

Madagascar reports

The cooperative efforts within the HRAC projects have in the case of Madagascar resulted in three Swedish contributions which are published here. Dr Amelie Berger's fieldseason conducted together with Dr Jean-Aimé Rakotoarisoa and Dr Chantal Radimilahy concentrated on food production in the southeastern parts of Madagascar. Ms Carolina Bastigkeit studied the impact of local exhibitions on the inhabitants of Ambanja and Djangoa in a Minor Field Study project supported by Sida. Mr Andreas Nilsson (currently on a EU research scholarship to Madagascar) investigated the spatio-temporal change in human-modified landscapes in a C-paper presented here at the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, 1999.



SHARING SCIENCE WITH THE PEOPLE



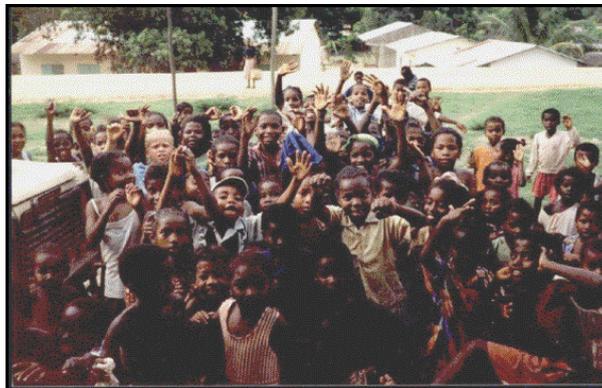
[Carolina Bastigkeit](#)

A Minor Field Study in

Ambanja and Djangoa, Madagascar

Uppsala University 2000

Department of Archaeology and Ancient History



“Great exhibition!”, “A Miracle!”
...waiting for a more detailed
exhibition, displayed in a
museum for everybody,
“....addressed to all Malagasy
people or to the whole world!”

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Contents

PREFACE	7
1. INTRODUCTION	8
1.1. AIM	9
1.2. LITERATURE STUDIES	9
2. BACKGROUND	10
2.1 DOCUMENTATION AT THE EXHIBITIONS	11
2.1.1. <i>Exhibition A</i>	12
2.1.2. <i>Exhibition B</i>	13
2.2 INTERVIEWS	14
2.3. PUBLICITY	15
2.4. PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION	15
3. MATERIAL AND METHODS	16
3.1 MATERIAL	16
3.2 METHOD	16
3.3 METHODOLOGICAL CRITIQUE	17
4. RESULTS	18
4.1 SEX AND AGE	18
4.2 QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS	20
5. DISCUSSION	22
6. RECOMMENDATIONS	26

SUMMARY	28
REFERENCES.....	29
APPENDICES.....	31
APPENDIX I.....	31
APPENDIX II.....	33
APPENDIX III	34
APPENDIX IV.....	38

Preface

In May 1999 I was granted a scholarship from the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida) to carry out a Minor Field Study on the north-west coast of Madagascar. The Minor Field Study gave me a unique possibility to link university studies to practical experiences in a new context and took place from the middle of October to the middle of December 1999.

The overall approach of my field study, in the town of Ambanja and the village Djangoa, was to evaluate the archaeological exhibitions about Mahilaka, the earliest urban settlement of Madagascar, from the local residents perspectives. In my goal to go beyond looking at exhibitions only from a scientific angle, I interviewed people in the region. My hope is that this paper will be an input to the current project of sharing science with ordinary people in Madagascar.

Many people were involved in this study and without their help and knowledge this project would not have been possible. I would like to direct grateful thanks to my supervisors in Sweden Prof. Paul Sinclair as well as to my supervisor in Madagascar, Dr. Chantal Radimilahy. I would also like to thank colleagues and employees at Musee d'Art et d'Archeologie in Antananarivo. I am very grateful to family Andriamasawa in Ambanja and my interpreter Maryse, with whom I lived during fieldwork. I am also very grateful to the extended family who always tried their best to help me and to Jean-Pierre who among other things helped me when I had lost track in the Malagasy culture.

Stockholm, October 2000

Carolina Bastigkeit

1. Introduction

Dr Radimilahy and her team found *the earliest urban settlement of Madagascar*, when excavating the site of Mahilaka (1989-94) on the north-west coast of the island. Now she would like to share the science with the people who helped her gather the knowledge: the residents of Mahilaka. According to her plan, an exhibition will to be located in the village of Mahilaka, where the history of ancient Mahilaka is exposed. Dr.Radimilahy hopes there will be a museum situated at the ruins of ancient Mahilaka (1 km from the village Mahilaka) in the future. In the museum, visitors will be able to learn about one of the cultural heritage Madagascar can offer.

Within the scope of the project Urban Origins in Eastern Africa Follow-up (supported by Sida), I carried out a Minor Field Study in archaeology. The focus of my study was the *sharing of science* with the people in Madagascar. I visualise the whole process of sharing as something that circulates, for example photosynthesis or a chain of recycling. The local inhabitants attend the excavation and help the archaeologist to collect information. The archaeologist arranges and analyses the accumulated information. Finally, the archaeologist shares the result with the local inhabitants as well as with other colleagues. I would like to underline that the process of sharing science in archaeology with local residents is a quite recent idea in Madagascar. Elsewhere in Africa this approach has been pioneered at Manyikani in South Mozambique (Sinclair 1990 152-159).

I was invited within the frame of the Urban Origins follow up programme to survey the setting of the exhibition "Mahilaka, the earliest urban settlement of Madagascar" and to make an evaluation. My hope is that the evaluation can help to improve the exhibition, if required.

1.1. Aim

The purpose of this study is to 1) evaluate the display by interviewing residents 2) find out how the science is received on a local level 3) assess the content of the exhibition.

I will discuss 1) the exhibition from a gender perspective 2) how the exhibition can be improved.

1.2. Literature studies

Archaeological references on the site of Mahilaka are *Mahilaka- an archaeological investigation of an early town in north-western Madagascar*, by Chantal.Radimilahy 1998, *The history of civilisation in North Madagascar*, by Pierre.Vérin 1986 and *Les ruines de Mahilaka*, by L.Millot 1912. Dr. Radimilahys work is the most recent and it became my main source for archaeological information.

As a complement to the interviews I used a method common to anthropologists called *participant observation*. I found good references on how to approach the field with the method in *Om kvalitative metoder. Forskning som skapande arbete*, by the ethnologist Billy Ehn 1983 and in *Field research. Strategies from a Natural Sociology*, by the sociologists L.Schatzman & L.S. Anselm 1971. Ehn calls attention to fact that people automatically reflect upon their own observations in daily life. He says, “People are onlooker to others and their own life. All social interactions require observation and memory, everybody observe while participate (Ehn 1981) [my translation].

The gender approach in my study refers to: *Feministisk bruksansvisning*, by the ethnographers Claudia Lindén & Ulrika Milles 1995 and *For meget fødelse, for lidt intellekt?-et forsøg på arkæologisk kvindeforskning*, by the archaeologists J. Nielsen & B. Nørgaard 1987 and *Moving on to New Perspectives on Women’s Movement*, by Yvonne Hirdman 1991.

2. Background

Why have I focused on sharing science on a local level in this study? And why am I interested in the aspect of gender in the process of sharing science? It is clear that development in the southern hemisphere is governed by many factors, where culture (and science seen as an aspect of culture) is one of the most important aspects in the construction of a viable society. In the publication by Sida “The power of culture”, it is stated that:

Culture is also what gives us identity and pride. In former colonies of Africa and Latin America, domestic culture was oppressed and depreciated. Today attempts are being made to revalue these countries’ own culture” (Vaihinien, Thornblad, Terreros. 1999).

I share the opinion and look at the exhibition as one means among others on the way to re-evaluate Malagasy culture.

The concept of the word culture is complex and it is used in a variety of different ways. For example there are different cultures within a country because of ethnicity and religion, and there are different levels of culture within the different cultures based on aspects such as age, level of education and gender.

When I discuss the aspect of gender in the exhibition, I look at gender both in a biological and social sense, e.g. the role one acts in society because of biological facts (Hirdman 1991). I believe there is a need for both women and men to re-evaluate their own culture in the former colonies of Africa. I would like to see an activity based on the needs of both female and male visitors in Dr.Radimilahy’s present project, of disseminating archaeological knowledge to the residents in north-western Madagascar. My conclusion is that if one wishes to see an effective development in the South, where culture is seen as one of the most important aspects in the construction of viable societies one can no longer avoid considering the need for a greater importance of gender equality at all levels in society.

2.1 Documentation at the exhibitions

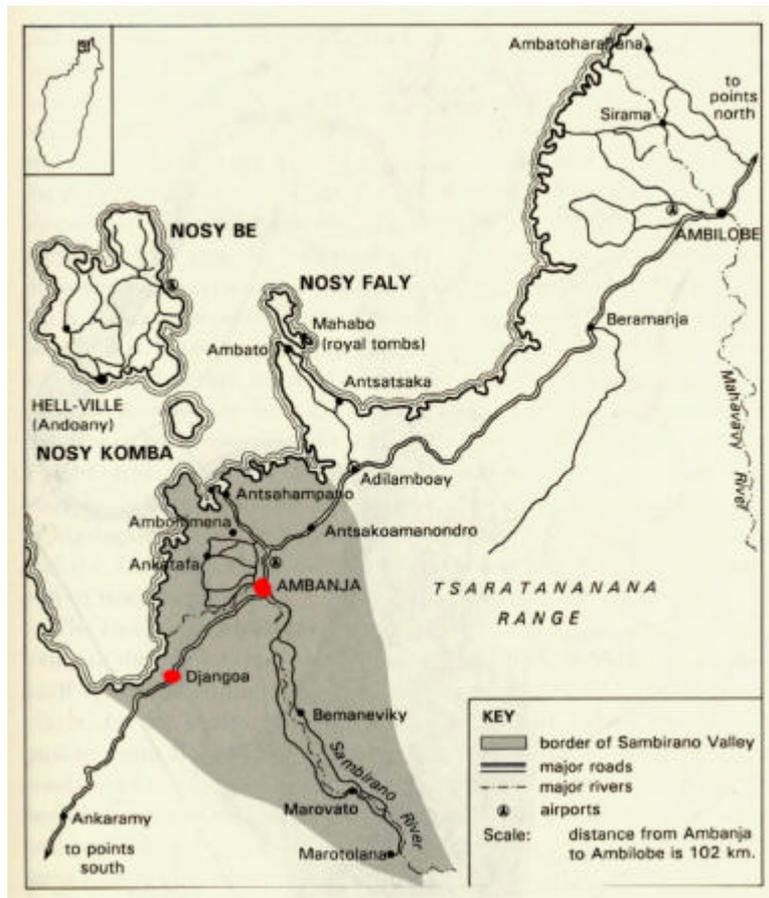


Figure 1. Detail map of north-west Madagascar.

Source: After Madagascar FTM (1986) (Sharp 1993)

The village Mahilaka is located 22 km south of the town Ambanja, on the north-west coast of Madagascar. It consists of a church, and a combined shop/bar, but there is no school. I counted about 30 houses, scattered along the Route National no 6. There is no electricity in the village and therefore no television or radio, with an exception of a battery powered tape-recorder at the Marco-Polo bar.

Political and practical reasons made it impossible for Dr Radimilahy to set the exhibition in the small village. First, the election for municipals took place the same weekend the exhibition was opened. People with influence in society were all

occupied with the election and had no time to spend on the archaeological exhibition. Second, no suitable building to house an exhibition was found in the village near Mahilaka. The original exhibition became two. One in the town Ambanja and the other in the village Djangoa. I will call the one set in Ambanja in the entrance to the city hall "Hotel du Ville", exhibition A. The one set at the secretariat in the municipal office in Djangoa will be named exhibition B. The exhibitions are identical when speaking of the text. The photos and images at exhibition B are, according to Dr. Radimilahy, more specific than in exhibition A, where they give the spectator a general view of ancient Mahilaka.

2.1.1. Exhibition A

The town Ambanja is situated 22 km north of the village Mahilaka, on the north-west coast of Madagascar. The population is around 30 000 of whom 30% are illiterate, according to one informant. The Thursday-market in Ambanja is well-attended by surrounding villages in the prosperous region. One exchanges news and greetings to the family on the street. Most houses have electricity, albeit unreliable, a radio and in some cases a television. People who do not have their own set, gather in the evenings at the marketplace to watch the public television, which is an ordinary television fastened at the top of the roof to the bazaar. There is no working telephone in town and no publication of a newspaper.



Plate 1. Visitors at exhibition A in Ambanja.

Exhibition A is set (glued) on the wall, at the entrance in the city hall "Hotel du Ville". It consists of seven photos, two maps, five drawings, artefacts from the ruins and text in Malagasy and French. It is a public building where administrative paperwork are done, such as birth certificates and identity cards. It is also a registrar's office for marriages. The city hall is normally open Monday to Friday 8-12 and 14.30-17.30.

2.1.2. Exhibition B



Plate 2. Friday market in Djangoa

The village Djangoa is situated 2 km north of the village Mahilaka, on the north-west coast of Madagascar. This is the village in the district where you find the municipal bureau, the school, as well as the well-attended Friday-market. There is hardly any electricity to be found and therefore no telephone.

Exhibition B is set on the walls at the secretariat in the municipal building. The exhibition consists of fourteen photos, two black and white photocopies, two maps, four drawings, artefacts from the ruins and text in Malagasy and French. The municipal office in Djangoa is normally open Monday to Friday 8-12 and 14.30 - 17.30.

2.2 Interviews

I have interviewed visitors at both exhibitions (mainly A) one month after the setting. I was eager to hear the opinions of the residents about the information given in the exhibitions. Since I do not speak either Malagasy or Sakalava (a local dialect) I conducted all interviews through my female interpreter.

The situation for interviews at exhibition B were different. Dr Radimilahy and her team set the exhibition in Djangoa and then left the village. I was told that no publicity was necessary. Everybody in the village would exchange the news about the exhibition on the streets.



Plate 3. Schoolchildren in Djangoa visiting exhibition B.

Three weeks later I returned to Djangoa with my interpreter for interviews. It turned out that no one knew about the exhibition, except for the man who worked in the municipality. Then my interpreter talked with the municipal inspector and fifteen minutes later all students from the school across the road visited the exhibition. My interpreter explained in Sakalava the history of ancient Mahilaka (located only 2 km away) and answered questions. That day all students aged 6-18 in the village visited the exhibition. Hopefully they brought the history of ancient Mahilaka back home. Not least, they found out what a European stranger was doing in their municipality!

I formulated the interview-questions as follows: 1) Why are you here at the exhibition right now? 2) Was there anything particular that you enjoyed? –Why? 3) Were there something you did not like or did not understand? –Why and what?

2.3. Publicity

First we announced the existence of the exhibition A, on the local radio FM (*Ankoay*) in Ambanja several times. Second, a commented slideshow in dialect about ancient Mahilaka, made by Dr Radimilahy, was on broadcast one time on the local television. Third, my interpreter talked with people on the street, who in turn informed other they met. The news went like a long chain. In two weeks time everyone in town knew about the exhibition and the European woman, who was interviewing there.

2.4. Participant observation

As a European and a woman, I attracted special attention at both exhibitions. Sometimes I felt people were more interested in finding out about me, to start with.

I would say most people who entered the city hall in Ambanja, did not see the exhibition at all. They noticed me, but were probably too occupied with the goal of visit as such to reflect on the text, drawings and photos on the wall.

However, there were some who stopped at the exhibition. They spent on average 10 minutes on the text, the photos and the artefacts. It is likely that these visitors already had an interest in history and were able to read.

3. Material and methods

3.1 Material

During the month of November to early December 1999, I accomplished all in all thirty-four interviews with visitors at the two exhibitions and one interview with the display producer, Dr Radimilahy. I had sixteen questions to put in Sakalava dialect or French and I documented the answers both in writing and on tape. I also took notes from participant observation. In addition, I had informal discussions with village dwellers for the duration of my stay.

3.2 Method

I was interested in the residents' opinions of and reactions of the exhibition, and therefor the micro-level was my primary unit of focus. With my indispensable female interpreter I interviewed visitors within the first month after the setting up of the display. During the same period I made observations. I had also the opportunity to survey the setting of the exhibitions in early November and to interview the display producer.

3.3 Methodological critique

I would like to highlight some critical points in this evaluation. First, since the interviews were made with the help of an interpreter and my French was not fluent, there is always a risk of misinterpretations. Second, my interpreter is town born and bread and well respected, since she is a princess from the royal family in the region. I stayed with my interpreter in the royal family and were according to Malagasy custom considered to be her "kind of" sister. I cannot tell what impact my interpreter's royal status had on the interviews. Madagascar is a republic today, but is still highly respected the different status that comes with belonging to the nobles or the commoners. Third, if you come from Europe to Madagascar it means you are called *vazaha*. The word refers to something like "French white stranger" (because of colonial history). On the northwest coast people are used to *vazahas*. I was cheered, met by friendliness and curiosity. Sometimes, I suspect people visited the exhibition out of pure curiosity of my presence there. Fourth, this was my first visit in Madagascar and therefor I was not familiar with social patterns, traditional costumes, taboos, respect for royalty, etc. I have interpreted all new experiences through my "Swedish glasses". In other words, I have used myself as the instrument of reference in every situation.

4.Results

4.1 Sex and age

Dr Radimilahy emphasises that she wants to reach all Malagasy people and above all the students, with this exhibition. The new generation in Madagascar should be aware of, take care of and preserve their own cultural heritage. Otherwise, the traces of ancient times in Madagascar will be destroyed within the near future, she states.

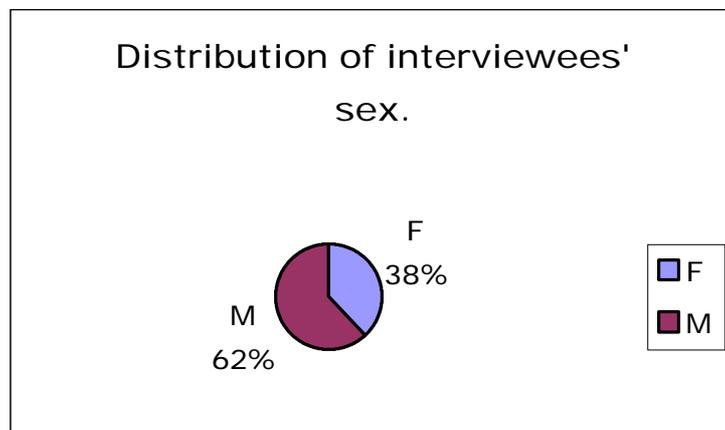


Figure 2. Source: Interviewees in north-west Madagascar (appendix I).

I intentionally tried to choose people of different age and sex when interviewing. As one can see (fig.1), I did not manage to interview as many women as men.

The interviewed individuals are divided the interviewed into five different age groups (fig.2), according to their state of life: 1) <16 = Schoolchildren 2) <18 = High

school students 3) <30 = Married and settled down 4) <50 =Middle age 5) <66 = Retired. At the age of fifty you retire in Madagascar. The average length of life is fifty five for women and fifty two for men (Edkvist 1995).

In category <66 (fig. 2), I only managed to interview one woman. I can not say

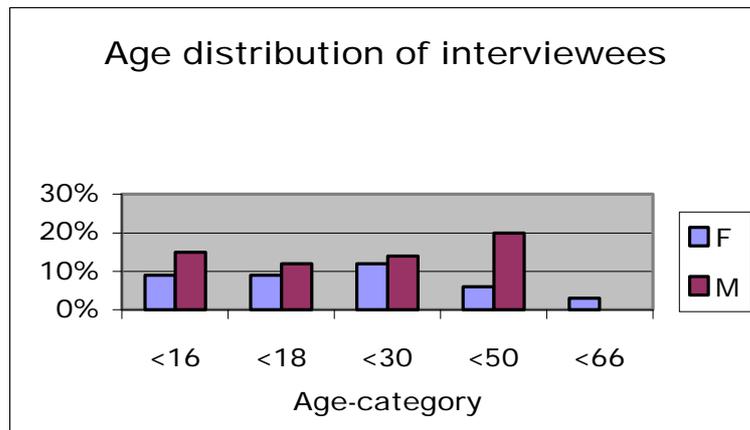


Figure 3. Source: Interviews in north-west Madagascar (appendix I)

why there were so few retired people of that age-group at the exhibition, either I was unlucky in not catching them or they could have had business somewhere else.

In category <50 (fig. 2), men are the largest group of all. The men who stopped at the exhibition were eager to give their opinion and I let them do so. I learned that according to cultural tradition, the men with some influence in society are used to talking in public. In comparison female visitors in the same group were generally not interested in becoming interviewed. The women are apparently used to discussing things in more informal situations. Perhaps they would have been more willing to give their opinion if I had interviewed them at home or at the well?

In category <30 and <18 (fig. 2), I have almost the same numbers of interviews from men and women. There is an insignificant overweight for the males' opinions in both cases. In category <30, I have the highest number of women's voices. Perhaps they passed the exhibition and I caught them on their way to arrange documents for marriage, birth, etc. This generation is perhaps more active in society and not afraid

of giving their opinion to an European female stranger. The result can also be a coincidence.

In category <16 (fig 2), there is a tendency for the boys to be more prepared to give their opinion in an interview. I wonder if it is in the line with the cultural pattern, mentioned for group number 4.

4.2 Questions and suggestions

All interviewed individuals were eager for more information and the complete tale of Mahilaka. I got many questions when interviewing, among the most frequent where 1) Why was ancient Mahilaka abandoned? 2) Where was the graveyard situated? 3) What did the population look like, what race were they? 4) What did the houses look like? (table 3. in Appendix II).

Question! –“Where did you get information about the existence of the exhibition?”



Plate 4. Visitors at exhibition B in Djangoa.

Most visitors said they had heard the announcement on the local radio FM or that someone had told them on the street. A couple had seen the popular slideshow video on the local television. When I asked, why they were visiting the exhibition, most people told me they had come to exhibition (A) to see for themselves, get proof and more information. When I asked to whom they thought the exhibition was addressed, some answered,”

to all Malagasy people or to the whole world!” Other thought it was mainly for intellectuals and adults, with an interest in history already.

I asked whether there was something in particular that they liked in the exhibition. Many answered that they liked the whole idea about the exhibition. Some people mentioned parts of the exhibition such as the colour photos, mainly the one from excavating the stone foundations and the text with the information. I was told that the colour photos were seen as the final proof of an existence of Mahilaka. That can be one reason why people liked them in particular.

I asked whether there was something they disliked or thought was missing in the exhibition. First people said that the exhibition was complete and that they liked it all, but then people came with suggestions such as:

- 1) Why not drawn images of every day life in Mahilaka, like the hunt, what people looked like, the market place, houses, etc.
- 2) There should be items to touch, turn and smell, people up here like that!
- 3) Why not show the popular slide show video here at exhibition?
- 4) A guide could explain, invite people and keep the exhibition in shape.
- 5) A catalogue would give possibilities to bring the information back home.
- 6) Better advertisement for the exhibition to reach the student.

Finally, I wanted the interviewed to say whatever had come across their mind, about the exhibition. Some expressed their deep appreciation such as “Great exhibition!”, “A Miracle!” Other thought it was a great first step, but waited for a more detailed and to extensive exhibition, displayed in a museum for everybody. Most visitors thought that the existing exhibition must be improved to reach all Malagasy people on a local level.

5. Discussion

My intention is to discuss what impact the exhibitions made on the local population and how one could improve the exhibitions to reach more people. I have been especially interested in how one could improve the aspect of gender. The discussion is mainly built on interviews with visitors at the two exhibitions and my own participial observations.

My general impression is that people were amazed about the news and eager for more details about ancient Mahilaka. Some said that the exhibition was like a miracle for them. Why is this? First, no one seemed to have expected that one of the first large towns of Madagascar would be situated in their part of the country. I learned that one is taught a general history of Madagascar at school and almost none about the local one. Perhaps people feel that the news give credit to themselves on the north-west coast?

Some thought the exhibition was mainly addressed to intellectuals and adults who can read when others said it was for all Malagasy people and the whole world. I imagine that the exhibition would be interesting for all Malagasy people, since it is the history about one of the first urban centres of the island. Therefore I will state the information to be relevant on a local level in society as well as on national level. I agree that the exhibitions are mainly addressed to intellectuals, because they are based on text and indistinct images. The display producer has to deal with and solve the problem of how to really address everybody, including people who cannot read.

The drawings (appendix IV) are all very artistic and well made but apparently not illustrative enough, because visitors kept on asking me all the time. If the goal is to direct the exhibition to everyone on a local level, one has to: 1) modify the images and 2) add an explanatory text. Another problem is that you have to be able to read and understand French or Malagasy to take part of the information. Not the Malagasy spoken in the region, Sakalava, but the dialect of Merina, which we

commonly refer to as Malagasy. In my opinion we need to add a translation of the text into the local dialect, to really address the residents in the region.

Many of the residents suggested a guide to be engaged at the exhibition who could explain, invite people and guard the exhibition against decay. In my opinion a guide is necessary and one way to make more people to take part of the history of Mahilaka. I do not think there will be any problems to find guides. Most students I interviewed said they personally could act as guides, because in their opinion all Malagasy people ought to know about the existence of Mahilaka.

To some extent the choice of buildings for exposing an exhibition is not ultimate. Why should the municipal in Djangoa and the city hall in Ambanja be the best choices? According to an informant in Ambanja, people from the surrounding villages would never dream of entering the impressive city hall. Common people are supposedly afraid of visiting the large building. If it is correct then one has to choose another building. If it is not possible to be sure that everyone in town attended the exhibition. I only interviewed people who in fact entered the building. Where should the exhibitions be set to reach everybody?

One man from the local NGO asked for a portable exhibition, an exact copy of exhibition A, to be used on special occasions where many people gathering, for example the Malagasy independence day.

I cannot be sure that my interviews represents peoples general opinions, but I think this study indicates a genuine interest among the population for their own history. Perhaps a special happening could be arrange at the exhibitions, like an opening, to attract other categories in society. One cannot force or palm off information on people. In my opinion the most important thing is to give the information in a way so that it can be well received and understood by people who are curious to find out more about their background.

When discussing the reason for visiting the exhibition, people told me they mainly had come to get proof and more information. The colour photos were appreciated and seen as the ultimate proof of ancient Mahilaka. The real artefacts were also appreciated, but not at all seen as proof. Why is this?

In the town Ambanja I observed that a camera is something you rarely find in common people's home. A camera and the film is incredibly expensive and usually it costs more than in Europe. People seem to rely on the eyewitness of a photo, since the art of photographing is highly respected. They do not seem to be familiar with the techniques of manipulating pictures. The photos are in my opinion relevant on a local level, because they attract people, but one needs to add an explanatory text and a signature of the photographer. One picture can say more than a thousand words, but there should not be any hesitation and question mark about what is really perceived with one's eyes.

Why are the artefacts not seen as proof? Mainly the artefacts were appreciated because you were able to touch them or because they were beautiful. I was told that people produce similar products today and it is impossible to tell if the artefacts at the exhibition were authentic or not.

How could the aspect of gender be improved in the exhibition? When interviewing, I found that it was mainly women who appreciated the beads. In Ambanja I noticed women wearing beautiful gold-jewellery when they left home for shopping or visiting someone. Perhaps the beads in the exhibition are well received by women today, because they are beautiful and an indication of that there must have been women living in Mahilaka who, like the present woman, liked to adorn themselves with beautiful jewels. For a moment the present women come close to the ancient women and can identify with something familiar to their own lives. My conclusion is that one way of addressing women could be to use and talk about typically female remnants from ancient Mahilaka.

It was explained to me that a characteristic for the Sakalava (the main group on the north coast) is that they like to experience with all senses. To really understand something new, people like to see, smell and touch. If that is correct, the artefacts in the exhibition should be relevant on a local level for both men and women, children, illiterate and old.

As mentioned earlier, the archaeologist Dr. Radimilahy made a popular commented slideshow-video, about the excavation in Mahilaka. It was shown one time during peak viewing hours on the local television. I heard positive comments about it and one person made requests for additional telecasts. In my opinion it could

be installed at the exhibition, as a supplement useful for children and people who cannot read.

The exhibition producer, archaeologist Dr Radimilahy, stated that she especially wanted to reach the students with the information. She said it was important to reach the new generation, to make them aware of their cultural heritage, so they could take care of and be proud of their own history. Quite contrary to her aim, a visitor at exhibition A, made the remark there were no visiting students. Perhaps one has to make better publicity at schools, to reach the students. One could for example inform all school directors in town and the directors could send their students and the teachers to the exhibition. When visiting exhibition B in Djangoa, I experienced how the school director in fifteen minutes managed to send all students and their teachers to the municipal building.

6. Recommendations

First I would like to say that people are eager to know more and are waiting with excitement for a detailed continuation of the story about Mahilaka. Both exhibitions are well received, but I think the display producer has to work with the concept, as well as adjusting text and images.

In my opinion the information is important for all Malagasy people, because 1) they ought to be aware of their cultural heritage 2) culture is important for people's identity and pride. I did not find the exhibitions relevant for everyone on a local level. To a certain degree they are only directed to intellectuals and adults and definitively not to people who cannot read. To address all people on a local level one need to improve the exhibitions and I will give some suggestions.

1. one needs to adjust the text by adding more details and answer the visitors questions (Appendix II, question 8&9). 2) Translation in Sakalava should be added.
2. all images should be clearer (both photos and drawings)and signed. I suggest additional drawings, to give visitors an idea of everyday life.
3. in order to address children and people who cannot read and to give them the ability to receive the information, I suggest local guides to be engaged at the exhibitions, who could invite people, explain and answer questions and also guard against damage.
4. in my opinion the existing popular slideshow-video ought to be installed at the exhibitions to catch all five senses in a complementary way to the exhibition mounted on the wall.

Dr Radimilahy says she would especially like to address students with the information. To reach the students and let them receive the information, I suggest she to informs the directors of all schools. They in turn will inform their students

and teachers and send them to the exhibition, perhaps as a part of the educational programme.

At exhibition B in Djangoa, teachers asked for a special working-day about Mahilaka, which I think is splendid idea and suggest to be complied. This is a request from local level and information about ancient times will be updated at school, teaching the new generation a more true version of their history.

I know Dr Radimilahy did not set out to produce an exhibition that discussed the aspect of gender. I thought she perhaps had made women visible without being aware of it, since she is a woman educated in Europe where one frequently discusses gender in science. In my opinion the exhibitions did not focus on gender at all, with one exception the bead artefacts. To attract women today, my suggestion is to expose archaeological finds which are more closely related to females, like the beads. These could be used as a starting- point for a text. I would like to see an exhibition that discussed the role of women in the ancient society of Mahilaka.

For a future exhibition I propose an special opening. One would then attract special attention from the population and have publicity for free.

The evaluation has shown that publicity it is necessary to inform and invite people. I suggest the exhibition producer to make advertisement at for example the local radio and television, at the weekly market and on placards.

Summary

If one's goal is to share science with the residents of a locality using a museological approach, the challenge is to create an exhibition relevant to everyone: old and young, intellectual and illiterate, women and men.

As exhibition producer one must work hard with the concept to attract and be able to reach the target groups. The producer has to be 1) skilled and experienced, 2) familiar with the population and their cultural tradition, 3) able to make use of the art of mediation in the most advantageous way.

Why share science with the people? One position established by Sida is that culture and also science seen as aspects of culture, gives us identity and pride. Another consideration according to Dr Radimilahy, of the Musée d'Art et d'Archeologie in Antananarivo, is that neither Malagasy schoolbooks nor teachers are up to date with new scientific results in Madagascar and therefore students are taught incorrect facts about their prehistory. Her goal is to make the new generation in Madagascar aware of their own cultural heritage, so that they can be able to take care of and preserve it. Otherwise she believes that many traces of ancient times in Madagascar will be destroyed for ever within the near future.

Dr Radimilahy is the first archaeologist ever to share archaeological knowledge with the residents on the north-west coast of Madagascar. In an interview she stated the present exhibition to be a first attempt, an experiment to be evaluated and later improved.

The evaluation was made during and within the first month after the exhibition was set. Visitors were interviewed to find out how people received the exhibition. I also used the traditional anthropological method, *participatory observation*.

A general opinion was that the exhibition about Mahilaka was good but limited. I believe one would probably reach more local inhabitants simply by adjusting text and images, with a translation of the text into the local dialect. To reach people who cannot read, I suggest that local guides are engaged and that Dr Radimilahy's popular video is set up at the exhibition.

Supervisors: **Prof. Paul Sinclair** at Department of Archaeology, University of Uppsala and **Dr. Chantal Radimilahy** at Musée d'Art et d'Archeologie, Madagascar.

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Appendices

Appendix I

Following people have been interviewed:

- Dr Chantal Radimilahy, 991025. The display and exhibition producer at Muse d' Art et d' Archeologi, Antananrivo.
- Visitors in Ambanja at exhibition A.

Date: Sex: Age:

991119	M	8
991119	M	19
991119	F	28
991119	F	17
991119	M	49
991119	M	32
991119	F	19
991119	M	36
991119	M	41
991122	F	21
991122	F	66
991122	M	38
991124	F	21
991124	M	20

991124	F	17
991125	M	19
991125	M	13
991125	M	13
991125	M	11
991125	M	16
991125	M	34
991125	M	19
991125	F	18
991125	M	15
991125	M	11
991129	F	37

- Visitors in Django at exhibition B.

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Sex:</u>	<u>Age:</u>
991130	F	11
991130	M	17
991130	F	17
991130	M	17
991130	F	12
991130	F	41
991130	M	29

Appendix II

Questionnaire guide with both open and structured questions. Originals in French and Sakalva (Malagasy dialect).

Name:

Age:

Married/Single?

Children?

Education?

Profession?

Ethnical group belonging?

1. Where did you get the information about this exhibition?
2. I would like to know the reason, why you are visiting the exhibition?
3. Do you have an idea why town-dwellers would visit the city-hall?
4. Do you have an idea what kind of town-dwellers that could have an interest in visiting the city-hall? Why?
5. To whom is this exhibition addressed? Why?
6. Have you appreciated some part/parts of this exhibition in particular? Why?
7. Have you found some part/parts you do not like at all? Why?
8. Is there some information about everyday life in Mahilaka that you think is missing in the exhibition? What kind of information?
9. Is there something in the exhibition you do not understand?
Would you like to ask the question right now?
10. Are you missing something in particular in this exhibition? What?
11. What do you think about this exhibition? Could you explain?

Appendix III

Some interview-questions and answers.

No. 1 Where did you found information about the exhibition?

AMBANJA

1. I happened to see it when I entered the city hall in other businesses. 4
2. I met Madame Chantal how told me about "Mahilaka , the first big town of Madagascar". 7
3. I heard the announcement on radio FM *Ankoay* about the exhibition. 14
4. I saw a white woman with a local hairstyle and I became curious. Then I saw the exhibition. 1
5. I saw the slideshow-video on the local television. 2
6. Someone told me about the exhibition on the street, family, friend, etc. 2

DJANGO

7. Our teacher told us about the exhibition today and that there was a white woman at the municipal how was going to tell us the history of ancient Mahilaka. 5
8. The municipal told me about the exhibition. 1
9. I met Dr Radimilahy and miss Carolina. They told me about "Mahilaka , the first big town of Madagascar". 5

No. 5 Addressed to whom?

1. For intellectuals how are already interested in history. 8
2. For those how are not illiterate. 6
3. For all Malagasy people. 23
4. For all Malagasy people, also the illiterate because the photos are enough! 1
5. For the illiterate one need a guide. 12
6. To all people in the town of Ambanja. 2
7. All Malagasy people on the North coast. 1
8. For adults. 4
9. ...also for the tourists (foreigners). 9

10. For the whole world.	1
11. All Malagasy students.	3
12. It is not for small children.	1
13. People in the surrounding villages of Djangoa.	2

No. 6 I liked something in particular

1. The whole idea about the exhibition.	4
2. The text, the information given in the exhibition, "the news".	7
3. The information about the first mosque found in Mahilaka.	1
4. The artefacts in general.	3
5. The beads (artefacts)in particular.	4
6. The chlorite schist fragments (artefacts) in particular.	1
7. The drawings.	1
8. The photos are like the ultimate proof!	6
9. The photo of the first mosque.	1
10. The photo of the artefacts.	2
11. The photos of the stone foundations.	5

No. 8&9 Visitor questions (the most frequent are bold)

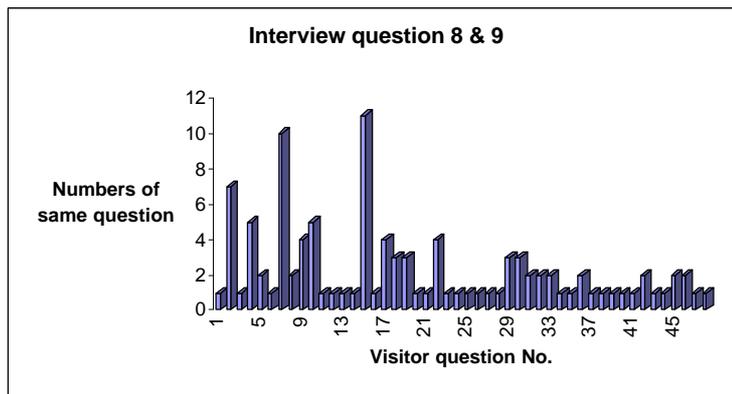


Figure 4. Source: Interviews in north-west Madagascar.

1. I would like to know how one can determine the age of pottery, beads, walls, etc.
- 2. I would like to have a more detailed exhibition with the "whole" history of ancient Mahilaka, more of everything!**
3. Did there exist contemporary villages in the surrounding, or was it just the town of Mahilaka?
- 4. What did the houses look like and what material were they built out of?**
5. What did the first mosque look like and what material was it built out of?
6. What did the walls look like and what material were they built out of?
- 7. What did the inhabitants look like- which ethnic group?**
8. What did the people in ancient Mahilaka eat?
- 9. What kind of clothing did the inhabitants wear?**
- 10. Where was the churchyard situated?**
11. Did the inhabitants go to church?
12. Did they hunt-if so, what?
13. What is Chlorite schist?
14. How big was the population?
- 15. Why was ancient Mahilaka abandoned?**
16. How was the town of Mahilaka founded?
- 17. Where did all the inhabitants move after 1400?'**
18. Was there a market place and what did it look like?
19. How was everyday life in Mahilaka (ordinary life)?
20. How have one found out the exact year 900-1400?
21. How did one find the walls hidden under the soil?
- 22. I did not understand what the photos were showing(2.ond, 4:th, pottery)?**
- 23. The drawings were good, but difficult to understand what they showed exactly?**
24. Did one use money in ancient Mahilaka?
25. Why did the Muslims chose to build a mosque in Mahilaka?
26. Was the place to found the town of Mahilka carefully chosen or was it just a coincidence?
27. Where there a road over land that connected with Diego Suarez in that time?
28. What was the name of the man how constructed the first mosque?

29. How come one started the excavations in the ruins of ancient Mahilaka in the first place?
30. Did one know about the existence of ancient Mahilaka before the excavation took place?
31. Was there any other religion beside Islam in ancient Mahilaka?
32. Where there really no rats on Madagascar before the trade brought them to Mahilaka?
33. I would like to know the goal of this exhibition?
34. What would you like to do with the results when the whole site is excavated?
35. Was Mahilaka like a village in the forest?
36. The photos of ancient Mahilaka, when was it taken- back in those days or?
Was it possible then?
37. Where exactly was the chloriteschist found, in a house or...?
38. Where there different groups of people how lived together in ancient Mahilaka?
39. How big was the town of Mahilaka?
40. Who has taken the photos- a photographer or an archaeologist?
41. Where does all information come from- how do one know all this?
42. What did the boats look like that went with the transports?
43. Did they go to school?
44. Why was the houses destroyed?
45. Did one cultivate rice?
46. Could they really build foundations like those I have seen on the photos
(unbelievable)?
47. What year did Mahilaka existed(Djangoa)?
48. What kind of tool did one use to build walls like those in Mahilaka?

Appendix IV

Exhibition illustrations.



Plate 5. Detail of exhibition A, photos.



Plate 6. Detail of exhibition A. Illustrations of pottery.



Plate 7. Detail of exhibition B, photos of artefacts.



Plate 8. Detail of exhibition B, survey photo of Mahilaka



Plate 9. Details of exhibition B.