Hainteny: The Traditional Poetry of Madagascar

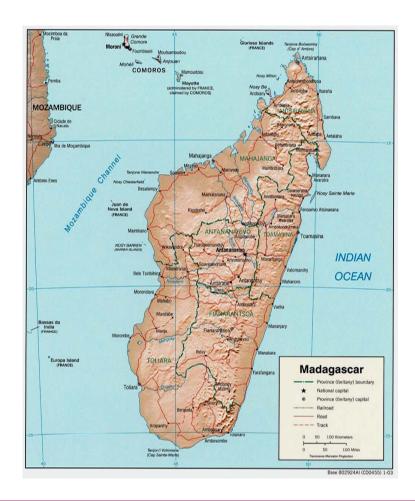
Special Studies,
Department of French,
Spring 2009

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Project Origins

- Semester in Madagascar, Fall 2007
- Malagasy language
- Intersection of art, environment and religion



Defining Hainteny

- Translation: "art of word"
- Maximum thought, minimum words → allusion, metaphor, proverbs
- Themes: romantic love (desire, hesitation, declaration, union), separation and nostalgia, regret, wisdom, humor and mockery, prayer
- Heavy environmental imagery

The People's Poetry

- Oral poetry
- Art form of illiterate
- Used to woo prospective lovers, settle debates, declare loyalty



Evolution of Hainteny

200-500 AD: First settlers arrive from southeast Asia

1500: First European contact

~1750-1850: Merina conquest

1883-1896: Franco-Hova War

1946: Nationalist uprising

1960: Independence from France

2009: President Marc

Ravalomanana ousted from presidency by Andry

Rajoelina

- Response to colonialism: negritude and malgachitude
- Jean-Joseph Rabearivelo (1901-1937)
- Translation and publication dilemma

Traditional Hainteny

Merina Hainteny 12 Translated by Leonard Fox

That road, there in the north
Is shady, like an old road
And it seems to wind here, it seems to wind there,
But in the west, it encircles the house of
She-whom-I-love-more-than-anyone

Irony lalana ery avaratra ery
Dia malomaloka toa lalana ela
Ary toa miolika atsy toa miolika aroa
Nefa manodidina no andrefan-tranon-dRatiskonohoniolona

Contemporary Hainteny

- "Isabelle" by David Jaomanoro
- Social issues
- Sometimes composed in French
- Social and political issues



References

Fox, Leonard. <u>Hainteny: The Traditional Poetry of Madagascar</u>. Lewisburg: Bucknell U Press, 1990.

Haring, Lee. <u>Verbal Arts in Madagascar: Performance in Historical Perspective.</u> Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992.

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