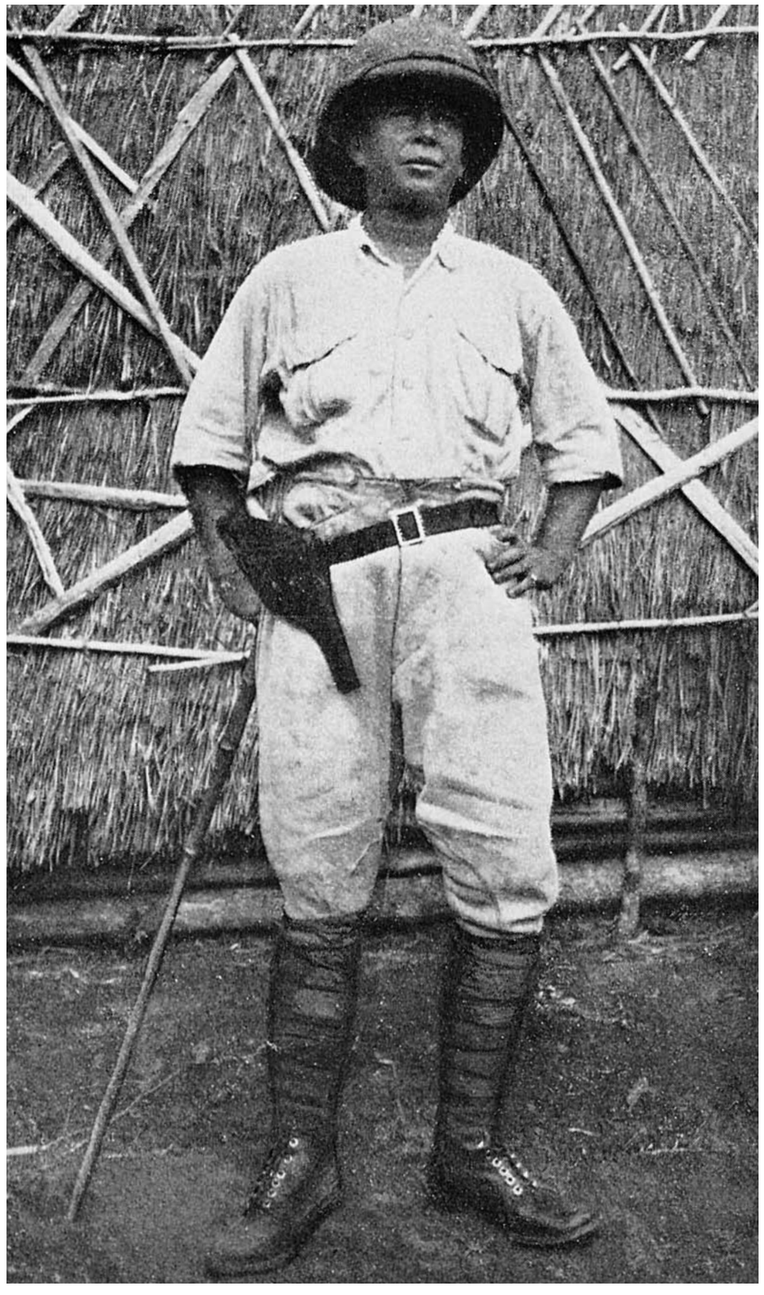


2.1
This photograph of Ralph Linton in Madagascar appeared in the April 1928 issue of the journal *Asia* (28, no. 4: 259).

2

Ralph Linton in Madagascar, 1926–1927

Liliana Mosca

Ralph Linton, assistant curator of North American Ethnology at the Field Museum of Natural History, left Chicago in the fall of 1925, headed for Europe prior to commencing an expedition to Madagascar (fig. 2.1). The Field Museum meticulously planned the ethnological expedition but allowed Linton to organize his research independently (Mosca 1988, 2; 1994,15). He had only to keep in mind the expedition's primary objective: "To determine the relationship of the natives to other Malayan groups, particularly to those of Sumatra whence their first migrations are supposed to have taken place" (RLP, D. C. Davies, Director, Field Museum, to Linton, Oct. 13, 1925).[1] According to the prevalent theories of the time, the Proto-Malagasy, the first inhabitants of Madagascar, had come from Sumatra (Mosca 1996, 631).

Prior to traveling to Madagascar, Linton briefly spent time in Britain examining the Malagasy collections in London, Cambridge, and Oxford (RLP, Linton to Davies, Nov. 14, 1925; RLP, Linton to Davies, Dec. 16, 1925). He then went to France to conduct more research, as well as to establish diplomatic contacts (RLP, Joseph C. Grew, Undersecretary of State, to Davies, August 31, 1925; RLP, Linton to Davies, Dec. 16, 1925).

On December 17, Linton boarded a ship in Marseille headed for Madagascar; he was accompanied by his wife, Margaret McIntosh.[2] The trip took about one month with stops in African and Malagasy ports. The Lintons finally disembarked in Tamatave (now Toamasina), the main harbor of the island (Linton and Linton 1973, 8, 11, 13–14, 19), and continued the journey by train to Tananarive (now Antananarivo), the capital of the colony (Mosca 1989–1990, 10).

They arrived in Antananarivo during the rainy season, and Linton decided to remain there until the dry season (Mosca 1988, 3). After solving numerous practical problems—from housing to daily living to establishing cordial relations with French officials—Linton planned the various steps he would follow in order to take advantage of the time he would spend in the city.[3] He visited the Bibliothèque du Gouvernement and the Bibliothèque de l'Académie Malgache to do research and the Musée du Palais de la Reine to study its collections (RLP, Linton Report to Sept. 9, 1926, 6; Mosca 1989–1990, 17). He also took lessons in the Malagasy language, even though he had hired an interpreter, Ramamonjy, described as "one of the *Notables* of Madagascar and...a professor" (Linton and Linton 1973, 39).[4] From the very beginning, Linton started collecting artifacts in Antananarivo and in villages around it (fig. 2.2),[5] according to the instructions he had received from the Field Museum

2.2
"The Talata market, in Imerina."

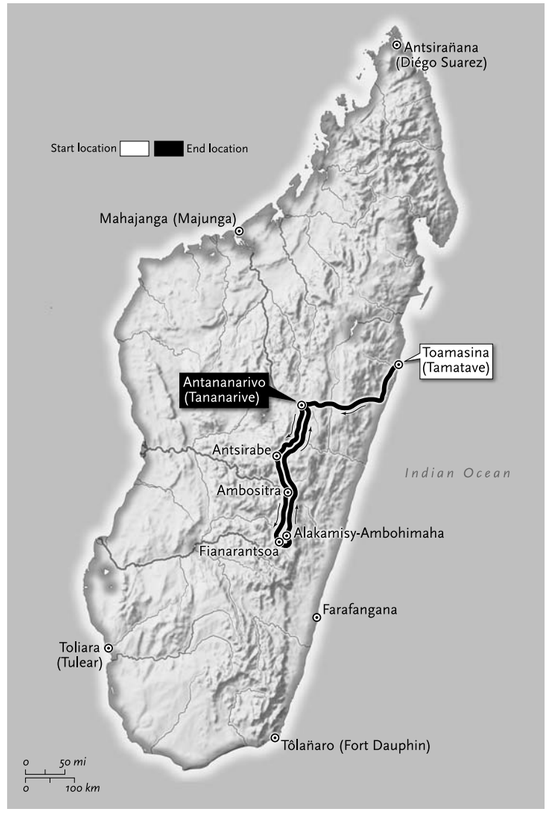
Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 51715).

2.3
"A Hova [Merina] woman weaving a lamba."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 51729).

> It is to be understood in general that the larger portion of the appropriation should be devoted to the acquisition of collections required for exhibition. The collections should vividly illustrate the life, activities, industries and religious beliefs of the native tribes of the island. You should also secure data and photographs of one or two life-size and as many miniature groups showing modes of living, habitations, or striking industries. [RLP, Davies to Linton, Oct. 13, 1925]

Malagasy people often visited Linton and offered to sell him objects. He also hired three Malagasy assistants, whom he would send out to collect more material. This system proved to be very efficient (Mosca 1989–1990, 16). After a few weeks, Linton had collected about six hundred artifacts, representing more or less all Merina culture (figs. 2.3, 2.4). Among them were some objects of considerable value, such as silk *lamba,*[6] for which Linton paid as much as US $25 (RLP, "For Director's Information," letter from Linton, Feb. 7, 1926), stone lamps, rare wooden utensils, a collection of snuff boxes, a fairly complete set of charms, beads, and a wooden "idol" (RLP, Linton Report to Sept. 9, 1926, 6; FMNH 1927, 35; Linton 1927b, 301).[7]



In his attempt to trace the ancient history of migrations to Madagascar, Linton devoted time to collecting oral material from elderly people, which he transcribed each night after checking the information with others. He reached the conclusion that the Malayan immigrants did not come to Madagascar traveling directly across the Indian Ocean but rather that they landed on the western coast of the island after a lengthy voyage along East Africa (RLP, Linton to Davies, March 25, 1926).[8]

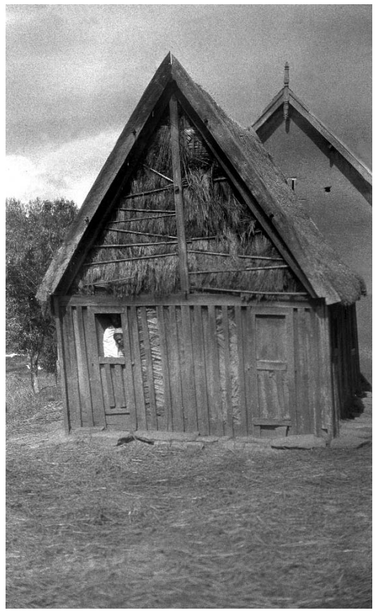
By the time the dry season approached, Linton had completed his collection of Merina material culture and was ready to move on (fig. 2.5). He boarded a train to Antsirabe on April 6 or 7, 1926, and from there, he continued his journey by bus to the town of Ambositra in Betsileo territory (figs. 2.6, 2.7). In Ambositra, Linton was taken ill with malaria, so his wife, Margaret, took charge of collecting. She visited the city of Fianarantsoa and the nearby village of Alakamisy-Ambohimaha, "some twenty-six kilometers away," where she procured ninety-two objects, among them a fetish (Linton and Linton 1973, 74–76). Ralph Linton described the fetish as a "diviner's kit with various sacred woods, to be grated to get a medicine of one kind or another, beans used in divining, the skull of a small animal, probably a lemur, a piece of quartz, and a bamboo container full of small reeds" (RLP, Linton to Davies, May 5, 1926).[9]

In the Betsileo region, Linton met a Malagasy man who was a fellow veteran of World War I (Mosca 1994, 25–26).[10] The two men took a liking to one another and became friends. Through his newly acquired companion, as well as by assuring the Betsileo that the specimens he collected would be preserved forever, Linton won their confidence, and

2.4
"A Hova [Merina] widow. The lamba is folded in this manner to show widowhood, and the hair worn down in a braid."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 51728).

2.5
The first phase of Linton's expedition: Antananarivo (Tananarive), Antsirabe, Ambositra, Fianarantsoa, Alakamisy-Ambohimaha, Antananarivo (Tananarive).



2.6
"Ancestral Betsileo house at Ambositra."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 51881).

2.7
"Betsileo woman and her baby."

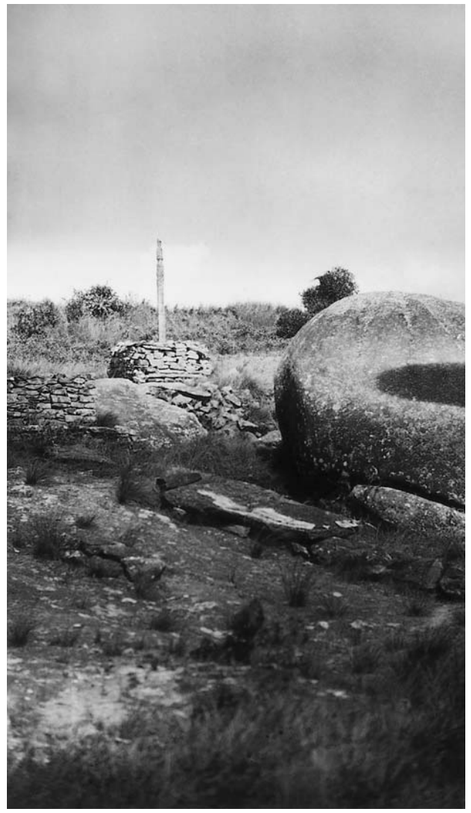
Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 51738).

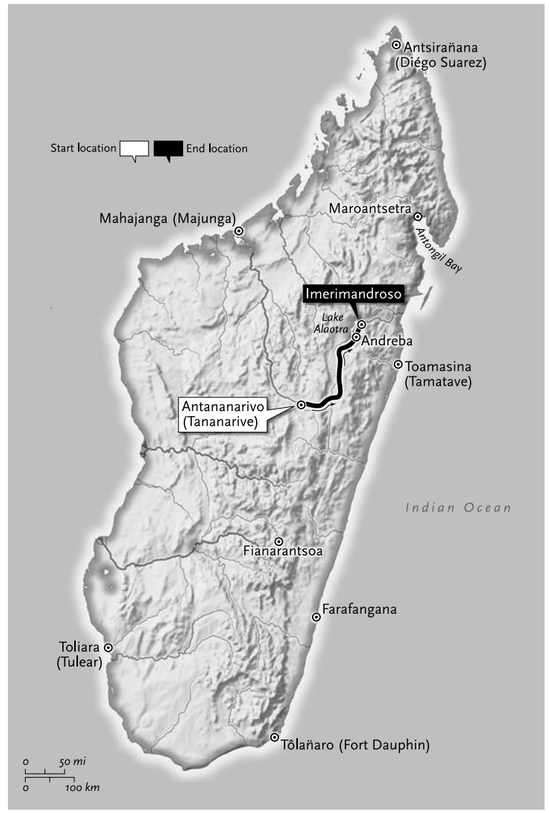
2.8
"Winnowing rice [Betsileo country]."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 51884).

the houses of the Betsileo were opened to him and his wife (fig. 2.8). The Lintons were allowed to buy many items as well as to see the sacred tombs of the Vazimba (fig. 2.9), or ancestors (Linton and Linton, 1973, 65).[11] The Betsileo collection totaled about three hundred pieces, some of which were very valuable. Especially rare were the wooden objects, including a carved bed and a carved box to hold clothing, a form of traditional handicraft that was fast disappearing or was perhaps already lost (Mosca 1994, 27).

Linton returned to Antananarivo, where he packed the material he had collected and shipped it back to the Field Museum in Chicago. He planned next to visit the Sihanaka people of the Lake Alaotra region, to proceed toward the eastern coast, and then to tour the northern part of the island (RLP, Linton to Davies, May 5, 1926; Linton Report to Sept. 9, 1926, 5).





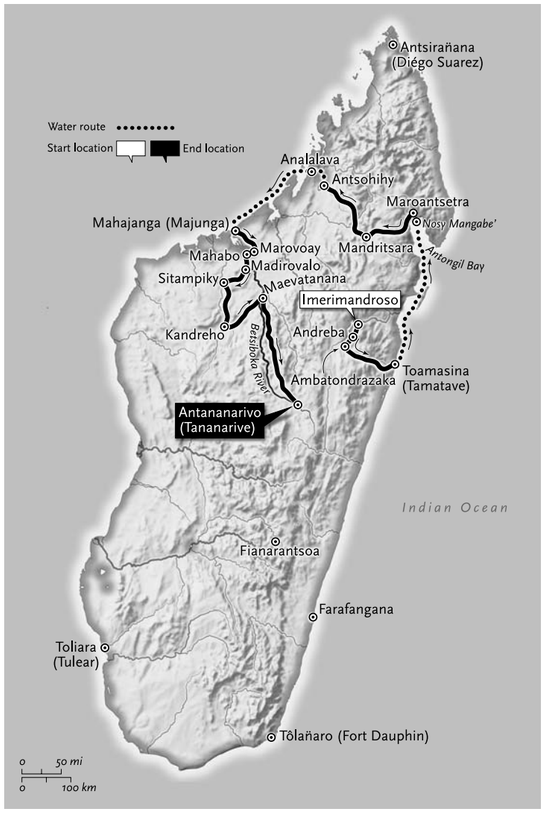
2.9
"Betsileo tombs, with a sacred place of the 'Vazimba' [ancestors] in the right foreground."

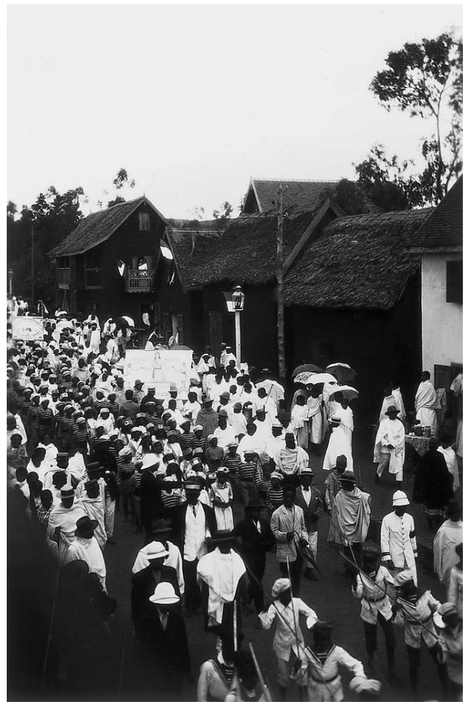
Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 51741).

2.10
The second phase of Linton's expedition: Antananarivo (Tananarive), Andreba, Imerimandroso.

On May 18, Linton left Antananarivo by train for Andreba, a town at the lower end of lake Alaotra (fig. 2.10). The next day he traveled by rickshaw to the village of Imerimandroso. Unfortunately, he suffered another bout of malaria there and was forced to abandon the idea of continuing on by land to the city of Maroantsetra on Antongil Bay. The journey would have taken almost one-and-a-half months and would have been very dangerous for a man severely weakened by malaria. The region was remote, without roads, scarcely populated, and lacking in medical assistance in the event that Linton needed to be hospitalized (Mosca 1994, 29).

Linton preferred not to take such risks (fig. 2.11). He returned to Andreba by canoe and from there left for Toamasina, stopping for two days along the way in the town of Ambatondrazaka for the annual fair (fig. 2.12). The date of Linton's arrival in Toamasina is uncertain because he recorded two different versions of his stay among the Sihanaka (RLP, Linton to Davies, May 27, 1926; Linton Report to Sept. 9, 1926, 5). He collected around 250 Sihanaka objects, enough, in his opinion, to study this group (RLP, Linton Report to Sept. 9, 1926, 7). He was interested in particular aspects of their culture, specifically in their traditional religion. Furthermore, he examined their techniques for creating various objects. He reported, for example, that the designs used in mat making were all named and that supernatural powers were attributed to some designs (RLP, Linton to Davies, May 27, 1926; RLP, Linton Report to Sept. 9, 1926, 7). During his stay in the Sihanaka region, magic was practiced on Linton, who took the experience so positively that he wrote an article about the incident (Linton 1927c, 191–96; Mosca 1994, 31).[12]





2.11
The third phase of Linton's expedition: Imerimandroso, Andreba, Ambatondrazaka, Toamasina (Tamatave), Maroantsetra, Nosy Mangabe', Mandritsara, Antoshihy, Mahajanga (Majunga), Marovoay, Mahabo, Madirovalo, Sitampiky, Kandreho, Maevatanana, Antananarivo (Tananarive).

2.12
"Procession at the Fair at Ambatondrazaka."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 51907).

With the help of Ramamonjy, Linton was able to exchange a little money and copies of the Malagasy New Testament for some Sihanaka charms (RLP, Linton to Davies, May 27, 1926). He described the Sihanaka people as still culturally tied to ancestral traditions and very little influenced by European culture.[13] Their independent attitude toward Europeans and their direct approach to discussion seemed to confirm that interpretation. About their material activities, Linton noted:

> Weaving is entirely extinct among them, except for a little work done by Hova[14] immigrants, and I got what they siad [*sic*] was the only piece of the old Sihanaka silk weaving left. Other industries still go on, but all the work is simple, although well finished. I got a fairly complete collection of miniature paddles with the tops carved in various realistic forms, which seem to have been the chief's insignia in the old days, the full outfit of a Sihanaka marriage, including the family jewelry, and a very good lot of charms, also 2 sorcerer's staves, which will be the only ones in any Museum. [RLP, Linton to Davies, May 27, 1926]

The Lintons remained more than a month in the seaport of Toamasina waiting for the east coast steamer, the *Imerina*, to take them to Maroantsetra. From Maroantsetra, Linton intended to reach the western coast by land and then travel to the south. If that could not be accomplished, he planned to go to the seaport of Diego Suarez (now Antsirañana)

and board the mail boat serving the island's western coast (RLP, Linton to Davies, July 6, 1926). While they waited in Toamasina, Ralph Linton spent part of his time writing articles for the *Atlantic Monthly*:

> As there is almost no material or information to be gotten in the town itself, I have spent part of this time in writing up two popular articles. I am enclosing copies. Both are true in all important details, although the name of the town and one or two other minor things have been changed in the witch story. The sorcerer's staff mentioned in this is No. 942 in the catalogue, the charm put inside the door of my house by the wizard is No. 983. It belongs to the general class of love charms and is so listed. Charms Nos. 984–7 inclusive were given me by the wizard before his disappearance. [RLP, Linton to Davies, July 8, 1926][15]

On July 10 the Lintons finally left Toamasina for Maroantsetra, where they remained from July 12 to July 21, completing the Betsimisaraka collection, attending the Bastille Day celebrations of July 14, and taking photographs of some of the events. The stay in Maroantsetra offered them the opportunity to visit the little island of Nosy Mangabe', also known as Nosy Marosy, believed to have been a base for pirates between the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century (Linton and Linton 1973, 109–11).[16]

Linton was not very enthusiastic about his Betsimisaraka collection. In his report to the Field Museum he explained that the Betsimisaraka people had been strongly influenced by the external world and, as a result, the investigation of their history and culture had been very disappointing.[17] He also indicated that because of their sandy soil the Betsimisaraka did not produce pottery nor did they make wood carvings. They produced instead mats and baskets, whose workmanship was simple and without designs, and raffia clothes, which at times they twined with imported cotton thread. He purchased some items and also bought some tools and musical instruments, collecting some eighty-eight pieces in all (RLP, Linton Report of Sept. 9, 1926, 8; Linton 1927b, 304).

On July 21, the Lintons set off by *filanjana*[18] for the western coast. Initially, they traveled along the coast, then they headed toward the Malagasy forest, which they described in detail (Mosca 1994, 36). During the first four days, the region that Linton and his wife passed through was still populated by Betsimisaraka people, who had lived there for five or six generations. From there, they proceeded to Tsimihety country, arriving in the city of Mandritsara on July 26, 1926, and staying until August 5 (RLP, Linton to Davies, August 15, 1926; RLP, Linton Report to Sept. 9, 1926, 5).

Linton found elderly informants in Mandritsara "usually glad to talk"(Mosca 1994, 37), and their narratives supported his hypothesis about the origin of the first inhabitants of Madagascar:

> I stayed some time at Mandritsara, where people are quite primitive, and worked with several of the old men. They all declared that the first settlers of that country, the Vazimba, were the direct ancestors of most of the population. They said that these Vazimba cultivated rice to a limited extent, lived in holes or dugouts in the hard clay soil, and were armed with axes and blow gun [*sic*] with poisoned arrows. At the present time they use the blow gun here for small game but have lost the secret of the poison. At a later time, the ancestors of the rulling [*sic*] element in the tribe entered the region from the west, coming from across the water. These new comers [*sic*] brought with them the bow, which was the great historic weapon of the Tsimahety, and according to 2 informants, cattle. The rest were uncertain on the cattle. All agreed that the newcomers were very much like the present Sakalava and came from the same place.

> Some thought that they may have been a branch of the Sakalava. The Sakalava are unquestionably of rather recent African origin, and the traditions certainly point to the conquest of an early population of Malayan culture by an African people. I cross-examined them repeatedly and they stuck to their stories. I have also gotten some indications of the migration route of the Malays in the distribution of the outrigger canoe. This contrivance is used in the Comorros and all down the west coast, but seems to be unknown to the east coast tribes. If the Malay immigrants had come straight across the Indian Ocean and landed on the east coast, as has been generally assumed, it could hardly have been unknown there. It looks as though they really did coast along Africa, as told in the traditions. I find too that the canoe sail of the west coast is practically identical with that used in the Marquesas and New Zealand. [RLP, Linton to Berthold Laufer, Curator of Anthropology, Field Museum, August 26, 1926]

In this region Linton also discovered villages of Makoa people,[19] who had totally forgotten their original language and had completely absorbed the Malagasy culture (RLP, Linton to Davies, August 15, 1926; Mosca 1997, 500–501)

Linton collected about 250 Tsimihety items: baskets, raffia and cotton clothes, *lamba*, pottery, and amulets (RLP, Linton Report to Sept. 9, 1926, 8; Linton 1927b, 305). Linton wrote about the amulets:

> A fine collection of these [charms] was obtained, including some unique pieces. The most remarkable are the complete equipment of a native doctor, a warrior's charm necklace containing rare beads and silver cornecopias [*sic*] for charms, a large silver horn containing charms, a small figure into which sickness was drawn, and two charms for killing enemies. One of these, consisting of 3 charms wrapped up together and placed in a basket, is of the most dangerous type and could not be kept in the owner's house, as it would cause his death. A man who thought it's [*sic*] owner was operating against him showed me where it was hidden on condition that I carry it off, which I did. [RLP, Linton Report to Sept. 9, 1926, 8]

Linton gathered information on Tsimihety society, its burial customs, and its religious beliefs and practices. Furthermore, he ascertained that the Tsimihety people did not worship their dead with any special ritual (RLP, Linton Report to Sept. 9, 1926, 8).[20] On August 5, Linton left Mandritsara and traveled to the city of Antsohihy, arriving after a five-day journey (RLP, Linton to Davies, August 15, 1926; Linton and Linton 1973, 128). On August 13, he boarded a ship for Majunga (now Mahajanga). From there, he had planned to go to Tulear (now Toliara) and, if possible, continue toward Fort Dauphin (now Tôlañaro) by land.

Linton intended to study the population of the southern part of the island as soon as he could because he thought—as did many scholars of his time—that only then would a dependable evolutionary reconstruction of the whole Malagasy society and culture be possible. Unfortunately, once he arrived at Mahajanga, he was unable to continue his journey south due to a quarantine that had been imposed by the government to prevent the spread of bubonic plague, which had struck the region (RLP, Linton to Davies, August 15, 1926). Linton remained in Mahajanga for a little more than a month. During this time he looked for objects to collect, although initially he was not optimistic (RLP, Linton to Laufer, August 26, 1926). In the end, however, he obtained a considerable number of objects, taking advantage of the fear and desperation of people in the face of the epidemic:

> Majunga is quite a large civilized town, with a large Arab, Hindu and White population, but there is a native village in easy reach and I have been highly successful in collecting there. The severe epidemic of plague now underway has paralyzed all business and many of the natives are badly in need of money. A good many of them are trying to get away on small coasting boats and dhows, which takes ready cash, and they are willing to sell almost anything.... I have made a practice of visiting the quarters of the village where it [the plague] was worst and offering to buy jewelry, etc. from natives who were in danger and anxious to get away. In this way I have gotten six raffia prayer rugs [see chapter 8 of this volume], and much jewelry. The rugs are made by Mohammedanized Sakalava for their own use and at ordinary times they will not sell them to Christians. I find that most of the whites here have never seen them. I feel that the jewelry collection is perhaps the most remarkable thing I have gotten on the expedition. The Sakalava are a rich tribe and until the beginning of the war it was their practice to have gold and silver money that came into their hands worked up into massive jewelry.... Because of the plague the natives sold me many pieces that were treasured heir-looms. Among other things I have gotten two necklaces of big gold beads, 2 solid gold ear plugs of exquisite filagree [*sic*] work, 6 ear plugs of gold and silver, and quantities of silver ear plugs of all sorts, many beautifully worked, a silver head band, and a large number of necklaces, chains, bracelets [see fig. 1.21] and anklets, showing all the styles in use.... The collection will make a fine exhibition and I am convinced that it can never be duplicated unless certain pieces are copied. The natives also make very artistic painted pottery and a good collection of this has been obtained. With the Sakalava material that I hope to get during the next two months it should be possible to make the Sakalava exhibit one of the outstanding features of the Madagascar hall. 275 pieces, over 200 of which are jewelry, have been collected to date (Sept. 9th). [RLP, Linton Report to Sept. 9, 1926, 9]

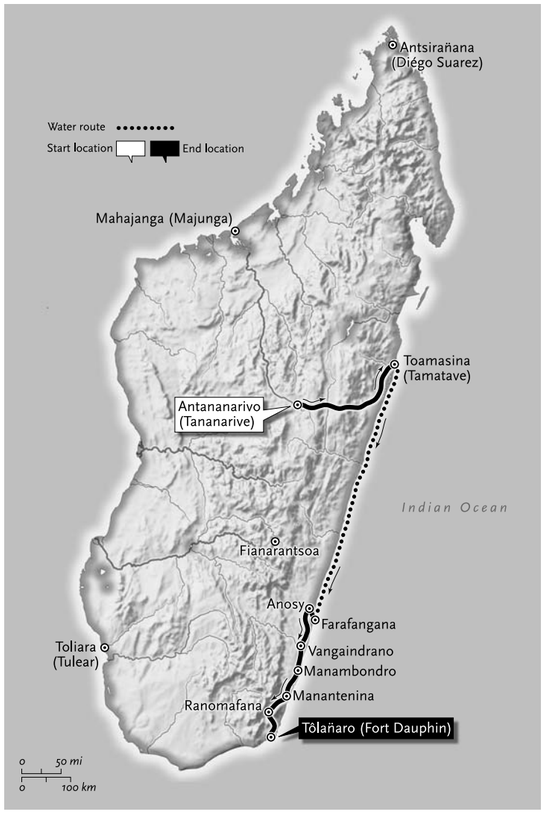
As soon as the quarantine situation allowed, Linton left Mahajanga (the exact date of his departure is unknown). He went up the Betsiboka River to the city of Marovoay. Later, he went to the village of Mahabo to see the Mahabo, or Sakalava pantheon (RLP, Linton to Davies, Nov. 2, 1926),[21] as well as the site of the sacred drums (RLP, Linton to Davies, Nov. 2, 1926; Linton and Linton 1973, 153).

He arrived in the village when the *manala tranon-kalo*, or purification ceremony of the royal tombs was underway. After sacrificing a young ox, Linton obtained permission to participate in the rite. He visited the royal tombs and took photographs of places and objects (RLP, Linton to Davies, Nov. 2, 1926; RLP, Linton Report Sept. 1926 to Jan. 1, 1927, 1; Linton and Linton 1973, 153). Linton was impressed by the number of Sakalava people present at the ceremony and greatly admired the beauty of the women's jewels (RLP, Linton to Davies, Nov. 2, 1926).

After returning to Marovoay, Linton went on up river to the town of Madirovalo and then visited the villages of Sitampiky and Kandreho and the region west of Kandreho in search of "a very fine type of Sakalava raban (raffia cloth) with designs by the warp dyeing process" (RLP, Linton to Davies, Nov. 2, 1926).

In the country Linton found stirrings of rebellion against the French (RLP, Linton to Davies, Nov. 2, 1926), but, consummate anthropologist that he was, he continued to visit the villages and collect examples of raffia cloth. Satisfied with his collection, he wrote:

> I consider the collection of Sakalava raffia cloths one of the two or three most valuable acquisitions to date. There are not over fifteen persons



2.13
The fourth phase of Linton's expedition: Antananarivo (Tananarive), Toamasina (Tamatave), Farafangana, Anosy, Vangaindrano, Manambondro, Manantenina, Ranomafana, Tôlañaro (Fort Dauphin).

2.14
"Chief of Antaifasina [Tefasy] tribe."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 63643).

> alive who know how to make them and nearly all of these are old women. I believe they will be quite unobtainable ten years from now, and as there are none in any American museum, or in any of the European museums visited, they will certainly have a very high monetary value. I think that they represent the highest development of the warp dyeing process, for each warp thread carries several colors as well as a hundred or more changes of color. The designs are bold and the colors often rich. It requires three months to prepare and weave a single strip of the usual size, 2 to 2½ ft. wide by 6 to 7 yards long. The natives themselves now value these cloths so greatly that they will give an ox for a well made strip. Three strips are sewn together to make a mosquito tent. I collected nearly 20 examples of this cloth, including several complete tents. [RLP, Linton Report Sept. 1926 to Jan. 1, 1927, 2]

Linton also collected additional valuable Sakalava jewels that were still in use (RLP, Linton Report Sept. 1926 to Jan. 1, 1927, 2). Finding an unpublished manuscript written by the first French commandant of Kandreho, he copied everything of value concerning the customs of the people there and took notes on their technical procedures (RLP, Linton Report Sept. 1926 to Jan. 1, 1927, 1–2).

After completing his work at Kandreho he traveled to the town of Maevatanana, and from there he returned by bus to Antananarivo, arriving in the capital on November

2.15
"Native children. Antaifasina [Tefasy] tribe."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 63946).

2 (RLP, Linton to Davies, Nov. 2, 1926; RLP, Linton Report Sept. 1926 to Jan. 1, 1927, 1).[22] In Antananarivo he packed the collected material for shipment to the Field Museum and began preparing for a trip by steamer to the south (Mosca 1994, 49).

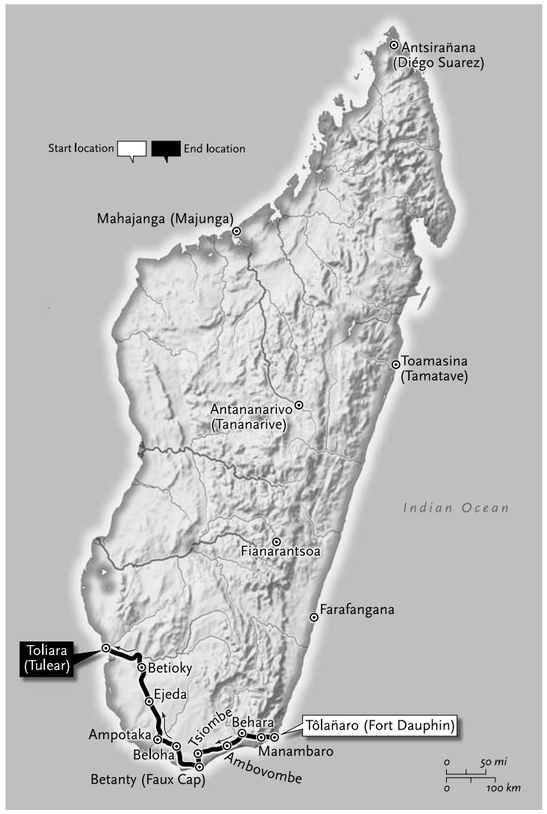
He traveled to Toamasina to wait for the steamer and to make arrangements to ship the packed collection to America (RLP, Linton to Davies, Nov. 29, 1926).[23] At the beginning of December, after more than two weeks wait, Linton boarded the steamer, but he did not stay aboard long (fig. 2.13). After ten days, he decided to disembark in Farafangana in order to learn about the Antefasy (now Tefasy) people (RLP, Linton to Davies, Dec. 27, 1926).

A Malagasy Lutheran pastor introduced Linton to Mosely, the chief of the village of Anosy, a short distance from Farafangana,[24] and Mosely offered Linton some objects (fig. 2.14). His subjects followed the example of their chief, and after three days Linton had collected more than three hundred pieces including mat clothing, hats, utensils, a sword, and a shield (RLP, Linton Report Sept. 1926 to Jan. 1, 1927, 2) at very little expense (approximately US $35). His Tefasy collection was exceptionally precious because, as far as he knew, no Tefasy objects could be found in any museum (RLP, Linton to Davies, Dec. 27, 1926). Linton questioned the Lutheran pastor and Mosely about Tefasy social structure, religious traditions, and so forth. He learned that the Tefasy shared a social organization and religious traditions similar to those of other Malagasy people (fig. 2.15). Their burial procedure and beliefs about the dead, however, were different.[25] Furthermore, he recorded "an account of the taking of heads as trophies and their suspension from a rack outside the village" (RLP, Linton to Davies, Dec. 27, 1926). About this, Linton commented, "Head hunting is such a universal Malay trick that I have always thought it must exist here, though it has never been reported" (RLP, Linton to Davies, Dec. 27, 1926).[26] He also took note of a type of local sea-going canoe, "I have also found a hitherto undescribed type of sea going canoe and made photographs and drawings" (RLP, Linton to Davies, Dec. 27, 1926).

On December 30, 1926, Linton left for the south by *filanjana*. He spent a few days in the city of Vangaindrano hoping to study the Antesaka (now Tesaka) people. Linton explained that because of their difficult and suspicious attitude, he was unable to secure a collection and the data for which he had hoped. Consequently he described the Tesaka as insolent and thieves (RLP, Linton to Davies, Jan. 3, 1927). He discovered, however, that the Tesaka were the only weavers in the area and that, unlike other Malagasy groups, they had male weavers (RLP, Linton Report of Work continued, 1). The Tesaka wove with indigenous cotton and silk (RLP, Linton to Davies, Jan. 3, 1927). Linton's discovery of a manuscript written by an educated Tesaka man and found in the local archives enabled

2.16
"Houses and granaries [south-east coast]."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 63907).



2.17
The fifth phase of Linton's expedition: Tôlañaro (Fort Dauphin), Manambaro, Behara, Ambovombe, Tsiombe, Betanty (Faux Cap), Beloha, Ampotaka, Ampanihy, Ejeda, Betioky, Toliara (Tulear).

him to make notes on the culture and history of the group (RLP, Linton Report of Work continued, 1).

His expedition south then brought Linton among the Antemanambondro (now Temanambondro) people for three days.[27] Because of the cultural similarities with the Tefasy and Tesaka, he tried to find specimens that would precisely reveal the differences between these groups (RLP, Linton Report of Work continued, 1). Linton continued south to Manantenina, Ranomafana, and later Tôlañaro, where he arrived on January 20, 1927. He stayed there for about two weeks, as a guest of the Norwegian-American Mission (RLP, Linton to Davies, Jan. 29, 1927).[28]

In Tôlañaro Linton studied the Antanosy (now Tanosy), whose culture and art appeared to him to have originated from Africa (RLP, Linton to Davies, Jan. 29, 1927). Later on, Linton specified that the Tanosy culture must be considered intermediate between the cultures of "the Southeast Coast and the Southern Culture areas" (RLP, Linton Report of Work continued, 1; Mosca 1994, 55). He collected few, but nonetheless valuable, items and little information, although he tried to gather as much oral documentation as possible regarding the construction of the Tanosy megaliths. He made drawings and took pictures of these monuments,[29] whose columns reminded him of European menhirs (RLP, Linton to Laufer, March 5, 1927; RLP, Linton Report of Work continued, 1). On February 1, Linton left for Toliara more than three hundred miles away, a trip that, according to the French authorities, would pose a number of dangers (fig. 2.17). Specifically, a rebellion against the French was underway in the Androy region, spurred on by a tax increase imposed on livestock (RLP, Linton to Davies, Jan. 29, 1927; RLP, Linton to Laufer, March 5, 1927; Linton and Linton 1973, 177, 182). The country in this part of Madagascar was mainly desert with villages of a few huts alternating with larger villages (Linton 1927a, 810–11; Linton 1928b, 721, 728; Linton and Linton 1973, 177, 186–88, 194–95, 210, 228–29). Almost all the villages were located far from a water source (RLP, Linton to Davies, March 5, 1927).

Contrary to the prevailing opinion that the Antandroy (now Tandroy) bore animosity toward westerners, the people were very kind to Linton and warmly welcomed him wherever he went (fig. 2.18). This despite their suffering as the result of the destruction by an insect infestation of the cacti they depended on for their survival (RLP, Linton to Laufer, March 5, 1927; Linton 1928b, 732; Mosca 1994, 58–60).[30] Among the Tandroy, Linton acquired a complete and valuable collection of textiles, jewels, baskets, tools (RLP, Linton to Laufer, March 5, 1927; Linton Report of Work, 2), sacred objects, amulets, and more (RLP, Linton to Laufer, March 5, 1927; Linton Report of Work continued, 1–2). Though Arsene, his new interpreter, had problems with the Tandroy dialect, Linton took notes on

2.18
"Natives of Antandroy [Tandroy] tribes."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 63122).

2.19
"[Mahafale] Women and children."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 63129).

their working methods, historical traditions, and institutions (RLP, Linton Report of Work continued, 2; Mosca 1994, 62).

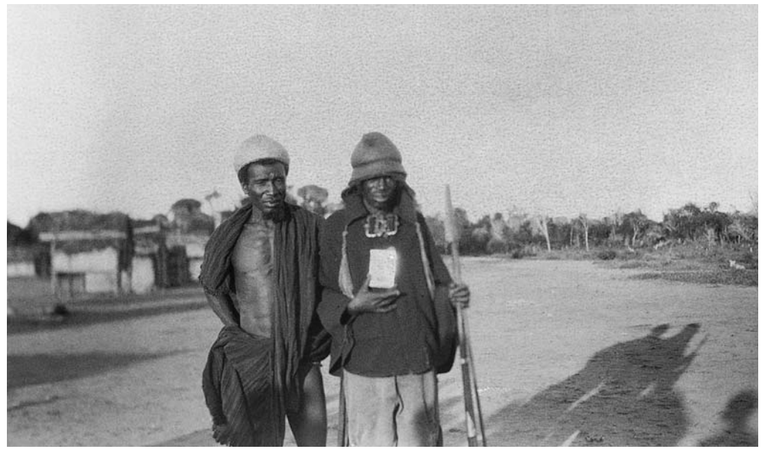
From the Tandroy territory, Linton went on to the Mahafale country (fig. 2.19), which, in contrast to the arid Androy, was a hard, red land with a vegetation of trees and bushes (Linton 1928c, 595; Linton and Linton 1973, 269). The Mahafale culture reminded him of that of the Tandroy. The Mahafale people, though, were woodcarvers (fig. 2.20), especially of funerary stelae[31] (RLP, Linton to Davies, March 5, 1927; RLP, Linton to Laufer, March 5, 1927; RLP, Linton Report of Work continued, 2). They also carved wooden headrests, items unknown to the scholars of Madagascar, according to Linton (RLP, Linton to Davies, March 5, 1927; RLP, Linton to Laufer, March 5, 1927; RLP, Linton Report of Work continued, 2). He collected examples of these artifacts, as well as carved wooden panels used in home decorating, fabric, and small implements such as bowls, spoons, and knives (RLP, Linton to Davies, March 5, 1927; RLP, Linton to Laufer, March 5, 1927; RLP, Linton Report of Work continued, 2).

In the village of Ampanihy, Linton learned about the Mahafale "taboos, religious beliefs and procedure, trials by ordeal, etc." (RLP, Linton Report of Work continued, 2) from the descriptions of a local man (fig. 2.21). Linton found that the Mahafale differed from other ethnic groups because their culture reflected a strong African influence (RLP, Linton to Davies, March 5, 1927). On March 3 Linton at last arrived in Toliara, where he remained until March 22 (RLP, Linton to Davies, March 5, 1927; RLP, Linton to Laufer, March 5, 1927; RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927, 1). During this period, he shipped the material he had collected to Chicago and turned his attention to the study of the local population, the Vezo:

> Vezo material culture is poor and largely duplicates that of the northern Sakalava, so few specimens were purchased. Excellent informants were obtained, however, and I got unusually complete notes, including instruction in the casting of the sikidy, the native form of divination. The Vezo are a sea people, employing outrigger canoes with sails of Polynesian

2.20
"Sculptures on Mahafaly [Mahafale] tombs."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 63977).



2.21
"[Mahafale] Chief and medicine man."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 63641).

> type. In historic times, they have recognized the control of the kings of the Masikoro (southern Sakalava) and live at peace with the latter exchanging their fish for cattle and vegetable foods. They claim to have originally come to Madagascar from islands lying to the west, i.e. in the Mozambique channel, and say these islands have since disappeared. They have memories of a premetal period in which they also had no pottery and no weaving. At this time they dressed in bark-cloth or mats and cooked in earth-ovens identical with the Polynesian ones. Their religion, social organization, etc. is not almost identical with that of the Sakalava. [RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927, 1–2]

Leaving Toliara, Linton moved eastward toward the Bara region (figs. 2.22, 2.23), arriving in Manasoa, where he encountered Tanosy immigrants (fig. 2.24). The people sold him few objects, but he succeeded in acquiring more Bara artifacts with the help of an American doctor, John Olsen Dyrnes (RLP, Linton to Laufer April 6, 1927; RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927 1–2).[32] Heading east again, he stopped in the village of Benenitra (RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927, 1) en route to Betroka, where he

2.22
"Bara dancers."

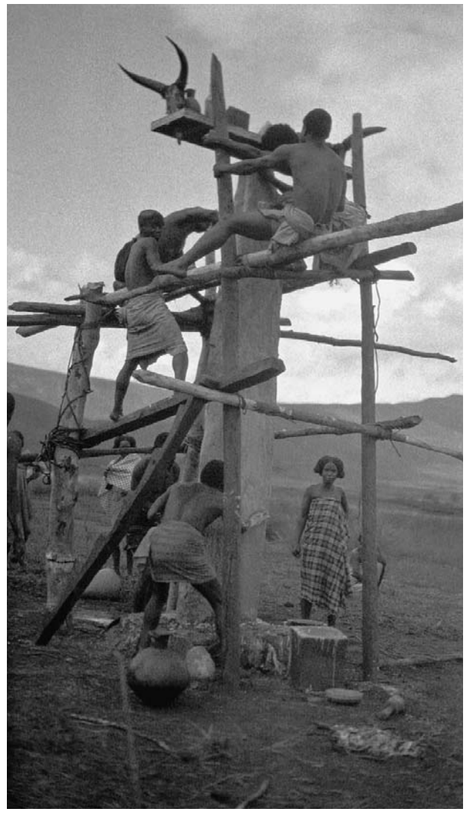
This photograph reveals a number of loincloth styles (left to right: dark, striped silk; tradecloth; white-striped cotton with twining; tradecloth) and various ways in which the cloth may be belted.

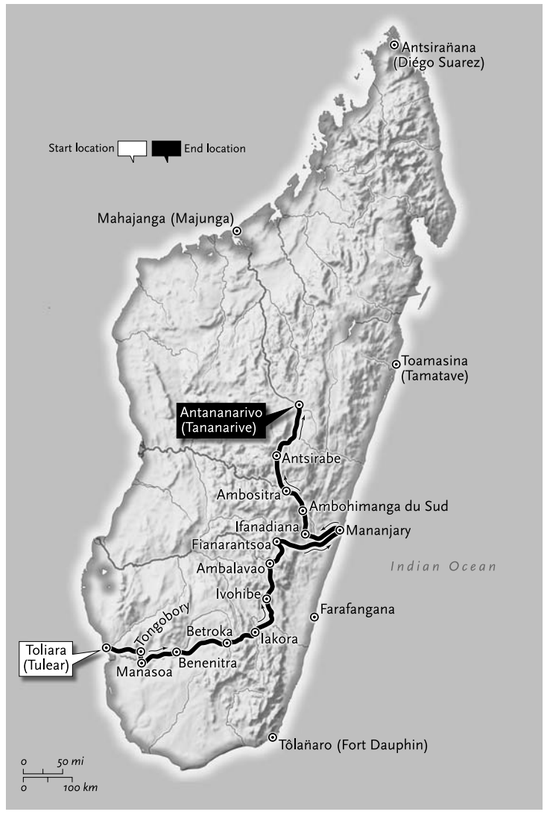
Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 63568).

arrived on April 5 (RLP, Linton to Laufer, April 6, 1927). Linton's sojourn in Betroka proved poor in terms of collecting but was very rewarding in other ways (fig. 2.25). Redira, king of the Bara, Maravola, and Tsifolahy, a hereditary priest of another group, told him the story of the Bara's arrival in the region and the extermination of the earlier population (RLP, Linton to Davies, April 16, 1927). With the king's help, Linton also purchased some artifacts (RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927, 1). From some Betsileo living in the area and weaving for the Bara (see chapter 6 of this volume), Linton obtained examples of fine Betsileo robes, made with old materials and dyes that Linton wrote were "almost impossible to get in the real Betsileo country" (RLP, Linton to Davies, April 16, 1927).

After departing from Betroka, Linton went on to Iakora, where he stayed longer than planned in an effort to make a good collection. Even with the aid of the French authorities, however, Linton was able to collect very little material there (RLP, Linton to Laufer, May 8, 1927). Next, he headed north to the village of Ivohibe, where he obtained some valuable pieces, including "one very remarkable portrait figure that has considerable artistic merit" (RLP, Linton to Laufer, May 8, 1927). He recorded information on the everyday life of the people, but almost nothing about their religion (RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927, 2).

Upon completion of his work in the Bara territory, Linton planned to go to Fort Carnot (now Ikongo) and work with the Tanala people (RLP, Linton to Laufer, May 8, 1927; RLP, Linton to Davies, May 9, 1927; Mosca 1994, 72–73). He then planned to visit the town of Ihosy, back in the Bara region, to attend a trade fair. Instead, however, he traveled to the town of Ambalavao and from there to Antananarivo probably to attend to business matters for a short time (RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927, 1; Mosca 1994, 74). He then returned to Ambalavao and stayed for awhile in this town to study the southern Betsileo, who, he hypothesized, were closely related culturally to the "Malay" having "a distinction between the soul and the life which I have not found elsewhere.... They also believe that the soul may desert the body through the breaking of a tapu, or through excessive chagrin, grief or fear, and have a ceremony for luring it back which is quite Malay in character" (RLP, Linton to Laufer, June 21, 1927). He was assisted by an





2.23
"Smearing memorial stone with grease, Bara."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 63632).

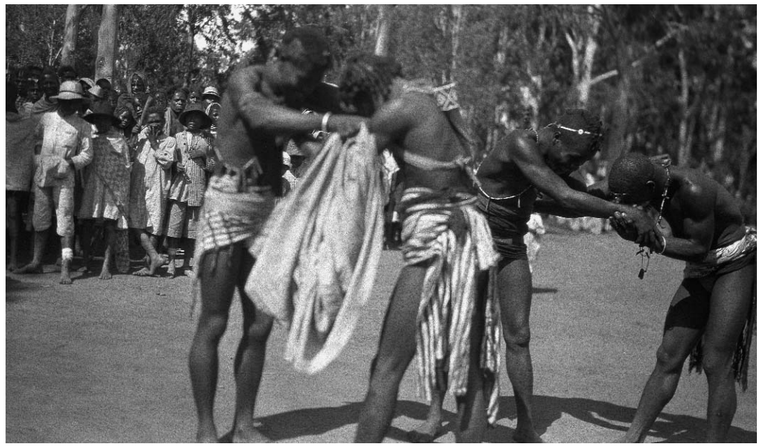
2.24
The sixth phase of Linton's expedition: Toliara (Tulear), Tongobory, Manasoa, Benenitra, Betroka, Iakora, Ivohibe, Ambalavao, Antananarivo (Tananarive), Ambalavao, Fianarantsoa, Mananjary, Ifanadiana, Ambohimanga du Sud, Ambositra, Antananarivo (Tananarive).

elderly informant, "of the priestly clan" (RLP, Linton to Davies, undated). When necessary he also worked with others (RLP, Linton to Laufer, June 29, 1927; RLP, Linton to Davies, undated). In the end, Linton was able to procure a good amount of information about all aspects of Betsileo culture (RLP, Linton to Davies, undated; RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927, 2–3).

He bought more objects to add to the collection he had secured during his previous trip in the Betsileo country. Some of the pieces were of particularly high value including : "two of the royal robes of the last Betsileo king [see fig. 1.1], his war axe and ceremonial lamp (the latter a fine piece of iron work nearly six feet high) and the fork used in the drought sacrifice...many fine lambas of rare types" (RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927, 2).

From Ambalavao, Linton went to Fianarantsoa (RLP, Linton to Davies, undated) and from that town to the port of Mananjary to ship material to Chicago. From Mananjary, he went to the locality of Ifanadiana and then toward the north, in order to reach Ambohimanga du Sud, in the heart of the Tanala region (RLP, Linton to Davies, undated; RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927, 1).

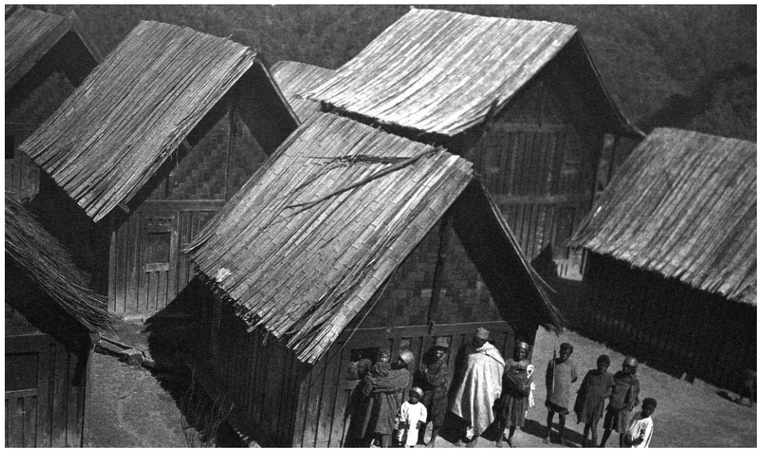
His time among the Tanala people (fig. 2.26), despite what he wrote (Linton 1933, 16; 1939, xvi) and what other scholars reported (RLP, Laufer to Davies, Dec. 30, 1927, 6; A. Linton and Wagley 1971, 30; Southall 1971, 145; Southall 1975, 606), lasted about one month, and he never returned to the Tanala region (Mosca 1994, 81). Linton published a monograph and other minor works on the Tanala people (Linton 1933; 1939; 1940), whom



2.25
"Bara wrestlers, Betroka."

In Madagascar the loincloth is closely tied to notions of masculine identity and remains the required costume for wrestling (see chapter 6).

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 63120).



2.26
"Native village, Tanala tribe."

Photograph by Ralph Linton, 1926–1927 (FM Neg. 63629).

he preferred "because their culture appears to be archaic in many respects and because they have been, as yet, only slightly influenced by European contact" (RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927, 3; Linton 1933, 15).

He assembled a complete collection of Tanala specimens. The most valuable among them were wooden and carved objects with "designs reminiscent [of] western Polynesia" (RLP, Linton Report March to September 1927, 3) and some "lambas made from bark thread" (RLP, Linton to Laufer, Sept. 3, 1927).

With his visit to the Tanala region completed, Linton considered his mission to Madagascar accomplished (Mosca 1994, 85) and decided to return to Antananarivo to take care of the final shipment of material to the Field Museum. He organized the documents collected and at the same time worked with an old man who provided him with more information about the Merina culture.

We know that Linton had initially intended to go back and visit the northern populations for a more accurate study of these groups, but this event did not occur because he was fearful of another bout of malaria (Mosca 1994, 85–85). On September 12, 1927, Linton left Madagascar and, via Africa and Europe, returned to the United States (Mosca 1994, 86).

Linton's work represents the most important early twentieth-century survey of Malagasy culture (Mosca 1988, 21), and his hypothesis that the Proto-Malagasy migrations took a path along the East African coast before reaching the island was probably his major contribution to the history of the southwest Indian Ocean.[33] If we consider this to be the case, it is a matter for deep regret that he never studied the artifacts he collected altogether when they were received at the Field Museum. It is even more disappointing that Linton's collection of data, his notes and journal on the different groups he visited (RLP, Laufer to Linton, May 19, 1926; RLP, McIntosh Linton to Laufer, May 25, 1927), are missing.[34]