en soupirant, se raccommode d'un air fâché, et chaque fois que cette pénible scène se renouvelle, la distance qui les sépare diminue ; l'amant devient plus pressant, la belle plus sensible : elle semble prête à céder : un dernier effort l'éloigne encore de son vainqueur. Celui-ci, piqué de cette résistance, s'éloigne à son tour ; mais le regard plus doux qu'ils se jettent en se rapprochant à bientôt carme ce dépit passager : tous deux se rapprochent de nouveau, l'espace qui les séparait n'existe plus, leurs genoux se touchent, leurs lèvres se frottent, et les spectateurs se tournent ou détournent les yeux. Il n'en est pas de même des Noirs qui les entourent : le feu de leurs regards, leurs grimaces expressives, leurs réprimandes, leurs encouragements, tout annonce combien ils prennent part à la scène qui se passe devant eux, et l'impatience avec laquelle ils attendent le moment de figurer à leur tour. Souvent tirés par les regards lascifs de la danseuse, que toutes les

agaceries de son danseur ne peuvent déterminer à intervenir au dénouement de cette danse érotique, un nouvel athlète se présente dans l'arène et separe de la place vainement occupée par un rival malheureux. Le premier danseur se retire sans humeur, sans dépit : et range à son tour parmi les spectateurs, excusé comme eux du geste et de la voix son heureux successeur. »

Nous pouvons comprendre que les danses sur l'origine de cette danse -le Mozambique- et sa dénomination *Chiga* ou *Tsiga* relèvent au moins de la perception des colons. L'emploi de formules génériques par Arago ne permet pas de savoir si ces données étaient aussi présentes dans la parole des esclaves : « On désigne généralement... »

À la différence de Milbert, Arago est très explicite sur ce qui dans le Chiga ou Tsiga répugne au regard français de l'époque : le fait que cette danse soit exécutée par des acteurs noirs, que la volupté qui y règne conduise « vers la fin en une licence révoltante ».

2.3.2. Les écrits de Milbert et d'Arago demandent à être pondérés par la prise en compte de la distance voire de l'opposition qui existe entre les paradigmes des cultures européennes et africaines quant à la sexualité. Au sein des premières, la sexualité fait l'objet d'une forte répression par la morale religieuse qui explique le

caractère insupportable du « *Chiga* » pour le regard européen : au sein des secondes, celle-ci fait partie des thèmes récurrents. Dans son ouvrage sur la musique de la société antislavie, Jacqueline Roseman (1986 : 19-21) évoque notamment des descriptions portant sur les danses des esclaves, celles des danses de la filicondit

qui presenrem bren des points de ressemblance avec celles decrues par Milbert et Arago:

« Quds sont les grands themes de la religion des esclaves ? Ils crorem en un grand Dieu fecondareur.

Ce dreu fecondareur est à l'ongme de la creation de la terre fecondatrice de la nature, de l'homme fecondateur de l'homme, de la mort fecondatrice de la scrvre. Chacun de ces rues a sa danse de la fecondue. Bien que rumant l'acte sexuel, chacune a ses particularnes. Aucun hrstorien ne le comprit. Ils les decnvem mutes les trots avec des remarques differentes, mats les appellent routes *calenda*. La dense de la recondite de l'homme est decrue par le pere Labat, celle de la mort par Moreau de Samt-Mery, et celle de la terre par C. Emmanuel Paul.

La danse de la recondite de l'homme:

" Les danseurs son! disposes sur tes deus: lignes, tes uns devant les autres. les hommes d'un c0tî. les fîmmes de l'autre. Ceux qw son, las de danseret les spectateurs fînt un cercle at/tour des danseurs et des tamooours. Le plus habile chanre une chanson qtl'il compose Stir le champ, sur tel sujet qli'ii luge a propos, dont le refiam, qw est chante par tous les spectateurs, est accompagne de grands battemenrs de mains. A l'îgard des danseurs, ils liennern les bras ii peu pres comme ceux qui dansent en tenant des castagnenes. Ils sautent, fînt des virevoues, s'approchenr Q deux ou trois pseds les lllls des autres, se reculent en cadence lllsqil'ii ce qlle le son du tambour les avenisse de se joindre en se fiappunl les cuisses les uns contre les autres, cest-a-dire les hommes consre les fîmmes. A les voir ii semble que ce soient des coups de venre qu'lis se donneru, quosqui! If'y alent cependant que les cmssent qui supportent ces coups. Als se retirenr dans ce

momell en pirouettant, pour recommencer le metne mouvernent par des gestes tout a fîu /ascifî, aurant de fîois que le tambour ell donne le signal, ce qu'ii fîlt ptusieurs fîois de sllire. De rems en tems(sic.) ils s'erurelasseru (es bras et fînt de lxx 0ll trois tours en se fiappant toujours les cmsses er en se baisant:»

La danse de la recondite de la mort. A Sauu-Dorruque les colons l'appelleru Chica. Si ce n'etau la ngidite du buste, elk ressemble en tous points à la danse de la recondite de l'homme.

«L'art pour la danseuse, qui nent les eHrimitis d'un mouchoer ou les deux cotes de son jupon, consiste principalement ii aguer la parne infineure des reins, en mainrenant toll/ le reste du corps dans une sorte d'immobilirî. Veur-on animer le chfîu, un danseur sopprocbe de la danseuse, pendant qu'e/le s'exerce, et s'elancant d'une maniere precipuee, ii tombe en mesure presqle ii la toucher, recule, s'îlance de l'oudeall, et semble la conjurer de cîder avec lui au charme qui les maitnse. Enfin,

/orsque le chica paralt a"lec son caracrere le plus expressif ii ya dans les gestes et les mou"lemenls des deux danseurs, un accord plus fîcile ii concevoir qu'ii dîcrîre, fl n'est rien de lascif qu'im pareil tableau lle pllisse offrir, nell de ofîptueux qll'il ne peigne. C'est une espece de lutte oU routes les ruses de /'amour, et tous ses moyens de triompher S0/f mis en action : cramte, espoir, dîdain, tendresse, caprice, plaisir, refus, dî/re fîîle, l'îresse, anîanrissement, to lly a un langage, et les habaants de Paphos aurment dî-, llllsî /'invenreur de cette dallsse ".

3. Les textes d'auteurs mauriciens

3.1. *Us Essais d'un Bobre Africain*

Le premier ouvrage qui retient notre attention est celui des *Essais d'un Bobre Africain* de François Chrestien, fils de colon né à Maurice en 1767. Il est membre du cercle ténérinaire de la Table Ovate créée en 1806. Ses *Essais* constituent en fait un recueil de chansons en créoles qu'il écrit entre 1822 et 1831. Nous avons retenu cet ouvrage dans le contexte de la présence analysée parce qu'il témoigne d'un mode d'intégration de certains des pratiques musicales des esclaves par les colons de la culture dominante. Le bobre, comme nous l'avons déjà souligné, est l'instrument utilisé au sein de la population servile pour produire une forme de musique mélodique, seule forme de musique d'origine africaine qui ait bénéficié d'une certaine considération dans les écrits de Bernardin de Saint-Pierre et de Milbert.

Les traits adoptés des pratiques musicales serviles par l'élite culturelle de la colonie sont d'abord d'ordre symbolique et linguistique : le « Bobre » terme du titre des *Essais* évoque le ton nostalgique de l'écriture de Chrestien et rappelle si celui-ci utilise le créole, la structure de ses chansons ne sont pas moins françaises – importance accordée aux paroles, à la forme textuelle rimée et organisées en couplets.

Le recours de l'auteur francophone, même de la colonie, à la musique des esclaves se limite donc au recours au créole et aux connotations nostalgiques des notes d'un de leurs instruments de musique, le bobre, qui est le plus proche des habitudes musicales des colons. Certes, le style des chansons de Chrestien s'inscrit dans la ligne du succès des chansonniers en France. Toutefois il est important de remarquer les signes de rapprochement même tirés entre pratiques musicales des maîtres et celles des esclaves. Les *Essais* de François Chrestien émergent dans le

contexte de la mise en place de la nouvelle administration britannique. Les anciens maîtres ayant été dépossédés politiquement de l'ancienne Île de France devenue depuis la conquête anglaise de 1810, l'île Maurice, il n'est pas étonnant de retrouver dans leur discours une certaine tentative à légiférer sur le plan symbolique – langue et musique – leur appartenance au territoire administrativement conquis. L'unlisanon du créole par François Chrestien pour ses chansons est minutieusement comme le soulignent la présentation et les notes de Norbert Benoit (1998 : V) :

« Le choix du créole par François Chrestien n'était pas fortuit. L'auteur s'explique en quatre occasions au moins. D'abord dans l'avant-propos de la première édition des *Essais d'un Bobre Africain*. Puis dans l'adresse au début de la deuxième édition :

A mes amis

AIR: Braves de la Germanie. & a.

Mes amis, de la tristesse

Le penchant n'est pas heureux.

Gardez plutôt la sagesse

De nos gais et bons aïeux.

Et, conjurant de la vie

Les chagrins et les soucis.

Puisez un grain de joie

Dans le gauchois du pays.

Ensuite, dans *Mes Adieux*, chanson qui termine le recueil de ce deuxième édmon, où il reconnaît avoir eu recours au créole pour divertir ses amis :

*Adieu, gentilles chansonnettes
Qui fâisiez rire mes amis.
Quand J! risquais quelques blagues
Dans le patois du pays ».*

François Chretien présume ses chansons en créole comme lieu de refuge et moyen de devenir ce à quel les colons peuvent avoir recours pour conjurer leur triste sort de vaincus. Les traits culturels de la population servile a priori rejetés par le groupe social dominant sont appréhendés comme source possible de reconfort, moyen de résistance psychologique dès que le groupe se recouvre à son tour en posmon de domine.

3.2. Description du Baron d'Unienville

La description des pratiques musicales de la population servile s'étend sur quatre pages et fait partie d'un chapitre plus grand intitulé " *Régime des esclaves* ". Comme Milbert, d'Unienville catégorise ces pratiques selon les différences ethniques qu'il distingue parmi les esclaves : les « *Eroles* », les « *Indiens* », les « *Malgaches* », et les « *Mozambiques* ». Par rapport à la catégorisation de Milbert, les « *Créoles* » constituent dans le texte de d'Unienville un nouveau groupe plus proche vers les formes musicales européennes : la danse du « *Tchiega* » faisant figure d'exception (p. 294) :

« Les créoles, quoiqu'élevés au milieu des Indiens, malgaches, mozambiques (sic.) ; préférent les airs et danses des Européens ; de toutes

les danses des nations noires, ils ne préfèrent que celle très lascive, connue sous le nom de Tsctuega, qu'ils ne dansent même que par occasion, et par forme de diversissement extraordinaire et passager. Dans toutes leurs réunions, ils dansent des contradances et des watses, au son du violon, dont beaucoup d'entre eux jouent assez passablement, pour servir de menemens »

Nous retrouvons pour le groupe des « *Indiens* » les mêmes caractéristiques que celles notées par Milbert, avec toutefois plus de connotations négatives dans l'écriture de d'Unienville (p. 295) :

« Les Indiens ont un chant lugubre et sans expression : ils ne se servent d'aucune sorte d'instrument, et leur danse pantomime ne peut avoir de charmes que pour eux. Il est à remarquer que ceux-ci chantent plutôt dans la douleur que dans la joie, dont ils sont d'ailleurs peu susceptibles. »

Cette perception est sans doute à situer dans un contexte social où la nouvelle administration britannique a établi l'abolition de l'esclavage contre la volonté des anciens colons et provoque la nécessité de « l'importation » massive de travailleurs engagés de l'Inde. Pour la même des Malgaches, d'Unienville reprend les aspects évoqués chez Bernardin de Saint-Pierre et Milbert, toutefois l'instrument mis en avant est le « *marow-vane* » et non le bobre que l'auteur présente comme caractéristique des Mozambiques (p. 295) :

« La musique du malgache porte un caractère de mélancolie, sa danse est grave et assez gracieuse : son instrument favori, le marow-vane, le rend triste, en lui rappelant vraisemblablement les souvenirs de son enfance ; ses effets peuvent être comparés à ceux que produisent sur les Suisses, leurs fameux *Raus* ; de *Yachies* (sic.) ».

Alors que les prauques musicales des Mozambiques cumulaient des trans négatifs dans la description de Milbert, ou étaient passées sous silence dans la description de Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, elles sont présentées de manière essentiellement élogieuses par d'Univille. L'aspect érotique qui a chevé les auteurs du début de siècle est J. p. évoque (p. 295) :

« Tout, dans la musique et la danse du mozambique, annonce la gaité et la force des gambades grotesques : des mouvements d'une souplesse extraordinaire, et d'une lascivité plus ou moins ourée, forment leurs danses, qu'ils ne cessent que par excès de fatigue. Ils ont l'oreille exultamment juste, et leurs chants accompagnés d'un *hombré* (sic.), sone de guitare à une seule corde, tendue par un arc anèche à une calebasse verte, et d'un tam-tam, sone de tambour frappé avec les mains, sont d'une cadence parfaite et son harmonieux »

La musique chez les Mozambiques est présumée par d'Univille comme une pratique intégrée aux travaux du quotidien (p. 295) :

"Les mozambiques, hommes et femmes, font peu d'ouvrages sans se divertir par des chants, dont les paroles se composent sur-le-champ, du sujet qui les occupe, ou de celui qui frappe le maître de musique, auquel tous répondent en chœur. »

Les nuits du samedi à dimanche ainsi que le nouvel an sont décrits par l'auteur de *Statistique de l'île Maurice et de ses dépendances*, comme des temps forts de festivités où la musique occupe une place centrale. Les ethnies explicitement évoquées dans le récit de ces temps forts sont les Mozambiques et les créoles. Les deux ethnies restent séparées et distinctes dans ces moments de divertissements : les nuits de samedi, les Créoles se réunissent « dans la case de celui qui a procuré

le maître et prépare le souper », les Mozambiques se retrouvent « *de préférence en plein air* » : pour la célébration du Nouvel An, nous comprenons que les Créoles ne font pas partie du cortège bruyant et joyeux d'esclaves qui envahissent la maison des maîtres à la pointe du jour jusqu'à se retrouver ivres morts à la fin de la nuit. En effet, parlant de la reprise des chants et danses la nuit suivante d'Univille souligne que (p. 297) :

« Un intervalle de repos, de midi à la nuit, est suivi de la reprise des chants et des danses : c'est alors seulement, que les commandeurs, les domestiques et les créoles de grand ton, se livrent aux plaisirs de la danse et de la table. »

Le Nouvel An est donc une occasion d'interaction festive entre maîtres et esclaves, où contrairement à la situation sociale établie, ce sont les derniers qui s'imposent. Le cortège des « Noirs » du matin du Nouvel An est décrit comme un coup de force de leur part qui oblige les maîtres à recevoir vœux et bouquets en échange d'arack, d'argent et de vêtements. L'interaction festive apparaît comme moins forcée dans les bals organisés par « *les commandeurs, domestiques et créoles de grand ton* » : ces bals ont lieu dans la maison des maîtres qui y participent. Ils se déroulent sous le regard des autres esclaves « *noirs* » relégués au rôle de simples spectateurs n'étant pas admis dans ce type de festivité, mais non moins satisfaits du rapprochement entre leurs maîtres et « *leurs camarades* ».

Les commentaires de d'Univille laissent comprendre que ces différents types de célébration du Nouvel An ont une valeur politique où esclaves noirs comme maîtres, chacun des deux corps sociaux essaie d'influencer l'autre par son comportement. Parlant des cortèges des « Noirs » d'Univille précise (p. 297) :

"Tant que la poudre, l'arack et les bouquets durent, les maiues ne peuvent pas se natter d'un instant de repos: vouloir ordonner le silence ou la retraite, serait un acte vexatoire et impolitique ».

Quant à la présence des maîtres aux bals des créoles, d'Unienville souligne son impact sur les esclaves spectateurs (p. 298) :

« Les autres esclaves, quoique non adrus à ceue reunion choisie, viennent cependant, comme spectateurs, exprimer leur satisfaction de voir leurs maîtres prendre part aux divertissements de leurs camarades : et l'on ne saurait imaginer combien l'influence sur leur esprit, la conduite de leurs maîtres dans ce jour de saturnales, qui d'ailleurs est un jour de grâce et de pardon, donne beaucoup de narrons profiter pour rentrer à leur atelier. »

Les festivités du Nouvel An permanent donc une transgression des frontières ethniques entre maîtres et esclaves, établies par l'ordre colonial ainsi qu'un adoucissement des mœurs: c'est un jour de «*grâce et de pardon*» selon les termes mêmes de l'auteur. «*dont beaucoup de marrons profitent pour rentrer à leur atelier*».

3.3. Typologie de Charles Baissac (1888)

Le texte de Baissac se situe dans le Tome XXVU d'un ouvrage collectif qu'on peut considérer comme une encyclopédie puisqu'il porte sur *Les Littératures populaires de toutes les nations*. L'intérêt de l'analyse de Baissac est qu'elle témoigne d'une créolisation effective des pratiques musicales chez les descendants d'esclaves : les pratiques européennes telles que la romance et l'opéra côtoient les pratiques héritées du continent africain ou de Madagascar. Il n'y a pas dans le discours de Baissac, de distinction entre les différentes ethnies, en particulier entre «*Créoles*» et «*Mozambiques*» : la dénomination générique qu'il attribue à l'ensemble des

pratiques qu'il décrit est celle de «*chanson créole* » (p. 425) tout en utilisant les expressions telles que «*le barde à peau noire* » ou «*noire Muse noire* » (p. 432 et 433) pour se référer aux producteurs ou acteurs de ces pratiques. Le texte de Baissac laisse donc entendre qu'à la fin du XIX^e siècle, la distinction opérée par d'Unienville entre Créoles et Mozambiques n'est plus fonctionnelle.

La typologie de Baissac est introduite par la description d'une célébration du Nouvel An auquel il dit avoir assisté peu de temps avant la publication de son ouvrage. Il situe cette fête donc il a lieu au bord de la mer.

« dans un quartier perdu, que sa distance même du centre brillant de notre civilisation n'a encore ouvert qu'imparfaitement aux lueurs de notre bienfaisante aurore » (p. 426).

Pour Baissac, cette fête du Nouvel An ressemble à celle qu'il a connue au temps de son enfance, c'est-à-dire, peu de temps après les données rapportées par d'Unienville⁹. Cependant, les pratiques décrites par Baissac diffèrent de celles rapportées par d'Unienville. Chez Baissac, la célébration du Nouvel An relatée est celle qui a lieu en famille, chez le gardien de son «*campement* ». Y participent les fils de ce dernier et «*ceux qui étaient nés de ses fils* ». La fête dure cinq jours, passe en chants, danses et jeux. Elle est marquée par la gradation de l'ambiance festive qui des pratiques européennes conventionnelles va évoluer vers les pratiques expansives du sega (p. 426-428) :

« Le premier jour, le grand répertoire, l'opéra : Pon-Louis, nous le reparaît. C'est la *Race*, quand di *Seigneur* : *O ma fille c'est* : *Jardins di Balasar* : *Enfin* : *une femme inculte* : nous en passons, il suffit d'avoir indiqué le genre.

Le second jour, un revenez-y vers la romance sentimentale, la romance langoureuse aux yeux blancs, où le *imes/iu/es cnelies/ollt pleirer le tines iens* qui chantent de la gorge: *Tit'en souvtens. Marie; Mon queir i mOrt ll'avinir: Pauvri fleir dichichie.*

Mais dès le matin du troisième jour, sous l'énergique poussée même des rafraichissements qu'imposait cette ardeur de musique et de danse, l'enduit exténeur se mit à s'écouler, le vernis léger s'en allait plaque après plaque: avant midi la déquammaison était complète, et la marvanne gonflait, tandis que le *sega* vainqueur trempait sous l'ombre légère des grands filets sonores...

Dans sa typographie, Barssac s'attache à l'aspect textuel des formes musicales qu'il observe chez les descendants d'esclaves. Par ailleurs, de son modèle de la chanson européenne, l'auteur présente les paroles de la chanson créole en des termes peu élogieux (p. 428 et 431):

« Ce qu'ils chantaient en baccant le sable de leurs pieds nombreux, le voici. Comprenez qui pourra: c'est farouche et ferme.

Basia, ' basia ! basia !

To li queir fini pari.

L'amour di bengali:

Basia soucani.

Lajinabarca ! ...

« vous plaît-il que nous essayons d'y entendre quelque chose? Quand ce ne sera que pour donner une haute opinion de notre sagacité.

Les deux premières strophes se dérobent complètement. « *Basia, lafi, wbarca, I go to day, I come to morrow etc.* », autant de mots qui n'appartiennent à aucune langue, et qu'il faut renoncer à traduire en français.

Le centre premier de Buissac pour évaluer les chansons qu'il décrit et leur paroles. Il trouve celles-ci pauvres, obscures, incohérentes...

Cependant, plus d'une fois dans sa typographie il évoque les traits caractéristiques propres aux pratiques musicales qu'il décrit sans être conscient de leurs pertinences. Ainsi dans les paragraphes d'introduction, il se demande si les paroles des chansons créoles ne sont pas secondaires par rapport au rythme et à la danse (p. 425-426):

« Émiettes dans cent mémoires à la fois infidèles et jalouses de ne pas se laisser interroger, nos vraies chansons créoles n'existent plus qu'à l'état erratique. Et les morceaux en sont si petits, si tenus, qu'un doute nous est venu qui sera bien près de se changer en certitude: la chanson créole n'existe, dans le principe, qu'à la condition qu'on appelle chanson un simple refrain. La chanson créole, en effet, n'a eu d'abord qu'une phrase, phrase unique répétée à l'envi durant des heures entières, pour les besoins du *sega*. À cette danse épileptique suffisaient quelques courtes paroles, pour soutenir jusqu'à épuisement de forces les danseurs galvanisés par le rythme implacable que martelait la marvanne (sic).

Voilà nos lecteurs prévenus: de nos chansons créoles, les premières en date, nous n'avons qu'une phrase, rarement deux, à leur donner, et nous sommes à peu près sûrs qu'elles n'en avaient pas davantage ».

Plus loin, Barssac explique que l'absence de nombre, de rime, d'assonance dans les textes est compensée par la structure rythmique de la « marvanne » (p. 432):

« On sait maintenant comme nous à quelle source de poésie le sega va puiser. Cene poésie, le lecteur n'essaiera pas plus que nous de la réduire aux règles de la prosodie la plus élastique : pas de nombre, pas de rime, pas même d'assonance : la marvanne bat les temps forts, et ça suffit ».

En ce qui concerne le manque de clarté des paroles, il en trouve lui-même l'explication, elles ont été déconnectées de leur contextes d'improvisation. (p. >33).

« Rien de vain comme la matière de la chanson créole : elle s'inspire de tout, ou rien : l'incident du jour lui suffit, pour infirmer qu'il soit. De là, sans doute, ces obscures qui défient toute pénétration : avec le souvenir du fait le sens de la chanson a été aboli pour toujours : *Basia soucani*, il faut s'y résigner ».

L'analyse de Burssac présume donc des signes d'une compréhension plus immédiate des données serviles héritées du continent africain, qui demeurent cependant aléatoires dans une approche qui reste conditionnée par les paradigmes socio-culturels de l'observateur.

RCapitulatif de la variation des perspectives

Même si la perspective d'écriture de l'ensemble des auteurs reste fondamentalement eurocentrique, elle dénote toutefois une certaine variation qui va de pair avec la variation des objectifs d'écriture. La prédominance des textes législatifs au départ sur les mœurs des esclaves n'est pas détonnante : il s'agit d'assurer l'ordre pour faciliter l'établissement des premières habitations. Dans ces textes, les pratiques musicales qui rassemblent des esclaves de propriétés différentes sont perçues avant tout comme des alibis qui suscitent la confiance des administrateurs de la colonie. Les assemblées que ces pratiques occasionnent ont dans ces textes valeur de

phénomènes sociaux déstabilisateurs qu'il s'agit de réglementer pour assurer l'ordre. Cependant, les témoignages des différents textes montrent que les tentatives répressives ne sont d'aucune efficacité. Non seulement ces pratiques résistent à l'ordre établi et au temps, elles sont aussi un moyen qui rapproche les différents groupes sociaux de par les échanges, les reconstructions qu'elles occasionnent.

Nous comprenons par les commentaires de Noël et d'Urvillette que les célébrations du Nouvel An ont lieu dans le régime répressif et violent de la société esclavagiste, une fonction du catharsis, procurant aux groupes dominés un espace où ils peuvent entrer en interaction avec les maîtres en jouant les interdits qu'ils connaissent en situation d'esclaves. Dans les récits de voyage, la musique servile fait partie des traits du tableau exotique que représentent les mœurs des esclaves pour l'étranger venu de France, mais aussi pour le public de son pays : il s'agit avant tout de satisfaire la curiosité des lecteurs quand aux mœurs des autres peuples. C'est dans cette perspective que peut s'expliquer dans une certaine mesure la place plus importante accordée par Milbert et Arago à la danse à connotations sexuelle qu'ils choquent le plus : place qui est en paradoxe avec le rejet que chacun d'eux manifeste.

L'opposition que nous avons soulignée entre la description positive de Bernardin de Saint-Pierre et celle plutôt négative de Milbert n'est en fin de compte qu'apparente. En fait, les deux auteurs partagent la même échelle de valeurs, le silence de Bernardin sur les danses « libertines » est la mesure du tableau dénigrant qu'en brosse Milbert. Par ailleurs, les deux auteurs apprécient la musique plus mélodieuse des Malgaches proche de leurs habitudes musicales. Le séjour de

Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (1768-novembre 1770) a pourtant été de 8 mois plus long que celui de Milbert (mars 1801-février 1804).

Tout laisse croire que le « *Chiga* » ou « *Tsega* » décrit dans le texte d'Arago est la danse lascive dont parle Milbert sans pour autant la nommer, la même que nous retrouvons dans ses formes modernes dans l'île Maurice d'aujourd'hui : l'exécution de la danse par les danseurs, la proximité des dénominations anciennes utilisées dans le texte d'Arago avec la dénomination moderne « *siga* ».

Pour les mêmes raisons nous pouvons rapprocher cette danse antérieure des le XVIII^e siècle de l'histoire de Maurice avec celle décrite par Moreau de Saint-Méry pour ce qui est des sociétés caribéennes. Les précisions données dans les commentaires de Rosemain d'une part et d'Arago d'autre part donnent d'autres raisons de rapprochement entre les deux régions. En effet, les deux auteurs citent le nom de « *Chica* », Arago comme une dénomination originaire du Brésil, Jacquemart comme dénomination propre aux colons de la Saint-Dominique.

Après, les similitudes entre la danse caribéenne décrite par Moreau de Saint-Méry et celle des textes mauriciens, posent problème dans la mesure où la population servile des Caraïbes était originaire de l'Ouest du Continent africain et celle des Mascareignes du Sud-Est du continent. Par ailleurs, l'identification du « *Chica* » canarien par Rosemain comme danse de la fécondité de la mère est séduisante : la valeur symbolique de cette danse -expression de la mère fécondatrice de la survie- expliquera son omniprésence même au sein des populations serviles, et sa persistance malgré la répression des autorités morales et politiques.

La troisième série de textes analysés, produits par des colons francophones natifs de la colonie en période de colonisation britannique, témoigne d'un processus de

créolisation des pratiques musicales : face à la nouvelle domination, aux nouveaux arrivants, il s'agit d'affirmer son appartenance à l'île, ce qui aura eu pour effet d'atténuer dans une certaine mesure sur le plan culturel, les interdits moraux par le premier régime colonial entre groupe dominant et groupe dominé. Par ailleurs, il faudrait aussi prendre en compte dans l'affaiblissement des interdits interethniques, le courant abolitionniste qui se développe dans la pensée européenne.

Nous pouvons dire que le processus de créolisation s'est fait dans les deux sens, même si les résultats et les intentions sont différents entre le groupe dominant et le groupe dominé. L'appropriation de la musique des (ex)-esclaves par les colons se fait essentiellement sur un plan symbolique : les traits de cette musique deviennent ceux du colon non tant dans le domaine de ses pratiques musicales mais surtout dans son discours en tant qu'éléments de l'espace social auquel il s'identifie. Le bobo africain n'est pas joué par François Chénien mais est utilisé en tant que symbolique de l'espace insulaire dont il fait partie : dans son introduction à sa typologie, Baissac utilise le possessif « nos » qui le présente comme un des héritiers de la chanson créole, alors que par ailleurs il se distancie de ceux qui la pratiquent.

Les comportements participatifs de la part des colons s'observent surtout lors des célébrations du Nouvel An par la population servile : les maîtres acceptent que leur espace privé soit « envahi » et deviennent aussi acteurs de ces célébrations. L'appropriation de la musique des colons par la population servile aurait commencé au sein d'un groupe social intermédiaire dans la structure hiérarchique de la colonie : celui des Créoles qui adoptent de préférence les formes musicales européennes du maître sans se défaire totalement des pratiques du groupe des esclaves « Noirs ». Les textes de d'Unienville comme celui de Baissac témoignent

du sega comme une pratique indélébile de la mémoire collective des (ex-)esclaves qui résiste à la position dominante des pratiques européennes.

1. L'ethnonyme « Creoles » se réfère dans le contexte de l'île Maurice aux Maîtres d'origine africaine et malgache plus ou moins mélangés.

² Chaudenson (1984 : 157-237)

³ Article 22 du Règlement du Conseil Supérieur du 11 août 1762 (sur toutes les colonies de l'île de France)

• Notes de CHAUDENSON (1984 : 397)

⁴ Dictionnaire de toponymie mauricienne.

⁵ A défaut du lexique original de ARAGO, *Promenade autour du monde pendant les années 1817-1820 sur les corvettes du roi d'Espagne et la Païssienne* (Paris, 1822), nous reproduisons ici un extrait cité en notes par Norbert Benoit (1998). Une autre description de ce type de danse existe dans l'atlas publié par le même auteur en 1839 et intitulé *Le Musée de l'île Maurice*. *Le Musée de l'île Maurice*.

⁶ L'auteur parle encore dans son ouvrage datant de 1838 de « de population des esclaves » (p.294).

⁷ Ranz des vaches.

⁸ Barssac est né à Maurice en 1831. Sa biographie indique qu'il a quitté sa terre natale entre 1843 et 1854 pour des études en France. Nous pouvons donc situer le souvenir d'enfance de l'auteur globalement entre 1837 et 1843, c'est-à-dire entre l'âge de 6 à 13 ans. Les données de l'Université d'été de 1930.

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Il s'agit d'une hypothèse qui demande à être vérifiée.

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Part Three

The Origins of Slaves

Introducing Mozambique

Vilalva Teelock and Edward A. Alpers

General Background

The coastline of the modern nation-state of Mozambique stretches from the Ruvuma River in the North to the Nkomau River in the South. On the continent of Africa it shares borders with Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and South Africa. Most of the slaves who were known as "Mozambiques" at Mauritius came from what historians refer to as East Central Africa, which includes the entire deep hinterland of Mozambique north of the Zambezi River right into northeastern Zambia. But many also came from the hinterland of Krlwa, in southern Tanzania, that is, to the north of the Ruvuma River, as they did from the country lying inland from the southern Mozambican port of Inhambane. So in the case of Mauritius, as is also true for La Reunion and the Seychelles, the meaning of "Mozambique" does not equate precisely with the Mozambique of today.

This whole area became opened up to international trade because of its natural products, especially gold and ivory. Slaves were for the most part incidental to this trade, only rising to global significance with the development of plantations in the Mascarenes in the 18th century and at Zanzibar in the following century, and the extension of the Atlantic slave trade to Brazil and Cuba during the same period. Trading patterns were shaped in earlier centuries. Knowledge of the monsoon winds of the western Indian Ocean first brought the Arabs and Indians to the coast of East Africa at least two millennia ago, although it was only after the rise of Islam in the 7th century CE, that these contacts became more intensive. The

northeast monsoon dominates from November to March while the southeast monsoon from April to October. Maritime voyages were thus planned accordingly. There are also many safe and natural harbours all along the coast and islands. We should note, however, that the prevailing currents of the Mozambique Channel are disjunct from the monsoon regime and make navigation more complicated. Similarly, the winds and currents of the southwest Indian Ocean, that is, beyond the Comoro Islands and the coast of northwest Madagascar, are somewhat different. Later, with the European discovery of the route from the Atlantic around the Cape of Good Hope at the end of the 15th century, Portuguese, Dutch, French, British, American, Brazilian, and Spanish traders all entered this ancient trading system.

The Slave Trade between Mozambique and Mauritius

Trading relations between Mauritius and Mozambique began in the first half of the 18th century with the slave trade. In 1727, Mauritius was allowed to trade in slaves without passing through Bourbon. At first, slave trading was slow. By 1734, there were only some 650 slaves in Mauritius compared to 7000 in Bourbon. Some ships from Bourbon, such as the 'Duchesse de Noailles' and the 'Indien', which had been to Mozambique Island, the administrative headquarters of the Portuguese in East Africa and at that time still subordinate to the Portuguese Viceregal State of India at Goa, returned with Mozambican slaves. This early slave trading was facilitated by connivance between the governor of Mozambique, Nicolau Tolentino da Almeida, and the governor of Ile de France, Bertrand Francois Mahe de Labourdonnais. Portuguese laws forbidding foreign trade at Mozambique Island were disregarded in the interest of promoting the slave trade. Although Mozambique became an independent imperial government reporting directly to Lisbon in 1752, this pattern of local officials conniving to turn personal profits even when imperial policy forbade such trade endured throughout the period of

French rule at Mauritius. By the time the British seized Mauritius in 1810, the slave trade had been declared illegal, but successive Portuguese governors, not to mention local traders, continued to pursue their own economic interests by promoting the slave trade.

The people most affected by this sordid history were the inhabitants of the African continent. First among these were the Makua-speaking peoples of northern Mozambique, who today constitute the largest ethnolinguistic group in Mozambique, although they never shared any political unity. Inhabiting the coast and hinterland from the southern end of the Kerimba Islands right down to the Zambezi delta, the Makua were both the first Africans to profit from the slave trade and to be exploited by it. At the beginning of this trade, they sold slaves to the Portuguese who in turn sold them to French slave traders. In 1741 some French traders had succeeded in bypassing the Portuguese and thus avoided paying custom dues. The cycle of violence that had begun was exacerbated when the French began to supply the Makua with firearms. By the 1750s the Makua chiefs who dominated the immediate coastal hinterland of the tiny Portuguese colony at Mozambique Island had built up their traditional military strength with firearms acquired through trade with the French.

Relations between the Makua and Portuguese were never good and the slave trade was responsible for heightening tension both between Portuguese settlers and various Makua chiefs, and between these same chiefs and Yao caravans that came from the far interior to trade at the mainland fair opposite Mozambique Island. In some cases these tensions led to wars. By 1781 almost all Makua chiefs near Mozambique Island were nominally subjugated, but the fact remains that the ebb and flow of political relations between the Portuguese and the Makua remained

volatile throughout the 19th century and was only settled by prolonged armed conflict at the end of that century.

During this same period, the Yao became recognised as the principal traders in ivory and slaves throughout the larger region of East Central Africa. They had developed two main trade routes for their ivory trade, the first from northern Zambesia all the way to Kilwa and the second also from northern Zambesia to Mozambique Island. Later they used these same routes for the slave trade. Most trade was earned on in the dry season from May to November when agricultural activities were at a minimum.

The Yao never traded directly with the French slave traders from the Mauritius or Reunion. There were a host of intermediaries, such as the Afro-Portuguese agents at the coast or Portuguese soldiers. As we have seen, despite the fact that Portuguese officials had strict instructions not to allow foreign ships to trade in slaves, the profits to be derived were so great that not only did they turn a blind eye, but even participated in it themselves.

The French also traded for slaves to Mauritius at the Kerimba Islands, the far northern outpost of Portuguese colonization at this time. Some of the victims of this smaller trade were also Makua, but Makonde from off the plateaus that give them their name were also among their number. Slaves acquired by the French at Kilwa, Lindi, and Mongalo - all small ports in what is now southern mainland Tanzania - came from among the many small groupings of peoples who inhabited this interior, including Makonde, Makua, Matambwe, Ngindo, as well as Yao and other peoples brought by the Yao from the farther interior.

The Napoleonic Wars caused some interruption in the trade to the Mascarenes, but almost at once slave traders began to develop new strategies to avoid the interference of British anti-slave trade patrols and the inconvenience of having a British administration at Mauritius. This illegal trade continued into the middle of the 19th century by passing off newly enslaved Africans as domestic slaves by teaching them a word or two of French and then transshipping them through the Comoro islands, the Seychelles, or La Reunion, where slavery was not abolished until 1848. A new major source of now illegal slaves for Mauritius in the early 19th century was the port of Quelimane, located on the northern delta of the Zambezi River. With the sudden rise of the Brazilian slave trade in Mozambique, Brazilian settlers and slave traders transformed this sleepy town into a major center for the export slave trade, drawing upon the peoples of the Zambezi Valley, most of whom were either Makua-Lomwe from the immediate hinterland, Chewa-speakers (known at the time either as Nyasa or Maravi), or Sena-speakers. In addition, the ports of Inhambane and Delagoa Bay (where the modern capital of Maputo is located), far to the south, also provided slaves from its hinterland for the Mauritius plantations. Some of these would have been vulnerable refugees from the great political upheavals that were transfixing Zululand and much of southeastern Africa during the late 18th and well into the 19th century.

Finally, we should make note of the slave trade that fell into the hands of coastal Muslims, who were called Muojos in Mozambique rather than Swahili. These traders maintained close if not always friendly relations with their Makua-speaking neighbours around towns like Quitangonha, just to the north of Mozambique Island, and especially Angoche, which lay to the south between there and Quelimane. Through them ran much of the slave trade of the 19th century, especially the trade to the Comoros and Madagascar, which had itself become a

major slave importer during this period and a significant route through which slaves from East Africa, that is, "Mozambiques", were trans-shipped to the Mascarenes. Thus, whatever "Mozambique" may have represented to the slave traders and slave owners of Ile de France/Mauritius, the forced migrants who came to Mauritius from the African continent derived from a wide range of different African peoples.



Becoming "Mozambique": Diaspora and Identity in Mauritius *Edward A.*

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On the eve of the abolition of slavery in Mauritius, the Baron d'Unienville described the slave population of 67,619 individuals as being composed of four distinct classes: Creoles, who accounted for "more than a third" of the total; Indians, including a few Malays, who together comprised not more than "one-seventeenth" of all slaves; Malgaches [Malagasy], who numbered "about a fifth" of the total and included various populations of the Great Island, such as Hovas or Ambohimbes [Mena], Bersueos, Antateirnes [probably southern Betsimisaraka], and Sakalavas;¹ and Mozambiques. Of this last category he wrote:

Mozambiques. The fourth class, forming by itself about two-fifths of the slave population: it is composed of different African people, Macoas, Mondjavoas, Senas, Malousstnas, Yarbanses, Louquindos, Vtaravis, Macondes, Nramoeses, all designated under the collective name of Mozambiques.

It is evident from d'Unienville's description that the ethnic designation of "Mozambique" was no more than a convenience for the slave-owning class of Mauritius. Thus, for example, a slave census of 1826 for Plaines Wilhems lists more than 300 slaves as "Mozambiques" without reference to their particular ethnicity, although it carefully records their employment, age, height, sex, and

disungurslung marks. Similarly, an 1831 registry of 173 fugitive slaves includes 186 "vtozambiques.. by -caste-". At the same time, there is contemporary

evidence from the African side that confirms d'Urville's identification of many of the groups that came to comprise the "Mozambiques". It Maunus, specifically naming the "Makous, vlonjuvas, Senas, Mcussenas, Niamccses, Yambanes, Muccndes, vtaravis, &c.". Indeed, although the records of the 1823 Mauritian census generally label East African slaves as "Mozambiques," slave owners were also obligated to declare the particular ethnic origin of their bondsmen.

Table. Ethnic Groups Identified in 1823 Mauritius Slave Census

<i>Contemporary Identifications</i>	<i>Modern Identifications and Locations</i>
Maconde	Mnkonde (northeast Mozambique and southeast mainland Tanzania)
vtignase	Nyasa (Lake Malawi area)
vtoujouane	Anjouan or Nzwari, Comoro Islands but almost certainly ultimately of Makua or other East African origin
Moucangut, Camanga	Kamanga (western side of Lake Malawi)
vtoudjiavoua, vtoujavars, Moujoua	Yao
Monavoi	Maravi
Yambane, Yamvane	Southeast Africans exported from Inhambane
Macoa, Macoua, Maquoir	Makua
Maroubi, Motamby	Matambwe (southeast mainland Tanzania)
Ylsagala, Massagara	Sagara (central Tanzania)
Ou...ounco	possibly Sangu (from the Southern Highland, of mainland Tanzania)
Morra, Moera	Mwera (southeast mainland Tanzania)
Missana, Micene, Mousena, Mnsena	Sena (from Zambezi valley)
lougindo, Mingindo	Ngindo (southeast mainland Tanzania)

Further confirmation of such awareness of particular African origins in the 1823 census comes from a single plantation in Flacq that included people who were identified as Monjavu, Monjavois, Maconde, Macquors, Motomby, Monquido, Monrima (Mrima), and Macouba (?), as well as Mozambique, reminds us once again of the multiethnic composition of the category of "Mozambiques" at Mauritius.⁵ For the most part, however, as consumers of the labor power of enslaved East Africans, slave owners disregarded recognized differences in the actual origins of these bondsmen and imposed on them a new identity, that of "Mozambiques," as a form of shorthand for a broad category of servile labor from eastern Africa for the Mauritian market. Thus, whereas "The Malgache is generally inclined to laziness and desertion," and not fond of cultivation, "Mozambiques" were generally considered to be "stronger, more hard-working, more docile, but much less intelligent than the preceding; they are again remarkable for a sort of aversion for all types of clothing which seems to constrain them."⁶ By emphasizing and voicing these distinctions, this sort of stereotyping clearly exacerbated cultural differences between different groups of Mauritian slaves while at the same time laying the foundation for negative images of Afro-Maurnians that would become further exaggerated following emancipation. Furthermore, the legacy of lumping these bondsmen together under an artificial ethnonym also contributed to divesting them of specific African roots to which they and their children might look for self-identity construction within the radically transformed demography of later nineteenth-century Mauritius.

In this chapter I seek to trace these East African roots and to consider the process of enslavement and cultural transformation whereby the different peoples of East Africa became "Mozambiques" and, ultimately, Mauritian Creoles. In particular, I want to argue for a more complex appreciation of the continual process of

creolisation than has previously characterized slave studies and that I believe marked every stage of the process of enslavement from initial capture or sale through all forms of transportation to the final adjustments to slavery, emancipation and freedom in an individual's final destination. This is a perspective that has implications that extend well beyond Mauritius, of course, and even the Indian Ocean, where I am engaged in a broad-based study of the African diaspora. Indeed, with a few notable exceptions, the position I am advocating here departs from prevailing debates in the study of the African diaspora in the Atlantic world, where creolisation in the Americas has generally been counterpoised to the search for African origins and renewals.⁷

I also hope, however, to suggest some possibilities for identifying African cultural traits and markers that can be either verified or searched for in future research on the history of landed East Africans at Mauritius. In order to accomplish these goals, I consider it essential to place the Mauritian experience in its wider setting of the Southwest Indian Ocean, which I take to include not only La Reunion and the Seychelles, but also Madagascar and the Comoros. In addition, I draw upon the recent literature on the African diaspora, slavery and identity formation in the Atlantic world for comparative examples and suggestions for possible lines for future research. Although the data for the slave trade from East Africa to Mauritius are incomplete and those that we possess are imperfect, the important work of Ljilj. Filliot and Richard Allen enables us to appreciate the dimensions of the slave trade reasonably well.⁸ Accordingly, I do not propose to go over what will be familiar ground to historians of Mauritius. Echoing Paul Lovejoy, however, what I do want to emphasize is that we do not yet know as much as we should about the precise origins of East African slaves, the circumstances of their capture, their trials in

being transported to Maunuu, or their experiences under slavery and in post-emancipation Maunuu.¹⁰

African origins

Although the slave trade from East Africa to the Mascarene Islands dates to 1721 and increased significantly from the 1770s, the eighteenth-century heyday of the legal slave trade drew, to the last fifteen years or so of the century.¹¹ It should not surprise us, then, that the earliest descriptions of East African slaves for this market date from the beginning of the new century. These comments are especially noteworthy because they ultimately come from individuals who were either in the business of purchasing slaves, and therefore had to know the market, or who were committed to its suppression, so that their understanding of ethnic differences between different African peoples who found themselves caught up in the slave trade reflected serious efforts at research. Similarly, we must recognize that the circumstances of the slave trade imposed a kind of ethnographic shorthand on its participants that evoked a parallel form of lumping and stereotyping that mirrored that of plantation slave owners. Nevertheless, as we shall see in the following detailed descriptions of slaves of different origins at the coast of East Africa, some of the details provided enable us to get closer to meaningful identifications than mere labels make possible. For example, according to the French trader Epidariste Colin, basing his observations on the peak slave trading months of August and September 1804 at Mozambique Island,

The blacks whom the traders preferred to all the others are the Macquors (Makua), they reach Mozambique in good health, having made a journey of only 30 leagues [about 90 miles], and sometimes less. They withstand the rigors of the

sea better: they are more cheerful, but more enterprising and cruel than the other blacks. They are almost always those who instigate shipboard revolts, and it is necessary to watch them carefully. One recognizes them by an oval mark that they make on their temples, and in which there are many bumps in the form of beads, of which the extremity of the eye is the center. They also have a smaller oval between the eyes, and some lines in festoons on the back. The Macquois despise the slaves of other castes, and do not wish even to eat with them. One is obliged, on board, to set them apart.¹²

Similarly, Colin writes of the Yao, whose homeland lay in what is today Niassa Province of the Republic of Mozambique and who were the dominant long distance traders of East Central Africa:

The ilonjavas [Yao] are the most common type of blacks at Mozambique. One recognizes them by the stars which they make on their bodies, as well as the two or three horizontal bars below their temples. Their humor is melancholic; they are much attached to their master, provided they are not maltreated; they are better made, in general, than the Macquois, but rather less robust. One must realize that they have made a journey of 250 leagues [approximately 750 miles], and are prostrated with fatigue; this is undoubtedly the reason why so many of them die at sea. This people loves music to excess, their airs are short, and are repeated many times. One can distinguish a chant full of sweetness, and tunes which please even trained ears, and

Conunung his discourse. Colin provides shorter sketches of the other kinds of slaves to be purchased at Mozambique Island. "The Maravrs." he tells us, "have much in common with the Monjavcs. above all with respect to customs: however, they are not so well made, and their height is smaller. They love the flesh of dog, cat, rat, etc. They have large transverse bars on the back and chest." Turning to two groups of slaves coming from ports south of the Zambezi River delta, Colin first names the Jambanes, another variation on the collective name for slaves exported from Inhambane, whom he depicts as being "well made, but wicked," and very hardy. He further indicates that they were as dangerous on board ship as the Makua. The Sofalas, for those carried from Sofata, he says resemble the Jambanes, even to their stature. They showed "great comempr" and an aversion for the Monjavas and Maravis, who do not let the Sofalas approach them. Their women are "the most beautiful of the coast," but they disfigure their upper lips and put "lurle holes" in their lower lips, which he states is a common practice among Mozambique slaves. Finally, Colin concludes by describing another northern Mozambique people:

The Macondes [Makonde] are well made and are above all very intelligent: they resemble the Sofalas in their customs. One recognizes them by a line of small points that they make on the cheek: it runs from the corner of the eye and curves around to terminate at the temple."

These observations combine evolved preferences for certain categories of slaves, character attributions that are highly stereotypical, and surprisingly acute comments on both customs and what are commonly referred to in the context of the slave trade as "country marks." For example, Colin's comment that the Yao and

Marcvi have "much in common with respect to customs.. was certainly true.

although their languages are quite distinct and mutually unintelligible.¹⁰ On the other hand, the fact that Colin manages to distinguish between recognizable ethnic groups of East Central Africa is mitigated by the fact that he cannot do this for those who were shipped from the southern ports of Inhambane and Sofala to Mozambique Island for sale overseas. And this should alert us to similar difficulties with respect to those ethnic names that have modern counterparts. Here we can see the beginnings of the tendency by slave traders and purchasers of slaves in Mauritius to assign ethnic identity, with all the stereotypical characteristics that they chose to attribute to such monikers, according to colloquial ports on the African continent. That said, the fact remains that four of the five ethnic groups that Colin was able to distinguish in 1804 appear in d'Unienville's list of "Mozambique" slaves in 1830.

Exactly five years later, British ambassador plenipotentiary to Abyssinia Henry Salt spent the months of August and September at Mozambique Island on his way out to fulfill his diplomatic mission. Salt was particularly impressed by Makua enmity towards the Portuguese, which "is confessed to have arisen from the shameful practices of the traders who have gone among them to purchase slaves."¹⁷ He describes them as "a strong athletic race of people," noting that

In addition to the bodily strength of the Makooa, may be added the deformity of their visage, which greatly augments the ferocity of their aspect. They are fond of tattooing their skins, and they practice it so rudely, that they sometimes raise the marks an eighth of an inch above the surface. The fashion most in vogue is to make a smudge down the forehead along the nose to the chin, and in another more direct angle across from ear to ear, indented in

a peculiar way so as to give the face the

appearance of its having been sewed together in four parts. They file their teeth to a point, in a manner that gives the whole set the appearance of a coarse saw, and this operation, to my surprise, does not injure either their whiteness or durability.

They are likewise extremely fantastic in the mode of dressing their hair: some shave one side of the

head, others both sides, leaving a kind of crest extending from the front to the nape of the neck, while a few are content to wear simply a knot on the top of their foreheads. They bore the gristle of the nose, and suspend with ornaments made of copper or of bone. This protrusion of their upper lip is more conspicuous than in any other race of men I have seen, and the women in particular consider it as so necessary a feature to beauty, that they take especial care to elongate it by introducing into the centre a small circular piece of ivory, wood, or iron, as an additional ornament. Wild as the Makooa are in their savage state, it is astonishing to observe how docile and serviceable they become as slaves, and when partially admitted to freedom, by being enrolled as soldiers, how quickly their improvement advances, and how thoroughly their fidelity may be relied on.

The Makooa are fond of music and dancing, and are easily made happy with the sound of the rumbom, yet, like all savages, their unvaried tunes and motions soon fatigue European attention. They have a favorite instrument called Ambira, the notes of which are very simple yet harmonious, sounding to the ear, when skilfully managed, like the changes upon bells. It is formed by a number of thin bars of iron of different lengths, highly tempered, and set in a row on a hollow case of wood, about five inches square, closed on three sides, and is generally played upon with a piece of quilt."

Salt's observations indicate a quite different pattern of tattooing from that described by Colin for these people. His comments on teeth filing, however, echo those of Fr. Jodo dos Santos made at Mozambique Island in the early seventeenth

century, who like Salt also commented upon Makua facial scarification and

piercing, including lip plugs.

The Kaffirs of the mainland of Mozambique are Mecuas, heathens, very barbarous, and great thieves. . . . As a rule they all file their lower and upper teeth so that they are as sharp as a needle. They mark the whole of their bodies with a sharp piece of iron, with which they cut into their flesh. They pierce their cheeks on both sides from the ear almost to the mouth with three or four holes on either side large enough to put one's finger in, and through these their gums and teeth can be seen, and the moisture and spittle from the mouth usually run out of these apertures. For this reason, and also for ornament, they put stoppers of wood or lead into these holes, which they make round for the purpose, and those that use lead are the wealthy and are treated with greater respect. a) lead is very dear among them. They also have two holes in their lips. Through that of the upper lip they put a piece of wood like a hen's quill about as long as a finger, sticking straight out like a nail, and in the lower lip down till it almost touches the chin. In this manner they always go about showing their gums and filed teeth, which makes them look like devils. They always have their ears bored all round with many holes. Through these they put thin pieces of wood about the length of a finger similar to darning needles, which gives them the appearance of porcupines. All this they do for ornament and in times of rejoicing, as when they are vexed or sad they neglect these matters

and leave the holes unstopped. They are a very

robust and hard-working people"⁹

Later European travelers in East Central Africa confirm Colin's description of the characteristic Makua inverted crescent tattoo on the forehead. In June 1866, David

Livingstone observed that people "can at once tell by his tattoo to what tribe or portion of a tribe a man belongs" and noted that "the Makua have the half or nearly

full moon." He commented, as well, on the different patterns of tooth alteration of the Makonde, Ilvatambwe, and Machinga Yao.¹⁰ Yet when Livingstone encountered a Makua settlement on an island in the Ruvuma River, which today marks the international frontier between Mozambique and Tanzania, the chief of this village, one Chirikaloma, informed him that all of the men of his Makua group

bore the half-moon tattoo when they lived to the southeast, that is, in the heartland of Makua territory. "but now they leave it off a good deal and adopt the Wanyau

[Yao] marks, because of living in their country."¹¹ Did that make them Yao or were

they still Makua? During his exploration of the coastal hinterland north of Mozambique Island in August 1875, British Consul Frederic Elton met the Makua

chief of a settlement named Jajani on the Moma River, whom he described as

having a crescent scarification on his forehead."¹² Early in the twentieth century, still another British traveler noted only that the Makua of northern Mozambique displayed a wide variety of disincumbent tattoos, adding also that Makua women wore the *pelele* or lip-plug."¹³ Use of the lip-plug was not, however, restricted to the Makua; echoing Colin, Owen remarked in 1823 that women in the

Sofala and Inhambane hinterland wore lip-plugs in their upper lips, while Thomson commented in 1881 on seeing it used by both sexes among the Makonde and the

Mawra, who were essentially the same people."¹⁴

Twentieth-century colonial ethnographic descriptions both enrich and complicate

this body of evidence. For example, from the beginning of the century Karl Weule

provides detailed descriptions, designs, and photographs of different styles of personal adornment from among the numerous peoples of Makua, Vwera,

Matakonde, Ndonge, Makumbwe, Yao, and Ngoni, among others, of southeastern

mainland Tanzania, that is, the Kilwa hinterland, what these reveal is the

widespread use of earplugs, nose plugs, and lip plugs, as well as examples of cosmetic dental modification, but with no clearly discernible patterns of specific

ethnic identities in this region of significant population movement and

intermarriage in the nineteenth century."¹⁵ Among the unusually homogeneous Makonde of Mozambique, however, who are noted for their extensive body

earplugs, Jorge and Margot Dias reported half a century later that "earplugs have for the Makonde above all a decorative and transsexual character, without

losing its ethnic distinctiveness, with regional variations within each specific

group." Although it is associated with the marriage of both boys and girls, and executed by a professional, called *mpundi wa dinembo*, they state that earplugs

had no supernatural meaning among the Makonde, but only satisfied "a traditional

aesthetic sense [for which] no one remembers there having been any other reason.

With respect to the designs themselves, they noted that the modern use of finer cutting tools had made possible the evolution of quite different, more delicate patterns than had obtained in earlier times.¹⁶ In addition, they provide a careful analysis of the use of the lip-plug (*indona*). Like circatization, the Makonde could not explain its origin and considered it to be "the distinctive sign of their people."¹⁷

Finally, the Drazes discuss cosmetic dental alteration, which they note was

formerly mandatory for all Makonde, but in the 1950s had become a matter of

choice, as was the case for an increasing number of individuals with both

For the Makua around Angoche. this

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tendency was already noted at the beginning of the century by Eduardo Lupi, who observed that tattooing "will within a few years be a thing of the past." Angoche was already a heavily Islamized area, which no doubt accelerated this process, although even in the interior he considered it to be infrequently seen among young Makua. He tells us that the process was usually begun around the age of five or six and continued until just before circumcision and provides a useful description of usual circumcision patterns.

The typical design is constituted by a crescent on the forehead with the points resting on the temples, and some crossed points (*trafos*) or some XX on the corners of the mouth; a few others are formed by a series of large circles. Sometimes, the crescent is doubled, enveloping five vertical lines above the eyes. On the body, especially on the breasts and the shoulders, are also seen some tattoos of different forms, but always symmetrical. One rarely encounters the complete design among women: when they are tattooed, the signs are restricted to small circles on the forehead or sides of the mouth, on the shoulders, hips, and stomach."

Lupi also observes that "The characteristic *peiele* of the Makua in former times, also is on the road to disappearance: the few that we saw were limited to a hen's quill or a tiny piece of wood of the same diameter, and five or six centimeters in length." On the other hand, Lupi understood the extension of ear lobes and the use of small metal buttons in the right nostril, which was probably a sign of coastal Muslim influence, as compensatory recent forms of bodily adornment.¹ Although we do not possess similarly detailed evidence for the Yao, a French traveler in the undeveloped north of Mozambique in 1959 did photograph at least one man who displayed the characteristic three horizontal bars at the temples that Colin noted at the beginning of the nineteenth century."

Taken together, what these very different passages remind us is that no single visitor to East Africa, however assiduous in his inquiries, provides us with all the information we may need to identify enslaved Africans who were carried away to Naurius in the nineteenth century. At the same time, while they highlight the significant cultural continuities among the Makua over the course of at least two centuries, they also make the point that certain practices, such as the use of lip plugs, were not restricted to any one group but had a wider currency that transcended several East African ethno-linguistic groups. Finally, they also draw our attention to the potential significance of changing fashions over time in bodily decoration, as seems to have been occurring among the Makua whom Livingstone encountered in their steady migration north across the Ruvuma into what is now southeastern mainland Tanzania and as noted by the Dias in among the Makonde of Mozambique. In short, we need to be wary of hoping to establish straightforward connections between ethnographic descriptions of Africans at the point of departure for shipment overseas and evidence we may possess of their practices in slavery and freedom following emancipation, especially without reference to historical changes in African cultures."

Nevertheless, we do possess a number of distinct names of African peoples from the slave trade era that correspond to modern ethnic identifications in East Africa. What are we to make of these? In some cases, as I have already suggested in the case of "Sotalas" and "Yambunes" or "Jambanes," these names already reflect a form of creolization at the point of collection and shipment that obscures their actual ethnic identity. So while we can probably assume that many, perhaps most, slaves shipped from these two south-central Mozambique ports were peoples from the near hinterland, we cannot know for certain precisely from which groups they originated. In the case of Sofala, most probably came from one of the several

Shona-speaking groups, although some may have come from the ethnically mixed lower Zambezi region. Similarly, the hinterland of Inhambane is especially complex, with Tonga, Tsonga, and Chopi all living within close proximity." Even in a case where we would seem to be dealing with a modern ethnic identity we must exercise caution. For example, although the term "Niamoeses" or "Nyamwen" is today applied to a broad ethnolinguistic group of western Tanzanian peoples, Andrew Robens reminds us that they "are far from constituting a discrete and homogenous tribal group," and in the nineteenth century this name was given to virtually all people who came from the far interior to central Tanzanian coast towns like Mbwa Maji and Bagamoyo and thence to Zanzibar. In fact, the Swahili word for coast, *mrima*, was historically applied to that particular section of the coast and clearly gave rise to the invented ethnic identity of "Monnma" noted among the slaves enumerated at Flacq in 1823.³⁵ The same may also be true for "Senas" and "Moussenas," who although they represent a specific congeries of people living around the Portuguese administrative town of Sena probably included slaves gathered from raids among peoples inhabiting both banks of the Zambezi River and marched down to the coast for shipment from the thriving nineteenth-century slave trading port at Quelimane." To what extent this was true of the other individual peoples named in the sources cited above we cannot determine, especially as captives were frequently named by the identity of their captors once they reached the coast, but once again the imprecision of these terms argues for caution in our attempt to trace specific African origins for Maunians of African descent.

Before turning to the situation at Maurinus, let us consider the conditions that confronted captured Africans to see if in any way these may have affected the process of cultural transition from their indigenous identities to "Mozambiques"

and, eventually, to Mauritian Creoles. The first point to make is that the slave trade was a brutal process that stripped people of their broader social identity and assaulted their persons both physically and spiritually. Whether enslaved through a process of direct raiding, kidnapping, debt payment, or criminal judgment, once wrenched from her or his original social and cultural environment each individual entered a traumatic period of identity transition from free person to slave that was moderated only by association with family, friends, and speakers of a common language who were caught up in the same process. In some cases, for example, both captors and captives would have spoken the identical language, but in others they would not. Sometimes individuals would be seized directly from their home environment to be marched straight off to the coast; in others they would have been passed from hand to hand through intermediate stages of captivity over varying periods of time until they eventually reached the coast. Yet despite these hardships, each individual (except perhaps for children caught up in the process) carried a fund of knowledge of the Africa which they had inhabited that sustained her or him throughout this critical transition.

Depending on the distance captives were forced to march to the coast, the circumstances of their journey, and their biological resistance to coastal diseases, they reached their final continental destiny in various states of vulnerability, a point made vividly by Colin in his discussion between Makua and Yao slaves at Mozambique Island.³⁶ In 1819, Fr. Bartolomeu dos Memes noted with some alarm that both Yao and Makua slaves were immediately hit with illness on arrival at the coast, a problem that he attributed to "climate." Speaking of the Brazilian trade, he observed: "Before their departure all the ships leave a good portion of their cargoes buried here, piled on top of each other along the beaches across from the city [Mozambique Island], besides the sick they leave here in the care of some

friends, of which few escape death." Most deaths he attributed to the measles (*sarampo*) and the "bloody flux" (*profluvius sanguinios*), i.e. dysentery. According to data that he gathered in 1819, of the more than 10,000 slaves who were brought to Mozambique Island for sale that year, some 1,200 died before being sold, while of the 9,242 slaves purchased for export to Brazil 1,804 died on land before embarkation. This constitutes a mortality rate before embarkation of almost 25%.

Finally, in addition to the rigors of the march to the coast, we must also take into account the period of time, which could last up to three months, that people were held at the coast in barracoons while waiting for shipment overseas.³³ Other individuals undoubtedly first experienced slavery at the coast itself before circumstances caused them to be sold for export. Here they may also have begun to acquire some common language with which to communicate, notwithstanding the picture of distinct slave communities we get from Colin. At Kilwa and Zanzibar, as perhaps in the Kerimba Islands along the far northern Mozambican coast, this would have been Swahili; at Mozambique Island and Angoche, Makua would have become the rudimentary lingua franca; while at Quelimane it would probably have been Sena that predominated. Nevertheless, the British abolitionist naval captain, Fairfax Moresby, noted at Zanzibar in the 1820s that if one randomly selected several individuals from any cargo of slaves one "found they were strangers to each other's language." There is no reason to think that the situation was any different for those who were destined for transportation to Mauritius.

The middle passage

The experiences of enslaved East Africans during the oceanic crossing that took them to the Mascarenes were certainly no better. Anthony Barker indicates that East African slave cargoes bound for Mauritius endured a direct voyage of thirty to forty days, with some taking as few as twenty or twenty-five days. Like their Atlantic counterparts, captive Africans were often tight-packed, whether aboard European or smaller Arab vessels making the intermediate stops to Madagascar, the Comoros, and Zanzibar. Most shipments consisted of about two-thirds adult men to one-third women and children, with the ratio climbing to 3:1 during the period of illegal trading.³⁴ Conditions were generally deplorable, disease endemic, mortality high. According to Auguste Toussaint, the mortality rate for known slaving voyages from East Africa to Mauritius between 1777 and 1808 was 21%.⁵ Shipboard revolt was a great concern to slave traders who took extreme measures to keep male slaves under control, while women were also sexually exploited. All of these conditions worsened after the abolition of the legal slave trade following the British seizure of Mauritius, as slavers had recourse to smaller sailing vessels and indirect routes via Madagascar, the Comoros, or the Seychelles for introducing new bondsmen to meet the increasing labor demands of the expanding sugar plantation economy of the island.⁶

What evolved during the decades of the illegal slave trade was a system of acculturation that taught new slaves a smattering of French that masked their true identity and facilitated their introduction to Mauritius as a slave owner's Creole bondsmen, and therefore his legitimate property, or provided cover for those who were smuggled onto the island and ran the risk of discovery by authorities. The way the system operated was that slave vessels first took their cargoes to safe ports in the Comoros, or to Nosy Be island closer to the northwest coast of Madagascar, or to the nearby major slaving port of Mahajanga on the Great Island, or to the

small French establishment on the eastern coast of that island at Ile Sainte Marie, or to the Seychelles." Notwithstanding the formal abolition imposed by treaty of the Madagascar export slave trade in 1817, many of those landed at Mahajanga were marched overland to the eastern coast of the island, from which they were eventually shipped to the Mascarenes, which adds a further complication to our ability to distinguish between "Mozambique" and "Malagasy" introduced to Mauritius during this period. The controversial British Governor of Mauritius, R.T. Farquhar, described this process as one in which new slaves from East Africa became "franchisees".⁴¹ This system flourished right up until the abolition of slavery itself at Mauritius in 1835 and emancipation in 1839, and was complicated by the delay of abolition at Reunion until 1848.

During the second half of the nineteenth century the need for labor did not abate in the Mascarenes. Indeed, the rapid expansion of the sugar plantation system required ever more labor. At Mauritius, British colonial authorities and plantation owners concentrated their energies on the recruitment of indentured labor from India, one of the consequences of which was the dramatic demographic revolution that marks Mauritian history in that century. At La Reunion, the French were able to arrange for only a part of their burgeoning labor needs by recruitment from British India and thus they also turned to East Africa. Yet even in the case of Mauritius, East Africa continued to provide laborers for the sugar industry right up until the end of the century, sometimes as "liberated Africans," often as free labor immigrants.⁴² Like the deceptions practiced during the previous era of the illegal slave trade, however, workers who were carried to the Mascarenes under the guise of being freely recruited laborers were, in fact, simply a new variety of forced migrants, enslaved at the source in East Africa and introduced to the islands as something they were not.

The principal scheme for labor recruitment from East Africa that operated during this period was the French "*libres engagés*" or "Free Labor Engagement" system. According to Richard Burton, "free labor" was "the latest and most civilized form of slavery" in Africa. Centered on the French colonies of Reunion, Mayotte, and Nosy Be, slaves were imported from the coast of East Africa and, as was the case during the illegal slave trade era that preceded it, "seasoned" for their re-export to the Mascarenes. Based on his observations on the former gathered at Quetmane around the time of the great famine of 1855, Burton noted sarcastically:

Slave owners taught their chattels a nod of assent to every question proposed, and brought them before the French agent, who, in his own tongue, asked the candidate if he was willing to serve as a free labourer for so many years. A 'bob' and a scratch upon a contract-paper consigned the emigrant to a ship anchored so far out that he could not save himself by swimming. The *cuvener libre* was at once put in irons till the hour for sailing came. Arrived at Bourbon [Reunion], *libres engagés* were politely informed that they were no longer slaves, and they were at once knocked down to the highest bidder.

The expiration of their engagement-period found them heavily in debt, without the hope of working off their liabilities; and seven years of hard labour at Bourbon might be considered almost certain death.

Although the Portuguese port of Quetmane was a major focus of the "*libres engagés*" system, it was not the only source for this trade, which extended to the Kerimba Islands and the southern Swahili coast around Kdwa, as well as to Zanzibar, especially after January 1859, when the French government declared

such recruitment illegal." As Ehon noted in March 1876, "Under the guise of 'free emigration' we apparently have more 'forced labour systems,' that is to say, more slave-trade, in the Mozambique Channel than it was possible to have suspected!"¹¹ Finally, the last gasp of African forced emigration to the Mascarenes dates to the late 1880s, when a fully legalized form of contract labor migration was brokered arranged between the French and the Portuguese to operate primarily out of Ilha, in the far north, and Inhambane so

Africans caught up in the slave trade or one of the "free" labor emigration schemes likely believed that their future was doomed. Indeed, scattered African testimony from the second half of the nineteenth century reiterates the widely reported fear that it was their fate to be eaten.¹² Yet, however figuratively, this was not the only way in which Africans were consumed. In the process of becoming Creoles and, eventually, Mauritian citizens, it is argued that Africans also lost their sense of African identity. At least, that is the common belief in Mauritius. But there is evidence that whatever was lost in their forced migration from East Africa to Mauritius, Africans (as well as Malagasy) did not readily surrender their identity. So the problem remains for us to see if we can begin to sort out the historical process by which African traits were lost and retained, that is, how the historical process of creolization was actually worked out on the ground: to do this, we must first reconstruct the evidence for African retentions in nineteenth-century Mauritius.

In Mauritius

I began this chapter by citing early nineteenth-century Mauritian sources that speak to a process of ethnic categorization that subsumed many different more specific African heritages under the rubric of "Mozambique." Conversely, I also noted the

example of the 1823 census that reveals the ethnic complexity that underlay this type of generic labeling. What we seem to have here is a good example of the uneven process of creolization that was taking place at the end of the era of slavery in Mauritius. This is a history that still remains to be explored in many details, but we are fortunate to be able to draw upon the current research of Megan Vaughan, who brings a sophisticated understanding of creolization to her work on slavery and identity in eighteenth-century Mauritius.¹³ Vaughan argues persuasively, as I have also been suggesting in other language, that at each stage of the way from East Africa (or West Africa, Madagascar, and India, as she also discusses) a process of creolization had been taking and continued to take place to produce the different ethnic groups of colonial Mauritius. Her vivid examples, whether of the unique place occupied by Senegambian slaves in eighteenth-century Mauritius, when the *Compagnie des Indes* favored them for certain occupations and they established a residential area—Camp des Yolofs—that persists as a neighborhood in Port Louis to the present, or of a conversation in court that was conducted in Maravi (what has today become known as Cewa) between two "Mozambiques," because the individual bearing witness did not speak Kreol, underscore my earlier point about the need for caution when trying to reconstruct identities or, in the present case, look for East African cultural survivals.¹⁴ Furthermore, a major factor that renders this sort of historical reconstruction especially difficult for slaves and their descendants of East African origin is that, as Vaughan states succinctly, "In the hierarchy of the slave economy, 'les Mozambiques' lay at the bottom," and consequently had to surrender proportionately more than they were able to contribute.¹⁵ Nevertheless, we do have the example of Flacq before us; what else might we have with which to work?

In the mid-1840s, the remarkable French ethnographer, Eugene de Froberville, journeyed to the Indian Ocean on behalf of the *Secrete de Giographie* to conduct research on the peoples of eastern Africa. As he meticulously notes, his methodology was to speak with people from as wide a variety of societies who had become enslaved and sent in bondage to the Mascarenes. He interviewed more than 300 individuals, "among whom some fifty had recently quit their country," taking careful notes on their customs and traditions and even collecting about sixty living masks and busts in plaster of people coming from the different regions he was able to identify. His endeavors also included "fifty portraits designed with the characteristic tattoos that these races love to trace on the face and body," as well as examples of thirty-one vocabularies." Although only a portion of his researches seem ever to have been published, and the busts and drawings to which he refers have not yet been located, if they still exist what he did publish makes it quite clear that specific African traditions were very much alive on the Mascarenes at the time of his visit. Froberville published major articles about the Makua and Ngindo, as well as shorter pieces on the Nyungwe, Ngoni (whom he calls Mabsiti), and Niambana (Yambane). He also published two remarkably accurate maps. The first, which partly reflects library research and is schematic, indicates his understanding of Bantu language groupings and their relationships to each other in eastern Africa. The second depicts in some detail the country and peoples who dwelt between the Ruvuma and Rufiji Rivers in southeastern mainland Tanzania, which surely reflects the significance of the slave trade from that area to the Mascarenes in the first half of the nineteenth century." Froberville's ethnographic observations on the Makua, Ngindo, and Nyungwe include detailed information on customs and beliefs, as well as on political and social organization. That is to say, such knowledge was current in the evolving African/Creole community of mid-nineteenth century Mauritius. In his description of Makua adornment he writes:

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The women all pierce the nostril and insert a piece of crystal or a large jewel of copper or ivory. Their eurs, pierced with many holes, are ornamented with rings of copper, or of Venice beads. Men and women break their incisors into points in a manner that their teeth have the appearance of a saw, of which they are very proud.

Froberville also pays attention to Makua religious beliefs and practices, noting the significance of spirits, sorcery, divination, and recourse to poison ordeal to determine causality." He indicates that the Ngindo were notable for their skills as potters, weavers, iron workers, makers of musical instruments, designers of traps for hunting, woodworking, musical composition "and long stones told by the elders [which] attest that they have industry, imagination, and, to a certain degree, a taste for the arts." Religion and divination are also central to his notes on the Ngindo.⁵⁹ Both of these peoples, he observed, were matrilineal. Perhaps reflecting the chaotic state of affairs in Zambesia and the permanent threat of attack by the Ngoni, not to mention slavers, he observes that when young Nyungwe men were ready to leave their homes, they gathered with their age mates at the compound of the local small chiefs, where they learned the arts of war, their own traditions, and became tattooed. He also includes the text of a Nyungwe war song. Once again, however, he gives most of his attention to Nyungwe spirit beliefs, even contrasting their practices for determining death to those of the Makua.⁶⁰ Finally, in his very brief notes on Yambane speech patterns he remarks that his informant had his teeth "filed to a point?" Even his few notes on the Ngom reveal new information on ethnicity, since it was gathered second hand from a Nyungwe who had seen them at close range and "a Mu-Tonga [i.e. probably from the Inhambane hinterland] who had spent two years as their prisoner." Here again, as Lovejoy suggests for the better studied Atlantic diaspora, there is ample evidence for "arguing that many

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slaves in the Americas, perhaps the great majority, interpreted their lived experiences in terms of their personal histories, as anyone would, and in that sense

the African side of the Arianne continued to have meaning.⁵

Froberville was without question a man of unusual talents and interests, interests that were just as certainly not shared by most European observers of Mauritian society at this time. But quite apart from the enormous possibility of locating his original notes and drawings, his unique research suggests that there may well be other hints of such first generation African survivals and knowledge to live by that

are documented in contemporary literature and archives. For example, in 1861 the Anglican Bishop of Mauritius encountered a group of liberated Africans among whom were several Makua-speakers.⁶ In addition to making connections with some of the beliefs, customs, and practices that Froberville delineates, scholars should be looking for survivals and adaptations of folk culture, including material culture, that may have marked the transition from new slaves to Creoles during the riddle decades of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, as Vijaya Teelock continues to remind us, this is research that has been completely ignored until very recently. We do know, however, that even today there are practices with respect to belief in spirits and spirit possession, which undoubtedly reflects a creolisation of

African, Malagasy, and Indian beliefs. Although there is very little written about

this for Mauritius, the literature for Reunion is both rich and instructive.⁷ And, of course, there is the music and dance known as *sega*, which has been officially sanctioned as the Afro-Malagasy contribution to Mauritian national culture: but it is my contention that *sega*, even in its non-commercialized form, is only the most apparent aspect of the creolisation of African culture in Mauritius.⁸ We should be asking ourselves, as well, what if anything may have been the influence of matrilineality among descendants of Makua and Ngindo. Indeed, posing this

question raises still another question for further research into the process of creolisation, that of gender, since the overwhelming number of enslaved Africans

at Mauritius were men not women.

If we have not identified much more than Froberville's evidence from nineteenth century, we do have some early names in the form of names from the end of the century that indicate not so much survivals from an earlier era, but instead the infusion of more recent awareness of East African ways, during the period of "free engaged labor." According to preliminary research conducted by Joyce Fortune,

marriage certificates from peoples living in the dependencies of Mauritius during the 1880s include a number of personal and place names that are certainly of African origin. Among the latter, since it will take much deeper research to address the ethnic identity of personal names, are Sofala, Mombembe and Matambwe [Matambwe], Lokasambo (*muka:ambo*, a slave leader among the Chikunda of the Zambezi valley), Mookondah [Ntakonde], and Wangonah [Ngorn].⁹ Similarly, in the archives of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute one finds references to Ilacoua, Maravy, Ilomisa or Morusa [perhaps Brsa, from eastern Zambia], Yambana, and Moujaava or Vtjouoova [Yao]. Because the indentured labor registers indicate place of origin, we know that many of the Makua came from the village, of Looly,

Moosmua or Mtoosimba, and Olatasa. While the last two presently defy

identification, Looly unquestionably refers to the village of Luli or Luna, on the bay where the Luli/Lurio River enters the Mozambique Channel, between Pemba and Pemba (south of Vitecufi) on the modern map of Mozambique.¹⁰ For me the most interesting question is how these individuals, who evidently had a vivid sense of their African origin, negotiated their integration into Mauritian Creole society and how, if at all, they may have made Mauritians of African descent more aware of that heritage as a result of their mere presence and self identification. Although

there does not seem to be any modern recollection of specific African ethnicities in Mauritania today, at least not beyond a vague sense of "Mozambique" and "vialgache". we need to understand this apparent process of forgetting by comparing it to the not entirely dissimilar situation in Reunion, where at least some individuals recalled their "Makua" and "Yambann" descent into the late twentieth century."

Looking to the future, these discoveries suggest to me that there will probably be similar evidence to be found in police records, land registries, and church archives, both centrally located and in parish records of marriage, baptism, and death. These archives, but especially those of the church, which have regrettably remained closed to lay researchers, should be carefully searched in combination with the reconstruction of family genealogies to seek out whatever links may exist between modern Creole identity and the African (and Malagasy) roots from which it in part derives. Note that I say "in part": for despite my attempt to examine the specific origins of Africans enslaved or indentured to Mauritania I am not arguing for a simplistic determination of African survivals and transformations based on historically reconstructed ethnic identities. As we have seen, there were many different and overlapping African and Malagasy cultural currents that contributed to the evolving identity of "Creole", not to mention those emanating from the other populations of Mauritania during the formative decades of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. What I am suggesting, however, is that without knowledge of the African side there can be no meaningful appreciation of the elements that possibly contributed to the difficult transition that East African peoples made from being sons and daughters of their homelands to becoming first "mozambiques" and, finally, Creoles.⁷¹

Baton, M. (1997). *Structure de la société et de la culture à l'époque coloniale*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 133 pp.

176-178. He, (stall) come from the census of 1 January 1830. Ily thJnk to Pier Larson for explaining the meaning of Amboimbe, a pejorative term used by the peoples to refer to those from highland. (JdJg:bcJr. JnJ for describing the local interpretation of Antancuns, a people of the coast. "hKh probably inJc:acd BeJmJr: h hlg tuuth or Tamtave. See Pier Larsen email to author, 3 June 1999.

179. However one thinks of the (a)u.i. Yao, SenJ, people from Inhambane, Marav, and Makonde in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, neither the Ngindo, who inhabited the Krlwa hinterland, nor the Nyamwezi, of what is now western mainland Tanzania, could reasonably be considered to be from Mozambique.

I am indebted to Vqayc Teelock, for providing me with the census data, which derive from the Public Record Office (hereafter PRO), T711591 & 593 (Treasury Records). For the fugitive slave registry, see L. Sytvo Michel, *Esclaves libérés* (Juntiu 1998), which reproduces file KK \8, Vol. II, from the Mauritania Archives, Comorand.

71. British Museum, Additional MSS. 11, 165, vol. V, f. 67-68. "Memorandum Connected with the Final Suppression of the Slave Trade on the East Coast of Africa, c. December 1821 (in pencil).

I Huguec Ly-Tio-finc Pineo, "Les esclaves 'de plançonn' Je l'ih: Maur e J la vertte de ruotmon, d'après le recensement Je '813." in *Histoires d'Owl-Mat Milmig's en l'honneur de JeR-Wills Wlege* (Aix-en-Provence, 1991), II, pp. 635-655. Table II, "Tribe Names" entered in Register KK \118:3) end explanations," which the author compiled partly with my collaboration. rhocah I have reorganized and revised some of the material in this table.

My thanks again to Vp)I Teelock for this (upplement) contribution on the 1813 census, which comes from the Mauritania Archives, KK :3.

D. Lmenville, *Slullstqltu*, p. 278-279, for an earlier statement of this stereotype regarding 'vtccambrqcc' slaves. see George Thomas, Earl of Albemarle, *Fori Years of Jc Life* (London 1871), p. 199, who viewed Maunuu as a young naval officer in 1818-1819.

For the Ley recevru perspectives, cf. Melville Herskn, ll., *The Mlth of the Ytgro Pan* (>c" York, 9J.11. "ho argues for a broad African cultural hcrage thit was earned to the xew \World, wuh Sidney Mmtz and Richard Pnce, *Tjft Birth of Afñcon-American Cuhurt: An \mthropolm:cal P.,rlp.,cllt* (Boston, 1991 [1976]), whose authors contend that Africany "ere from 3Uch diverse backgrounds and so mdrvrduahzed that they created new "AmajCJn- or "Creole" cultures that ewed vmually nothing to Africa. Recent conmbunons that modrfy this dichotomy while disagreeing over the euem to which it is possible to nace African origins and roots in the Amencas, include John Thornton, *Africa and 4fficalu in the \ukmg of the Arlam,c World, 1/00-1680* (CJmbndge, 1991) and Philip Morgan, "The Cuhurat Impheauon, or the Arlaonc Slave Trade, African Regional Origrns, amencan Desun:tuons and New World Developments," *Stll:n and Abotuson*, [8/1 (1997), pp. 1:12-105. For a perspective thar parallels my own, see Robert \V Slcnes, "0:1:lungu..vgomas Commg!" Afñca Hiddert and Discovered in Br:ull: m Nelsen Aguilar (ed.), *Wosira de r.:d.:schohrmello.. vegro de Cvrp() e Alma. Black m Body and 50tt* (Slio Pculfo, 2000), pp. 2:11-29.

See J. M. Fdhm, *La Trene des Esclaves l:tr3 In Moscarel'llles au XVI/te sucte* (Pans, 1971) and the revtsromst chapter by Richard Allen in ttt volume 10.

Paul Lovejoy, "The Afrcan Diaspora: Revuroms Interpretancs of Ethrucuy, Culture and Religion under Slavery," *Stud...s m tht wortu History of Slavery, Aboluan, and Enumcipanan*, II, 1 f (1997) at <http://www.h-net.mtu.edu/slavery/essays/esy9701love.html>. See also the call for further research on slavery issued by Vijaya Teckock, "Quesnonmg the link between slavery and 'exclunon': the experience of plamanen slavery," paper presented to the conference "L'esclavage et les sequeltes J. Maunce," Port-Lours September 1998, 11.

Edward A. Alpers, "The French Slave Trade in East Atñca (121-1810), *Catzers d'Etudes sfñcames*, X, 37 (1970) pp. 80-100; Frllim, *La Traut des Esc/aves*. For the

nmeieemh cemury, 3CC Richard Allen, *Staves, Freedmen, and Underwured Laborers in*

Coloma/ Maurims (Cambridge Umversuy Press, 1999) InJ. Amhony Barker, *5:cherr and Antislavtry m Wujm/WJ, /8/O.JJ The Colqclt blttwelm Econonuc Expanuon and Hunwmtarrun Rt/orm under Brituh Ride* (Hcundsrmls, London, and New York, 1996).

1: Eprdanste Colin, "Nouce sur Mozambique," m *Annoles des Volagts, di' la Geographse et de l'usurre*, IX (Pans, 1809), pp. 320-321. A Maunuu-bound shipboard stave revolt 111 1730 was led by a man named Borom, for wtich see lvsu Aggarally, "Les revones d'Esclaves dans les Mascarcrgnes ou l'Hisloire du Silence," m U Bissoodoya! anJ S B.C. Servansmg (eds.), *Slavery m Sulllh wert fndrun Ocean* (Moka, 1989), pp. 179-180. This Borom qune possibly came from the area of Borom, between the Qua Qua and Shire Rivers 10 the north of the Zmbesr, see MD D Newm, *Portuguese Sttlemrll 0ll tht Zambtsi* (London, 1973), pp. 2, 88. For other examples of shipboard revolts of both East Africans and Malagasy, see AmCdCe Nagapen, *Lt Marroillrage .. /sit de France-fle \lalaict: Rive on RlpOJce de /Esc/mr* (Port-Louis, 1999), pp. 337-349. 11 Cohn, Notice, p. 321. For lhc Yao, see Alpers, *frory and Slaves* 111 *East Celllral Africa* (Berkeley and London, 1975). 11 [ibid., pp. 322-32).

11 See Michael A. Gomez, *Exchangmg Our Cmmttr. Marks: The Transformation vf Afñcm! (drntmes m tht Co/olial and Antrbellum South* (ChIpel Hill and London, 1998).

16 Though 11 is dated, see, e.g., Mary Tew (Douglas), *Peoples of the Iakr Nrasa Rrgwn*, [nternatonal African InslltNe, Ethnographic Survey of Africa, ed. Darryl Forde, East

Central Africa, Part 1 (London, 1950). My thJnks to Christopher Ehret for lngultic clarifcatmn.

11 For MJKua wars against the Portuguese, see Alpers, *Ivory and Sfa,es*, pp. 150-157, 195-198, 219-128; Nancy Jfne Hlfkm, "Trade, Society, and Pohtics m Northern Molambique, c. 1753-1913," Ph.D. disserlauon, Boston Umverny, 1973; Joseph Mbwhzi, *A History of Commodl) Productrwn 111 Wakum, 1600-/900, mercantl/vst accumulallOn to impenalst*

domination (Dar es Salaam, 1991).

11 Henry Salt, *A Voyage to Abysslmw .. in the Years /809 wd /8/O: m \hlch are mcluded An Account of the Porruquest Sakemellls on the Easr Coast of Africa*, 1111ed m

the *Course of the Voyage* ... (London, 1814), pp. 38, 40-42. See the illustration of this "ambira" (*mbira*) in *ibid.*, plate opposite p. JOS. uem 12. According to Margm Dias, *Instruções para a construção de instrumentos de música* (Lisboa, 1986), p. 76, the lamelophone or plucked

deophone is called *irimba* or, in the north, *chitata*, by the *Chakua*, so it is interesting here that Salt uses the more generic, central Mozambic term *mbira*.

⁹ João dos Santos. *Ethnographisch-Orientale* (1609). in George McCall Theal. *Records of South-Eastern Africa*. VJ (London, 1901), pp. 309-310.

¹¹ David Livingstone. *lost Journals*, ed. Horace Waller (New York, 1875), p. 53, which includes an illustration of Machinga Yao teeth: see also *ibid.*, p. 99, for an illustration of Manguma and Machinga women with tattoos and lip-plugs.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 59; see also George Shepperson (ed.), *David Livingstone and the Rovuma: A Notebook* (Edinburgh, 1965), p. 189.

¹³ J. Fredenc Elion. *Travels and Researches among the Lakes and Mountains of Eastern and Central Africa*, ed. H.B. Cottenilt (London, 1879), p. 142.

¹⁴ James Slewellson-Hamilton. "Notes on a Journey through Portuguese East Africa, from Ibo to Lake Nyasa." *The Geographical Journal*, XXX.v (1909), p. 52J.

¹⁵ W.F.W. Owen. *Narrative of Voyages to explore the shores of Africa, Arabia, and Madagascar; performed in H.M.S. Ships Leven and Barracouta* (London, 1833), I, p. 276; Joseph Thomson. "Notes on the Basin of the River Rovuma," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, CV (1882), pp. 74, 79.

¹⁶ Karl Weule. *Wissenschaftliche Ergebnisse meiner ethnographischen Forschungsreise in den Sudoßen Deutsch-Ostafrikas* (Berlin, 1908).

¹⁷ Jorge and Margot Dias. *Os Macondes de Moçambique*. II: "Cultura Material" (Lisboa, 1964), pp. 56-72, quoted at 57; for a particularly insightful discussion of the gendered nature of this form of bodily decoration, including the significance of changing fashions over time, cf. Heidi Gengenbach. "Boundaries of Beauty: Tattooed Secrets of Women's History in Southern Mozambique." Paper presented at the African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, 30 December 1998.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 71-78, quoted at 76. cf. photographs in FrJnt:01) Balsan. *Terres sauvages de Moçambique* (Paris, 1960), between pp. 248-249.

¹⁹ Dias and Dias. *Os Macondes*. II, pp. 78-79, who explain that teeth are not tiled, but chipped mm points.

⁹

²⁰ Eduardo do Couto Lupi. *Anooshe Breve memonn sobre uma das copitama.mores di' Moçambique* (Lisboa, 1907), pp. 9J-95.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

²² See the cover of Balsan. *Terres sauvages*; cf. Tew. *Prop'es*, p. 17, where she indicates that this mbira mark... consisted of two, rather than three short cuts.

²³ This is a point that Lovejoy hammers home throughout his essay on "The African Diaspora." For an important cautionary comment about "the homogenizing tendency of stressing cultural unity in Africa" in diaspora studies, see Philip D. Morgan... "The Cultural Implications of the Atlantic Slave Trade: African Regional Origins, American Descendants and New World Developments." *Slavery and Abolition*, 18(1) (1997), pp. 122-145. qoxec at p. 142.

²⁴ See A. Rina-Ferreira. *Povos de Moçambique: tunona e cultura* (Pono, 1975), chs. 3-5.

²⁵ For the Nyamwezi, see Andrew Roberts. "Nyamwezi Trade." in Richard Gray and David Birmingham (eds.), *Pre-Colonial African Trade* (London, 1970), p. 19; for the vtnma, see Jonathon Glassman. *Feasts and Rites: Revolt, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856-1888* (Portsmouth, NH/London/Nairobi/Dares Salaam, 1995), pp. 32, 14.

²⁶ See. Rua-Ferreira. *Povos de Moçambique*, pp. 145-156; Allen F. Isaacman. *Mozambique. The Africanization of a European Enclave. The Zambezi Province, 1750-1902* (Madison, 1972), pp. 85-9J; Leroy Vail and Landeg White. *Capitalism and Colonialism in Mozambique: A Study of the Delimitation District* (London, Nairobi, Ibadan, 1980), pp. 7-50. In nineteenth-century British still another nominal category for slaves from the Zambezi region of East Africa was, in fact, "Quelimanes." See Alpers. "'Mozambiques' in Brazil: Another Dimension of the African Diaspora in the Atlantic world." Paper presented to the

conference "Enslaving Connections: Africa and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade." York University, Toronto. 12-15 October 2000.

iii For an arresting example of one such situation, see Alpers. "The Story of Swema: Female vulnerability in Nineteenth-Century East Africa," in Claire C. Robertson & Martin A. Klein (eds.), *Women and Slavery in Africa* (Madison, 1983), pp. 185-219.

17 Arquivo da Casa da Cadaval. Codex 826 (M.V. 32). D. Fr. Bartolomeu dos Marures, "Memoria Chorographica da Província e a Capuama de Mocimboa da Costa d'Africa Oriental Conforme o estado em que se achava no anno de 1822," ff. 29-30; cf. Alpers, *Slavery and Slaves in East Central Africa* (London & Berkeley, 1975), pp. 21-22; [Frederick Lamport] Barnard, *A Three Years Cruise in the Mozambique Channel* (London, 1969), 2nd ed. (1848), p. 217.

18 See Barker, *Slavery and Antislavery*, p. 90, for borracoons and slaves held at the coast; see Barnard, *Three Years Cruise*, pp. 137, 224.

19 Quoted in Barker, *Slavery and Antislavery*, p. 91.

20 For the higher figure, as well as an important general analysis, see Richard B. Allen. "Licentious and unbridled proceedings: the illegal slave trade to Mauritius and the Seychelles during the early nineteenth century," paper presented to the conference on "Migration and the Countries of the South," Centre for the Study and Research of North-South Relations, University of Avignon, 18-21 March 1999, p. 18. I am grateful to Dr. Allen for permission to cite his paper before publication in the *Journal of African History*.

21 Auguste Toussaint, *La Route des îles* (Paris, 1967), p. 451, Annexe 1, Tableau 3; Cohn, "Nouveaux sur Mozambique," pp. 324-328, indicates that dysentery was the main cause of death on board slave ships.

22 Barker, *Slavery and Antislavery*, pp. 91-93. Allen, "Licentious and unbridled proceedings," p. 22, see also, Derek Scarr, *Slaving and Slavery in the Indian Ocean* (Houndmills, London, and New York, 1998), pp. 33, 75, 101-105, 133-134, 150-151.

23 See, i.a., PRO, Colonial Office (hereafter CO), 115/3, C.R. Moorsom to Joseph Nourse, H.M.S. Anadine, Port Louis, 21 June 1823; Moorsom to Chnsuan, H.M.S. Andromache, Simon's Bay, 21 May 1825, in Theal, *Records* (London, 1909), IX, pp. 51-52; PRO, CO

115/5, Evidence of Fairfax Moorsby, 23 May 1826, to House Select Committee on the Mauritius Slave Trade, pp. 110-112.

24 BM, Add Ms) 11,265, vol. V, ff. 14-18, Farquhar to Moorsby, Port Louis, 5 April 1821, PRO, CO 167/57, Farquhar to Bethhurst, Port Louis, 11 June 1821.

25 In addition to Barker, *Slavery and Antislavery*, passim, see Claude Wunquet, "La traite négrière à Maurice à l'époque anglaise (1811-1835)," in Serge Dagel (ed.), *De la traite à l'esclavage* (Nantes & Paris, 1988), pp. 151-165; vrjaya Teelock, *Bitter Sugar: Sugar and Slavery in 19th Century Mauritius* (Moka, 1998), pp. 46-62; Allen, "Licentious and unbridled proceedings."

26 See Marina Carter and James Ng Foong Kwang, *Forging the Rainbow: Labour Immigrants in British Mauritius* (Mauritius, 1998), especially pp. 6-25, 66-71, 86-88.

27 Richard F. Burton, *Lanibar: City, Island and Coast* (London, 1872), II, pp. 349-353. For all of his prejudices against Africans and the ways in which his attitude colored his descriptions of Africans, Burton was nevertheless a keen recorder of what he saw.

28 For the operation of this scheme in Mozambique, with much information on Quichmane, see JoSC Cypeta, *O Escravismo Colonial em Moçambique* (Porto, 1993), pp. 98-110; for an earlier version, see Capela and Eduardo Medeiros, "La traite au départ du Mozambique vers les îles françaises de l'Océan Indien, 1720-1904," in Bissoondoyal and Servansing (eds.), *Slavery*, pp. 266-275; in addition, see Medeiros, *As Etapas do Escravatura no Norte de Moçambique* (Maputo, 1988), pp. 33-46; James Duffy, "Quichmane of Slavery!" *Labour Policies in Portuguese Africa and the British Protest, 1850-1920* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 12-13; Sudel Furna, *L'Esclavage à la Réunion, 1794-1848* (Paris & Saint-Denis, 1992), pp. 131-139; Michele Marimcurou, "L'engagisme à La Réunion: continuité ou rupture avec l'esclavage?" in *Lie de La Réunion: Regards croisés sur l'esclavage 1794-1848* (Paris & Saint-Denis, La Réunion, 1998), pp. 238-243.

29 Elion, *Travels*, p. 166. For a Mauritian perspective, see Ly-Tio-Jane Fane, "Aperçu d'une immigration forcée d'Africains vers les Mascareignes et aux Seychelles, 1840-1880," in *Minorités et gens de mer en Océan indien, XIXe-XXe siècles*, Institut d'Histoire de Pays d'Outre-Mer, Université de Provence, Etudes et Documents 11

(Aix. 1910), pp. 73-85. For the system as it operated with specific reference to the French colonies at Nosy Be and Mayotte, see Raymond Decary, *L'île Nosy Be de Madagascar: histoire d'une colonisation* (Paris, 1960), pp. 140-150.

see Sec Cape la, *Esclavage*, pp. 110-116, also Hubert Gerbeau, "Fabuleuse fobuleuse, la traite des noirs à Bourbon au XIXe siècle," in Daget (ed.), *De la traite à l'esclavage*, u. pp. 467-485; document that is not cited by Copley for the period of African labor recruitment to Réunion, as well as for attempts at repatriation, exists in Archives Nationales, section Outre-Mer, Rue Oudinot, Paris (since transferred to Aix-en-Provence), Réunion. C350/2460-1, 2463, 2465, 2467-8, 2470-2, 2474, 2476-85.

ii Gerbeau...La traite," p. 179.

iii Megan Vaughan, "Reported Speech and other Kinds of Testimony," draft paper for the "Words and Voices" conference, Betlagn, February 1997; "we are all Creoles Now," paper to the seminar on Creole Histories and Societies, Oxford, 1997; and "Slavery and Identity in Eighteenth Century Mauritius," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, ser. 6 (1998). I am indebted to Dr. Vaughan for so generously sharing her unpublished work with me.

iv Among the sources cited by Vaughan, see most notably Richard D.E. Burton *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition and Play in the Caribbean* (Ithaca and London, 1997). For different perspectives on African retentions and reconstructions in the Americas, see John Thomson, *Africa and Africans in the making of the Atlantic world, 1400-1800*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, 1998), Ch. 7; Ira Berlin, "From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, LXXI (1996), pp. 251-288; Douglas B. Chambers, "'My Own Nation': Igbo Exiles in the Diaspora," *Slavery & Abolition*, 18 (1997), pp. 72-97; and Peter Caron, "'Of a nation which the others do not Understand': Bambara Slaves and African Ethnicity in Colonial Louisiana, 1718-60," in *ibid.*, pp. 98-121.

v Vaughan...Slavery and Identity,"

vi Eugene de Frobergville, "Notes sur les mœurs, coutumes et usages des Amakoua, sur le commerce et la traite des esclaves dans l'Afrique orientale," *Revue de la Société de Géographie*, 3^{ème} Série, 8 (1847), pp. 311-329, quoted at 311-312.

vii Frobergville, "Amakoua," "Notes sur les va-Nungue et les Mabsm, peuples de l'Afrique orientale," *Revue de la Société de Géographie*, 3^{ème} Série, 10 (1848), pp. 65-71. "Notes sur les va-Nungue," and "Tribus de nègres begayeurs au nord de la Cafre," *Revue de la Société de Géographie*, 4^{ème} Série, 3 (1852), pp. 425-443 and 517-518. The two maps are included in *ibid.* See also L. Bouten, *Processus verbaux de la Société d'histoire naturelle de l'île Maurice, du 6 octobre 1842 au 28 août 1845* (Mauritius, 1846), pp. 54-70, for an account of Frobergville's "Mémoire sur les langues et les races de l'Afrique orientale au Sud de l'Equateur," presented to the Society on 8 February 1844, which indicates the kinds of sources he was able to consult before arriving in Mauritius. My thanks to the President of the Royal Society of Arts and Sciences of Mauritius for permission to consult this rare publication.

viii Frobergville, "Amakoua," p. 315.

ix *ibid.*, pp. 315-321.

x Frobergville, "va-Nungue," pp. 432-438, quoted at 432.

xi Frobergville, "va-Nungue," pp. 70-79. For several photographs of cicatrization patterns among some of the peoples of the Zambezi River valley, most notably the Nungwe around Tete, see J.R. dos Santos Júnior, *Misistio Antropologica de iforambille. I.* (Campanha, Agosto de 1937 a Janeiro de 1938) (Lisboa, 1940).

xii Frobergville, "Negres Begayeurs," p. 518.

xiii Frobergville, "va-Nungue," p. 81.

xiv Lovejoy, "The African Diaspora," p. 7.

xv Vincent W. Ryan, *Journal of the Residence in the Diocese of Mauritius and of a Visit to Madagascar* (London, 1861), pp. 164-168. These Makua also identified Marawi and Nyasa among their number.

xvi See Alpers, "Recollecting African Diasporic memory in the Indian Ocean world," *African Studies Review*, 43/1 (2000), pp. 83-99; Vaughan, "Reported Speech," pp. 24-26; for

Reunion, see Prosper Eve, *Utilisation populaire à la Réunion* (Réunion, 1985), 2 vols.; Robert Chaudenson (ed.), *Encyclopédie de la Réunion*, 6 (Saint-Denis, 1980), pp. 79-103; Chaudenson, with Ch. Birat and M. Carayol, *Magie et sorcellerie à la Réunion* (Saint-Denis, 1983); Gerard Mouis, *Étude sur la sorcellerie à la Réunion (Distinction Riale)* [Saint-Denis, 1981]; *la Revue Grand Océan* (Réunion), J. "Les Ames Errantes: Sorcellerie et Magie dans les Mascareignes" (in d. but mid-1990s).

66 See, for example, the representation of *sega* on tourist items such as tea towels, postcards, and in tourist hotels. For the African derivation of the word *sega*, see Phyllis Baker and Vimes Y. Hoolooms, *Dikyoner kreol morisien* (Paris, 1987), pp. 288-289. See the chapter on sega by Daniella Police in this volume; else, Clifford Patrick Pavaday, "Le sega mauricien: une étude thématique," *Mémoires de la Réunion*, Université de La Réunion, 199).

67

68 CL the discussion in Alpers, "A Complex Relationship: Mozambique and the Comoro Islands in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Calivers d'Afriques Africaines*, 161 (2000).

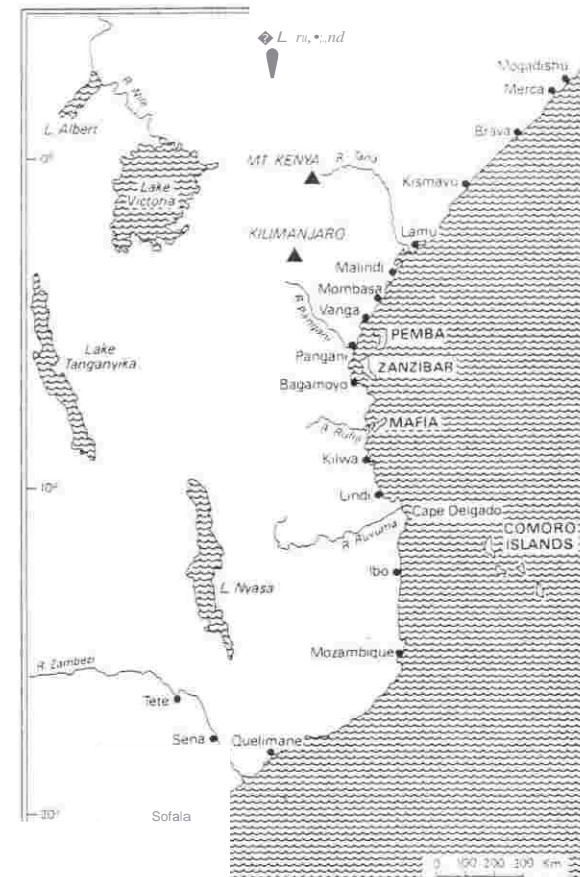
69 Joyce Fortuon email to author, 16 Mar 1999: the cemeteries are located in the Civil Status Office. I am obliged to Ms. Fortune for sharing this information with me. For more on the role of the *mukawambo* on the *pratos da coroa* in Zambesia, see Isaacman, *Mozambique*, especially pp. 22, 33-34; Newru, *Portuguese Settlement on the Lambesi* (London, 1973), *passim*.

70 Joyce Fortune email to author, 18 Jan 1999: the relevant volumes cover the period from about 1885 to 1914. Although I have briefly surveyed this rich fund of information, I have not yet had the opportunity to work through it systematically. I am grateful to Mrs. Salom Delpas, Curator of the Museum of Indian Immigration at the M.G.L. for facilitating my access to these records.

71 For Yambann, see Claude Prudhomme, *Histoire religieuse de la Réunion* (Paris, 1984), p. 331, for Makua, see Françoise Dumas-Champion, "L'ère des deux catholiques, l'un papa, l'autre maman" - Regard sur des pratiques religieuses à l'île de la Réunion, *Journal des Africainistes*, 68/1-2 (1998), pp. 99-122, at 101. See also, Furna, *L'esclavage*, p. 40, n.

J.J. who states, "The lines of Bourbon are originally from the east coast of Africa, notably from the Cafre [sic], Inhambanes, and Macouas tribes."

72 Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the Conference commemorating the 160th anniversary of the abolition of apprenticeship sponsored by the African Cultural Centre and funded by the Mauritian Research Council at the University of Mauritius, Moka, 12 June 1999 and the Harriet Tubman Seminar, Department of History, York University, Toronto, 15 November 1999. I am grateful for comments made by both audiences and especially to Jeremy Prestholdt for his trenchant comments on the original draft.



Th. Eau Afr., an tonl

A Traffic Of Several Nations: The Mauritian Slave Trade, 1721-1835

Richard S. Allen

The institution of slavery is inextricably bound up with the social, economic, and political history of Mauritius. Slaves first reached Mauritius in 1639, *only* a year after the Dutch East India Company established its first settlement on the island. Adriaen van der Seel, the settlement's commandant from 1639-1-5, imported more than 300 male and female slaves from Madagascar during the early 1640s to supply the labor needed to develop the colony and exploit the island's natural resources, and servile laborers remained part of the local resident population until 1710 when the Dutch abandoned the island.¹ Eleven years later, slaves accompanied the first French colonists sent by the Compagnie des Indes to settle on what was now known as the Ile de France, and succeeding decades witnessed the steady growth of this servile population. Slaves outnumbered the island's white residents by a margin of almost seven to one as early as 1740, and during the second half of the eighteenth century bondmen and women accounted regularly for 80-85 per cent of the Mauritian population. Although the proportion of slaves among the island's inhabitants began to decline during the late 1810s, servile laborers still comprised two-thirds of the Mauritian population on the eve of emancipation in 1835.

Scholarly interest in the traffic that introduced tens of thousands of slaves to the Ile de France and its sister Mascarene island of Ile de Bourbon (Reunion), colonized by the Compagnie des Indes in 1670, dates to the 1960s when historians began to investigate French slave trading along the East African coast during the eighteenth century." In 1971, L.-M. Filliot published his classic study on the Mascarene trade

between 1670-1810.' Subsequent scholarship focused upon the Indian and other Asian slaves who reached the Mascarenes during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries" and the nature and dynamics of the illegal slave trade to Reunion between 1317-1818.' More recent work on the Mauritian experience before 1835 has largely ignored this traffic, concentrating instead upon the institution of slavery on the island and in its dependencies.⁶ With the notable exception of Gwyn Campbell and Prer NI. Larson, historians of Madagascar and the Swahili coast have likewise either paid little attention to the Mascarene trade or discounted its importance in shaping developments in the western Indian Ocean during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.'

A striking feature of this historiographical tradition has been a continuing reliance upon Filliot's estimates of the number of slaves introduced into the Îles de France et de Bourbon before 1810. Filliot projected that 160,000 slaves reached the islands between 1670-1810, with 15 per cent of these bondmen arriving from Madagascar, 40 per cent coming from Mozambique and East Africa, 13 per cent originating in India, and 2 per cent arriving from West Africa. More specifically, he estimated that 15,000 slaves reached the Mascarenes between 1670-1768 (mostly after 1721), while 80,000 arrived between 1769-93 at an average rate of 3,000 a year except for 1791-93 when imports averaged 5,000 a year. He concluded that another 35,000 bondmen landed in the islands between 1794-1810.³ These estimates gave substance to earlier arguments that the dramatic expansion of the Malagasy and East African slave trades during the late eighteenth century could be traced largely to the Mauritian and Reunionnais demand for servile labor."

Filliot's attempt to gauge the number of slaves imported into the Mascarenes before 1810 drew upon an impressive array of sources, and his willingness to undertake

such an exercise can only be commended given the difficulties of reconstructing the Indian Ocean slave trades." However, recent work on the illegal slave trade to Mauritius and the Seychelles during the 1810s and 1820s suggests that the number of slaves imported into Mauritius was probably larger than hitherto supposed,' while a preliminary reassessment of the Mascarene trade between 1670-1810 notes that Filliot failed to review contemporary census data to confirm the general sustainability of his projection. It is these latter, admittedly problematic data that mandate a re-evaluation of his estimates of both the number of slaves imported into the Mascarenes before 1810 and the percentage of slaves drawn from the major catchment areas that supplied the southwestern Indian Ocean. We may observe, in the first instance, that the Îles de France et de Bourbon apparently housed some 126,500 bondmen and women in 1808, a figure equal to four-fifths of the total number of servile laborers who, according to Filliot, had reached the islands since the slave trade had begun in earnest some 70-80 years earlier. These figures suggest that he made inadequate allowance for the men, women, and children who had to be imported each year simply to replace those who had died in servitude or been emancipated. Secondly, the limited information on slave ethnicity at our disposal suggests that eastern Africa rather than Madagascar supplied the largest number of slaves to reach the islands. Equally important, these data highlight the need to consider the degree to which the Mauritian and Reunionnais slave trades may have differed from one another.

The demand for slaves to work colonial fields, to work upon them in their homes, and to service the ships that called at the island remained a constant feature of Mauritian life throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The Compagnie des Indes actively imported slaves from Madagascar and its possessions in India during the years it controlled the Mascarenes (1721-67), and

also sought to tap into the Portuguese controlled Mozambican market whenever possible. The 1769 royal decree opening the Mascarenes to free trade by all French nationals was an event of considerable consequence for slave trading interests in the western Indian Ocean that not only led to increased commerce with traditional sources of supply such as Madagascar, but also encouraged French merchants to frequent the slave markets at Krlwa, Zanzibar, and other points along the East African coast. The Mauritian slave population increased dramatically in the wake of this decree, rising from 15,027 in 1767 to 49,080 in 1797, and then to more than 60,000 during the first decade of the nineteenth century (see Table 1).

Table 1
THE MAURITIAN SLAVE POPULATION, 1725-1835

Y.	Number*	Year	Number
1725	1•	1787	33,990
1735	648	1788	38,136
1740	2,611	1797	49,080
1746	2,533	1806	62,879
1752	5,821	1809	62,742
1757	8,000	1814	78,102
1760	12,313	1815	87,352
1767	15,027	1819	80,115
1777	25,154	1825	76,539
1782	28,352	1830	69,476
1785	32,148	1835	66,610

* Including slaves in minor dependencies.

Sources: R.R. Kuczynski, *Demographic Survey of the British Colonial Empire*, Vol. 2, (London, 1919), pp. 751, 753, 755-56, 758, 760.

Auguste Toussaint, *Histoire des îles Mascariennes*, (Paris, 1972), pp. 335, 337.

Philippe Haudricq, *La campagne française des îles au XVIII^e siècle (1719-1795)*, (Paris 1989), Vol. 3, p. 91.1.

Richard B. Allen, 'Licentious and Unbridled Proceedings: The Illegal Slave Trade to Mauritius and the Seychelles During the Early Nineteenth Century,' *Journal of African History*, 42 (2001), p. 96.

As was the case elsewhere in the European colonial world, the death rate among Mauritian slaves exceeded their birth rate, corroborated by a very substantial margin.¹⁰ This demographic fact of life required the importation of significant numbers of men, women, and children simply to maintain the local servile population. Unfortunately, birth and death rates among Mauritian slaves cannot be determined with any degree of precision. Colonial statutes required slave owners to record all births and deaths among their bondmen but, as contemporary observers of colonial life readily acknowledged, local civil status records were anything but complete or accurate. These problems left Baron d'Urmerville, the island's archivist during the early nineteenth century, with no other option than to estimate the birth and death rates among the island's bondmen and women.¹¹ His determination that the local slave population decreased by an average of 0.33 per cent a year between 1764-1824¹⁶ was challenged more than half a century ago by R.R. Kuczynski who argued that d'Urmerville's estimate was much too low and that, at least between 1827-34, this population declined at an annual rate of 1.1 per cent.¹² The information at our disposal about government-owned slaves and the island's "apprentices" and ex-apprentices point to even higher rates of net decline.¹³ The apprentice/ex-apprentice population shrank at an average rate of 1.7 per cent each year between 1835-46, while the annual rate of net decline among government slaves averaged 2.54 per cent between 1814-32.¹⁹

8. V. Hargman's work on slave demography in the British Caribbean demonstrates that the high rates of net decline experienced by Mauritian apprentices and government slaves were not uncommon, and that it was not unusual for such high rates to prevail over a period of several years.²⁰ Other evidence likewise indicates that higher, rather than lower, rates of net decline probably prevailed among Mauritian slaves during the eighteenth as well as early nineteenth century.

Residents of the Île de France suffered frequently from beriberi, dysentery, typhoid, and enteric fevers, while epidemic smallpox, cholera, and influenza also swept the island periodically. Serious outbreaks of smallpox occurred in 1712,

1754, 1756, 1758, 1770-72, 1782-83, and 1792-93, while cholera epidemics occurred in 1775 and 1819-20. The smallpox epidemic of 1756 reportedly killed 1,800 slaves owned by the Compagnie des Indes and one-half of all bondmen held by individual colonists, while the epidemics of 1770 and 1792-93 may have killed as many as 20-25 and 33 per cent respectively of all African slaves.²¹ Seven thousand slaves reportedly died during the cholera epidemic of 1819-20.²² The island's continuing dependence on imported foodstuffs to feed its resident population²³ and the attendant probability of malnutrition, if not occasional outright famine, among bondmen and women also point to higher rather than lower rates of slave mortality.²⁴ So do contemporary reports that characterize the early nineteenth century Mauritian slave regime as a harsh one even by the standards of the day.²⁵ The impact of these various factors on early nineteenth century slave mortality is revealed by returns the island's district commissioners supplied to the Commission of Eastern Enquiry.¹⁶ According to these officials, a total of 22,319 slaves died between 1810-26, a figure that clearly underrepresents the actual number of slave deaths by a substantial margin.²⁶ More specifically, we may note that while 16,841 slaves were reported to have died in Port Louis during this period, only 5,859 bondmen supposedly did so in the eight rural districts that housed some 80 per cent of the island's servile population.²⁷

The rates of net population decline among the island's apprentices/ex-apprentices and government slaves, together with the available data on the size of the local slave population at given points in time before 1810, provide the basis for the projections presented in Table 1.²⁹ Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine the

extent to which these estimates of Maunna imports differ from Filliot's because he made no attempt to distinguish what proportion of Mascarene imports reached Mauritius. Hubert Gerbeau attempted to address this question several years ago,

proposing that 85,000, or 53 per cent. of Filliot's 160,000 imports reached the Ile de France.¹⁰ A review of what we know about the size of the Maunna slave population in specific years, of the number of slaves Filliot estimated to have reached the islands during each phase of the pre-1810 trade,¹¹ and of more recent estimates of the number of slaves who reached the islands before 1810¹² indicates, however, that probably no more than 45 per cent of all slaves imported into the Mascarenes between 1721-1810 were landed on the Ile de France.

Table 2
PROJECTED SLAVE IMPORTS INTO MAURITIUS, 1725-1809

	Slave Mortality	Projected Imports					
		Deaths at		Average Annual		Imports	
Slave Pop.	Change"	1717	1751	A,	A _c	A _c	A _c
		1717	1751	ANSM	ANS _c	ANSM	ANSM
1725-1746	- 2,499	248	362	2,747	2,861	125	130
1747-1757	5,167	926	1,351	6,393	6,818	101	125
1758-1767	7,027	1,392	2,032	8,419	9,059	812	906
1768-1777	10,127	2,615	3,817	12,742	13,941	1,271	1,394
1778-1788	12,982	4,811	7,028	17,796	20,010	1,618	1,819
1789-1797	10,941	5,972	8,718	16,916	19,662	1,880	2,185
1798-1809	11,662	10,248	14,960	23,910	28,622	1,993	2,385
Total		26,215	38,268	88,923	100,976		

Notes: * From previous total slave population figures (see Table 1).

^b Average net slave mortality.

Sources: R.R. Kuczynski. *Demographic Survey of the British Colonial Empire*. Vol. 2. pp. 751, 753, 755-56, 758, 760;

A. Toussaint. *Histoire des îles Mascareignes*. pp. 335, 337;

P. Huudrere. *La compagnie française des indes au XVIII^e siècle. (1719-1795)*. Vol. 3, p. 914;

R. Allen. 'Licentious and Unbridled Proceedings: The Illegal Slave Trade to Mauritius and the Seychelles During the Early Nineteenth Century.' *Journal of African History*, 12 (2001), p. 96.

Table 1 suggests accordingly that the number of slaves who reached Maurmus before 1810 was 4.6-18.8 per cent higher than Gerbeau has proposed, and 23.5-40 per cent higher than the number of such imports that might be inferred from Frlbot's estimates. Given the paucity of information in the archival record about the number and size of slave cargoes to the island and the dearth of reliable data on Maurmusian slave demography, determining which set of projections in Table 2 may be a more accurate indicator of the Maurmusian trade's volume necessarily becomes

an exercise in judgment. What we know about slaves' living and working

conditions suggests, however, that the higher of the two rates of net decline in question is probably more indicative of overall slave mortality, and that a corresponding estimate of 101,000 imports may be more representative of the Maurmusian trade's magnitude between 1721-1810.

The number of slaves who reached Maurmus following the island's capture by British forces late in 1810 and slave emancipation a quarter of a century later also remains, in many respects, a subject of informed speculation. The 1807 Parliamentary ban on slave trading by British subjects was applied to Mauritius and its dependencies in 1811, and the attendant criminalization of this traffic ensured that few relevant shipping records found their way into the archival record. However, a review of nineteenth century census data using the methodology outlined above has yielded an estimate that 52,550 slaves were imported into Maurmus and the Seychelles between 1811 and the illegal trade's demise circa 1827.¹¹ This estimate, together with that for the period before 1810, points to the introduction of perhaps as many as 153,500 bondmen and women into Maurmus between 1721 and slavery's formal demise 110 years later.

Slaves reached Maurmus from throughout the Indian Ocean basin and beyond. A 1791 map of Port Louis reveals, for instance, the existence of a *Camp des malabars et lascars* and a *Camp des wolofs* (sic) in the city's eastern suburbs, while its western suburbs contained a *Camp des malgaches* and a *Camp des hambars* (sic).¹² Oregorre Avme, who visited the Île de France circa 1802, observed that the island housed "des noirs de toutes les espèces, et par conséquent des mouscambres, des wolofs des ajouanars, des malgaches ou madecasses, des cafres, des gumees, des

macours, des maconds, des malais, et beaucoup d'autres esclaves des côtes de

l'Inde."¹³ A decade later, Jacques Mirlbert confirmed that the local slave population was composed "de plusieurs nations, des Indiens, des Malais, des Malgaches ou Madegasses, musulmans de Madagascar, des Mozambiques, de quelques habnars de la côte de Gumees, et des Wolofs, naturels de la côte occidentale d'Afrique."¹⁴ Other sources shed additional light on the ethnic and cultural diversity among Maurmusian bondmen and women. In addition to the peoples and places of origin mentioned by Avme and Mirlbert, maroon registers, notarial acts, and colonial censuses reveal the presence of Acyssmans, Bambaras, and Canary Islanders among the island's slaves of African origin, and Bengalis, Lascars, Malabars, Talingas, and Timonians among those of Asian origin.¹⁵ Baron d'Umenville reported in turn that the island's "Malgaches" included slaves taken from among the Amateunes (sic), Betsileo, Hova (Menna), and Sakalava, and that its "Mozambiques" included individuals who came originally from among the Marav, the Mondjava (probably Mujac or Yao), the Moussena (Sena), the Mouqmdo (Ngindo), the Niamoese (Nyamwezu), and the Yambane (probably Nymbune), as well as the Makonde and the Makua."¹⁶

Although drawn from a multiplicity of African and Asian peoples and cultures, Maurmusian slaves were usually identified as belonging to one of four *castes*, or

ethnically and geographically based categories—Creole (i.e., locally born), Indian, Malagasy, and Mozambican. While colonists and government officials regularly noted the background or place of origin of the slaves in their midst, the archival record sheds surprisingly little light on *caste* distribution within the Mauritian and Reunionnais slave populations as a whole. Information on the ethnic composition of the Ile de Bourbon's slave population is available for only four years (1735, 1765, 1808, 1826), while similar information on Mauritius is limited to just 1806 and 1826/27. However, despite their obvious limitations, these data underscore the need to reconsider the extent to which slaves reached the Mascarenes from the major catchment areas that supplied the southwestern Indian Ocean with servile labor.

Filhol held that Madagascar and East Africa (i.e., Mozambique and the Swahili coast) supplied the great majority of Mascarene slaves before 1810, with these two regions furnishing 15 and 10 per cent respectively of all imports, while India and West Africa furnished the balance (13 per cent and 2 per cent respectively) of the islands' servile laborers.¹⁹ There can be no doubt that the Grande Ile and the East African littoral were the most important sources of their manpower. However, what we know about *caste* distribution indicates that the extent to which the islands drew upon these catchment areas varied through time, and that generalizations about the ethnic composition of the Mascarene slave trade must be qualified accordingly. More specifically, we may note that while Malagases accounted for the great majority of Reunion's non-Creole slaves in 1735 (76.1 per cent) and 1765 (67.8 per cent), Mozambicans accounted for some 60 per cent of non-Creole slaves on both the Ile de France and the Ile de Bourbon circa 1806–08. Some two decades later, the Mozambican presence among non-Creole slaves had declined on both Mauritius (to 55.8 per cent) and Reunion (to 50.1 per cent) while the Malagasy

presence had increased, from 36.6 to 39.1 per cent on Reunion and from 25.1 to 36.8 per cent of all such bondmen on Mauritius. The proportion of Indians also fluctuated, declining from 9.6 per cent of Reunion's non-Creole slave population in 1735 to 8.1 per cent in 1765 and then to 3.2 per cent in 1808 before increasing slightly to 5.1 per cent in 1826. On Mauritius, on the other hand, Indians accounted for 11.1 per cent of the island's non-Creole slaves in 1806, but only 6.4 per cent of such bondmen in 1826.²⁰

When viewed in their totality, these data provide additional insight into the Mascarene trade's structure and dynamics over time. In the first instance, these data indicate that we can distinguish three major phases to this trade on the basis of its sources of supply. During the first such phase (1670–1769), Madagascar supplied about 70 per cent of all slaves reaching both Mauritius and Reunion, with the balance of imports coming from Mozambique and the Swahili coast (19 per cent), South Asia (9 per cent), and West Africa (2 per cent). During the trade's second phase (1770–1810), eastern Africa supplanted Madagascar as the most important source of slaves for the Mascarenes, with Mozambique and the Swahili coast furnishing 60 per cent of all imports compared to the 31 per cent drawn from the Grande Ile, and South Asia once again providing about 9 per cent of bondmen who reached the islands. The proportion of imports from eastern Africa basically remained constant (at 59 per cent) during the trade's final phase (1811–48), an era which also witnessed a resurgence (to 38 per cent) in Malagasy imports, the demise of the Indian slave trade to the islands, and a serious attempt by Reunionnais, if not Mauritians, to tap into Southeast Asian slave markets (3 per cent). Overall, these figures suggest that eastern Africa supplied 53 per cent of the slaves who reached the Mascarenes between 1670–1848, compared to almost 40 per cent

from Madagascar, 6.8 per cent from southern Asia, and 0.3 per cent from other regions such as West Africa.¹

These data also point to some potentially significant differences between the Maunuan and Reunonnais slave trades. One of the more striking features of the islands' social landscape at the beginning of the nineteenth century was the presence of a substantially larger population of Indian slaves on the Ile de France than was to be found on the Ile de Bourbon. What we know about colonists' perceptions of their slaves and the relative status of the two islands vis-à-vis one another suggests that this demographic difference was not the product of mere chance. Like their counterparts elsewhere in the colonial world, Mascarene slave owners assigned stereotypical qualities or attributes to each of the servile *castes* in their midst. Yozambicans, for instance, were often regarded as lacking in intelligence but well suited to physical labor, while Indians tended to be praised for their grace, docility, and intelligence while being deemed unfit for hard labor." Given their preconceptions, colonists often employed Indian and Malay slaves as domestic servants and skilled artisans while relegating those of African or Malagasy origin to field labor. At the same time, first Compagnie and later royal officials pursued policies intended to make the Ile de France into an important military base and commercial center while charging the Ile de Bourbon with responsibility for supplying its neighbor with food and other basic necessities. Under such circumstances, the presence on Mauritius of significantly larger numbers of Indian slaves who either possessed much needed skills or were perceived as being more capable of learning them comes as no surprise.

A second distinction between the Mauritian and Reunonnais trades is suggested by the apparent resurgence of the Malagasy slave trade after 1810. As was noted

above, the proportion of Malagasy slaves on Réunion rose only slightly (from 36.6 to 39.4 per cent) between 1808-1826, while increasing significantly (from 15.1 to 36.5 per cent) on Mauritius during basically the same period. These figures, coupled with what we know about the *caste* of slaves introduced illegally into the Mascarenes during the 1810s and 1820s,² suggest that Maunians drew more heavily upon Madagascar for their illicit bondmen than did their Reunonnais counterparts. The Grande Ile's closer proximity and the attendant greater ease and speed with which Malagasy slaves could be shipped to the island were undoubtedly important considerations for Mauritian slave owners who, from a relatively early date, had to contend with imperial and colonial governments that were not only committed to the illegal trade's destruction, but also willing to take concrete steps to achieve their goal.³ Their Reunonnais cousins, on the other hand, did not face comparable pressures until after *circa* 1826.⁴

More than twenty years ago, Hubert Gerbeau noted that any attempt to reconstruct the history of slavery in the Indian Ocean basin entails coming to terms with a huge, ill-defined, and exceptionally diverse human and geographical domain." The slave trade to Mauritius illustrates the probity of his observation and highlights the need to examine not only the local institution of slavery, but also its legacy, from the broadest of perspectives. Central to any such undertaking must be a determination of the number of bondmen, women, and children who reached the island from various parts of the world during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Our dependence upon a frequently problematic archival record means that, unfortunately, we will probably never know exactly how many slaves reached the Ile de France. A careful review of the data at our disposal indicates, however, that it is still possible to gauge the volume and distinguish other important features and characteristics of the Mascarene trade with a greater degree of precision than

has hitherto been the case. Engaging in such an exercise is important because it permits to deepen our understanding of not only the nature and dynamics of the rich Mauritian historical experience, but also of the larger African and Asian diasporas in which the island and its inhabitants played such important roles.

Abbreviations

- CO Coloma! Office files. Public Record Office, Kew
 MA MaunUS Archives
 PP Brnsh Parliament Sessmnl Papers
 T Treasury Office files. Public Record Office, Kew.

¹ P.L. Mcree, *et. Collecta Hts/Off' of Ourch Mauritms. /598-1710*. (London and New York, 1998). PP 31-32. See also R.R. Kuczynski, *Demographic Survey of the British Coloma! Empire*, Vol. 1. (London, 1919). pp 7-14. and Gabncille de Nettincourt, 'Le peuplement neel: Indals a l'lie Mauoce (1598-1710)', in *Mouvemens de populations dans l'ocian Indlen*. (Pans. 1979). p. 22-1. on the number of slaves on Maunus between 1639-1710.

² G.S.P. Freeman-Greenfield. *The French at Kifwa Island*. (Oxford. 1965); G.A. Akinola. 'The French on the Lindi Coast. 1785-1789.' *Tanzania Notes and Records*, No. 70 (1970), pp. 1-10. Edward A. Alpers, 'The French Slave Trade in East Africa (1721-1810)', *Cahiers de l'Association africaine*, 37 (1970). pp. 80-124. See also Robert Louis Stein, *The French Slave Trade in the Eighteenth Century*. (Madison and London, 1979). pp. 119-26.

³ J.-M. Filliot, *La traite des esclaves vers les Mascareignes au XVIII^e siècle*. (Pans. 1974).

⁴ Hubert Gerbeau, 'Les mmoires mal-connues, esclaves indiens et malars des Mascareignes aux XIX^e s.', in *WigrallOlls. mmontrs et ichangts en ocian mdien. XIX^e-XX^e s. nictl*. I. H.P.O.J.I: Etudes et Documents No. 11. (Arx-en-Provence, 1978). pp. 160-242. and L.: esclaves asmlques des Mascareignes aux XIX^e s. lide enquetes et hypotheses, *Annuaire des pays de l'ocian mdien*. 7 (1980), pp. 169-97. Manna Caner 'Indian Slavery in Maunus (1719-1830)', in *Historical Review*, 15/1-2 (1988-89), pp. 233-17.

⁵ Hubert Gerbeau, 'Quelques aspects de la traite d'origine des esclaves J l'lie Bourbon au XIX^e sicle', in *Mouvemens de populations dans l'ocian mdien*, (Pans. 1979). pp. 273-308.

See also Manna Caner and Hubert Gerbeau, 'Covert Slaves and Coveted Coahes in the Early 19th Century Mascareignes.' *Slavery and Abolition*. 9/1 (1988). pp. 194-208.

⁶ U. Brssoondoyal and S.B.C. Servansingh, eds. *Slavery in South West India: Ocerm*. (Moka. Maurmus. 1989). Anthony J. Barker, *Slavery and Abolition in Mauritms. /810-33*, (London and New York, 1996); Deryck Scarr, *Slavery and Slavery in the Aldia, Octan*. (London and New York, 1998); Vijaya Teelock, *Bitter Sugar: Slavery and Slavery in the Aldia, Octan*. (Moka. Maurmus, 1998); Deryck Scarr, *Se, chdf: s mee 1770: Histor. of a Slave and Post-Slavery Society*, (London, 2000). See also Moses DE. Nwaha, *The History of Slavery in Mauritms and the Seychelles. /810-/875*. (London and Toronto, 1981).

⁷ Cf. Hubert Deschamps, *Histoire de Madagascar*. (Pans. 1961); Mervyn Brown, *Madagascar Rediscovered. A History from Earh Times to Independence*. (London, 1978); Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices and Ivory in Lal:ibar*. (London, 1987); Francois C. Raison-Jourde, *Bible et pouvoir (1 Madagascar au XIX^e sicle*. (Paris, 1991). Relevant works by Campbell include 'Madagascar and the Slave Trade, 1810-1895', *Journal of African History*, 21. (1981). pp. 203-27; 'Madagascar and Mozambique in the Slave Trade of the Western Indian Ocean, 1800-1861', *Slavery and Abolition*. 9 (1988). pp. 166-93; and 'The Structure of Trade in Madagascar, 1750-1810', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*. 26 (1993). pp. 111-118. Those by Larson include 'A Census of Slaves Exported from Central Madagascar to the Mascarenes Between 1769 and 1820', in *L'esclavage d Madagascar: aspects historiques et resurgences contemporaines*, ed. Ignace Rakoto. (Antananarivo, 1997), pp. 131-45. and *History and Memory in the Age of Enslavement. Becoming Hermit in Highland Madagascar. 1770-1822*. (Portsmouth, NH. Oxford. and Cape Town, 2000).

⁸ Filliot, *La traite des esclaves*. pp. 55. 67-69.

⁹ Alpers, 'The French Slave Trade.' pp. 82-84.

¹⁰ Hubert Gerbeau, 'The Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean: Problems Facing the Historian and Research to be Undertaken', in *The African Slave Trade from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century*. (Pans. 1979). p. 185.

¹¹ Richard B. Allen, 'Procenucus and Unbound Proceedings: The Illegal Slave Trade to Maunus and the Seychelles During the Early Nineteenth Century', *Journal of African History*, 42 (2001). pp. 91-116.

¹² Richard B. Allen, 'The Mascarene Slave Trade and Labor Migration in the Indian Ocean During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,' paper presented to the workshop on

Reassessing Connections, Continuities, and Cosmopolitanism: The western Indian Ocean Since 1800." Yale University. 3.5 November 2000.

u See Kuczynski, *Demographic Survey*, pp. 713-31, on the problems with Maunna slave censuses

v Official sources reported, for example, a total of 23,000 births and 1,285 deaths among Maunna slaves between 1815-19 (CO 167/1-11, Return No. 7 - General Return of the Periodical Recensings of Slaves for the purpose of Showing the Increase or Decrease of their Numbers)

w D'Urbanville was appointed Mauritius archivist in 1813. During the 1820s he compiled a substantial body of statistical information on the island, much of which was subsequently published in his *Statistique de file stounee et ses dependences swirt dune nOCCr hnnnque mr cette cotonie et d'illl essus sur l'Ve dt Wadagascar*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1838; 2nd ed., 11le j vtaunce, 1885-86).

x CO 172/12, Tableau No. 17 - Mouvements de la Population Esclave depuis 1767 Jusqu'en 1825.

y Kuczynski, *Demographic Survey*, pp. 869, 379.

z Although Maunna slaves were formally emancipated on 1 February 1835, the act of abolition required these new freedmen, now legally designated as "apprentices," to continue working for their masters for a maximum of six years. The Maunna apprenticeship system ended on 31 March 1839.

aa Kuczynski, *Demographic Survey*, pp. 765-66, 77-1, 777, 852.

ab B.W. Higman, *Slave Populations in the British Caribbean, 1807-1834*, (Baltimore and London, 1981), especially pp. 308-10.

ac Kuczynski, *Demographic Survey*, pp. 873-74.

ad Sir Robert T. Farquhar to R. V. Hay, Esq., 3 February 1829 PP 1829 XXV [337], p. 5.

ae Auguste Toussaint, 'Le trafic commerciale entre les Mascareignes et Madagascar, de 1773 à 1810,' *Annales de l'Université de Madagascar*, 6 (1967), pp. 35-89; Madeleine Ly-Tio-Jean, 'Problèmes d'approvisionnement de l'île de France au temps de l'intendant Porvire,' *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Arts and Sciences of Mauritius*, 3/1 (1968), pp. 101-15; Campbell, 'The Structure of Trade,' p. 113; Larson, *History and Memory*, pp. 56-60.

af Robert T. Farquhar, the island's first British governor, claimed that traffic had reduced the Maunna slave population by 5 per cent a year in the years immediately before the British conquest of the island in 1810 (CO 167/10, R.T. Farquhar to the Earl of Liverpool, despatch of 28 July 1812). In 1825, Governor Sir Lowry Cole reported that the daily food ration for many slaves consisted of no more than 1.5 lbs of maize or 3 lbs of manioc (CO 167/19, Despatch No. 18, Sir Lowry Cole to Earl Bathurst, 12 September 1825). Earlier that same year, the colony's chief of police observed that many fugitive slaves pretended imprisonment for manrooning to working on their masters' estates because they were treated better in prison (MA, 18/6/No. 9, J. Fmuss to G.A. Barry, 21 February 1825).

ag CO 115/3/A.3 - Statement by Catherine Ryder Nichols, 17 October 1823, A Lady (Lady Robert Bertrum), *Recollections of Seen Years Residence at the Maltrams, or Isle of France*, (London, 1830), p. 151. See also Barker, *Stationery and Affairs*, pp. 94-100, and Teelock, *Bitter Sugar*, passim, on slaves' wages and working conditions after 1810.

ah The Commissioner, appointed to investigate allegations that local officials had recruited the illegal importation of slaves into the colony, resided on the island from October, 1826, to June, 1828.

ai CO 415/6/A.12-1, Returns of the number of Births and Deaths in the district/town of J from the Year 1810 to 1826, inclusive.

aj On the geographical distribution of Maunna slaves, see M.1 Milbert, *Vo, agit pstaesoue it file de France, au Cap de Bonne-Esperance et d'île de Tiniriffe*, (Paris, 1812), Vol. 1, p. 233 bis, and d'Urbanville, *Statistique de file Maurice*, 2nd ed., Vol. 3, Tableaux, Nos. 19, 37.

ak The number of unions was ascertained by adding the projected number of slave deaths to the net increase in the size of the slave population during the same period.

al Hubert Cerbeac, 'Histoire oubliée, histoire occultée' La diaspora malgache et La Réunion: entre esclavage et liberté,' in *L'esclavage à Madagascar aspects historiques et résurgences contemporaines*, ed. Ignace Rakoro, (Antananarivo, 1997), p. 10, n. 38.

am Filiot, *La irane des esclaves*, pp. 16-51.

an Allen, 'The Mascarene Slave Trade.'

ao Allen, *License and Unbridled Proceedings*, pp. 100-01.

10. A. BJ,VAJJ/12 - Plan de la Ville de Pon Louts dans L'île de France par Douville, 1771.

"Raymond Decary, *Les voyages du chirurgien royal de l'île de France et dans la mer des Indes au début du XIX^e siècle*, (Paris, 1961), p. 17.

"Milbert, *Voyage parorereque*, Vol. 1, p. 161.

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Set: Huguette Ly-Tio-Fane Pineo, 'Les esclaves "de piantanon" de l'île Maunce à la veille de l'abolition, d'après le recensement de 1823,' in *Histoires d'osare-mer mi/anger en rhonneur de Jean-Louis Bédarride*, (Arx-en-Provence, 1992), Vol. 2, especially pp 653-55, on ethnicity among African slaves in early nineteenth century Mauritius. See also Richard B. Allen, *Slaver, Freedmen, and Indentured Laborers in Colonial Mauritius*, (Cambridge, New York, and Melbourne, 1999), pp 11, 42, 51.

11 D'Umenville, *Statistique de l'île Maurice*, 2^{me} ed., Vol. 1, p. 257.

19 Filhot, *La traite des esclaves*, p. 69.

10. Milbert, *Voyage pittoresque*, Vol. 2, p. 233 *ibid*; CO 167/111, Return No. 1 - Return of Slaves Registered in Mauritius between the 16th of October 1826 and the 16th of January 1827. J.V. Payer, *Histoire de l'esclavage d'île Bourbon*, (Paris, 1990), p. 17; Sudel Fuma, *L'esclavage à la Réunion, 1793-1848*, (Paris and St. Denis, 1992), p. 37. The number of non-Creole slaves on Reunion was 5,066 in 1735, 11,692 in 1765, 46,249 in 1808, and 35,618 in 1826. Mauritius housed 43,908 and 34,393 such slaves in 1806 and 1826/27 respectively.

"Allen, 'The Mascarene Slave Trade.'

11 In 1806 the 6,162 Indian slaves on Mauritius comprised 10.2 per cent of the island's servile population (Milbert, *Voyage pittoresque*, Vol. 2, p. 233 *ibid*). In 1808, only 3 per cent of Reunion's 65,014 slaves were of Indian origin (Payet, *Histoire de l'esclavage*, p. 17).

12 Milbert, *Voyage pittoresque*, vol. 1, pp. 162-63; d'Umenville, *Statistiques de l'île Maurice*, 1^{re} ed., Vol. 1, pp. 155-58. See also Charles Grant, *The History of Mauritius, or the Isle of France, and the Neighbouring Islands: From Their First Discovery to the Present Time*,... (London, 1801), pp. 297-98 [letter IX, June, 1749], and J.H. Bernardin de St Pierre, *Voyage d'île de France*, (Paris, 1834), pp. 120-22 [letter XII, 25 avril 1769].

13 Auguste Toussaint, *Histoire des îles Mascareignes*, (Paris, 1972), p. 122.

14 A census of 892 prize slaves (CO 167/111) - Returns of Prize Slaves condemned by the Court of Vice Admiralty in the Colony, 1 June 1816 to 28 January 1818) and a sample of 1,000 of 1,121 slaves identified by the Mauritian government as probable illegal imports of 1711-1820. Extracts of the Returns furnished by Slave proprietors in the Census of 1826 by which it would appear from the ages then given, that the undermentioned individuals must have been illegally imported into the Colony) suggest that Madagascar may have supplied as much as 75 per cent of such illegal imports before 1820 when an Anglo-Merina treaty closed much of the Grand Ile to European slave traders.

15 Allen, 'Licentious and Unbundled Proceedings,' *passim*.

16 Gerbeau, 'Quelques aspects de la traite illicite,' pp. 282-287.

17 Cerbeau, 'The Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean,' pp. 184-85.

The twinning of Maputo and Cape Town: The early Mozambican slave trade to the slave lodge, 1677-1731

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"Globalization is on the lips of everyone as a very good thing. However, whether we live in Mauritius, Mozambique or Cape Town, we have all been globalized before. It was called slavery and it lasted for 500 years." Historians looking at globalization in the Southern African region would have to begin with the oceanic slave trade to South Africa and the Mascarenes. In Cape Town, that fantastic corporation, the Dutch East India Company (hereafter DEIC), owned hundreds of slaves whom they housed in the famous Slave Lodge at the top of Adderly Street. These Lodge slaves were in a constant state of attrition until the end of Dutch East India Company rule in 1795, without a dedicated slave trade to replenish their numbers, the Lodge slaves would have died out. The Company – unwilling to pay the high Cape domestic market price for slaves, and forbidden in any event to buy slaves from fellow Christians – relied for slaves on its own slaving-ships operating in the Mozambique Channel.

They had experience to draw upon. The Company had been slaving in Malagasy waters prior to its occupation of the Cape in 1652. Simon van der Stel's father, no less, had been an important early slaver in those waters, as Jan van Riebeeck (the first commander of the Cape) was to discover when a Malagasy king sent him some slaves and fondly recalled the elder Van der Stel's visits to the island. The

Cape is conventionally regarded as a way station for provisioning the outward and homeward bound Dutch East India Company fleets. However, the Cape had important subsidiary functions. One was to serve as an occasional staging post for Cape-based slavers. They could supply Dutch-ruled Mauritius and the gold mines in the Company's Eastern possessions with bondsmen.¹ For instance, in 1677, the *voorhout*, a Cape slave ship, and the *Hassenburgh*, a slave ship from Batavia serving the Dutch gold mines at Saldra on the west coast of Sumatra, arrived simultaneously in Madagascar. The disastrous return voyage of the *Hassenburgh* and the successful trip of the former, convinced the Batavian authorities, to use the Cape with its large hospital as a staging post for the supply of slaves for the gold mines in its Eastern possessions.

Consequently, Company slave ships intermittently plied a triangular trade between the Cape, Madagascar and the Saldra mines.* From this forgotten local triangular trade, the Cape officials accumulated valuable experience in large-scale slaving. But having started as a way station in this trade in the 1680s, by 1734 the Cape had become its terminus. Until the 1770s the Cape settlement dominated Dutch slave trading in Madagascar and the Mozambique Channel. Having learned the location of the most convenient slave entrepôt in Madagascar – Mezatagen (or Masailly) – in 1672, and with the experience of the *Voorhout's* voyages of 1676 and 1677 behind them, the Cape authorities began slave trading to and from Madagascar in earnest. The twenty-three years following 1684 were the most successful period in the Cape for slave trading to that island. After 1707 and the end of the Van der Stel era, the Cape officials organized only one further voyage to Madagascar up to 1721.

The *Lidsman* under the command of Hendrik Frappe, bought approximately 200 slaves at Madagascar and landed in 1719 at the Cape in 1715.¹ One further voyage deserves mention: the 1,009 ton *Barneveldt* set sail from Batavia on a routine return voyage to the Cape in July 1719, experiencing a freak storm-driven passage to Madagascar. The crew and passengers were allowed to buy slaves, which they sold to the Company when they eventually arrived at the Cape.² Thirty slaves were bought at Madagascar on this occasion. Twenty-eight slaves were entered into the Company's books when the ship returned in 1720.³ This voyage indicates that there was some laxity about buying slaves from private individuals. Although the directors of the Dutch East India Company had considered the possibility of a permanent slave depot ('factory') on Madagascar from as early as 1640, the area was considered too dangerous, both on account of the presence of French, English and Arab traders, but also on account of pirates. These were, after all, the waters in which the notorious pirate Captain Kidd sailed. After the Dutch had lost one Cape Madagascar slave ship – the *Weserwilck* – which pirates simply boarded after the captain and crew had gone on shore to obtain slaves, they were reluctant to lose more personnel or material.⁴ A permanent slave station on Madagascar was therefore ruled out.

From Delagoa Bay to the Lodge

The area within the Mozambique channel between Madagascar and the African mainland offered greater security, but had always been a strictly guarded Portuguese preserve. By 1721, their hold on the area was weakening. The English were the first to move in. The Royal African Company had taken two African males to England, but they proved to be princes, brothers of the king of Detagoa who demanded their return. Colonel Twogood, who had some oversight of the princes, indicated in a defensive memorial:

(t)hat the expenses he has been at on their account has been from no private nor other motive but in pure compassion to their unhappy circumstances, till he could find some means of getting them sent home to their own country, which if the Company agrees to do, he expects no reimbursement from them of the charges he hath been at.⁵

This was common English practice preparatory to setting up a trading station. The Company explained: 'That a settlement be made to the Southward of Cape Negro, which by the account the Committee have received, as well in regard to the nearness of the Suvaion to the Portuguese, as to the Island Trade: driven by the Negroes with them, may tend to the opening a new trade for the Company in all respects as advantageous, as any branch which they already enjoy. And the Committee are of opinion that the sending of these Princes along with the ship that is to make that settlement will very much contribute to the success thereof the Negroes in those parts bordering so near the Emperor Monomatapa, Brother-in-law to these princes ... (T)he appearance of these Princes among them and the relation of their Case and treatment they have met with from the Royal African Company cannot fail so to conciliate the affections of the Natives to the Company's interests as in all probability may facilitate the establishing [of] the settlement and produce very happy circumstances from it.'

But before these happy circumstances could arise, news arrived that one of the African princes had hanged himself.¹⁰ Elizabeth Donnan believed that the second prince died as well, but in fact he survived. Theal recalls that when Prince Mepumbo was baptised John, an unnamed English Duke served as his godfather.

He was simply known as 'Pnnce John' in England and was treated there 'as a person of great consequence.' He spoke fluent English.¹¹ The Northampton brought him round the Cape on 9 December 1722 which was possibly his second stop in Cape Town. Since the ship had a secret stowaway and could not produce an acceptable commission, nobody was allowed to land. Nor were refreshments allowed to be sent out to the ship.¹² Moreover, all the ship's documents were painfully copied out by the tireless soldiers-at-the-pen (as the DEIC termed its clerical staff).¹³

Prince John's stop in Cape Town must have been an uncomfortable one. When he reached home in he was wearing an outfit 'that astonished the officers' at what had in the meantime become a Dutch 'factory.' The English must have been greatly disappointed at being beaten to it by the Dutch. Worse was to follow. Maphumbo quickly discarded his fine clothing and soon was indistinguishable in appearance and mode of living from his countrymen.¹⁴ The following year the Cape received its last favourable report from its new slave station which they had named Fort Lerdaambeit.¹⁵

The progressive weakening of the Portuguese

In 1721, while Prince John was still in England, Cape Town VOC officials had made their move. The Dutch East India Company, taking advantage of a growing malaise in the Portuguese empire, established a slave factory at Delagoa Bay, present-day Maputo. The present-day capital of Mozambique was South Africa's first slaving station. Mozambican ivory, gold and slaves were alluring commercial

prizes. The Dutch East India Company was willing to make a large investment of money, material and men to secure these treasures. According to the historian of

this venture, Colm G. Coetzee, 'exotic diseases, excessive heat, and h.dcou, l\tng condruons led to low morale, high mortality and ultimately a fierce mutiny.' Long conditions were ghastly: no sooner were the Company employees buried, than 'wolves' dug up the bodies. To prevent recurrence, a consignment of specially built coffins would be sent up on each Delagoa Bay supply and slaving ship, a general reminder to those meeting the ship on the quayside of their probable destiny.¹⁷ worse of all, slaving was slow. The locals, although living cheek by

with the Dutch, were highly suspicious of them. Dutch East India Company personnel at the tiny post claimed that the local people believed that 'Hollanders purchased the slaves for no other purpose than to fatten and eat them.'¹⁸ To counteract this belief three Mozambique princes were taken on a visit to the Cape to see how well the slaves were treated in the lodge, one of these princes was a nephew of Maphumbo (alias 'Prince John'). The princes professed to be pleased with the manner in which the slaves were treated, but George McCall Theal notes, 'the traffic did not increase after their return. The visit had a slight negative effect on the volume of the trade.'¹⁹

In 1727 nearly 700 slaves were in the lodge, at least 1/2 from Mozambique some of whose names follow: Calewnes; Chnsuez; Coctelana; Coclanus; Diana; Dorotea; Janflanus; Junvatane; Kahou; Kees; Kosa; Lawrsanie; Le;l; Lreleffes; Loewannj; Lursangen; Maboule; Macqueltes; Macquesralis; Martovanc; Masmko; vathonboebs; Maumsa; 'laqanbahj; Marthe; Mauheks; Mietke; Yloehonem; Mondene; Oemerunutje; Peflamj; Penjarj; Pilh.ine; Poelaan. PrulJ. Qurnsane; Sawella; Siakoeke; Siangtangsnnes.Sreln; Sreleffane; Srkenella; Smqu.ane;

Smeeninarjc.Soesarukes; Tnfanne; Woefijkunut.:"

Quo Fredenck Stenrzt, the German tutor who lived at the Cape in the seventeenth century, remembered that Dutch East India Company personnel – who were drawn on to replace Company casualties at Delagoa Bay – regarded a posting there as a punishment. The 'factory' even had a nickname 'Retegao Bay' from 'relegated to Delagoa Bay.' After exceeding nine years, the station was abandoned after a fiercely suppressed mutiny in which twenty-two officials were executed, some of them being bound on crosses and having their bones broken with iron bars before their heads were cut off. Other mutineers were half suffocated and then beheaded, and the rest were simply hanged. It was probably the most savage 'whine-on-whine' violence to take place in Southern Africa before the second Anglo-Boer War.

The slave factory yielded only 280 slaves to the Company Lodge but there were more Mozambique slaves among the non-Company slave-owning population in Cape Town during this period? Possibly, these extra slaves were brought by individual crew members and sold to the town's burghers. Ylentzel summed up the situation. The result was that among the Europeans there, death was frequent and sudden: indeed it was reckoned that of the men sent there only one in ten returned, and that the Company lost almost as many Europeans as it gained slaves.¹

Disease and the mutiny put an end to this slave station, and Cape officials never repeated the experiment. After the Delagoa Bay mutiny, the Dutch East India Company resumed the slave trade to Madagascar with the voyage of the *Snuffelaar* which called at both Inhambane and Delagoa Bay in September of 1731. Twenty-two African slaves were landed at the Cape in February 1732. In the same year, acting on instructions from Batavia, the Cape authorities again started supplying the Sri Lankan gold mines with Malagasy slaves. Although there was substantial trading, 'nearly all slaves perished' on the *Herstelling* direct trip to Sumatra.²

Following this disaster (a repetition of what had happened in the 1670s at Batavia), duplicated their own ship – the *Blissvleugel* in 1731: this was the last attempt at a Cape-Madagascar-Batavia triangular trade, thereafter the Cape was left to supply to conduct slaving in Madagascar for its own requirements until 1795.³

There was one other source of Company slaves: in times of famine or war, officially, in the Dutch eastern possessions often had an excess of slaves on their hands. For example, between 1680 and 1731, Company officials in Jaffnapatnam in Ceylon dispatched such slaves to the Cape. On 14 December 1713, 50 slaves were dispatched, of whom 36 arrived. In 1719, the Jaffnapatnam officials dispatched 80, but only 59 arrived. Ulumarely 95 such excess slaves arrived.⁴ The overwhelming majority of Company slaves were Malagasy, the result of specially commissioned voyages to the island, less than a tenth were 'surplus' stocks from Ceylon.

Between 1680 and 1731, almost one-fifth of all arriving Company slaves came from the slave station at Rio Delagoa. However, Mozambique slaves – Mozbrekers – earned a reputation as reliable agricultural labourers and Mozambique again became an important source of slaves in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, especially under the free trade statutes of the first British occupation (1795-1803). Pret Reuef, the voonrekker leader and Afrikaner martyr, quizzed his own Cape Mozbreker slaves about the Portuguese colony's situation before setting out on his fateful trek in the nineteenth century. He was concerned naturally enough whether he would be able to make his way of life – based on slave-ownership – mobile.⁵

Conclusion

It is but a quirk of history that Maputo should be the capital of Mozambique, considering it was South Africa's first external slave station. Many excellent documentary sources on the station exist. Indeed, Maputo would make an excellent site for the UNESCO slave trade route project as it links all the slave trading centres of the South-Western Indian Ocean: South Africa, the Seychelles, Reunion, Mauritius, the Comoros and Madagascar. Its downtown area could accommodate a reconstruction of Fort Leidsamerhoek. In fact, Mozambique has a variety of slave sites since it was both a slave exporter through Delagoa Bay, Inhambane, Quelimane, Inhanga, Mozambique Island, and the Kenilworth Islands, as well as a slave employer on its inland plantations. For example, in the hinterland of Mozambique one could feasibly recreate some of the *prazos*, those plantations which Allen Isaacman and Malyn

Newitt have written about so ably.⁷ As we look to the future of the UNESCO slave route project, Maputo should also consider the possibility of similar slave sites.

⁷ For Sturges, see H.C.V. Leysbrandt, *Precis of the Archives of the Cape of Good Hope: 1699-1732* (Cape Town: W.A. Richards, 1896), 30 June 1698, p. 59. James C. Annstrong, 'Madagascar and the slave trade in the seventeenth century', *Omnia* 17-20 (1983-84) pages 11-13.

⁸ Cape Town Archives Repository (CTA) C 331 'Aestates (from BaJvIJ)' December 1683, page 78-1, 783-1. see also Rijksarchief VOC 1017 'Instructed door de upperhoofden van t jacfu Sdhda' folios 35-10, further details from James Armstrong, personal correspondence.

⁹ CTA C 336 'Anestane verklanna van die aangedome staaven van xtadcgasca-' 13 November 1715, folio 593, folio 3 verso.

¹⁰ James Armstrong, personal communication.

¹ CTA C 338 'Mrjnheer Ccst. passog.er.' page 787.

² CTA C 338 'De onder volgende slaven op den 11^{en} December 1720 van het schip Baameveldt ontfangen.' p.753.

³ 'We only know this since the westewijk's captain and his landing party of nine men were found by the Cape slaver Jambij four years later in the bay of Manngar. see CTA C 501 Letters despatched [Cape to Patna]' 18 April 1687, folios 630 and 631.

⁴ Ehzaberb Donnan (comp.), *Documents illustrative of the history of the slave trade to America, the eighteenth century* (Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1931), 2: pp.261-263.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.263.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.263, note 5.

⁷ G.M. Theal, *History of South Africa before 1795* (Cape Town: Struik, 1961), vol. 1, p.11, note.

⁸ H.C.V. Lerobrandt, *Precis of the Archives of the Cape of Good Hope Journal 1699-1732* (Cape Town: W.A. Richards, 1896), 9 December 1721, p. 292.

⁹ South Africa (Archives), *Resolutions van die Politieke Raad deel VI Uutsmesburg: Publications Section of the Office of the Director of Archives*, 1971, 10 January 1723, pp.221-5.

¹⁰ Theal, *History*, vol. 1, p.11.

¹¹ Lerobrandt, *Precis of the Archives of the Cape: Journals 1699-1732*, 13 March 1721, p. 296.

¹² C.G. Coetzee, *On the Kompanjie se besemng van Qdagoi BaJvIJ* in: *Archives Year Book* (1978 II) p.234, 156.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

¹⁴ Resolutions, 22 August 1726, 'der mlanders, die malkanderen hebben wjsgemacht en stg inbeelden dat onsen slaven handel mer geen ander oogmerk gesctuedc, als om desclve alhier te mesten en op te eten' 17: p. 17B.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Resolutions, 22 August 1726, 'der mlanders, die malkanderen hebben wjsgemacht' p.278.

¹⁷ O.F. Mentzel, *Life at the Cape in mid-eighteenth century* (Cape Town: YRS, 1919), p.62.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.69, 59. O.F. Mentzel, *A geographical and topographical description of the Cape of Good Hope* (Cape Town: YRS, 1921-1944), VRS vol. 6, p. 125.

„meest alle gestorven“

James Armstrong, Personal Communication.

18. Armstrong, 'The Slaves, 1652-1795' in *The Shaping of South African Society 1652-1800*, ed. Richard Elphick and Hermann Giliomee (Cape Town: Longman, 1979), p.79; CTA C 336 'Auestaues, verklaring na gedane monsternge... 'S Comp. Lerfcrigenen,' Ji August 1711, pp.157-75.

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19. Parck Barnes, 'Yozbiders: the immigration of an African community to the Western Cape, 1876-1882' in: Christopher Saunders, (ed.), *Slavery in the history of Cape Town* (1981); pp.153-61.

20. Allen F. Isaacman, *Yozambique: The Africanization of a European Institution: The Zambesi Prazos 1750-1902* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1972); D.D. Newman, *Portuguese Settlement on the Zambesi: Exploration Land Tenure and Colonial Rule in East Africa* (London: Longman, 1973).



ANALYZING "MALAGASY" SLAVE NAMES IN THE 1826 AND 1835 CENSUSES¹

James C. Armstrong

Library of Congress

The anonymity of the victims of the slave trade and of slavery is one of its characteristic features. It is generally true that only in the 19th century is the veil of namelessness lifted on the identities of slaves and that their individualities, through their names, become more apparent. This is true in the case of Mauritius, as well as in most other slave societies. The export, by the Dutch, of slaves from Madagascar to Mauritius began in 1642 from Amboing Bay. Six voyages, 1642-7, transported more than 500 slaves, many of whom were re-exported to Batavia.² If the names of these slaves were recorded, it was the Dutch practice in their subsequent Cape-based trade, they have not yet come to light.

The earliest recorded Malagasy slave names from the Cape we have come from the voyage of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) vessel, the *Vaurhour*, in 1676.³ However, many of these 279 names appear to be descriptive in character, e.g., variations on terms such as "lehlav l'iri", "good man", etc. The same is true of the 121 names recorded for the *So!daat* (1696/7) and of 198 from the *Peter & Paul* (1699). Such "names" presumably do not constitute original indigenous names, but were rather descriptors applied by the Malagasy interpreters, themselves, slaves of the Dutch, who accompanied the VOC slaving vessels on these and subsequent voyages. However, others are doubtless approximations or corruptions of original names, such as those incorporating the element "Andran" (sic) Andren Havanan, Andra Manonge, Andrenu Saelaze, Andia vomba, etc. A larger corpus of these names remains to be transcribed.

from the trade journals maintained by the Dutch supercargoes on the additional thirty xtadagascar voyages made by the Dutch. Some of these have survived.

A different, although related, source of Malagasy slave onomasucs is a combined tabutauon or Company slave deaths in the Cape, 1719-89. This, in its unedited form, contains 3638 names, of which some 71+ or 19.6% are of Malagasy origin. These names theoretically would correlate to some of those from the slave trading journals, an exercise which remains for the future.

We lack similar lists of names for Malagasy slaves taken to Staunius during the French period. One, however, has come to light, from a voyage of the *Garonne*, which departed Fouipomte 16 September 1769. The names are:

Alales
Ychalmahy Filargna
Retala Maounquer
Yvouavy Nyally
Rcala Embcisahore
Yffambou Yi-cmfamy
Ymaka -laanmachac
Ymcoameda

Females
YaoudaZe
Yangalk Uezou
Bouque Maie Couta
Serahare Fatema Y
sana Ymaroe
Cfuandouba EmaKa'

These 13 names, altered through a French orthography, are probably authentic Malagasy names, not descriptors. It is noteworthy that they do not match well with most of the approximately 1100 names on the Cape lists. It is striking that eleven of

them are binomials, whereas these are rare on the Dutch list. The prevalence of "Fatema", a common Muslim women's name, is suggestive; there is also one on the Dutch list. There are some elements which recur on the Dutch list: /Y\Ou-/; /Avoe-, /Si-ra-/; Si-ra-/; etc. It is to be hoped that this now considerable body of onomastic data will draw attention from Malagasy linguists, and that additional research in the Mauritian Archives will reveal further such evidence.

As it happens we do have additional information about five of the above:

"Nous possédons pour l'année 1761 [sic] des renseignements sur les dix prauques à Fon* Dauphin, d'où nous extrayons les quelques dormees suivantes:

Une icmme de 21 21 ans, taille moyenne, nommée Y.a-ouaze	5 fusils de munition
Une icmme de 26 11 10 ans, grand talle, nommet: Yangalle	1 fusil de munition.
	1 fusil de truite.
	1 piece de l'oue
Une icmme de 30 1 31 ans, grand talle, nommée vezou	2 fusils de traue,
	1 boutelles d'eau-de-vie
Une femme de 15 1 20 ans, taille moyenne, nommée Ymawo	2 fusils de munition.
	4 livres de poudre.
	1 boutelles d'eau-de-vie
Un homme de 11 11 10 ans, nomme: Em.lka	4 fusils de munition.
	50 livres de poudre.
	10 boutelles d'eau-de-vie
Un negillon de 11 à 12 ans, nomme: Fil.l.l.n	3 fusils de traue.
	1 boutelle d'eau-de-vie "

As little else is known of Malagasy onomasics (except for those of kings) in the 17th and 18th centuries, these slave names provide a welcome source of information. Although one might hazard that the "Andias" (sic) derive from the highlands, too little is yet known about regional patterns in names, even where they are associated with a known trading port. Slaves were traded over wide areas, hence knowing a given person is of limited significance as to the geographical regional origins of individual slaves. According to Dr. Vijaya Teelock, "There are no censuses for the French period with slaves' names, available in Mauritius." It is only with the British period that slave names began to be systematically recorded.

Turning to the 1816 census, we have only a partial transcription from a Public Record Office document.¹ The transcription covers the district of Plaines Wilhems, and includes 154 slaves from Madagascar. (Also included are another 100 Malagasy slaves in Seychelles). Names, surnames (sic) sex, age, height, origin, year and district are tabulated, as are disjunct physical features. Original names have disappeared, being replaced by French ones: Justine, Helene, Jean, Jean Louis, Delphine, etc. There are also a number of "classical" names: Cisar, Hercule, Adonis, Phaeton, Romulus, etc. Names of months, in common use at the Cape, were evidently not fashionable in Mauritius. The use of names deriving from the slave-owners' culture is of course the prevailing pattern in most Western slave-owning societies. The onomastic link with the slaves' homeland was thereby severed.

The "surnames" were supplied by the owners at the urging of the British authorities, pursuing slave registration regulations.² The result was that these were often arbitrary and capricious, although in some instances they may convey semantic values. La Joie, La Douce, La Bonte, L'Ameuble, Le Gras, etc. Others are more ordinary: Juhe, Lisa,

Joseph, Claude, etc. Whether these names recur in subsequent censuses, and evolve into genuine surnames, useful for genealogical purposes, will take additional study.

The most amazing element of this census is the inclusion of physical features, which in many cases include brief descriptions of scars and tattoos. The PRO document evidently includes sketches of these tattoos (not seen by this writer), which will certainly require further study. In all the Dutch documentation on Malagasy slaves, I recall no mention of tattoos. In the absence of original names these may provide some clues as to regional origins.

The 1835 census did not record physical features, but did include much additional data not found in the 1816 census. It includes name of owner, name and surname (sic) of slave, age of the slave, year, date of birth for infants, height in feet and inches, country of origin, name of previous owner (in 1826), district of 1826 and district (1835).

The 1835 census lists 2,305 Malagasy slave names, from all rural districts. All are French in form, ranging from Abel to Zephu. Popular names for men slaves were Auguste (28), Paul (25) and Pierre (18); for women then were Lefleur or LJ Fleur (22), Sophie (14) and Mane (13). As in 1813 there are some descriptive surnames, Achille L'invincible, Celeste Pied Poudreux, etc. But the vast majority display no such imagination. Obviously such names tell us nothing about Malagasy naming practices, although in one or two instances there may be a Malagasy element, e.g., Raurzaoune, and in place names (Tauuive, Ambolanve, Ambotrvahram) used for surnames. But such instances are rare.

An obvious conclusion from this cursory survey is that these two censuses, valuable as they are for many other purposes, do not have much to tell us about Malagasy names of slaves. What is needed are more cargo lists of slaves, if they can be identified in the Maunus Archives.

¹ As will be plain from the text and notes, the mispnnnn and date for this bncf survey derive chiefly from Dr Yi P. Teelock, to whom I express my thanks. She is responsible for us lacunae however.

• P. J. Monce, *Concise history of Dutch Malagasy 1598-1700* (London and New York: Kegan Paul, Leiden and Amsterdam, International Institute for Asian Studies, 1998), 31-3, 36-7.

James C. Armstrong, "Malagasy place name, in the seventeenth century... Qm:iv sv Amo, No 17-20 1983-8-1, 43, 59.

Compiled by Linda Duvenage, under the direction of Helene Vollegraaff (South African Cultural Historical Museum) and Prof Nigel Worden (Dept. of History, University of Cape Town). The source documentation was the monthly tabulation of Company slave deaths, included in the series of Avesiauch in the Cape Archives Depot, Cape Town.

I am indebted to Viliya Teelock for supplying this information. The crucial source is the [Aurmus Archives HB 16 series ff 11] value (see next note) used HB 16, piece 3, p 18.

J. Veteu, 'Considérations sur les expositions d'esclaves malgaches vers les Mascariques au XVIII^e siècle', in Michel Mollat, ed., *Société et commerce en Océan Indien* et dans l'Océan indien. Actes du Huitième Colloque international d'histoire maritime, Beirut, 1966 (Paris, S.E.V.P.E., 1970), 539.

Personal communication 5 Oct. 2000.

⁵ I am grateful to V. Teelock for giving me access to this, and for the abstract of the 1835 census.

¹ Personal communication from V. Teelock, 5 Oct. 2000.

The Origins of Malagasy Arriving at Mauritius and Reunion, 1770-1820: Expanding the History of Mascarene Slavery

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The wealth and power of Isle de France is dependent on Madagascar.
(Due de Praslin).¹

Of all the places where [Ile de France] trades, the only one that is indispensable to its present constitution is Madagascar, because of its slaves and cattle. Madagascar's islanders once contented themselves with bad muskets, but today they want Spanish pistols: everyone perfects themselves.
(Bernardin de Smm-Prerre).²

It is well known that during the late eighteenth century Madagascar was one of the major suppliers of slaves to the Mascarene islands. J. F. Millot has estimated that 15 percent of the slaves arriving in the Mascarenes originated from the Grand Island, going to their west. Less well known are the Malagasy origins of these forced migrants to the Indian Ocean islands and the effects of the slave trade on the Malagasy communities from which they derived. Because enslavement required the movement of victims after their capture, the slave trade inevitably linked societies of slave capture and those of slave destination. This linkage consisted of both economic and cultural dimensions. The demand for slave labor in the French colonies of Isle de France and Bourbon, therefore, profoundly affected the lives not only of those who fell victim to enslavement, but of those who were left behind in Madagascar. The history of highland Madagascar is part of the history of slavery in the Mascarene islands. Here, the impact of the Mascarene slave trade upon the communities of highland Madagascar, where a significant proportion of Malagasy slaves bound for the Mascarenes originated, is examined. Highland Madagascar is the starting point and the origins of Malagasy slaves considered an important dimension of the history of slavery in Mauritius and Reunion.

French Empire in the Indian Ocean

French ships of the Compagnie des Indes first rounded the Cape of Good Hope in the early seventeenth century, concentrating their efforts on Madagascar and the Mascarene islands.⁵ During the early years of its presence in the Indian Ocean, the Compagnie was more interested in the economic potential of Madagascar. Rigault, the founder of the monopoly Compagnie, had envisioned French colonies of trade in Madagascar as the Compagnie's primary goal. Pursuing its early vision of lucrative colonization in Madagascar, the Compagnie organized and financed several settlement schemes, at Fort Dauphin in southeast Madagascar during the second half of the seventeenth century.⁶

When by the late seventeenth century, violence broke out between irascible French colonists and local Malagasy thus scuttling grandiose visions for a thriving "France orientale" based at Fort Dauphin, the directors of the Compagnie took possession first of Ile Bourbon in 1663 and then of Ile de France in 1721. Given their recent and bitter confrontations with indigenous people in southeast Madagascar, the directors were particularly encouraged by the absence of a native population on the small islands. The Compagnie envisioned turning a profit from tropical agriculture in the Mascarenes. Despite the Compagnie's modest plans for the Mascarenes, however, the islands languished in economic mediocrity well into the eighteenth century. By the end of the first third of the eighteenth century the population of Ile de France comprised a mere 190 Europeans, 648 slaves, and some slave maroons.⁶ By mid-century however, a modestly increasing number of Compagnie ships began to call at island ports and European immigration to the Mascarenes picked up marginally.⁷

Economic development, however, was hindered by the very condition that had attracted the Compagnie to the Mascarenes in the first place: the absence of an indigenous population. Europeans seeking fortune there were aplenty, but who would actually cultivate the envisioned plantations? Without an indigenous or immigrant population that could be coerced into plantation labor, the colonies would not thrive. These problems once again shifted the Compagnie's attention westward toward Madagascar, the nearest populated land mass where agents of the Compagnie had already been trading and unsuccessfully colonizing for nearly a century. From the early decades of French occupation in the Mascarenes, then, Madagascar came to serve as "a warehouse or general reserve" of food and labor

for the two small islands.⁸ By the mid-eighteenth century, French economic interest in Madagascar was transformed. From the primary object of colonial desires, the grand island and its people were relegated to playing a support role for colonial development in the Mascarenes.

The Mascarene Supply Trade

Seasonal rhythms of trade between Madagascar and the Mascarenes were largely governed by weather and climatic patterns in the western Indian Ocean. Because both Madagascar and the Mascarenes lie within the hurricane belt of the southwestern Indian Ocean, violent storms there during the austral summer (lasting from December 10 May) usually rendered navigation treacherous.⁹ Anchoring along Madagascar's east coast also proved difficult during the summer, for in that season the winds shift from the southeast to the northeast and the open roadsteads of the nearly linear seaboard provide inadequate protection for sailing vessels.¹⁰ The austral summer is also the rainiest season in the Malagasy interior. Due to the poor state of passageways along the principal commercial corridors of the island, and especially through the eastern forest, inland travel during the summer was nearly impossible. Because merchants could not move about easily during the summer, inland commerce was restricted to the dry winter months between June and November when passage was comparatively easy.¹¹ The rains likewise brought malarial fevers with great frequency to unseasoned Europeans and to Malagasy highlanders held at the east coast as captives. Merchants who ventured to remain on Madagascar's east coast and survived several consecutive summers developed a partial immunity to malaria, but they seldom cared to maintain highland Malagasy captives there between November and April lest they perish of fever (like Europeans, transient highlanders possessed little resistance to malaria and their mortality rates at the east coast could be startlingly high, sometimes fifty percent during the first year for persons never before resident there).¹² In light of the unpropitious weather and the risk of disease, many foreign merchants temporarily removed to the Mascarenes to snout the malarial summer. For all these reasons, few Mascarene ships sailed to and from Madagascar between December and May.¹³

Like the trade in slaves from Senegambia to the Americas, the slave trade from central Madagascar to the Mascarenes developed out of a much broader spectrum of commercial relationships.¹⁴ Early Mascarene supply trade along Madagascar's

east coast consisted primarily of exports of rice and beef.¹⁵ Export items of secondary importance included pork, timber, raffia cloth, raffia gunny sacks, raffia twine (raffia is a kind of palm tree), coffee, and gum copal.¹⁶ The prohibitive cost of transportation by human portage from the interior of Madagascar to the east coast, which could easily double or triple the price of food supplies, meant that rice purchased by Mascarene merchants derived principally from surpluses produced along the coast.¹⁷ Although the amount of rice available at any one coastal location varied dramatically from year to year, the most productive areas were Betanimena just to the south of Tamatave, the Iharana and Ombe Rivers near Foulpomte, the region around Fenenge, and Anongil Bay.¹⁸ Little or no rice could be obtained north of Cap de l'Esc.¹⁹ Judging by merchant's accounts, supplies of rice for export increased markedly between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In 1773 total export supplies of rice along the east coast were estimated at more than 1,250 metric tons; in 1784, 750 tons of rice were obtained from the region between Tamatave and Foulpomte alone.²⁰ In 1789 Trauants Guard and Le Guenne claimed—optimistically—characteristically under the right circumstances the Mascarenes might obtain a combined total of more than 2,800 tons of rice from Tamatave, Foulpomte, Fenenge, Antongil Bay, and Angony.²¹ In 1807 rice actually purchased by Mascarene merchants amounted to 1,000 tons from Tamatave, 400 tons from Foulpomte, and 600 tons from Fenenge.²² In 1808 the export potential of the east coast north of Tamatave was evaluated at 2,500 tons annually,²³ and that of Ile Ste. Marie and Rantabe at 1,000 tons.²⁴

Marketed by men, rice was produced primarily by coastal women and slaves on the sides of hills (tavy) and in marshy areas called *horuka*, where soil partitions were raised to control the water.²⁵ Coastal people generally constructed *horuka* up to several kilometers behind the shore along rivers meandering into the seaboard plain.²⁶ Rice farmers completed their annual *grande récolte* during April and May at the onset of the drier season.²⁷ After farmers evaluated their crop, they began selling surpluses to the French in May and June. Europeans purchased all available surplus rice within a few months and little was again available until the next harvest.²⁸ Rice was priced according to its quality and by means of an elaborate bargaining process. Export rice of two general types—white and *gamelle* (a unique Malagasy variety, reddish colored)—were each further divided into several

subsidiary qualities. Malagasy fanners and rice merchants negotiated prices for a trade item called a *gamelle* that could vary with each transaction but usually

weighed between five and ten *livres*, although sometimes it could reach as high as thirty.²⁹ In an attempt to hedge inflation on the Mascarenes by reducing the costs of imported food, Compagnie officials normally published ceiling prices merchants could pay their Malagasy suppliers for a *gamelle* of rice. Independently minded traders, however, resented official intrusions into the market³⁰ and circumvented them by negotiating trade *gamelles* of different weights.³¹ Rice was normally exchanged for manufactured trade goods such as muskets, cotton textiles, gunpowder, mirrors, flints, bullets, knives, and handkerchiefs.³² Once they purchased rice, merchants had it packed in locally produced raffia gunny sacks for transport to the Mascarenes.

Although cattle supplied to the Mascarenes exuded through the east coast, the area of supply spanned the entire northern half of Madagascar. Some cattle intended for the export trade were raised along the east coast itself.³³ A significant minority of export cattle originated from the inland Ankay plain lying between the east coast and the central Malagasy highlands (homeland of the Bezanozano people). The majority, however, hailed from the Sakalava kingdom of Boma on Madagascar's northwest coast.³⁴ Losses of cattle due to "thievery along the often treacherous journeys to the coast could be particularly high, yet the trade remained profitable for the Bezanozano and Sakalava cattle ranchers who earned a living from it."³⁵ Once they reached the east coast, merchant ranchers grazed their cattle at collection points near major ports and eventually loaded them onto European vessels.³⁶ Sailing ships normally charged between 200 and 500 cattle each and accomplished between one and three return trips a year, sustaining an average ship-board stock mortality of twenty-five percent on each crossing.³⁷ Malagasy owners bartered their cattle, like rice, for arms, ammunition, European manufactures, and Indian textiles. Merchants reported that live cattle supplies at the coast generally varied from four to six thousand head each trading season during the last third of the eighteenth century, but estimates (some of them retrospective) vary considerably.³⁸ In 1768 officers of the French Government estimated the cattle trade at between 1,000 and 5,000 head.³⁹ In 1792 Dumaine reported that 3,288 live cattle were purchased, of which 1,989 had been exchanged for 130 barrels of gunpowder, 250 muskets, and 100 pieces of blue cloth.⁴⁰ During the first decade of the nineteenth century some 2,000 live cattle were annually loaded onto Mascarene-bound ships at Foulpomte.⁴¹

Live animals were the most valuable form of beef export but salted provisions, termed *satauoos*, were normally taken on in significant proportion to live.⁴² (CXK.)

Mayeur, for example, claimed that just over 6,200 head of live cattle were exported annually from eastern Madagascar between 1770 and 1777 inclusive but, counting *sokosons*, 8,000 to 11,000 from Foulpomte alone.¹⁵ Madagascar was the Mascarenes' staple food supplier.

Along with rice and beef, slaves were a primary export from the east coast of Madagascar. The first recorded foreign purchases of eastern Malagasy slaves occurred during the early seventeenth century, effected by Dutch vessels on their way to the newly founded colony of Batavia.¹⁶ Until 1770 the number of slaves purchased in Madagascar by French merchants supplying the Mascarenes was not large, a yearly average of some 500 between 1729 and 1768.¹⁶ During the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century most Malagasy slaves transferred to the Mascarenes, like almost all of the rice, originated in the narrow eastern coastal belt. These early captives entering the Mascarene supply trade were largely victims of conflict among the coastal chiefdoms of eastern Madagascar. Later in the century, many slaves were conducted into the region of Foulpomte along interior trade routes from the northwest coast.¹⁷ In general, however, the low-level Mascarene demand for slaves before 1770 seldom extended far into the interior of Madagascar. All this changed during the last third of the eighteenth century. Economic development at Ile de France and Bourbon from 1767 transformed patterns of trade and slave supply in the western Indian Ocean, dramatically increasing the demand for slaves from Madagascar. The interplay between elevated Mascarene demand and political developments in Madagascar shifted the source of servile labor far into the Malagasy highlands.

The Shifting Geography of Enslavement

The economic fortune of the Mascarenes brightened when, crippled by ongoing financial losses and unable to properly administer the islands, the Compagnie was forced to cede administration of the Mascarenes to the French crown in 1767. Two years later the French government issued an ordinance abolishing the trade monopoly of the Compagnie at the Mascarenes and allowing all French citizens the right to engage in commerce to and from Mascarene ports.¹⁸ Trade liberalization triggered a sustained period of economic growth in the islands that was seriously interrupted only by periodic English blockades during the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars.¹⁹ The European population of the Mascarenes soared after 1770. Concurrently, the number of privately owned vessels arriving at Mascarene ports

more than doubled between 1773 and 1791 from 152 to 361.²⁰ Although the number of these vessels sailing annually between the islands and Madagascar varied dramatically, yearly arrivals from Madagascar more than tripled, from less than ten during the 1770s to thirty, forty, and even fifty or more by the turn of the century.²¹

Mascarene trade with Madagascar not only grew in absolute terms, it became proportionately more important over time. Until about 1785 only some five percent of the privately owned vessels arriving in Mascarene ports hailed from Madagascar. After 1785, however, there was an appreciable rise in this proportion to about fifteen percent.²² Mascarene demand for food and slaves from Madagascar expanded significantly in about 1770, rose rapidly from about 1780, declined again for an interim of five years between 1795 and 1800, and then grew dramatically until the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century. The available data confirm contemporary observations that the Mascarenes "flourished with the help of Madagascar."²³ As shipping costs declined and maritime routes between the Mascarenes and Europe emerged more frequent and reliable, plantation agriculture proved increasingly profitable. Colonists on Ile de France and Bourbon expanded export-oriented cultivation of a variety of crops, including coffee, cotton, sugar, indigo and spices.²⁴ To expand plantation production colonists increased their purchases of slaves, thereby underscoring European demand for servile labor on the Malagasy coast. In 1810 Britain captured the Mascarenes in its Indian Ocean campaigns of the Napoleonic wars. Although the importation of slaves to British possessions had been prohibited by an act of Parliament in 1807, the slave trade to the Mascarenes continued at even higher levels than during the previous decades as sugar production entered a boom from about 1815 on.²⁵ The slave trade reached a higher level than ever before. Just as Radama cut the supply from his highland Malagasy sources in 1820.

Most of the Mascarene supply trade was concentrated along the northern portion of Madagascar's east coast, primarily between Tananarive and Cap d'Ambre. Three principal reasons account for this geographical concentration of the commerce. First, winds and currents just north of Madagascar rendered return voyages from the Mascarenes to Madagascar's northwest coast time-consuming and unprofitable; they restricted the supply trade primarily to Madagascar's east coast. Along the virtually barrier-free east coast, however, only a limited number of routes between

Tamatave and Antongil Bay offered adequate protection to anchored vessels during the austral winter. The principal locations of these anchorages, were Tamatave, Foulpointe, Fenenge, Vahambo, Tmungue, Semte-Manc, ilananara and Antongil Bay. Most of the anchorages were created by a partially protective headland projecting outward into the sea, perpendicular to the beach. Outreached headlands offered a fair defense from the prevailing southeasterly winds of the austral winter on their northern sides but little or no protection during the summer, when winds shifted to the northeasterly. Thus the geomorphology of the coast played an important role in determining precisely where and when trade could take place. Finally, the differing sociopolitical organizations and predispositions toward enslavement among eastern coastal Malagasy societies served to render certain areas more attractive to European merchants than others. Although the French identified Fort Dauphin in southeast Madagascar as a potential area of supply early in their ventures into the Indian Ocean, the people of that region were loathe to sell many captives across the sea. (This may have stemmed, in part, from a long history of French violence in southeastern Madagascar.) Throughout the eighteenth century and into the first decades of the nineteenth, Fort Dauphin seldom yielded more than 50 to 100 export slaves annually. Major commercial ports like Tamatave and Foulpointe benefited from their access to productive sources of slaves and food.

Overseas trade afforded people living along Madagascar's northeast coast opportunities to accumulate wealth and profitably dispose with surpluses of rice and beef. As a result, virtually all chiefs along the coast welcomed commercial opportunities with seafaring Europeans. Much of the proceeds from the export supply trade were distributed by merchant chiefs among clients to generate and maintain ties of political allegiance. Through this process, external trade emerged as a key force in coastal politics enabling the amalgamation of chiefdoms into a political confederation—the Betsirarsaka kingdom—during the early eighteenth century. When the Mascarene demand for rice, beef, and slaves began to increase during the mid-eighteenth century, therefore, Malagasy control over scarce anchorages between Tamatave and Antongil Bay became even more hotly disputed than it had before. During this period most Mascarene merchants operating in northeastern Madagascar relocated their operations to Foulpointe, the Betsirarsaka capital. Foulpointe offered one of the better anchorages along the northeastern coast, maintaining trade links from the highland interior and the northwest coast terminated there. By the late eighteenth century, Foulpointe offered plentiful

supplies of rice, sugar, and other foodstuffs. The potential hub of Betsirarsaka politics, Foulpointe emerged as the leading regional center of the Mascarene supply trade. In 1756 the governor of Île de France dispatched a *revissent des traves* to Foulpointe. An employee of the Compagnie, the *reinscurties traves* was responsible for maintaining reliable relations with Betsirarsaka chiefs, convincing them to supply slaves and food to Mascarene merchants, setting uniform trading prices and practices, and regulating conflicts between European traders and local communities.

In mid-century Betsirarsaka chiefs had administered the food and slave export trade in a relatively coordinated and cooperative fashion. When their leader Ratsimilaho died in 1750 however, the consensual traditions of the confederation began to squabble among one another and the precarious coalition lost its coherence. This problem, as one French observer noted, was that "since these chiefdoms are without any [written] constitution, a king becomes king only by the unanimous agreement of the chiefs." Deprived of their charismatic leader and under the influence of Mascarene merchants who consistently and effectively meddled in Betsirarsaka politics, the chiefs fell short on agreement. Ratsimilaho's successors commuted to reside at Foulpointe, but their authority waned considerably. Just when Mascarene merchants were being pressed to provide larger quantities of rice, sugar, and beef to Île de France and Bourbon in the years after trade liberalization in 1769, the trading environment at Foulpointe began to deteriorate. French *travailleurs* resident on Madagascar's coast attempted to increase the number of locally-supplied slaves by encouraging disputatious Betsirarsaka chiefs to wage war against one another and to sell the prisoners thus captured. The long-term effect of pitting warring chiefs on the coast, however, was to increase social disunity and the disruption of the food and slave trade rather than to improve it.

Instead of ending war between chiefs, Betsirarsaka chiefs retained them as a ransom to change for members of their families who had been captured or might potentially be captured. Almost predictably, therefore, production plummeted during the 1770s and there were fewer local cultural surpluses for Europeans to purchase. The coastal victors in local conflicts routinely destroyed the loser's granaries and plundered their stores of rice. Nicolas Bataillon noted that Mascarene ship captains were frequently forced to return to the island with empty

vessels.⁶ A state of war among eastern chiefdoms also rendered the security of Europeans who traveled away from permanent residences most precarious. Both inland and on the coast, merchant caravans were the frequent targets of mobile

bandits. Markets in the interior remained unreachable.¹ Bersimisaraka chiefs dreamed to share in the wealth of trade but found it difficult in their disunion to accumulate the capital necessary to outfit their own trading expeditions. Recalling a pervasive climate of insecurity that had reduced deliveries of rice, beef, and

captives after 1760, Mayeur claimed in 1807 that the east coast was "governed by an ants' nest of little despots."² By the later decades of the eighteenth century, *trauants* practice of exploiting Bersimisaraka political tensions to increase the supply of servile labor not only reduced the number of available slaves but also cut into exports of rice and beef, generating anxieties at the Mascarenes.

With political insecurity reducing commercial opportunities for Europeans at the coast, Mascarene traders and allied Malagasy merchants searched further afield for fresh sources of slaves. The quest led them into the densely populated highlands of central Madagascar. Why coastal merchants considered the interior a promising source of slaves at a time when supplies were declining at Foulponte and elsewhere must be sought in the politics of central Madagascar during the mid-eighteenth century, a time when highland Malagasy societies were politically divided much as the Bersimisaraka were. Historical narratives from central Madagascar characterize highland political disunity during the mid-eighteenth century through the metaphor of a magnificent united kingdom torn asunder. According to the story, an astute agricultural innovator named Andnamasmavalona succeeded in creating a single prosperous kingdom in the center of the island during the early eighteenth century. The tradition recounts how, as he approached death, Andnamasmavatona could not determine to whom among his four sons he would bequeath his kingdom. When he expired, therefore, he provided for the equal division of the kingdom among all four of his beloved sons, thereby fracturing the former union into multiple minikings.³

When Europeans first entered the Malagasy highlands in the mid-eighteenth century, sovereigns of the several minikings there were competing to strengthen and expand their political domains. Political contention in central Madagascar was structural to that obtaining among the Bersimisaraka during the same period, but it led to a strikingly different outcome. Whereas war prisoners among

the Bersimisaraka were held locally by groups of kin who hoped to use them to free their own enslaved members, captives in highland Madagascar were controlled by powerful kings without such concerns. Like their coastal counterparts, highland

Malagasy sovereigns sought opportunistically, for accumulating trade wealth. A rapidly

increasing demand for slaves at the Mascarenes dovetailed with political conflict in central Madagascar. In a quest for new sources of wealth to distribute along

networks of political support, some highland Malagasy leaders began to sell war

captives toward the coast. By 1777 when Mayeur traveled to Aruananarivo, highland Madagascar supplied a full two-thirds of the slaves shipped to the Mascarenes through Madagascar's east coast.

The Parties to Trade

Pirates lingering about Madagascar's coasts during the late seventeenth century were among the earliest brokers of Malagasy slaves to European sailors at the Mascarenes.⁴ Ejected from the Caribbean, some pirates moved into Malagasy chiefly families and assimilated themselves and their descendants into powerful political structures along the east coast (there being no competition along that coast from Muslim traders). Pirates and their descendants (locally known as the *anamafata*, from *anamka*, child, and *malata*, mulatto) arranged sales of slaves from coastal suppliers to European merchants serving most destinations in the western hemisphere. Much of the Mascarene demand for food and labor during the late seventeenth century was channeled through such European outlaws.⁵ After the second decade of the eighteenth century, when Mascarene economies experienced their first successes in tropical agriculture, the French regained an interest in Madagascar as a granary and labor reserve. They attempted to displace the pirates and control the trade through a Compagnie des Indes monopoly and direct trade colonization schemes on the Malagasy coast. Nearly every large-scale French attempt at direct colonization in Madagascar, however, foundered in violence.⁶ When the trade monopoly of the Compagnie des Indes was abolished in 1769, the royal government assumed an exclusive right to conduct the supply trade in Madagascar. In practice, contracts for the royal monopoly in food and slaves were frequently signed with private firms, and Mascarene authorities allowed many private traders, or *traaants*, to negotiate for slaves, cattle, and rice, and ready them for shippers. Although private trade was freely opened to French citizens only after 1796, individual Mascarene merchants had long played a vital role in the

Madagascar trade. By 1787 there were ten *trauants* resident at Foulponte, by

1792, twenty." The number increased even further after the 1796 *bberabzauon*. In 1807 the French *agent commercial* (who had replaced the *regisseur des traites*) enumerated six *traitants* living permanently and six seasonally at Foulpointe, and seven permanently and ten seasonally at Tamatave, for a total of twenty-nine.⁸⁰

Because many of the documents they generated found their way into colonial archives in Maunuu, France, and England, French *traitants* are the most visible actors in the mercantile system that moved slaves from the Malagasy interior to the coast. Yet they were but one set of persons with interests in the Malagasy slave trade. Sovereigns in the highland Malagasy interior anempred to control the drift of slaves from their dominions. Like Amboarsmarcfy at Antananarivo, many of these rulers were keen to attract slave merchants into their realms. Between the Malagasy highlands and the east coast, for example, various chiefs and big men sought to manage the movement of capuves through their dominions and derive an income from the commerce as it passed in both directions. Then, of course, there were the merchants themselves who moved slaves between the interior and the coast. Contrary to the dominant pattern in most of the African continent where Africans or *militu* populations specialized in the movement of slaves to the coast, some of these merchants were Europeans. Mascarene *trants* organized and led some caravans into the interior of Madagascar and purchased slaves directly from highland suppliers. *Traitant-led* caravans were composed primarily of Malagasy porters and associated merchants from the east coast of the island." While some Malagasy merchants operated under the supervision of *trants*, many participated independently in the trade and probably moved the majority of slaves eastward toward the coast. Among the Malagasy merchants, most until about 1800 were Betsimisaraka from the east coast who maintained alliances with Mascarene traders, accessing French mercantile credit by right of their homeland's proximity to the coast. Over time, however, an increasing number of merchants from highland Madagascar itself, often acting on behalf of or sponsored by kings from the interior, created a commercial niche for themselves in the export trade. Highland merchants came to significantly displace coastal traders during the early nineteenth century. Along the sinuous trade routes linking the Malagasy coast with the interior, a variety of individuals with interests in the slave trade hovered, some of them stationary, others on the move. Let me consider each of these participants in turn.

Highland Malagasy who entered the Mascarene trade as capuves were enslaved by king, social elites, and later by more common people through a variety of methods I examine elsewhere.⁸¹ For the most part these slaves were exchanged by highland Malagasy suppliers to itinerant merchants who moved them eastward, but sometimes to highland kings sought to control it so as to maximize the revenue that flowed into their kingdoms as a result. *Trants* who ventured into the Malagasy highlands to purchase slaves directly from local suppliers, usually did so with the permission and cooperation of the rulers through whose realms they traveled, whether or not they personally owned the slaves sold to merchants. Malagasy sovereigns attempted to control the trade by decreeing exchange values and requiring merchants to request trading permission through presentation of gifts, sometimes exceedingly lavish ones." Rights to purchase slaves and transport them out of the kingdom were then normally granted in exchange for the payment of a "taxe des noirs" for each captive taken eastward."

British missionaries explained the fate of highland Malagasy export slaves in the following terms.

When the traders had obtained a sufficient number of slaves at the capital [i.e. Antananarivo], or any part of the interior, by purchase or exchange of goods, they were conveyed in parties varying from fifty to two thousand, down to the sea-coast for exportation. On commencing the journey, their wrists were usually fastened by means of an iron band. They were then corded one slave to another, and through the whole distance compelled to carry provisions on their heads. Thus driven like cattle to the coast, they no sooner arrived there, than they were slowed away in ships, and conveyed to their final and fatal scene of misery and toil, unless their sufferings terminated in death during the passage.

The journey eastward was not simple as this passage suggests, for the geography and ecology of eastern Madagascar facilitated local control over the movement of people and goods. All they trekked eastward from the highlands to the coast, merchants and slaves traversed two distinct ecological zones. Just beyond the modern town of Manjakandiana, a steep escarpment plunges several hundred meters over the distance of a few kilometers. Beyond that escarpment lies a narrow plain oriented north-south extending some thirty kilometers wide and several

hundred long. Called the Ankav, the southern part of this expansive plain is replete with hills that rise from the surrounding level. Through the Ankav runs the Mangoro River, flowing first southward, then eastward through the mountains, emptying into the Indian Ocean near Mahanoro. Persons moving across the Ankav plain could be easily monitored from the promontories that dot it. Employing the unique topography of their homeland, Bezanozano chiefs who ruled this fertile zone attempted to establish control over commerce passing between central Madagascar and the east coast." In 1790 French trader Dumaine reported considerable difficulty passing with his slave caravans through the Bezanozano chiefdoms of the Ankav plain." Ideally, Bezanozano chiefs permitted coastal merchants to venture no further than the eastern edge of the Ankav plain, and highland Malagasy suppliers, who lay on the western side of the Ankav, no further than their western border." When Maveur traveled into central Madagascar in 1777, he chose to march far south of the Ankav to circumvent the Bezanozano altogether (he crossed the highlands through the very southern tip of Bezanozanoland)." Caravans that attempted to break through Bezanozano territory without securing permission and paying customs tolls were often attacked." In 1807 Bezanozano bandits attacked *truitant* Chardenoux's caravan and seized twenty captive women and five men." As strategically located intermediaries to the trade between the highlands and the coast, Bezanozano chiefs employed the geography of the Ankav to derive an income from the slave trade.

East of the Ankav lay a tropical forest that blanketed the mountainous transition between the high Ankav plain and the low coastal areas that lay just above sea level. Different from the open flat Ankav, forest ecology was equally suited to regulating the movement of trade. Surreptitious travel by slave caravans, even under cover of thick rain forest, was practically impossible. Individuals carrying loads, herding cattle, or moving coffles of slaves were constrained by the density of vegetation to employ established passageways. Because of this constraint on free movement, the Ambarivolo people (literally, "those beneath the bamboo") who inhabited the mountainous forest and derived their livelihood from it were able to exert significant control over the movement of trade through their homeland.⁹² Unlike the Bezanozano, who preferred to function as trading intermediaries by holding slaves between transactions, Ambarivolo allowed merchants and their caravans to pass through the forest but charged tolls, collected gifts, served as porters, and embraced opportunities to sell food and supplies to transiting trade

caravans." In 1808 *nouant* Legardere reported that caravans normally halted for two days at the *Antaninivolo* town of Beforona, allowing porters to rest and servants to prepare ropes of vegetal matter for fastening staves together on the return trip. The chief of Beforona routinely collected a trade tax of one pruster per slave exiting eastward through his territories.... During the era of the slave trade, Ambarivolo villages crystallized along primary forest pathways. The openness and ease of sight offered by the Ankav plain and the necessity for employing defined paths in the forest offered people inhabiting each ecological zone a degree of ease in establishing control over and taking economic advantage of trade passing through their homelands.

At the coast, Beumusaraka chiefs also sought to derive a revenue from the slave trade by assessing tolls on merchants conveying captives through their realms. Sylvain Roux, the French *agent commercial* in 1807, noted that a central coastal chief named Maroube had established himself as an important crossing on the Ivondro river at a place called Bocanne, just kilometers south of the trade entrepôt of Tarnatave. In his strategic position at a water crossing, Maroube appropriated communications between Tamatave and the Ambarivolo, obliging all passing merchants to reward him with tolls and gifts." Roux and other *travellers* often noted that Beumusaraka chiefs did not directly tax their own people. Instead, they relied for their principal income upon trade and a variety of payments from merchants residing in and passing through their domains. In this way, they quickly became dependent on the Indian Ocean trade for both their livelihood and the reproduction of their power.

Because individuals with competing commercial interests banded for control over various segments of the ocean-bound trade, some slaves traveling eastward changed hands at ecological, ethnic, and political transitions.... During the first years of the trade, highland merchants marched their slaves to the western edge of Bezanozanoland. There slaves were purchased by Bezanozano intermediaries who held them until Ambarivolo. Beumusaraka, and European merchants arrived to make purchases of slaves and locally raised cattle. Slaves and cattle were then marched to east coast ports and delivered to French merchants. Because Bezanozano and Ambarivolo chiefs benefited from their advantageous position between inland and coastal traders, and particularly because Bezanozano merely held slaves between transactions instead of moving them toward the coast, they

were deeply resented by inland kings and itinerant coastal merchants alike. On occasion before 1780, merchants like Meyeur found their way directly into the highland Malagasy interior. Because they were forced to dodge Bezanozano and Ambamvolo in the way, such early direct encounters with highland suppliers were probably rare. French merchants who successfully reached highland kings before 1780 were keen to determine the potential of inland societies to supply slaves, and they communicated their desire for slaves directly to those able to supply them.

In an effort to enhance their mobility and security along the commercial routes in the interior, itinerant European travelers were quick to enlist Malagasy allies. Because success in the Madagascar trade required persistence and an ability to forge trusting relationships with potential Malagasy supplier and merchant allies, most travelers learned enough of the Malagasy language to obviate the need for interpreters. In their private journals they sometimes freely exchanged Malagasy

and French words. The *Grand Dictionnaire de Madagascar*, a manuscript

Malagasy-French dictionary drawn up by Bartholomew Huet de Proberville after the turn of the nineteenth century, was based primarily on French merchant's knowledge of the Malagasy dialects of the eastern coast and interior.⁹⁷ Blood brotherhood, the Malagasy practice of *fandra*, was a favorite strategy merchants and their Malagasy suppliers employed to cement commercial relationships with strangers.⁹⁸ Despite (or because of) their competence in Malagasy cultures, travelers soon discovered that Malagasy women proved highly reliable and efficient trade associates in addition to cherished companions and sexual partners. The wives of Malagasy chiefs traveling along the trade routes, for example, often accepted advances of trade goods and readied supplies of food for slave-laden caravans on their return to the coast.⁹⁹ Travelers obtained some of their most valuable intelligence, including reports that local men were planning to plunder caravans, from women along the primary trade corridors.¹⁰⁰ Local women commonly took up European merchants in temporary sexual unions. Daniel Lescarlier, who visited the east coast in August 1792, noted the following about these "wives of European traders," or *vadinibazaha* as they were called in Malagasy:

A white arrives in Madagascar: he chooses, himself, a woman, who, from then on, moreover, regards herself as attached to him, and this engagement lasts

generally with fidelity until the departure of the foreigner from the country. It is she who looks after his interests and directs his business. It is by her as well that all commercial transactions with the natives are conducted. A European would have many difficulties concluding his business without the intervention of his faithful companion, who follows him everywhere. This type of contract, the only marriage they know, is terminated at the departure of the foreigner, with the same facility that it was concluded at his arrival.

In exchange for tying foreigners into local communities, providing them access to land, smoothing difficult relationships with local leaders, and turning caravans with needed supplies and food along the way, female trade partners created personal income and a network of friends and associates for themselves. These *femmes de troupe*, as the francophone community termed them, were key players in the slave trade.¹⁰¹ Although nearly invisible in most of the documentation historians employ to reconstruct this period, *vadinibazaha* were "very useful for

our interests," noted Meyeur, essential allies to the profitable success of the

Mascarene trade.¹⁰² Well-known traders like Bartholomew Hugon never ventured anywhere without their Malagasy female business associates.¹⁰³ In the final decade of the trade (1810-1820) some travelers even engaged women to lead their caravans into the highland Madagascar interior.¹⁰⁴ The importance of female business companions to the success of the Mascarene supply trade was later recognized by French colonial officials who during the early nineteenth century constanterly encouraged unions between European traders and local Malagasy women.¹⁰⁵ While the majority of captives were male, Malagasy women from the coast and from the hinterland areas that slaves transited on their dreary march from the highlands to the east coast all eagerly sought the opportunities for companionship in slaving. Like women slavers in the coastal areas of certain parts of west Africa, female slavers in Madagascar advanced their business interests and social status through alliance with foreign merchants.¹⁰⁶

Employing a variety of social strategies, much as their Muslim counterparts did from the Swahili coast in the early nineteenth century, travelers secured the right to make direct slave-purchasing expeditions into the interior by about 1800. Yet they continued to suffer periodic setbacks and endemic insecurity along trade routes until the very end of the trade in the second decade of the nineteenth century. In Bezoanaland still separate slave caravans conducted by European

tranants were attacked between 1803 and 1807, resulting in the loss of 16 captives, most of them women.¹⁰ "Our commerce at Tamarave is absolutely destroyed if the roads to Ancove are not free," complained Sylvain Roux in late 1807.¹¹ while they were solving passage problems through the interior, *tranants* faced challenges at the coast. In Foulpointe the French establishment and its associates came under pressure from Zakavola, who had risen to the local chieftainship in 1791. "Rich in need and enviously defiant," one French merchant complained, coastal Malagasy jealously guarded their role as brokers between inland suppliers and the French at the east coast.¹² Following several acrimonious disagreements between himself and Mascarene *tranants*, Zakavola attacked the residence of the French *agent commercial* and attempted to assassinate several resident European traders.¹³ At about this time Mascarene merchants began to flee southward from Foulpointe to escape Zakavola's depredations, establishing themselves at Tamatave. The demise of Foulpointe as the externally recognized center of export trade was sealed when in 1796 British warships appeared off the town and pummeled the French *palissade* (walled fort) with cannon.¹⁴ When the British navy left of the fortress, local Betsimisaraka burnt to the ground.¹⁵ Along with the destruction of the French establishment at Foulpointe in 1796 and the flight of its traders southward, the preference of highland merchants for the new export center at Tamarave insured that by 1800 it emerged as the new commercial entrepôt on the east coast to which most Mascarene vessels seeking slaves and food ventured. In 1807 the French government accorded Tamatave official recognition by making it the new seat of

its *agent commercial*.¹⁶ Although Foulpointe's king Sasse and French *trautants*

earned their mutual amrosomes well into the nineteenth century,¹⁷ Tamatave remained the premier port through which highland slaves were channeled toward the Mascarenes until the end of the trade in 1820.¹⁸

Credit provided a necessary lubricant for the movement of highland Malagasy slaves eastward toward the coast. Lines of credit ran like pipelines into the Malagasy interior, tying both participants and victims into the triangular economy of the western Indian Ocean. While some French *trautants* resident at the coast employed their own capital, many borrowed funds at interest from the shipping firms to whom they delivered slaves or from the French government trade representative and a variety of other sources in Madagascar. Merchant creditors tended to remain on the Malagasy coast while those who incurred debts during the course of the trading season were most likely to inhere in search of captives. Sylvain Roux

reported this mercantile tetrarchy, noting in 1807 that six or seven *trallalls peu forimis* (trallalls of bule) (C.11th) routinely traveled into the (Malagasy) highland, on commission for those who, because of their greater wealth, were obliged to undertake the physical toils of a several weeks' expedition. Betsimisaraka merchants also traveled on commission for French *trants*, who backed them with operating capital.¹⁹ In this system of movers and stayers, the majority of merchants who purchased, transported, and sold captives eastward were Betsimisaraka operating on a relatively small scale, obtaining credit advances in silver piasters and trade goods from their European associates. In the beginning of the winter trading season and returning with their cargoes of slaves at the end, they normally returned to their homes without carrying and peddling their wares. Although few data exist to estimate the average size of Betsimisaraka-opened caravans, they were probably of smaller scale than these, reflecting a more modest operating capital. On the other hand, coastal Malagasy merchants tended to cooperate with one another, aggregating their resources and traveling in groups to offer mutual assistance and consult with friends on financial matters.²⁰

From the opposite end of the land route and acting with the permission and assistance of kings in central Madagascar, highland Malagasy merchants also wedged their way into the commerce in captives. Lined by variable capital and, of credit from hinterland kings, highland merchants clearly operated on a

more limited scale than French *trants* did. Over the years, however, they moved

ever larger numbers of slaves toward the east coast.²¹ Two of the chief obstacles facing highland merchants were lack of firmharuv with trading procedures at the east coast, where slaves entered European vessels, and concerted anemph by their coastal Malagasy competitors, to impede their business. Highlanders overcame these difficulties through a variety of strategies. To insure continuity and contact on both ends of the system, some highland merchants created a trade diaspora by settling in Tamatave with their families to coordinate transfers of captives. In 1808, for example, 11 percent of the slaves boarded at Tamatave were delivered to the coast by highland Malagasy merchants acting for king Andrianampoinina.²² Direct cooperation with French *trallalls*, who shared a general interest with highlanders, in bypassing Bezaminjo, Ambamolo, and Betsimisaraka intermediaries, was another way in which highland merchants sought to carve out a role for themselves in the trade. The benefits of this,

cooperation were reciprocal, often highland agents "uh" "horn" *tranaeus* left piasters and trade goods in the Malagasy interior acquired slaves for their French allies. Ji Andnanambo, a local representative of Andnanampomurmerma in the Antanay plain, assured Chardenoux in recovering some of the slave, stolen from his caravan there in 1807, when all of the plundered capives were not returned. Andnanambo threatened to crush Bezenozano chiefs with a simultaneous assault b) French and highland armies converging from opposite directions!" Andnanampomurmerma, the nsmg kmg of the Malagasy interior, often made war on Bezenozano middlemen, claurung (with some justification) that they were but escaped and recalcitrant cattle herders of highland Malagasy reychv!" A highly successful rrenchman monarch, Andnanampomurmerma alternately negotiated with and waged war among the Bezenozano for safe passage of his itinerant merchants. In 1808 the French *agent commercial*, Sylvain Roux, reported that

highland Malagasy merchants routinely paid a local chief 1,000 piasters each year for the right to pass through his territory with their slaves!" When in the early nineteenth century British missionaries observed that "It is obvious that many different parties felt an interest in the continuance of the trade," they understood the local complexities of the commerce in slaves. Slaves were moved from highland Madagascar to the east coast through an intricate maze of competing actors, interests, and strategies.

Silver and Trade Strategies

While textiles of various colors and qualities, muskets, gunpowder, flints, lead bullets, knives, mirrors, brandy, amck (rum), and other manufactures were the

primary imports exchanged for slaves along the east coast before 1769, a slave

suppliers who entered the trade as Mascarene demand increased dramatically thereafter required purchasers to pay in proportion of their capives in European currency, the silver Spanish dollar (called the *anary* or *farantsa* in Madagascar) as authorities in France forbade circulation of French minted currencies outside the metropole. The Spanish piaster emerged as the most commonly used medium of exchange in the Mascarenes." The French Compagnie des Indes did not begin to employ silver piasters in the Indian Ocean until the 1740s, so with no island sources of silver, highland Malagasy turned to external suppliers. The first piaster, to reach central Madagascar "were probably supplied into the interior by Sakalava and Antalaoun merchants "who participated in the trading system of the western Indian Ocean through Madagascar's northwest

coast, acquired silver from Arab, Indian, and European merchants, and then exchanged it for slaves, iron, or textiles from the interior. As late as the mid-nineteenth century silver was valued in the Malagasy highlands primarily for the production of jewelry rather than as a currency of exchange." But when Mascarene merchants projected a fresh demand for slaves from central Madagascar around 1770, highlanders were already familiar with silver coins. Because Madagascar valued silver and employed it in a variety of ways, and because the piaster was an important currency of exchange in the western Indian Ocean, the coin emerged by the middle of the eighteenth century as a convenient medium of comparison (or money of account) for commercial transactions in the Mascarene supply trade. This meant that the values of slaves and European trade goods were usually set in prices of domestic goods, what proportions of various trade goods would be acceptable in payment for delivery of captive).

After 1770 slaves in the Malagasy interior were routinely exchanged for a basket of goods including gunpowder, muskets, textiles, and significant amounts of silver piasters. As suppliers of slaves in the Malagasy interior and merchantry along the way refused to accept payment entirely in kind—demanding quantities of silver among the bundle of goods exchanged for capives—they converted the piaster from a medium of comparison into a currency of exchange. By 1807 one trader reported that slaves were trading for forty-five piasters and two pieces of blue cloth in the highland interior, suggesting that silver currency had come to consume more than eighty percent of the exchange value of capives (valued at five piasters each piece, the two *mece* 10/6 *bleue* in this transaction would have comprised

eighteen percent of the transaction by value).⁴¹ In 1808 Rondeaux indicated that

highlanders generally purchased slaves in exchange for varying quantities of piasters, gunpowder, textiles, and muskets—on that order." This generalization is confirmed by an inventory of *traitant* Lagardere's exchange items established in Antananarivo in 1808. Lagardere's list of trade supplies shows 5,390 piasters and 193 pieces of blue cloth (the latter having a value of 965 piasters at the price of 5 piasters per piece), and thus a piaster to textile value ratio of 85 to 15 percent.⁴² For some reason Lagardere omitted 10 barrels of gunpowder from his inventory, but reported having exchanged 11 (twenty barrels) for 31 *fla* (b). If a value of approximately 85 piasters per barrel, figuring the value of the gunpowder into Lagardere's stock of cloth and piasters, produces a value ratio of 67 percent piasters, 10 percent textiles, and 1 percent gunpowder. *Travailleur*

frequently noted that highland slave suppliers insisted they be paid with "magnificent" silver piasters rather than with mediocre, trade-quality European

manufactures. The negotiating acumen of highland suppliers is captured in the following anti-Semitic journal entry penned by Barthelemy Hugon in 1808.

Sun good weather without clouds. Continued to purchase male and female slaves with great difficulty because one has to speak at great length with these people, who are merchants to the last point. They are so adroit, they mislead, knowing very well how to engage you, caressing their merchandise. Even though you tell them that their slaves do not suit you, they are not at all discouraged. They remain with you, speaking to you mysteriously and often they succeed in seducing you, and you purchase. I believe that I can name them the Jews of Madagascar."¹

The exchange of slaves for overwhelming proportions of silver in the export trade from highland Madagascar contrasts sharply with payment practices in the trans-Atlantic slave trades from Africa, where European currency imports represented on average only about ten to fifteen percent of the basket of goods exchanged for slaves.¹⁵¹

The movement toward piasters as a medium of exchange considerably increased the cost of Malagasy slaves at the Mascarenes and contravened the French mercantile principle that captive labor should never be exchanged for hard currency. Yet shippers and merchants who desired to excel in the business of supplying slaves to the Mascarenes were constrained to pay with silver coins in Madagascar. Liberalization of trade at the Mascarenes in 1769 and the full opening of the Madagascar trade to French citizens in 1796 sent private traders to Madagascar in increasing numbers. During the months of the dry austral winter European merchants who had earlier remained along the coast began to fan out through the Malagasy interior seeking new trade partners. "They have established isolated posts where the natives of the country bring them their slaves, their rice, and their cattle," reported one informant to the governor of the Mascarenes in about 1807. He proceeded to note that "they occasion by this means a commerce of great prejudice to those *trautants* who do not leave the coast."¹⁵² The intense competition that resulted from new commercial practices beyond the regulation of Mascarene authorities both increased prices and persuaded competing slave traders to pay for

slaves with piasters rather than insist on barter and risk forfeiting the sale to a competitor who offered to settle in silver.¹⁵³ A successful Mascarene merchant

operating along the east African coast scoffed at his *truitant* colleagues in

Madagascar who made "cash payments in piasters in haste to be off on their return voyage."¹⁵⁴ Exchanging captives for melted silver rather than a bundle of assorted trade goods increased costs to Mascarene purchasers between twenty-five and fifty percent (depending upon precisely what mix of trade goods was employed) since the prices that European manufactures fetched in Madagascar were considerably higher than those for the same products purchased with silver at the Mascarenes.¹⁵⁶ Malagasy merchants of slave labor commanded a commodity in meager supply in the western Indian Ocean, and they knew they could successfully demand payment in silver from their European clients.¹⁵⁷ The great island's suppliers know how to "put circumstances to their profit," Nicolas Mayeur opined.¹⁵⁸

Shifting focus to consider the interests of the highland Malagasy suppliers of slaves, it is clear that the increasing demand for and exchange value of slaves over the half century before 1820 served as incentives for continued participation in the commerce. One of the ways to judge the steadily rising value of slaves in the Mascarene trade is to compare, over time, the relative prices of captives and cattle, the two primary Malagasy stores of wealth during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1769 Mayeur noted that the price of slaves in east Madagascar was near twenty-five piasters and that of cattle between three and five, depending upon size and condition.¹⁵⁹ Thus, when captives first began to leave central Madagascar for the east coast, slaves were normally exchanging for between five and eight times the value of cattle. In 1807, by contrast, slaves were commonly exchanging for eighty piasters, and cattle for between four and six, making slaves thirteen to twenty times the value of cattle during the first decade of the nineteenth century. While substantial increases in the value of slaves relative to cattle insured that highland suppliers continued to participate in the slave trade, the price differential between slaves offered for sale in the Malagasy highlands and at the coast provided incentives for Malagasy and European merchants to hold and transport them eastward. Mayeur reported in 1787 that slaves could be purchased for some fifty piasters in central Madagascar but were being exchanged for seventy-two at the coast, a mark-up of nearly seventy percent.¹⁶⁰ In a remarkable document produced for the governor of the Mascarenes in 1807, Mayeur described the cycle of trading

greater detail. Because it captures the economics of the slave trade by attention to the strategies of the Malagasy participants, it is worth quoting at length.

Those of the natives who regularly conduct the commerce in slaves in the interior set out on their first voyage in March taking with them trade goods [purchased or advanced on credit from French *travailleurs*] appropriate to the area they are heading for. Because they do not have to return until June they have two entire months to sell their goods and to realize their gains in silver. They will certainly find nobody who will agree to sell them slaves for trade goods only, and if they have not earned silver into the interior there is nothing else that can take its place. These merchants of slaves arrive at Foulpointe and sell their captives entirely in piasters and leave again, in order to have the time to make two more voyages before the departure of the vessels, well assured that with silver they will not have to wait [i.e. they would find numerous suppliers in the interior]. But the piasters that come from this last sale, they employ in large part to purchase trade goods [again from *travailleurs*] that appeal to them. And this is their policy. With our piasters they say, we will go past all the *trauants* and exarrune at our pleasure all their trade goods, and after having made a choice we will take a musket for one, a stone of cloth at another and likewise all the rest, because all do not have the same trade goods nor the same quality and what's more, with my money, I am considerably more free about the choice of the things that I have need of.¹⁰²

Here in a nutshell was the strategy of coastal Malagasy merchants. They turned credit advances of trade goods into silver through successive return journeys into the interior. Mayeur overplayed the ease with which Betsimisaraka merchants successfully exchanged manufactured commodities for captives during their

ventures into the interior, for as is known highland suppliers demanded partial payment in piasters for their captives. Yet his summary of trading strategies demonstrates how silver flowed in the opposite direction to slaves. The fughest concentrations of silver remained at the east coast where itinerant Malagasy suppliers demanded silver in payment for deliveries of captives and who in turn employed that silver to purchase items of consumption at the end of the trade year. The entire commercial system was predicated upon a delicate balance of competing strategies among the various strata of French and Malagasy merchants for

obtaining and retaining as much silver as possible. Among the European *trauants*, those who disposed with sufficient capital preferred to remain at the coast, putting their trade goods and silver out on credit to men and women who would circulate in the Malagasy hinterland. In turn, mobile merchants sought to turn a profit in their businesses so as to become moneylenders and owners of silver themselves. Ideally, *travailleurs* would sell their trade goods to Beurrecrucka merchants in exchange for piasters at the opening of the trade season. More realistically, when they parted with quantities of silver early in the trading season in exchange for the first delivery of slaves, *trauants* hoped to recoup some of their piasters at the end of the season by selling European manufactured items of local consumption back to their Malagasy slave suppliers, *gersamank* merchants, on the other hand, attempted (usually, but not always unsuccessfully) to exchange their cattle or rice at harvest time for silver with which to purchase slaves in the interior.¹⁰³ In many *trauants* sought to indebted Betsimisaraka merchants during the agricultural season (the commercial off-season) with advances of rice payable in rice at harvest time.¹⁰⁴

Silver flowing through the hands of *travailleurs* and Malagasy merchants that did not remain at the east coast coursed back up the trade routes into the Malagasy highlands. *Trauants* at the east coast purchased slaves from Malagasy merchants for the highest proportions of silver to trade goods: suppliers in highland Madagascar sold them for the least. The increasing number of *travailleurs* caravans heading directly into the interior by the end of the eighteenth century represented an attempt by French traders to reduce the real costs in silver to their commercial enterprises. The strategy had contradictory consequences, however, for *travailleurs* who attempted to reduce the costs of slave by venturing themselves into the highland Malagasy interior also assumed "the costs and the risks of holding slaves who might sicken, die, desert, or be stolen by extraordinary misadventures as they were

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marched toward the coast.

For the variety of individuals who participated in the enslavement and delivery of captives along the trade linking the eastern seaboard of Madagascar with the highland hinterland, then, the value to be earned in the trade stemmed from two unregulated processes: first, the general rise in the value of slaves relative to other commodities over the course of the half-century of trade, second, the increasing proportions of silver that astute Malagasy merchants could negotiate in exchange

for the benefit of captives. Each of these benefits accruing to Madagascar-based suppliers and merchants of slaves passed on new costs to the end consumers of those slaves in the Mascarenes. Slave owners in Ile de France and Bourbon paid steadily higher prices for their human commodities over the course of the half-century of trade.¹⁷⁵

Aurhonnes at the Mascarenes complained bitterly about the hemorrhage of silver into Madagascar and about the rising real costs of slaves it occasioned, yet their concerns were insufficient to reshape the economic and political realities of supply and demand in the western Indian Ocean. As early as 1768 Mayeur noted that traders for the Compagnie would ceremoniously conform to company policy by exchanging trade goods for slaves by day, but then contravene it by allowing their Malagasy suppliers to return to the ship to refuel and re-exchange the merchandise for piasters.¹⁷⁶ In 1807, the governor of the Mascarenes suspected *traaants* had begun to pay for supplies of rice with silver and demanded that his new *all'ent commercwl* investigate the matter. In 1811 and again Sylvain Roux "who served as *agent commercial* at Tananarive between 1807 and 1811" cooked up plans to restrict the trade in piasters and the peregrinations of "cupid and unrequited" *trouans* in the Malagasy interior.¹⁷⁷ One scheme he submitted to the Mascarene governor called for grounding merchant and highly competitive *travallls* at their coastal residences and turning the entire land-based marketing system over to Malagasy merchants. In addition to these measures, he reasonably suggested, the only way to terminate the flow of piasters westward from the Mascarenes to Madagascar was for French authorities in the Mascarenes to make vessel captains—under threat of confiscation—declare their onboard supply of piasters upon embarkation for Madagascar.¹⁷⁸ His elaborate plans were never effectively implemented.¹⁷⁹ Roux became so exasperated by the free competition among *trouans* and between *travallls* and Malagasy merchants that he proposed not trading in Madagascar for 30 years so that they "make them see that we can do without them and their commerce" (i.e., it was a fantasy). To demonstrate how lower the price of slaves in Madagascar when the Mascarene market was demanding them in greater quantities than ever before would have reduced the flow of captives from the great island and placed Mascarene economies in crisis (not to mention the serious consequences for the Mascarenes of an end to the commerce in food from Madagascar). Henri Perrotout, lieutenant of General Decaens during his tenure as governor of the Mascarenes (1803-1810), confirmed that this commerce was conducted almost always in

piasters, sometimes accompanied by trade goods.¹⁸⁰ Despite Mascarene opposition, Malagasy merchants continued to successfully demand payment in ever-higher proportions of silver until the end of the trade in 1820.¹⁸¹

Between the opening of the eastward running export trade from highland Madagascar and its abrupt conclusion in 1820, some 70,000 individuals were sent away into bondage at the Mascarenes. Given a highland population of between one-half and one million during this period, total demographic depletion represented between seven and fourteen percent over half a century, or well under one half of one percent annually (less than 5 per 1,000 each year).¹⁸² While epidemic disease could periodically send mortality rates to much higher levels in particular years, the endemic level of enslavement was comparable to that in the export trade of west central Africa (2.5 to 6 per 1,000 each year). As Joseph Miller has vividly argued for that region, such a rate of enslavement approximates the incidence of endemic violence in modern industrial crises.¹⁸³ Because most of the captives marched out of highland Madagascar were men, it is unlikely that the slave trade actually led to a decline in the total population of highland Madagascar.

To conclude that because its demographic impact was moderate the slave trade was of little import in the Malagasy highlands, however, is to err fundamentally. As a broad-ranging social and cultural phenomenon, the slave trade cannot be assessed with quantitative measures alone. Largely invisible in quantitative assessments, qualitative transformations in everyday life and cultural practice demonstrate that the impact of the slave trade ran far deeper than numbers suggest. Although highland Madagascar is landlocked, it was not a backwater nor simply a hinterland to distant ports, isolated from the main currents of trade in the western Indian Ocean during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Because its merchants and citizens played a direct role in producing and transporting captives—the primary category of highland trade by value—central Madagascar entered the commercial economy of the western Indian Ocean by 1770. Participation in that commercialized regional economy restructured the local economy and everyday life in dramatic ways. The history of slavery in the Mascarene stands spreads far beyond the beaches at those islands themselves, encompassing the communities from which Mascarene labor was derived.

Abbreviations

Manuscript Sources

- AOC/FD/ = Archives Départementales de Caen, in Bibliothèque Municipale de Caen (Caen, France), Fonds Decaen, volume numbers 101 and 102.
- AN/CAONI/AGGMJ = Archives Nationales, Centre des Archives d'Oure-Mer (Au-en-Provence, France), Archives du Gouvernement Général de Madagascar, sous-séries 1Z and 5(4)O.
- ANICAO/SG/MAD/ = Archives Nationales, Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer (Aix-en-Provence, France), Série Géographique, Madagascar.
- ANIPICQU C⁵A - Archives Nationales (Paris, France) Série Colonies Classifications C⁵A.
- BLJ?vid/Add Mss/ - British Library Manuscripts Division (London, England) Farquhar Papers Add Mss. 18117-18132.
- 1NAI/HBI = Mauritius National Archives (Coromandel, Maunuu), Série HB (Madagascar).

Other Abbreviations

- HO.H = *History of Madagascar*, William Ellis, ed. 2 vols. (London, 1838)
- RH = Raombana. *Hutosres* (Fianarantsoa, Ambozonlany), 2 vols.
- Tantara = *Tantara ny Andriana* (Antananarivo: Trana Pinnun-Pirenena, 1981), two volumes successively paginated.

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11 Filhot 1974a: 159. Ratsvalaka 1995: 1. 267. The same pattern prevailed in the early slave trade of East Africa (Alperi, Edward A 1975 *Ivon and Stat's Chwllmg Pauerns of Tradt m East Crtllrol Africa lo lht Larer Nmerunlh C,nllry*. Berkeley 19J, 211).

11 Dumaine. J p 1810. "Voyage fan au pays d'Anca, e dans l'le de \adagascar. en 190" *AnnaleS dts VolllrS dt la Gēollraphie. el de f'Hutotre* 11 11.6-218. Filhol 197Ja. 159. Heben. leen-Calude. no date. "traue jēs esclaves au temps d'AndrJnampoinmenila." Unpublished manuscript (m Julh0r 11.15. JS.6

• 1 hyeur 19J

- Mayeur. "L'histoire hislonque, pohnque et cemmrrerclal," ADC/FO/10116\f.
- 40 A typ,cal example. "S 9brc. Patti de Marmandra. fait *sacaf* • Vounsara" (*Jacaf* or *slo,jo*, s the \Jalaguy "Ord for food or meal). Chardenou\, JOUmal, latt 1807. AFX:IFO.102116Jv
- " Ban,he!Cmy Huel de Frobervue. *Le grnd d,cllollalrt dt MllUJ,gQJcdr*, ca, 1816. BUMOIAdd 11ss/18121-181):?.
- 01 Lcscllier 1803. 8
- o, Ban,hClmy Hugon "Apn,u demon dermer voyage • Ancova de l'an 1808." 20/0411808. BU10IAAdl.MssJ\8\29/9v: Lebel. "El,post sur Madaguc;ir prtsent • Son Eminence lc Gou\ernt\lf Farquhar par Lebel (1801-1803!." BUM DIAdd MssJI 8125/210r-2 10v.
- 01 The importance of merchants' aliances "Ilh women along the trade routes is best illustrated in the Journal of Chardenoux. hue 1807. ADCIFO102/16Jt-177v
- m Lescalher 1803 22.
- Tellor to Decaen, Fon Dauphin. 28 NivoK an 12c. ADC/FD101/313v, • Mayeur. "Mtmcmc histOfique, pohnque et cemmrrerclal." AOC/FO101/53v-5,h, Roux to Decaen. Foulpomre. 27/0811807. ADC/FO1102130r.
- 111 Brnhe!tmy Huet de Froce-vrllc. *Le grand d,cllontWirt dt MllUJ,gQScar*, ca. 1816, BU10IO/Add 11ss/1 8125/68v.69: • Mayeur. 1913b. '68, Valene. Jean. 1967. "Note sur une coutume belSlnsraka du XVIIIe uectc. les vadmcbauha." *Cah,rs du Ctrllrt d'Efudrs des Co.,llurs* 3 -19-55. See also Ratl,alaka 1995 1, 170.2.
- 101 Mayeur "Mllmoirc tntstcnque, pohnque et comeerear." ADCJFD101/5-1v.
- 111 Ratstvalaka. Ouoen, 1979 "La traue europcne des esclaves en lmcnna au dCbul du XIXe sltllc.-xanraro t-S , 129-30.
- no HOM. 11. 233
- 111 \hhus to le Ministre de la Manne & des Colomx, Sec. Suzanne. 16/0711820. AN/CAOMISGIMAD/12." Rapport sur l'espcedruon de Madagascar." Pans. 28112/1820. ANICAOM/SGIMAO/12. De Frappaz to Forsuer. no place. 00/071\820. A..UCAO11S • AD/12. Frappaz to Mllllslle de la Manne. Pans. 31/05/18:0.
- Ai'ICAOM/SG/MAOJ\2126: Unknown to Foresuer. Pans. 2610611820. AN/CAOM/SG/MAD/1:126
- i: Brooks. George E. 1976 "The Sign!le5 of Samt-Louis and Goree. Women Entrepreneur.. in Eighteenth-Century Senegal." In Hafkm. Nancy and Edoa Bay *Wo.Mil m Africa*. Stanford: 19-
- .u. \louKr. Bruce L. 1983 "werren Slavers Of Gumca-Conakry .. In Robenson. Clmrc C me Manm A Klem, *Vomtn ond Slavery m Africa*, Madison 320-39.
- :J Boid to Roux, Tamarave. 25/08/1801. ADCIFD/1021177., Roux to DecclClI. Tarnatave. 211/07/1101. ADCIFD/10:115v Sec Cturdenoux. :ournal. late 1807, ADCJFD1101/1 63r-177v for a descnpuon oi the measures taken to remeve stolen slaves
- 111 Roux to Decaen. Tamatave. 1-11/1807. ADCIFD1102/122r For contmu,ng problems lluh -hb<rtC de pas •gc- on the mland routes see Roux to Decaen. Tamarave 2111 111 807. ADCIFD1102/128r
- 111 Lasalle. Jacques de 1898 • Itmoirc sur \ladagascar Jacques de Lasalle 1797). eureau des Archives de Samte-Mane et annore par A Jully" *Nuts, Ricmmuison<u cl Lploomlls* 3. 573
- 111 Chapcher. M. 1811 "Fragmcns sur vtadagascar • Allr10/1 des Vornrs. de la Gtographit, cl dt l'Huurre 1-1. 73-5
- 111 Graham. Gerald S 1967 *Grtdl Brum m d,c Indwn Ocean. A Sludl m Morrtun.; Enterprise 18/0./850*. Oxfon!. 1-1-57. Toussaint. A 197-1 *L'Ociun Inditn al, XVII/.s,tclt*. Pans 66-71
- For a descnpnon oi the p*Glissldt* in 1792 KC Lescather 180J 3-1
- 111 Freuange. J B 1808 -voyage • M.idaga(ar. en 1802. 1803 p1r J B Fressange. cornmumque par M. Peron." *Amia/ca J:s Vornig!s. dt lo Gtosroplul. et dt l'Hyworl* 1. J-12 1-1
- 111 Decaen to Maneue. no place [Ile de France]. M)J1\807 ADCIFO\01/J0v
- Roux 10 Occxn. Tarnatave. 23111/11107. ADCIFO/1021 \>-1r-D9v
- 111 Despcnc problems wnh the anchorage there 1-neneocns sur l'isle de Vldagascar," author uijk.no.,n. 110 ptee. 110 date, ADCIFO1101/J95v. "Tableau ccmparauf des nores." no plate. 1808. AOC/FD1\01/224r). For more on the shin of trade trom Foulpomte 10 Tamatave sec Ratswalaka 1995 1, 192-9
- \Mayeur "•ICMolrc mstonque, polmque et commercut." AOCIFO/101158•
- Roux to Decaen -aencoons ell 1orme de rapport." 011Q.111808. ADCIFD110 111J1v Roux him:clf probably cmplo)cd *iranant* Lag.ml•rc to purchase •la,es tor him in the highland mtcnor Junng the 1808 tr,ldng K150n 1Hebert Jean-Ctavde 1996. "Le Journal Ju trlitant mconnu en trnenna. en 1808" In mrrcographcd proceedmgs ul *Fanandevazuna oe EKitnagc Cottocue mternatwnl sur l'acta, a•t a \foda, Q,car*. Aminanan\O. Sep1 1-1-18 11i 1)8-U/ A)lnulal

- system of statutory creditors and itinerant debtor, operated in French Goree and St. Louis of Senegal [Klein, Marn 1998 *Saver, Illid Co/o,uol Rule in French West Africa*. Cambdgc. 22).
- 111 Chardcooux, Journal. late 1807. ADCIFDIIOU170r
- 112 Mayeur "Atteint: hmonque. polilique et commercial," ADC/FD/101/2r, 25v, 15v, 17r, 18v-19r, 58v. \la)eur. "Dialogue," no place. no date [probably 1807]. ADCIFDI01r15v. 51 v, 82r; Roux lo Decaen. "Rtll:xlons en forme de rapport." 0110/J/1808. ADCIFDI01/23iv-B8v
- Hugon "Aperçu du demon uermer VOJ:gc: 21/0,1/1808. BUMDIAAdd\hs1181199v
- 125 Mayeur, "vtemcre hmonque. pohneque et commercial." ADCIFDI01161 v For the aggregation of inepeneem merchants in10 kuger caravans cl— here in Africa see Alpers 1978: 230. Mrtler, Joseph C 1988 *Wu, Ol Death. Ifetcham Capria/um cmd the Angolan Sallt Trade*. J7J0-/SJO. \ladison 101.191
- After 1800 highland merchants arc regulatly mcnuood in tranent eevtrems. French and
- 128 highland Malagasy merchants generally treated each other as comrades and shared important information of mutual mercantile. For a typical example of "ovas venars de vendre leurs nous" I Tamatave - see Chardenoux, Journal. late 1807. ADC/FD/1021167r
- Roux, 10 Decaen. "Reflexions en forme de rapport." 01/0/J/1808. ADC/FD/101/2J2v. Roux to
- 129 Decaen. no place. no date. [probably 1808]. ADC/FD/101:152r.
- 130 Roux lo Decaen. "Reflexions en forme de rapport." 01/04/1808, AOC/FDJ01/24lr-Lt1v. For

- caravansied by highlanders see also Hugon...Aperçu de mon dernier voyage." 1110111808. BLJ",10/Add \lss118119/9v.
- 111 Hugon "Aperçu de mon dernier voyage." 11/0411808. BUMDIAAdd\lss 11812111r. Lagardère. Journal. 1110S/1801. 111 Htbert 1996: 237
- Chardenoux, Journal. 131C 1807. ADCIFD/1021171r See also Chardenoux in Roux, wicisara. 1 UI 1/07, ADCIFD/1021161 v.
- ROOOQlx in Dec3en. no place. no date [probably 1808]. ADCIFD/101f152v SCIC also RH 1. 198-9
- 138 Chardenoux to Roux, no place. no date [probably 1807]. ADC/FD/101:211 Jr
- 139 Roux to Decaen...Rtll:xlons en forme de rapport." 0110,UI 808 -AOC/FD/101/1.12r
- 140 *HO:W.11*. 150.1
- "Tableau comoreem des notes." no place. 1808. ADCIFDI01f213v Roux. "Rerlcwons en forme de rapport." 01f0/J/1808. ADCIFDI01f238v. Toussaint 1967: 191.5

- 111 "Etat de l'approvisionnement de marchandises de France," no date (1769): AN/P/COUC5A13/8: "Assonement de marchandises proposes pour la trane de MaJagascars: no date (KY05/1769). AN/PfCOUC5rV319. "Assorument pour 50 Mii de marchmdises ordonnCs par Monseigneur pour la trane des 00gres," All/PICOUCS.V3f9bls. "MCMolre sur MachgJScar par 01 Chevil1.Ird." no date [1773-1776], AN/PfCOUC5N31141209. Roux, "Rappon: de l'Agem Commercur." in Valene, Jc.m 1962 *Samit: \fan...., la colt: .. et de \ladagiucor tn /818*. Tananarive. Madagascar: 46 For a description of these coins see Campbell, Gwyn. 1993 "The Structure of Trade in Madagascar. 1750-1810." *The /nl. /nutionol Journal vJ African Hiunmt Studies* :6.1 118. \lost of the coins Malagasy cliled arlary were mltic ot sil,cr from Spam sh America. although there were several different kinds of coins in circulation, including some of French mint \olct, Louis 1962 "Les monn:ies d' Madagascar: *Cahiers d. L /uillu1 d. Scitnc: Econ,miqu.. Appliquet Sine V Humanucs. Economic. t:/u10/oge. Socio/agl..* 119 17-30. Chauvmcourt. Jean and S Chauvincourt 1968 *Us prem,er, s monnmo nuroduet d Madagascar*, Tanananve . \ladag1Scar)
- 119 Premout, Henn 1901 *Citedefranc.. sousDecaen, AMJ./810*. Pans. 208.
- 121 Filhol 1974a. 210.
- 122 Chauvmccun and Cbaevmccun 1968. 16-22. 25-6.
- 123 Anonymous. "MCMolre sur \fadag35car: BUMDfAdd\lssJ18126158: Lescather 1803 19,
- Chauvmccun and Chauvmccun 1968 J.S. Drury, Robert 1969 *Madagascar or: Robt:n Drury's Journal. During Fictn Tars- Capliv,rv on thw Island. ond a Furlter Descripnon of Modog,ucor by the Abbe ALlu Rochon t'ew York* (first published in 1792. 277. *Tamara*, 71. Htbert, Jean-Claude 1989-1990 "Les march6 des naces terres contr:iles \lalagaches avari Andnanampolimmenna." *Omah ry Amo* 29-32: 72. Graeber, David. 1996 "Beads and Money: \l0cs Toward J Theory of wealth and Power." *Am. nCan Ellino/001sl* 23. 1 1J-15.
- 124 It will also be the primary money of account in the Mascarenes (Premout 1901: 108-9) During the seventeenth century. Spam sh *reales* had served as a money of account in the Dutch trade of northwest Madagascar (Barendse, R J 1998 "Slaving on the \lalagasy Coast. 16JO-1700 - in Evers, Sandra and \larc Spindler, eds *Culture of Madagascar* Leiden 13-.55
- 125 \lan cue to Decaen. Quamer de Flacq. 1510211807. ADCIFDI01f291r.
- 126 Roux to Decaen. Reflexions en forme de rapport. 01 1808 -ADOF0101t:110r

- ... Bo) d to Rou. Tamam. 25/08/1807. ADC/FD102/L1r. The piaster price of blue cloth is established in Lagardere. Journal, 27/05/1808. in Hebert 1996. 23. This Journal entry also indicates that Andnanampomimcna \$C1 the same exchange price for slaves (45 piasters and 2 pieces of blue cloth) during the 1808 trading season.
- " Rondeaux 10 Decaen. no place. no date [probably 1808]. ADC/FD101n52r.
- " Lagardere. Journal. 13/08/1808. in Hebert 1996. 237. The exchange rate of pieces of blue cloth and piasters (5 piasters per piece of cloth) is from the entry for 27/05/1808. 231. The exchange is reported on 17/08/1808. in Hebert 1996. 237. The value of a barrel of gun powder in piasters is calculated in the following manner: Slaves were exchanged for a value of 55 piasters (45 piasters and two pieces of blue cloth). The exchange value of 11 slaves was thus 1,705 piasters, and the approximate exchange value of each barrel of gunpowder 1,705 ÷ 20, or 85.25 piasters. The direct piaster exchange value of gunpowder was substantially cheaper than suggested by this calculation. It is interesting why barter was so much more advantageous for *traumans* than purchasing slaves with currency.
- ④ \a\eur. Louisbourg. 25/11/1718. MNAIHB161191521. L. Salic 1898. 581. Saint-Pierre, Benedit. 1983. *Voyage à l'île de France* [first published in 1773]. Paris: 175.
- in Hugon "Aperçu de mon dernier voyage." 03/05/1808. SUMO/Add. ④uJ181④/15v.
- 171 Lovejoy. Paul E. 1983. *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa*. Cambridge. Chap. 3 and 5. Manning. Palnick 1990. *Slavery in the Americas: A History of Slavery in the Americas*. Cambridge. Chap. 5.
- 111 "Relations sur l'île de Madagascar." no place. no date. ADC/FD101. The first quotation is from 192v; the second from 193r.
- ... Roux 10 Decaen. "RCf:illon; en l'ordre de rapport... 01/01/1808. ADC/FO101t:POr. Mayeur. "Cmoire hislonque. pahuque et commercial." ADC/FD101/68v.
- " Once. "Plan for a Trading Centre on the East Coast of Africa." Ile de France. 21/09/1777. in Freeman-Grenville 1965. 196.
- 16 Tellor to Decaen, Fon Dauphin. 28 Nivôse an 12c. ADC/FD101/312v: \a\eur. "L'incure: tationque. pahuque et commercial." ADC/FD101/60v. 61r. "Ritellons sur l'île de \a\ig \a\ar... no place. no date. ADC/FD101/19v: Roux 10 Decaen. "RCf:uons en forme de rapport". 01/01/1808. AOC/FD1011238r. See also Mollet. 1962. 12: Vallette 1966a. J3.
- 141 \a\eur 912. 60. 91. 100. 107.

- 111 \a\eur. "Cmoire hislonque. pahuque et commercial." AOC/FD101/Siv.
- 112 \a\eur. "Cmoire hislonque. pahuque et commercial." AOC/FD101/57r.
- ... Mayeur. "Cmoire hislonque. pahuque et commercial." ADC/FO101/59r.
- 111 \a\eur. "Cmoire hislonque. pahuque et commercial." ADC/FO101/59r.
- 112 Ma\eur. "Cmoire hislonque. pahuque et commercial." ADC/FD101/67v.
- 61 \a\eur. "Cmoire hislonque. pahuque et commercial." ADC/FD101/58v. 59v. 69r.
- Roux 10 Decaen. "genexrons en forme de rapport." 01/04/1808. ADC/FD101/J38v.
- ④ Mayeur. "Cmoire hislonque. pahuque et commercial." AOC/FD101/159r.
- While prices of slaves in the Mascarenes could vary dramatically depending upon their personal characteristics and skills, they increased considerably between 1760 and 1801 for a series provided to me by Richard B. Allen. I would like to thank Richard for his assistance in researching these prices from among his personal notes. See also Filhot 1974. 217-19.
- 171 183eur. "Cmoire hislonque. pahuque et commercial." AOC/FD101/116r.
- 114 Decaen to Roux. no place [Ile de France]. 07/07/1807. ADC/FO101/03v-QJr. Dunnig 1807. 1. cenam. M. D'huil: came from Isle Bonaparte (Bourbon) with four or five thousand piasters and purchased one at three piasters and a half for each 100 *lwrts* (Roux 10 Decaen. Tarnatave. 28/11/1807. ADC/FD102/146v).
- 115 Roux 10 Decaen. Foulpmont. 27/08/1807. ADC/FD102/26r.
- 111 Roux 10 Decaen. Foulpmont. 17/08/1807. ADC/FD101/126v.
- 111 For Roux's plans to control the commercial practices of French merchants consult the correspondence from Roux 10 Decaen in ADC/FD102. This correspondence is summarized briefly in Prentice 1901. 314-23. Roux's letters from 1809 and 1810 make it clear that his schemes were never implemented. See, for example, Roux 10 Decaen. Tarnatave. 15/07/1809. ADC/FD101:091r-291v.
- 112 \a\eur. "Cmoire hislonque. pahuque et commercial." ADC/FD101/17r.
- 171 Prentice 1901. 121.
- 112 "Cmoire sur les établissements." no date. *prentice*. AOC/COUCSAI/618v. "Cote risum.int le rapport de M. de Kerguelen sur l'Indagascir." no date [1790s]. AOC/COUCSAI/518r.
- 111 LJon 1997. 131-135.

*** Miller 1981: 153-4. See also Thornton, John K. 1992. *Africa and Africa in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680*. Cambridge: 117.

Appendix I

Ships involved in Mozambique - Mauritius trade 1773-1803

These are only some of the ships that came to Mauritius (Ild RUnmn) from Mozambique. There were many more arrivals but which have not been recorded for several reasons. Many ships operated illegally to avoid port and slaves taxes and do not even show up in documents. For many other arrivals, the documents, such as customs registers, lists of arrivals crossing the archives in France, Mozambique, Portugal etc have not yet been used by researchers on Mauritius.

Year	Date	Name, origin	Port of departure
1773	9 January	Amelunier	nucmba
	7 February	Allie	Mozamb,ouc
	7 August	Udu,sc	Mo,ambioue
	7 December	Amelunier	Amelunier
1774	13 April	Suctos	Mo,amb,uue
	12 June	Aventurier	Ouenmea
	12 December	Actif	Mozimb,ouc
	29 December	Favoll	Mozambue
1775	7 February	La Flotte	nucmba
	24 July	Damam	Mozimb,uuc
	26 August	Src,nauc	Oucmba
	10 November	Bonne	Ibo
1777	13 February	Amable victoire	Mozimb,uuc
	21 July	Amable Victoire	Mozimb,Que
1780		St Amme	
1778	7 October	Avenunier	Oucmb
	30 January	Abvsn,nc	Mozimb,nuc
	9 July	IIIIII	Ibo
	20 July	Bouffon	Mozimb,ouc
1779	11 December	Deux Amis	Oucmba
	11 April	Confiance	Mozamb,Que
	1 June	Samr PlCrK	Ibo
	10 June	Due de Vnthen	Mozimb,QuC

	10 September	Pere Je FomHe	foLaflbi UC
	19 September	Soblisline	Couf of ,fnc:l
	26 November	Somt ,anne	Mot.lmb"lle
	29 November	Aumibk: Cmsm.:	\\011mbi UC
	9 December	Pente Victoire	African Coisx
1780	12 February	\\lononne	\\foumb,ouc
	16 November	So,m Amom: d' "l mas	\\foumb,ouc
1781	28 June	Isobel le	\\fozimb,nuc
1782	3 September	Oce:m	Moumb,ouc
	1 December	AtillC	Oucnmbo
17IP	6 February	sr Amomc	Mozimbluc
	11 September	St Anne	\\tot.lmbnuc
	9 October	Diom:nt	\\fozimb,ouc
	15 October	Confionce	\\fozimb,ouc
II II	11 January	Sr Anrou,c d'Almas	Mo,amb0lle
	20 May	Chulone	African Cd,ISI
	25 May	Councr 'mocnol	\\fozimb,ouc
	9 All01sl	Confionce	MoLambelle
	20 September	Eumo di As,o	\\foumb,ouc
1783	1 January	Eocr,ler	III
		Grande vrctre	
	21 October	v,comrc de SoullJe	Oucnmbo
nac	1 Ann]	Cochenne	Qucnmbo
	1 July	A,m:it,le \\fanc	Oucnmbo
	10 June	Vicomre de So,ulbe	Oucnmbo
	21 September	ccneux	Inhambor,:
	6 October	Moi:imbluc	O""nmbo
1-81	5 February	O.,u., Fri,es	III
	5 March	Jcanncue	Mo,amb,nuc
	11 March	CunCl\\	Mnuamb,ouc

	1 Seetemeer	PcmI	\\lelamb,ouc
	5 September	MLICf/C	\\foimb,ouc
	10 November	Ct: >dc	Moimb,ouc
1788	5 January	D:u\\ Fr:rs	lbo
		Notre Dame des	Moi:imblqle
		C,==	
	1 March	Le,er	MoLimbqle
	9 April	\\fotimb,aue	Mo,amb,ouc
	10 March	o,sc:lll	Mozimbluc
	2 June	Venus	Mozomb,ouc
	4 June	V de Houdcl0l	fozamb,ouc
	16 March	Eunhr,mc	Mo,ambu,uc
	29 September	\\fafl,uemc	Moiamb,ouc
	16 October	\\fanc:rm	vtczarnbrcue
	1 November	C,=	\\fon,alo
	7 November	Belle Afncenne	\\foi:imb,ouc
	16 November	Noire Dame de Bena	\\foz,amb,ouc
	1 November	Mou,ile	\\don,alo
1789	2 January	Au,usrc	Moi:imblauc
	9 April	Sr Anrcme	MoLamb,ouc
	1 May	10,1Chun	Mozomb,ouc
	2 July	V,ile de Bordcoux	African Coast
	12 July	Am,s	African Coast
	11 September	M,ur,illcnc	African Coast
	10 October	All01S/C	Mozimbluc
	11 October	Aneucue	Aincm C00,1
	6 November	\\arcchol d'Esia,nvIk	Mozomb,ouc
III O	11 March	African	Mo,amb,ouc
	27 April	Fch., Go,cmador	African Coast
	7 July	Bciu four	Lmdl
	7 August	Chasscur	Mo,amb,ouc
	10 October	Tvnhus	Mo,amb,ouc
	19 November	Deu,....m,s	African Coast
	11 November	Sci,mm	\\fon,alo
1791	1 January	laroue	Mo,amb,ouc
	16 April	Coum,er d'Amue	\\foimb,ouc

5 Julv	Ctiarle,	ArncJn Co.ISt
9 Au0usr	Jocicfl,m	Moumb,nue
10 Au0u.ll	D:u0 Amu	Moumb!"be
s ScItcmb>r	A*==	Moz:iribulut
"J Se"cmb>,r	Bonne Then,0	Jloz,nlb>nuc
1 October	Mode.sic	MozJmb!"ue
18 S:ocember	Dux Ami>	.(nc:inCa:ist
3 November	Clark>	\lozambduc
1 December	Eugenic	lbo
		Moz:imb,ouc

192	16 fanu:llV	Union	Mozamb,"a:z
	10(Aonl		Mozimbinu,;
	11 Jun,;	Un,on	Moumb,nuc
	J Julv	111111	Jloumbduc
	7 Julv	L:l Favne	\lozambduc
	1J /u:h	Sumnse	\foumbPue
	15 Julv	Bon Frlm,;	\lo:,imb,ouc
	16 October	Sarumc	Mo:,imb,ouc
	16 OcroDer	iJInOIC	Muz:,mb,nuc

	15 December	Cnr,ole,ics sevcnenes	Moumb,n<K
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193	1 fanu:lrV	Calvados	Mozamb!"llC
	9 Janu'lf\	I:,uiv	Afnc:m Co.II
	17 Janu:lrV	Tro,s Frlr,ss	\lOlolmbinuc
	0 March	Mane Fr:mco,se	Lmdv
	15 Aonl	Am, de la'2,u0	'loz,imoldue
	7 ifav	Aun:ible bcb0,c	\loumbinuc
	1 Au2ust	Olym0	\lozamb,nuc
	19 Sr: icember	Acnve	Moumbt"uc
	15 Scoicember	Llav,r:acur	Moz:imb,o!K
	1 October	Calvados	Afncan Coast

17)J	JJ)\l:irch	Nn,0a,or	\loIamb,uuc
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179.1 Ne record

•se	10 :lav	vov:r:0ur	\lozamb,nuc
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1797 No record

1795	J Octob<,r	Aceusre	\loumbique
1790	27 Juiv	Elvon	\lozambduc

11111 No record

1802	5 Februarv	N.lhm,<leCon,...	MOlambique
	1J Ann!	ConsJnce	afncan Coast
	16 fone	Ar,cllon	Mozamb,oue
	11 Julv	M,m,	Afnc:inCOlSt

	16 July	Fib Um"u0	00
	27 Julv	Jeune, Paul	vtoaamorcue
	9 AU0USI	Accord	Afnc:m Coast
	9 Au0u,i	Auro"	Afncan Coast
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	1J fanu	Acuf	lbo
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	1J Februarv	Jeune Suzec	lbo
	28 Aprl	Jeune Paul	Mozimb,oue
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	11 Au0uSI	Adele	lbo
	:! Se :ember,r	lle de France	\fozimbQUC
	4 September	Esper,,nce	\fozimbduc
	11 October	Accord	Afncan Coast
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	13 November	Hcurcu,;	Mozamb,uuc

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	2) fanu:lrV	Jcun,, Suzette	\lotlmb!ue
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	J Jun,;	General btdm	\loIambtQue
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	15 Julv	Etocdwon	vtczambruc
	9 Seccember	Gt,neril Isidro	Mo,,0mb,ouc

	15 November	Chrlone	Mozimbl UC
	23 November	Dcu1 Scours	Mol.mtlouc
	24 November	Suzanne	Mozimb,ouc
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	10 Scricmber	Perseverance	Moumb,uc
	23 November	O:ux Am,s	Moumb!tuc
	24 Scricmber	U III	Afncin C
	1 October	Deux Fl'Ves	Mozimbltuc
	3 October	Um	III
1811	28 Anni	Pencenc	Moumb,ue
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	8 Scricmber	V:,n:uo	Mozimb,ouc
	19 December	III	Mozimtltuc
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	12 June	Nvmm,c (k la Mer	Moumb,nuc

Appendix II

The Origins Project

Acknowledgements

Mauntius Research Council
Maunus Archives
Civil Status Office
University of Maunus
Ministry of Housing

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SaOe,u/m Perilum
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1823 Registration Returns

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