



BART EIJGENHUIJSEN
photos & text



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BEHIND THE MYTH

Daily Life in Modern Madagascar

Madagascar is divided from Southern Africa by the Canal of Mozambique. Being part of Africa, La Grand Isle sticks to its own identity by its unique flora, fauna and culture. For that reason writers and photographers do like to represent it as exotic and mythical.

In reality it's a poorly developed country in which the majority of the population has little security of existence. The economy consists mainly of agriculture and fishery, industry is poorly developed. Jobs are hard to find, the majority of the Malgaches is dependent of irregular income-opportunities and a small piece of land.

Daily life in modern Madagascar is the subject of this book, including the sunny side of malgache life: dancing, culture, ceremonies.

A girl idling under a palm tree along the seashore as painted by a local artist at Nosy Be.





Natasha Rasoanatoandro making beds at home in quartier Manjakaray in Antananarivo. Natasha is 16 years old and responsible for the household of the Rasoanatoandro-family as her parents are absent during the day.



Mobile phones are in heavy demand in Madagascar. Phone companies like Orange and Celltel are fighting for the market of mainly prepaid customers. A secondhand market in mobile phones is flourishing as purchasing power is limited in Madagascar. At Avenue de l'Indépendance in Antananarivo cars are lining up functioning like mobile repair shops.





Along the shore at Ambondrona in Nosy Be families who can't find any other means to survive are making a living by selling crushed stones. Pieces of stone, cut from the seaside rocks are being transported to the stonecutter's hamlet. Crushed to tiny pieces the stones are sold to local traders for use in construction and the local cement industry.



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Potato-farmers in the Vakinankaratra, Antsirabe | 2008.







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Solofo, 16 year old captain of the pirogue Aty Jerena is lifting sail With his youthful crew Tongazy, Majestin and Komany, he starts out on a fishing trip in the bay of Bombetoka, at Mahajanga. The pirogue belongs to Solofo's uncle. Half the catch of the day is for the boat owner, the other half for the youthful crew.

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Saturday Night Fever
at bar-dancing La
Banane in Dزاماندزار











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The story of Sirama at Dzamandzar is a sad story. The sugar and rum factory has been dominating socio-economic life at Nosy Be until it stopped production in 2007. Since then more than 1000 employees lost their job and the island itself lost its character of one big sugar plantation. The factory had to close down as the result of financial problems. Production targets were not met as a result of failing machineries, while funds for investing in new equipment were lacking.







Around Christmas time dozens of mobile plastic photostudio's are popping up along Av. l'Indépendance in Antananarivo. Middle-class Antananariviennes who can afford it, take their children to be photographed together with Papa Noël. Street children hang around begging for alms.



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After many years of negotiations the Ravalomanana-government and multinational mining company Rio Tinto in 2006 reached an agreement for the exploitation of the mineral ilmenite at the coastal stretches around Tólañaro. Qit Madagascar, a daughter of Rio Tinto, started the construction of new roads, a new port and infrastructure in 2007. Lacking officialy registrated owner-rights families of poor farmers had to find new homes.





Islamic members of the Indian community assembling at their mosque in Tólañaro | 2007



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Ladies in Comorian dress strolling main street in Hellville, Nosy Be | 2007









In Tanamanjaka-village near Antsirabe members of the Ranoely-family are celebrating Famadiana. According to the tradition of Famadihana the remnants of the ancestors have to be excavated and reburied every other 5 years.



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PHOTOS 2005-2010

ANTANANARIVO

AMBONA

AMBONDRONA

ANTSIRABE

DZAMANDZAR

HELL-VILLE

MAHAJANGA

NOSY BE

TANAMANJAKA

TOLANARO

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