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MISSIONARIES AND FANOMPOANA IN LATE
NINETEENTH CENTURY MADAGASCAR

by Gwyn Campbell

No. 211

Missionaries and Fanompoana in late nineteenth century Madagascar [1]

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Introduction

The literature on missionary activity in nineteenth century Madagascar, based on ample and diverse primary material, is prolific. Three main schools of historical thought are reflected in secondary works on the subject. The 'apologist' tradition, established early in the nineteenth century with the writings of Ellis, views the missionaries as the harbingers of civilisation. The 'French colonial' school formed almost as early. It publicises the French claim to Madagascar and portrayed the British missionaries, and particularly the London Missionary Society, as political protagonists of the the British imperial cause in the island. Finally, a 'nationalist' school has arisen since the 1970s which have interpreted the missionaries as racist agents of capitalism and hence of exploitation. [2]

The most studied period of missionary activity in Madagascar is that commencing with the conversion of the Merina court to Christianity in 1869 up to the xenophobic and anti-Christian uprising which followed the French

takeover in 1895, and which on the central plateau was termed the Menalamba revolt. In 1869 Queen Ranavalona II and her consort Rainilaiarivony declared themselves for the LMS version of Christianity and burnt all the national sampy, or talismanic protectors of the Merina state. Both the missionary apologists like Ellis, and their protagonists from the nationalist school, like Gow, view this epoch as the highpoint of pre-colonial Malagasy history. They claim that in this period a modern and civilised Merina government was forging of the diverse peoples of the island into a Malagasy nation. They differ as to the originator of this move, the apologists attributing the development to wise and benevolent missionary influence, whilst the nationalists consider it to have originated in domestic elements which found full expression through the brilliant statesmanship of the Merina dynasty. Both consider that the French thwarted the development of this fledgling nationhood, whilst the French colonial school counter with the argument that the Merina government had no claim to represent all the peoples of Madagascar and that its imperial exploitation of non-Merina was fostering enduring tribal enmity rather than a Malagasy identity. [3]

The present author differs sharply from traditional interpretations of missionary action in Madagascar, all of which ascribe to the missions an independence and power of immense proportions, which they used to benefit or exploit the Malagasy, depending upon the interpretation adopted. In this paper the view is taken that the missionaries constituted but one of many echelons of exploitation of the Malagasy peasant, an exploitation which was sanctioned and ultimately emanated from the imperial Merina court. It argues that the LMS, far from retaining independence, lost it to the imperial court which

absorbed it in 1869 into a state-church over which it maintained absolute control. It established the pace and direction of 'evangelisation', the appointment of state-church personnel, attendance at chapel and school. It also determined the location and closely supervised the activity of missionaries who were faced with the simple choice of submitting to its dictates or leaving Madagascar. A few principled men abandoned their mission but the majority succumbed and effectively became agents of the state. Albeit reluctantly, they abandoned the independence so dear to the non-conformist spirit for the joys, denied them in Britain of being the official religion. The advantages were of a different order, the chief of which was the access they gained as officials of the state-church to *fanompoana*. Sewell, a Quaker missionary, described *fanompoana* in the following terms:

'The government here, as in all eastern monarchies, is essentially despotic. By an elaborate system, in some respects similar to the old feudal system formerly current in Europe, and in other respects very different, every individual, from the lowest slave up to the Prime Minister, becomes the servant of someone else above him in rank, who can claim from him a large amount of unpaid labour, and not unfrequently money and property too. Service of this nature is called *fanompoana*, and is often very oppressive'. [4]

The major components of direct state-church *fanompoana*, which forms the focus of this paper, was the donation of time, labour, material goods, and money to the erection of churches and schools, and the maintenance of permanent state-church personnel, notably pastors, preachers, teachers, and evangelists.

A/ State-Church Buildings(i) Construction

One of the most important outcomes of the missionary-state alliance was missionary access to *fanompoana* labour for the construction of mission buildings. The chief construction project of the LMS before the building boom of the 1870s, was the erection of 'Memorial Churches', intended as monuments to the Christian martyrs of Ranavalona I's reign (1828-61). [5] Before 1869 the missions had been obliged to pay for much of the labour used in the construction of mission buildings, especially for skilled labour. Even after the state adoption of Christianity in 1869 the missionaries were circumspect in their use of forced labour in Antananarivo and its immediate vicinity because of the greater publicity Imerina received in Europe. In addressing their British public, the LMS missionaries in Madagascar claimed that any labour expended on the construction of church property was 'volunteer' labour, performed out of Christian charity, and that in effect the full cost of maintaining the mission fell upon their shoulders, because the Merina regime refused to assist them financially:

'The Government has not aided in building a single school-house, in training teachers, or in supporting schools, nor has it made any arrangement for raising funds for school purposes by local action of any kind'. [6]

This was a deliberate mis-representation of reality as one of the first components of state-church *fanompoana* from 1869 was the building of schools and churches where none previously existed in order to cope with the *en-masse*

and largely compulsory conversion of Merina subjects to the state-church. Indeed, attendance in chapels and schools was itself considered an aspect of religious *fanompoana*. The missionaries might initially not have had any part in the summoning of such *fanompoana*, but they nevertheless willingly accepted the system, and soon came to appreciate it. Indeed, the building of church property quickly became euphemistically referred to as '*ny fanompoany an'Andr.*' (ie. '*fanompoana for God*'). [7] Within a few years all missionaries were tacitly using their position as state-church personnel to summon *fanompoana*. Correspondingly their willingness to shoulder the financial burden of constructing mission affiliated buildings decreased. One missionary commented that: 'These buildings are a great tax upon the people, but they go in for them notwithstanding, hoping, in most cases, for considerable help from the missionaries, which is not always forthcoming'. [8] Access to *fanompoana* labour held not only the advantage of cheapness, it also ensured regularity, for whereas before 1869 the missionary builders had been bedevilled both by worker absenteeism and by state *fanompoana* demands on the skilled labour it was using, it could henceforth ensure compulsory attendance on the building site because missionaries were part of the state structure. [9]

The number of LMS congregations in Imerina increased from 148 to 621, and the number of schools from 28 to 359 within a year of the court's adoption of Christianity in 1869, thus causing an immense shortage of chapels. In response the newly founded state-church immediately embarked on a dramatic chapel building programme. [10] It was in this first decade of state Christianity that the great majority of mission buildings were constructed. The rival missions to the LMS joined in the building spate as they too laid

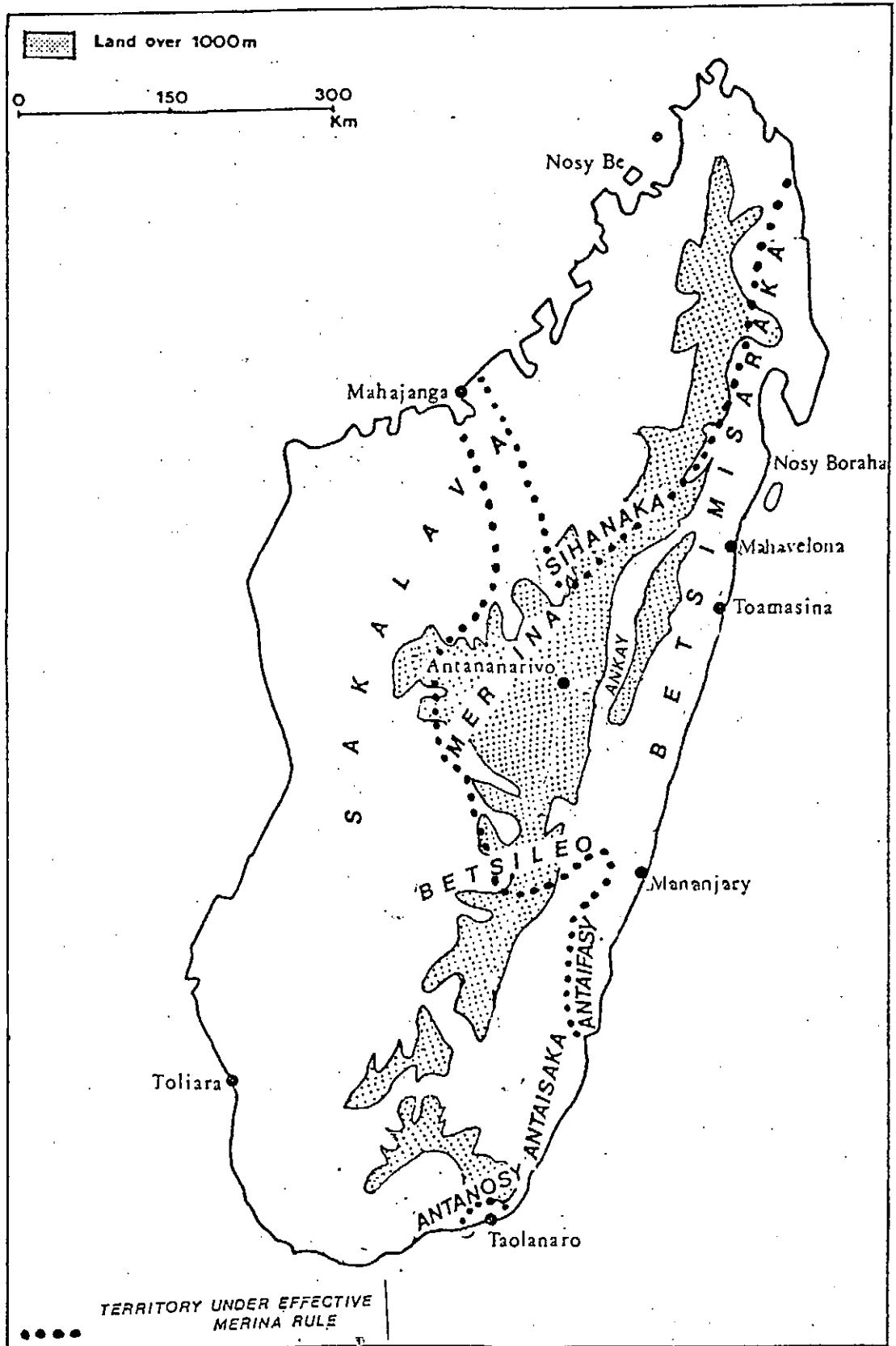
minor claims to the newly formed proselytes. For instance the Jesuit mission by 1881 comprised 228 mission stations, 144 chapels and churches, 170 schools, three dispensaries, and one leprosy clinic [11] One of the most spectacular examples of missionary building outside Antananarivo was the SPG mission compound at Ambatoharanana. On completion, it contained a church, a library, three schools, two mission houses, another to house the Malagasy deacon, and twenty-two houses for college students. [12] In addition, all missions had built for them houses and store-rooms for private mission use:

Table 1: LMS 'Private' Property constructed in Betsileo, 1875-95 [13]

<u>Property Title</u>	<u>Date Built</u>	<u>Construction</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Estimated Value in 1919 (\$)</u>
Ambatamalatsingo	1871	Sun-dried brick wall, tiled roof	6 rooms	1,000
Ambalamaso	1872	" " " corrugated "	8 "	1,000
'Blomfield III'	1872	" " " tiled "	1 "	25
'Sans Souci'	1875	" " " " " "	8 "	1,250
Vohitrantenaina	1882	" " " " " "	n.a.	1,000
'Bellevue III'	1884	" " " " " "	7 "	1,500
Anbohimandrasoa	1895	" " " " grass "	6 "	750

The first phase of chapel construction was largely limited to the towns, and to the chief villages of the districts. Many country areas were untouched; for instance until 1879 virtually no chapels existed in the Vakinankaratra mountains, to the south of Imerina. However, with increased government pressure following the 1879 Reform and the 1881 Code enforcing school attendance, there was a sudden surge in chapel (and hence school) construction. The same pattern appeared in Betsileo, from 1870 the second most important

The Merina Empire c.1890



centre of missionary activity after Imerina. It was there that Baron, a LMS missionary, confessed in 1879 that missionaries were devoting too much energy to chapel construction:

'In building alone almost sufficient work could be found... for one man [ie. a missionary], and it is a matter of frequent regret that so much of one's time (which ought to be given to more direct religious work) is occupied with the carpenters and bricklayers'. [14]

The enforcement of the 1881 Code resulted in the LMS in Betsileo doubling their pupil numbers. As in Imerina in 1869 this prompted a huge spurt of chapel construction, especially where competition for the new pupils amongst the rival denominations was intense. The province became a religious battleground as the Jesuit priests and their indigenous agents fought, sometimes literally, with the LMS forces to procure state provided proselytes. Having gained the congregations, they required chapels to house them, and there proceeded a frenzied building programme which lasted up to the Franco-Merina War of 1882-5. Thus in the Iarindrano district of Betsileo eleven LMS affiliated churches were constructed in 1882 and it was reported that in the Ambohimandrosos district the LMS and the Roman Catholics were erecting rival chapels in every village. [15]

Table 2: Statistics of the LMS Mission, Madagascar, 1880-90 [16]

Region	Year	Churches	Region	Year	Churches
<u>Imerina</u>	1880	728	<u>Isihanaka</u>	1880	15
	1890	769		1890	31
		+41			+16
<u>Retsileo</u>	1880	156	<u>Toamasina</u>	1890	75
	1890	283			
		+127	<u>S.E. Coast</u>		
<u>Imerina & Retsileo</u>			1890	45	
	1880	884	<u>Iboina</u>		
	1890	1,052		1890	20
		+168			
<u>TOTAL</u>					
				<u>Members</u>	
<u>Year</u>	<u>Churches</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>per Church</u>		
1880	1,024	68,227	53.90		
1890	1,223	59,615	21.19		
	+199	-8,612	32.71		

In 1884, in the midst of the 1883-5 Franco-Merina conflict, there was a surge of chapel building in Imerina. For instance, in the Ampamarinana district alone twelve chapels were in the course of construction in 1884. [17] In part this was due to the flow of 'Roman Catholic' adherents into the LMS churches following the expulsion of the French priests from the island at the start of the war, but it was mainly due to the government insistence on registration of children of school age as a basis for drawing up draft quotas for the army. Following the war the only increase in state-church building was in the subjugated provinces of the empire.

Table 3: The Growth of the London Missionary Society in Madagascar, 1860-96 [18]

Year	Churches	Schools	Pupils	Year	Churches	Schools	Pupils
1860	16	n.a.	n.a.	1878	1,088	784	44,794
1861	25	n.a.	n.a.	1879	1,142	882	48,150
1862	39	n.a.	n.a.	1880	1,024	862	39,258
1863	68	7	365	1881	n.a.	n.a.	61,000
1864	84	7	576	1882	900*	818	102,096
1865	97	n.a.	n.a.	1883	893	818	105,516
1866	108	20	936	1884	1,144	1,040	97,095
1867	132	18	811	1885	1,250	1,070	100,519
1868	177	28	1,735	1886	1,133	n.a.	102,667
1869	468	142	5,270	1887	n.a.	n.a.	86,333
1870	621	359	15,837	1888	n.a.	n.a.	91,667
1871	n.a.	n.a.	30,000	1889	n.a.	n.a.	86,333
1872	722	489	20,548	1890	1,223	700	68,187
1873	n.a.	n.a.	27,767	1891	n.a.	n.a.	61,667
1874	n.a.	n.a.	29,667	1892	n.a.	n.a.	47,000
1875	n.a.	652	34,167	1893	n.a.	n.a.	47,333
1876	902	652	36,534	1894	n.a.	712	45,000
1877	910	657	37,412	1895	n.a.	n.a.	78,667

* Imerina and Iboina only

Table 4: Schools affiliated to the Protestant Missions, 1884 [19]

Mission	Imerina &				East Coast	Grand Total	% of Total
	Imerina	Betsileo	Betsileo	Antsihanaka			
LMS	611	204	815	31	-	846	66.09
FFMA	125	-	125	-	-	125	9.77
LMS & FFMA	736	204	940	31	-	971	75.86
NMS	-	-	207	-	-	207	16.17
SPG	34	-	34	-	68	102	7.97
Total	770	204	1,181	31	68	1,280	

(ii) Cost of Building

The missions gained enormously through the use of *fanompoana* labour, especially as it gave them free access to skilled labour which on the open market generally commanded more than double the wages of unskilled labour. Moreover, it also guaranteed them that labour against the arbitrary demands of other *fanompoana*, something which had been a major grievance for the missions prior to the state conversion to Christianity in 1869. [20]

Table 5: Estimated Weekly Wage Rates in Antananarivo (\$) (21)

Year	<u>A/ Malagasy Labour</u>		<u>B/ European Labour</u>
	<u>Unskilled</u>	<u>Skilled</u>	<u>Skilled</u>
1865	0,498	0,75	n.a.
1870	0,250 - 0,50	0,50 - 1,00	n.a.
1875	0,498	1,284	5,93
1878	0,498	1,284	5,93
1890	0,216	0,909	4,20

The cost of chapel building, in labour and money, placed a heavy burden on peasant communities already afflicted by other *fanompoana*, particularly as most communities were pressurised into constructing and maintaining at least two rival church establishments. This is reflected in an LMS account of church construction in the Ampaarina district of Imerina in 1879:

'Chapel building is slow work in Madagascar, and is usually done by fits and starts. The money comes in slowly, and the workmen are very troublesome, often working for a few days and then staying away for a week or more, and sometimes never turning up again. The result is that work which ought to be done in six months may extend over two or three years.' [22]

The labour of the entire local community would be involved at some stage, on a temporary basis, in the construction of a chapel, although such building projects also required a heavy and regular core of workers. For instance, 200 men were summoned in 1884 to construct the LMS school at Ambatoma on the river Mananara. On a larger scale, when the hospital foundations were laid at Ambatolampy in 1888, 1,000 bachelors were promptly drafted from the local LMS affiliated churches, on the local governor's orders, to work as labourers. [23]

The organisation and labour involved in the construction of state-church buildings was formidable, especially from the 1880s when higher standards of construction and decoration were demanded by state-church officials. Although statistics show little increase in the number of buildings erected from the mid 1880s, this disguises the fact that a considerable proportion of old clay and thatch chapels were demolished and replaced by brick and tile constructions. One of the greatest difficulties was the transport of necessary supplies, particularly the main structural timber, for the imperial regime refused to improve tracks in the island. [24] To fully appreciate the effort involved for local communities, it is worth quoting an account at some length;

In building a church in Madagascar, the people not only give a donation of money, but they also do much of the work... with their own hands... the ground is levelled, and the foundation prepared, by the congregation, who make an appointment

for a certain morning, when the men, women, and children come in a body with spades and baskets and do the necessary work. An estimate is also often made of the number of bricks which will be required, and then a division is arranged... according to social position occupied, or the supposed ability to furnish the number... In the case of the tiles with which our church at Fianarantsoa is covered, the men, women, and children voluntarily carried the 24,000 tiles from the place where they were made and burnt to the building, a distance of more than a mile, and involving hundreds of journeys to and fro, and up and down a rather steep hill.

Of all the difficulties connected with church building that of getting heavy timbers required for the roof is the greatest... there are no timber-yards where the wood required can be selected and purchased. In the neighbourhood of the forests there are wood-cutters, and it is usual to make a bargain with these to cut down huge trees and to reduce them with their hatchets to within a few inches of the dimensions required. These wood-cutters, however, do nothing but fell the trees and square them roughly to your dimensions. You must get them to where you want them to be - fetch them, perhaps forty or fifty miles, from some valley in the dense forest, through which you must cut your way before you can advance... the male members of the congregation turn out on an appointed day, and carrying with them uncooked rice and cooking vessels, are prepared to camp out for the time required. On reaching the spot in the forest where the tree has been felled, they fit strong ropes or tough creepers to each end of the roughly cut beam, and then making a pull... in two or three days perhaps the beam gets near its destination... The difficulty is enormous, for there is no other way of getting your beams from where they lie in the forest than by actually dragging them over hills and valleys, up steep, rugged, and precipitous places, through morasses, swamps, and rivers... to the spot where you want them to be... Having been successfully brought thus far by the men, a message is sent forward to the village or town in which the church is building, whereupon the women also turn out ... and join with their husbands, sons, or brothers, or sweethearts, in bringing the beam home... Other [lighter] necessary timbers are carried by two or four men on their shoulders, while lighter poles and planks are carried by one individual on the head or shoulder'. [25]

Local craftsmen were then employed to assist in the erection and decoration of the church; carpenters to make the frames, the doors, and benches, masons to

construct stone steps and wrought stone platforms, and iron smiths to make the hinges and locks. [26] So arduous was state-church *fanompoana* during the building programme of the 1870s and 1880s that local Betsileo craftsmen fled, obliging the NMS to import skilled workers from Imerina. It was this flight of provincial craftsmen and the diversion of Merina artisans from their ordinary tasks, more than the competitiveness of imports, which led to a decline in domestic craft production. In some cases, however, foreign building techniques stimulated imports rather than local production. For instance, the NMS imported pre-fabricated wooden houses directly from Norway, rather than employ local craftsmen to construct them. [27]

Further, building techniques ensured that *fanompoana* labour would be required to maintain the chapel once built. This was because most church buildings were built with a low-pitched roof in emulation of the style of European houses in contrast to the high pitched roofs traditionally used by the Malagasy. The traditional construction was ideally suited to withstand the torrential rainstorms that regularly swept the plateau in the rainy season, to which the low-pitched roofs succumbed and collapsed, necessitating constant repair work.

Local or other *fanompoana* labour could not manufacture all the materials required for building state-church buildings. An ordinary small clay and thatch church cost an average of \$60-125 plus labour to erect, but missionaries constantly pressurized local communities to construct bigger and better buildings. They had considerable success following government pressure on local communities from the time of the Army Reform in 1879 and the Code of

1881. Thereafter composite clay and adobe, or in some cases purely adobe buildings were erected. In Imerina the first tiled roofs and glass windows and schoolrooms separate from the chapel appeared, usually in the imperial capital. [28]

Brick churches, costing an average of \$250-300 plus labour to erect, became common in the country districts in the 1880s, characterised by lofty roofs where tiles increasingly replaced thatch. As sun-dried bricks could only be manufactured during the dry season, this entailed a concentration of chapel and school construction between the months of April and November, when it impinged heavily either on the busiest agricultural seasons (harvest and preparation of the fields) or on the intervening 'ceremonial' period. [29]

Church building was a particularly onerous burden for the chief villages of each district where the missionary in charge attempted to create a showpiece edifices to outshine both those of rival denominations in his own district, and those of his colleagues in neighbouring areas. This would inevitably involve the purchase of stained glass, and frequently a bell costing \$20 or more. Also, whereas 95% of congregations held school within the church building, the district centres would each endeavour to possess a separate schoolhouse. LMS churches of this type, costing from \$500-1,500 and above, tended to be superior to those of rival denominations, and the financial burden this caused was a major cause of defection by the Malagasy to rival churches. [30]

The greatest expense of all was the import of materials from abroad, prompted by the competition to build better and finer churches. From 1887, all tiles used on LMS buildings in Imerina were imported from France. This considerably

raised the price of construction; for example, the estimate for the cheapest church that the LMS builder and architect, Pool, could build in 1887 was \$1,750. [31] Similarly, in one of the most spectacular missionary building projects next to the construction of the 'Memorial Churches', stone was imported from Britain to build the SPG church at Ambatoharanana, twelve miles north of Antananarivo. It was only in 1881, after the vast majority of church and school building had already been completed, that the SPG decided that it would contribute one third to the cost of constructing a new church. [32]

Carried away with enthusiasm for what they frequently considered to be personal creations, the missionaries rarely showed any awareness of the true cost of state-church construction to the local community. One exception was Cousins who commented of the Toamasina district that,

'At present the school is held in the Ambodifototra church, the new school-house being still in an unfinished state from want of funds. The people seem to have exhausted themselves in the efforts they made to build the Ambodifototra church. They told me that this building cost them \$1200 and that, with the exception of \$100 given by our Society, the whole of this sum was raised by the two congregations in Tamatave [Toamasina]'. [33]

B/ State-church Personnel

Fanompoana entailed not only forced labour but also the exaction of money and materials for state projects or state personnel. The latter increased dramatically from 1869; the number of LMS pastors, preachers and evangelists

rose from 101 in 1867 to over 2,000 in 1870, a number which was to double again within eight years. It soon became impossible for the LMS to pay more than a handful of church workers, and the LMS and other missions quickly resorted to the use of state-church *fanompoana* to provide indigenous mission personnel. Indeed, it had little choice in the matter as most such officials were appointed by the imperial court. In overall terms, the tax collected from the ordinary people for the upkeep of evangelists, pastors, preachers, and teachers was considerable. In absolute terms, annual congregational collections in LMS/State churches rose from \$1,060.50 in 1867 to almost \$18,500 in 1870. Thereafter it did not decline until the Franco-Merina War, after which it revived to reach a recorded peak of \$32,525.10 in 1890. In terms of the average contribution per church member this constituted an average yearly tax of \$0.38, the lowest recorded average contribution of \$0.19 occurring in 1885, the last year of the Franco-Merina War of 1882-5, and the highest of \$0.91 in 1869; the year of the imperial court's conversion to Christianity. [34]

(i) Teachers:

Nowhere in the 1881 Code concerning education was mention made of salaries for school officials. It was implicit that their work, like other state work, was *fanompoana* and therefore unremunerated. The LMS insisted that the local community bear the greater cost of supporting a teacher, providing him with a house, sufficient rice to subsist on (estimated at 50 bushels [1,818.50 litres] per annum, and at least two-thirds of his salary - frequently all of it. [35]

However teachers' salaries were not only low - \$2 a month in 1869, dropping to \$1 a month from 1870 and \$0.50 in 1875, except for LMS College graduates who received \$6 a month, but were frequently not paid at all by the local community. By 1890 teachers salaries were lower still, varying between \$0.25 and \$2 a month (plus the provision of a house and rice). They received a monetary "pittance" when they presented their registers for annual inspection to the missionaries at Antananarivo. A handful of 'deserving' schools obtained from \$7.5 to \$9.5 per annum from the mission. [36] Because teaching was unremunerative, teachers' salaries being well below those of unskilled labourers, and therefore unprestigious, many unsuitable candidates entered the profession, which only added to the dislike felt for them by the local community. [37] The effect of poor pay was to lower the standard of education in the schools:

'It is difficult to maintain any number of properly trained teachers in any district under these circumstances (ie. poor pay), and so most of our teachers of village schools are youths from the neighbourhood, who, in the hope of escaping unpaid Government service, and in consideration of what they can obtain from the congregation in their native village, supplemented by the small grant-in-aid... are willing to do what they can in teaching the children'. [38]

Despite the reluctance of local communities to support a teacher, a school post was highly desirable as a means to escape military *fanompoana*:

'Some of these men complain of being poor, but they are wise enough to know that their present poverty is riches compared with what would be their lot were they to return to their [military] *fanompoana*'. [39]

Table 6: LMS Teacher Salary Scales (\$) [40]

Year	Annually	Weekly	Province	Maximum LMS Contribution (\$ pa.)	Minimum Church Members' Contribution (\$ pa.)
1869	24.00	0.462	Imerina	8.00	16.00
1870	12.00	0.231	Imerina	4.00	8.00
1875	6.00	0.115	Imerina	2.00	4.00
1878	12.00 - 36.00	0.231 - 0.692	Imerina	4.00 - 12.00	8.00 - 24.00
1882	3.00 - 48.00	0.058 - 0.923	Imerina	1.00 - 16.00	2.00 - 32.00
1890	3.00 - 24.00	0.058 - 0.462	Imerina	1.00 - 8.00	2.00 - 16.00
	4.50 - 54.00	0.087 - 1.038	Betsileo	1.50 - 18.00	3.00 - 36.00
	12.00	0.231	Antsihanaka	4.00	8.00

Table 7: Annual LMS Church Contributions (\$) [41]

Year	District	Total Raised	% towards Teacher Salaries	Contribution per Congregation	Contribution per Church Member
1867	Imerina	1,060	n.a.	11.52	0.200
1870	Imerina	18,485	n.a.	29.77	0.882
1875	Imerina	16,755	11.85	18.58	0.284
1880	Imerina	19,815	20.62	17.35	0.277
1890	Imerina	23,400	16.08	30.43	0.434
	Betsileo	1,939	21.49	7.18	0.470
	Other	1,150	60.21	n.a.	1.450

In contrast to the Norwegian Lutheran and French Roman Catholic missions, the LMS in Madagascar gained little metropolitan financial support, and it was very rarely that the LMS provided any subsidy to local congregations for educational or religious work. Indeed, it was the avowed aim of the LMS mission from its inception in Madagascar in 1818 to become self-sufficient as quickly as possible. This policy which was re-affirmed for the second mission from 1862 by William Ellis, was particularly harsh for the peoples of subjected provinces of the Merina empire where the salaries of Merina state-church personnel was higher than in Imerina itself. [42]

(ii) Evangelists

By 1875 the Palace Church, which stood at the apex of the state-church structure, and over which no missionary had any control, was funding 28 trained teachers and evangelists. This evidently proved too much of a burden for the imperial treasury for in 1877 Rainilaiarivony ordered a collection throughout the Imerina congregations for a domestic Missionary Society called the *Isan-enim-bolana* (lit. 'every six months'), designed to send Merina evangelists to different provinces both on the plateau and in distant parts of the island. The *Isan-Enim-Bolana* was started by the LMS in 1871, but forbidden to operate by Rainilaiarivony until 1875 under a revised scheme of action. By January 1878 Rabezandrina, a court official, had collected \$5,784.5 in cash, plus clothes, books, watches and jewelry, from the members of the Palace Church, and \$1,325.81 from the seven 'town' churches of Antananarivo. [43]

Table 8: Mission Personnel [44]

<u>A/ LMS-FFMA</u>	<u>Evangelist</u>	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Preachers</u>
1884 Imerina	102	722	4,814
Betsileo	17	34	352
	119	756	5,166

Wilson, an FFMA missionary, reflected the desperate and contradictory attempts of the missionary bodies in Madagascar to maintain the pretence of an independent church to the outside world when he remarked of the *Isan-enim-bolana*'collection':

'Now the Malagasy as a whole are very poor, but at the same time, if the Queen says a thing has to be done, it will be done. This message was distinctly not compulsory; still, a sum of £1,200 [\$6,000] has been collected, which is enormous for this country'. [45]

Between 1880 and 1890 the Imerina LMS affiliated congregations contributed a total of \$15,000 towards the *Isan-enim-bolana*, on the basis of a half yearly levy of \$0.04-1.00 per 'country' congregation and \$5 for each church in the imperial capital. The government also levied a contribution from army officers. Some of this went towards the support of 23 evangelists, whose work was considered privileged *fanompoana*. Six of these were appointed from the Palace Church and were hence regarded as the chief evangelists, although it is probable that most money raised disappeared into the imperial treasury. [46] In 1875 it was decided that the evangelist, if working in the district administered by one of the mother churches of Antananarivo, should have one

third of his salary, which averaged \$5 a month, paid by the mother church and the rest by the LMS. In 1875 the LMS contribution was estimated to be \$4,550, but there was an understanding that the contribution of the churches of the district would gradually be increased, and the LMS supplement decreased. Outside Imerina the LMS initially agreed to pay two-thirds of the salary of evangelists, the rest to be provided by the churches of the district to which they were sent. However, in accordance with the LMS principle of self-sufficiency, it was expected that the LMS provision would be quickly reduced and that the local churches and the *Isan-Enim-Bolana* would soon assume financial responsibility for evangelists, each contributing half of his salary. [47] This placed a heavy burden on the less well supported churches of the provinces. For instance, twenty-four LMS affiliated churches amongst the Bezanozano contributed an average of \$100 per annum from 1883-95, which at \$2.08 per congregation per half year was over double the average contribution of the average Merina church. In Betsileo, where evangelists were paid \$8 every six months, a similar organisation, the *Isan-Kerintaona* (lit. 'the return of the year'), was established. In the year 1880-81, \$466.79 was collected there, and from 1880-90 the number of evangelists working in the region increased from 9 to 33. [48]

The burden on the local community for the support of teachers and evangelists was frequently too great for them to bear. As early as 1876 it was commented of the Faravohitra district of Imerina: 'The support of these evangelists is a difficulty. The seven churches agreed to find 12s. [\$3] per month, but they have never done so... [and] to find rice for the teachers is no light burden'. [49]

Table 9: Official Wage Rates of Indigenous State-Church Personnel [50]

<u>Year</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Place of Employment</u>	<u>Monthly Salary (\$)</u>	<u>Equivalent Weekly rate (\$)</u>	<u>Yearly Salary (\$)</u>
1869	Pastor (LMS)	Imerina	3,060	0,654	36,72
1873	Teacher (LMS)	Betsileo	0,375	0,096	4,50
1875	Evangelists (LMS)	Imerina	3,000	0,750	36,00
	Evangelist (LMS)	Antsihanaka	2,000	0,498	24,00
1877	Evangelist (LMS)	Imerina	7,000	1,500	84,00
1890	Evangelist (LMS)	Maroantsetra	7,000	1,500	84,00

The failure or refusal to find the salary of teachers and evangelists often resulted in the closure of schools for up to six months a year as the central mission fund alone was insufficient to maintain a teacher on a permanent basis. [51] The role of the schools in removing valued family labour from the ricefields made the Malagasy peasant increasingly unwilling to pay teacher/evangelist salaries. In the face of such opposition, the state-church resorted to force, which one missionary euphemistically referred to as 'the wise and friendly pressure put on the people by the Queen and Prime Minister' [52], in order to raise the money required to pay the teachers. Occasionally missionaries would object when they witnessed such extortion first hand [53], but on the whole they turned a blind eye because they realised that such methods were the only means of maintaining the schools. However, their support of force was always phrased to allay potential suspicion from the missionary supporting public in Britain. It was usually expressed in terms of inducing a sense of financial 'responsibility' and self-help amongst local congregations as part of their process of Christian maturation:

'The missionaries of the LMS firmly insist upon the churches bearing a share in the expenses of the schools. It cannot be doubted that, if the regular and persistent pressure

brought to bear by the missionaries upon the churches were to cease, their contribution would rapidly decline, and soon fail altogether'. [54]

(iii) Pastors and Preachers

Following the state adoption of Christianity in 1869, the position of pastor was usually filled by the head men of the village, though they were joined from 1876 by a large number of old soldiers who were retired in consequence of army reforms and were pushed by the court into becoming pastors of country churches. Their work was considered part of their *fanompoana* and they were directly supervised by the Merina court. As a missionary remarked, 'Pastoral work is, with very few exceptions, a mere addition to military and civil honours and duties'. [55]

Once given court approval, a pastor considered that his position was confirmed for life, and was even a hereditary one to be passed on to his sons. The status of such a post was considerable, as was its material benefits, for although officially unsalaried, the pastor felt himself entitled to demand a comfortable living from his congregation.

In contrast to teachers and evangelists, local congregations received virtually no support for the upkeep of their pastors and preachers. From 1870, the LMS officially refused to pay more than one third of the salary of its native pastors. In reality even this sum was not forthcoming, the onus being upon the local congregations to maintain their clergy through local 'church' contributions. [56] His wage taken from church contributions was exclusive of rice which the local congregation was also expected to provide. As rice

was the basis of every meal, this was a considerable bonus, and meant that the money salary could be expended on items other than food. In addition, he wielded considerable local power which was enforced through his control over the minor positions of authority within the church. [57]

Table 10: Betsileo: LMS Pastors and Church Collections, 1880-89 [58]

<u>Year</u>	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Church Collections</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Pastors</u>	<u>Church Collections</u>
1880	30	259.55	1885	43	298.52
1881	50	241.89	1886	50	277.27
1882	47	296.94	1887	53	206.36
1883	30	327.23	1888	56	218.25
1884	31	379.39	1889	75	253.79

The number of pastors increased markedly in Imerina between 1880 and 1890, although at a less rapid rate in the subjugated provinces of the empire. This growth is both a reflection of the increase in the number of chapels, and of the immunity of pastors to non-religious *fanompoana*. The slower rate of increase in the imperial provinces is explained by the fact that all pastors were Merina, and in the provinces earned the hostility of most of the local population to whom Merina pastors were justifiably representatives of an oppressive imperial regime. The number of part-time preachers also showed a rapid increase in both Imerina and Betsileo between 1880 and 1890. They were drawn from the members of the congregation and did not exclude non-Merina, which largely explains the increase in their numbers in Betsileo. Preachers were not exempt from non-religious *fanompoana*, but as they derived

Table 11: Estimated Number and Salaries of Indigenous LMS/State Church Personnel, 1866-94 [59]

Year	Evang- elists	Total Annual Wages	Pastors	Total Annual Wages	Preachers	Total Annual Wages	Teachers	Total Annual Wages
		(£)		(£)		(£)		(£)
1866	-		95	2,850	-	-	16	192
1867	-		101	3,030	-	-	50	600
1868	-		115	3,450	33	396	78	936
1869	-		153	4,590	315	3,780	403	4,836
1870	-		209	6,270	412	4,944	1,008	12,096
1871	n.a.		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1872	-		277	8,310	445	5,340	1,394	16,728
1873	-		-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1874	-		-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1875	-		-	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1876	36	2,160	283	8,490	583	6,996	1,826	21,912
1877	107	6,420	344	10,320	459	5,508	1,842	22,104
1878	156	9,360	386	11,580	546	6,552	2,195	26,340
1879	153	9,180	519	15,570	470	5,640	2,470	29,640
1880	n.a.	n.a.	604	18,120	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1881	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1882	123	7,380	654	19,620	179*	2,148*	2,252	27,024
1883	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2,318	27,816
1884	123	7,380	756	22,680	232	2,784	2,906	34,872
1885	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1886	n.a.	n.a.	825	24,750	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1887	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1888	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1889	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1890	n.a.	n.a.	971	29,130	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1891	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1892	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1893	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1894	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1,994	23,928

Working on the basis that 1. the annual average wage of an evangelist = \$60
 " " " " " pastor = \$30
 " " " " " preacher = \$12
 " " " " " teacher = \$12

- the number of preachers be counted, for wage purposes, as the number of congregations without either an evangelist or a pastor
- the ratio of schools to teachers being 1:2.8 (Rabary, Daty Malaza 3 (1931), 144; idem, 4 (Tananarive, 1948), 78.

Table 12: Statistics of the LMS Mission, Madagascar, 1880-90 [50]

Region	Year	Indigenous Pastors	Indigenous Preachers	Church Members	Church Members per Pastor	Church Members per Preacher	Total Local Contributions (\$)
Imerina	1880	536	3,314	63,927	119.27	19.29	11,012,625
	1890	847	3,695	53,883	63.62	14.58	23,399,708
		+311	+381	-10,044	-55.65	-4.71	+12,387,083
Betsileo	1880	24	349	3,119	129.96	8.94	2,500,000
	1890	92	750	4,122	44.80	5.50	1,939,375
		+68	+401	+1,003	85.16	-3.44	-560,625
Tsihanaka	1880	-	10	-	-	-	50,000
	1890	-	59	270	-	45.29	771,604
		-	+49	n.a.	-	n.a.	+721,604
Toamasina	1890	20	137	832	41.60	6.07	1,342,208
S.E. Coast	1890	n.a.	27	97	n.a.	3.59	n.a.
Iboina	1890	12	61	411	34.25	6.74	n.a.
TOTAL	1880	589	3,837	68,227	124.62	14.12	14,583,250
	1890	971	4,729	59,615	46.07	13.63	27,452,895
		+382	+892	-8,612	-78.55	-0.49	+12,869,645

considerable status from their role within the state church, they did possess some influence and would be more likely to evade such *fanompoana* than ordinary church members.

(iv) Extortion

The burden to the community of maintaining state-church personnel did not stop at meeting the cost of stipulated wages and food, and the supply of a house. The work of state-church officials was itself *fanompoana* and, in accordance with the traditional practice regarding *fanompoana* work, state-church officials resorted to extortion in order to supplement their income. In construction projects they inevitably took a percentage of the project resources, particularly in materials and money. For instance, during the erection of a new church at Isoavina Peake commented:

'I have been extremely tried by the scheming and cunning of some to make the work a means of "squeezing" money out of others. A few made attempts to upset and put a stop to the work, because they were not allowed the opportunity of handling the money', [61]

As with building projects, so the collection of money and food for the support of teachers and evangelists was subject to extortion, the head man of the village, who usually doubled as the pastor of the local church, raising money through the imposition of an *isam-baravarana* or house tax, from which he took his cut:

'The Malagasy mode of collecting by means of the head men in the villages is also a most unfortunate one, as the poor people are often compelled to pay much more than justly falls to their share. This plan is usually adopted in collecting the people's share of the schoolmasters' salaries... and considerable extortion is practiced. It is not surprising therefore that there should be much discontent in many of the villages with regard to this matter'. [62]

Summary

Up to the present, historians have given enormous weight to mission activity in Madagascar, arguing that the missionaries wielded enormous power. The missionary apologists claim that in the burst of proselytising which followed the conversion of the imperial court to Christianity in 1869, the missionaries used their power in benevolent fashion. They emphasise the self-sacrifice and generosity of missionaries and their supporters in Britain, which was emulated by indigenous converts. The French 'colonial', and the modern 'nationalist' schools also emphasise the enormous power and influence of the missions, but argue that the missionaries used that power to forward British political and commercial interests in Madagascar. This author argues, to the contrary, that the independence of the missions was negligible and that the power they wielded was not only circumscribed but derived entirely from the imperial court which totally dominated the missions and effectively absorbing them into a state-church.

It is within that context that this paper examines the burst of 'missionary' activity from 1869. The subsequent construction of church buildings, attendance at them, and the dramatic increase in the number of church officials, particularly those affiliated to the LMS, was an extension of imperial *fanompoana* and recognised as such by the Malagasy peasant. The cost, again in terms of *fanompoana*, of that expansion to the peasant was enormous, causing general resentment both against the imperial Merina regime that sponsored state-church *fanompoana* and the officials of the state-church, including the missionaries who executed imperial orders. The missionaries

were aware of the burden of religious *fanompoana*, but accepted it, and the loss of mission independence, in return for the advantages of belonging to a state-church. Chief amongst those advantages was their access, as state-church officials, to imperial *fanompoana*.

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1. The following abbreviations are used throughout this paper:

Missionary Societies: FFMA - Friends Foreign Mission Association; LMS - London Missionary Society; NMS - Norwegian (Lutheran) Missionary Society; SPG - Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

Sources of Primary Material: AAMM - Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine - Journal of the LMS in Madagascar; AMBAT - Archives of the SPG at Ambatoharanana, Madagascar; ANM - Archives Nationales de Madagascar; FLM/NMS - Archives of the NMS, Isoraka, Antananarivo; FJKM - Archives of the *Fiangonana Jesosy Kristy, Madagaskara* (Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar); US - Despatches of United States Consuls in Toamasina, Madagascar (1853-1906), National Archives, Washington DC.

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