

= Andriamasinavalona =

King Andriamasinavalona (1675 ? 1710) , also known as Andrianjakanavalondambo , was a King of Imerina in the central highlands of Madagascar . He made significant and enduring contributions to the social , political and economic life of Imerina . Chief among these was the expansion of his territories and the pacification and unification of certain principalities that had become locked in violent conflict ; Andriamasinavalona established and ruled over the largest extent of the Kingdom of Imerina . He gave the name of Antananarivo to the capital city that was rapidly expanding around the royal palace on the hill of Analamanga , created a large public square at Andohalo outside the gates of the city , and named a series of other locations within the city . He also took possession of a distant hill he renamed Ambohimanga as a lodging for his son Andriantsimitoviaminiandriana ; the royal city that developed there has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site .

The innovations of Andriamasinavalona were numerous and enduring . He created two additional noble castes and defined their associated rights , responsibilities and restrictions , and was responsible for introducing the tradition of the red parasol as an indicator of royalty ; he also decreed that all women had the right to choose their husbands . Trade with the Sakalava kingdom enabled this king to increase the firearms , cannons and gunpowder available for the defense of the kingdom , and expanded the availability of luxury items like silver piastres and porcelain dishes . The dikes around the Betsimitatatra rice fields of Antananarivo were expanded and raised to help ensure against famine .

In the interest of strengthening the defenses of the kingdom , Andriamasinavalona divided his realm into four quadrants to be ruled by his four favorite sons . This decision had the opposite effect , however ; each was interested in expanding his own realm , prompting one son to kidnap the king and hold him hostage for seven years . After the king 's eventual release , he famously committed a mock human sacrifice to re @-@ sanctify his authority . Upon his death , Andriamasinavalona 's sons launched military campaigns against one another to seize each other 's territories , triggering 77 years of civil war in Imerina . In Madagascar today , Andriamasinavalona 's reign is remembered as a golden age of justice , harmony and prosperity .

= = Early life and accession to throne = =

Andriamasinavalona was born Prince Andrianjakanavalondambo in the historic Merina capital of Alasora to his father King Andriantsimitoviaminandriandehibe and mother Rampanambonitany . He was made Prince of Alasora upon his father 's death in 1670 ; his older brother , Andrianjaka Razakatsitakatrandra , was named king . Andriamasinavalona ascended to the kingship of Imerina upon the deposition of his brother in 1675 . The deposed king fled to the Sakalava kingdom to the west and attempted unsuccessfully to secure military support there to regain the throne .

Two enduring royal traditions emerged in Imerina as a consequence of the power struggle between Andriamasinavalona and his older brother . Some versions of oral history describe a combat between their armies at Ambohibato in which Andriamasinavalona emerged victorious . He erected a commemorative stone at the battle site that he named Ankazonorona , designating it the site where newly enthroned kings would stand to receive their first expression of hasina (homage , affirmation of authority) from their subjects . Andriamasinavalona also introduced the practice of gathering his subjects to consult them and obtain their consent before making certain decisions . This practice was continued by subsequent rulers in Imerina .

= = Family and descendants = =

Andriamasinavalona married twelve wives and produced nine sons and one daughter . The children of four of his wives would go on to rule their own kingdoms : Ratompoinandroandriana gave birth to Andriantsimitoviaminiandriana at Ambohimanga ; Ramananandrianjaka gave birth to Andriantomponimerina at Ambohidratrimo ; Ramananimerina had her son Andrianjakanavalona at Antananarivo ; and Rasolomanambonitany had Andrianaavalonimerina near Ambohitrabiby . The

children of four other wives would renounce all claims to the throne : Andriamborosy and Rafaralahimanjaka , born to Renilambo in Ambohidrapeto ; Andriantsilavo , born to Ranavalona in Anosimanjaka ; Andrianavalona , born to Rakalafohy in Isoraka ; and Andriankotofananina , born to Reninandriankotofananina in Anosipatrana . The descendents of Andriamasinavalona 's wives who renounced claim to the throne were ennobled by him as the royal Andriamasinavalona class . The remaining four marriages (to wives Ralanimboahangy , Raseranolona , Ranavalotomponimerina and Ramanamabahoaka) would not produce children , but one of these wives - Ralanimboahangy - adopted a girl named Andriamanitrinitany . She was housed with her adoptive mother at Ambohipeno and died without producing children of her own , although she likewise adopted a child named Ramasina , who was most likely the son of her sister .

= = Reign = =

Andriamasinavalona is remembered in Imerina as a king of significant achievements . He is credited with unifying a number of warring principalities in Imerina and expanding the territory of the kingdom to its largest extent . He created the Andohalo town square outside the gate of Antananarivo , where all successive sovereigns delivered their royal speeches and announcements to the public . Andriamasinavalona gave the city - previously called by the name of its hill , Analamanga - its current name of Antananarivo , and assigned the names of numerous locations within the city , based on the names of similar sites in the nearby village of Antananarivokely . During his reign the production of the Betsimitatatra rice fields around Antananarivo was dramatically increased . He also increased the number of guns and quantity of gunpowder in Imerina through trade with neighboring kingdoms , and imported the kingdom 's first cannons for its defense . Other innovations included the importation and fabrication of plates made from sea turtle skin . He strengthened the social order by creating two new noble castes , putting in place further restrictions and responsibilities for each , and decreeing the right of every woman to choose her own husband .

Under Andriamasinavalona 's rule , the political administration of Imerina became more clearly defined . The number of andriana (noble) sub @-@ castes was expanded from four to six and additional roles and specific territories were designated for each group , both within the neighborhoods of Antananarivo and in the countryside surrounding the capital . These territorial divisions were strictly enforced : members of subcastes were required to live within their designated territories and were not authorized to stay for extended periods in the territories reserved for others . Andriamasinavalona decentralized governance and strengthened the power of local administrators by creating a series of new decrees that further formalized the relationship between the andriana and the hova (commoners) they ruled .

The king 's reign was marked by a drought lasting seven years that caused a famine in much of Imerina . According to oral history , the king attempted to purchase rice from his fief at Ambohipianana . The town had a surplus but the local leader refused to sell rice to Andriamasinavalona , claiming none was available . The king then sent porters to purchase rice from Antsahatovoka , where the residents declared that while the land was his and it was thus unnecessary for the king to purchase what already belonged to him , there was no rice available to share . Finally Andriamasinavalona sought to purchase rice in Andraisisa . His money was refused by the local leader , Andriandrivotra , who willingly gave the king large shares of food and a tribute of silver . To reward the leader of the fief , Andriamasinavalona promised to give him anything he liked . Andriandrivotra declared that all he desired was the love of his sovereign . To show his appreciation , Andriamasinavalona declared that he would make Andraisisa into a great fief , and gave Andriandrivotra a large piece of land to the west of the territory . He then undertook a major expansion of the Betsimitatatra rice fields around Antananarivo , significantly increasing their rice production to feed the populace .

= = = Sociopolitical restructuring = = =

Andriamasinavalona 's reorganization and refinement of the subdivisions of the noble class took

into account the precedents set by earlier Merina kings Andrianjaka and Ralambo . He declared that only members of the Zazamarolahy (" Numerous Children ") caste , composed of nobles descended from Andrianjaka 's children , could be shaded by the red parasol of royalty ; the tradition of the royal parasol was introduced to Imerina during Andriamasinavalona 's reign and persisted until the dissolution of the monarchy in 1897 . He also decreed that their tombs should be topped with a tranomasina , a small wooden house without windows or hearth and containing their worldly riches , where their spirit could return to visit after death . Unlike other noble subcastes , the Zazamarolahy were not constrained to inhabit a particular neighborhood , as Andriamasinavalona acknowledged the privilege of future sovereigns to determine the proximity of these most influential nobles according to the particularities of changing circumstances . Andriamasinavalona also narrowed the pool of potential future sovereigns by restricting this right to a new sub @-@ group within the Zazamarolahy , which he termed Zanak 'andriana (" Children of the Sovereign ") . This group comprised all the descendents of the royal wives who had given birth to the king 's four designated heirs . New rulers could only be selected from among this new sub @-@ class of nobles .

The four wives of King Andriamasinavalona whose children were not chosen to rule one of the four districts of Imerina were assigned the noble sub @-@ caste of " Andriamasinavalona " and transferred this ranking to their descendents . The king declared that members of this sub @-@ caste would inhabit Ambatobevanja , at the southern limit of the neighborhood of Andohalo in Antananarivo , just outside the walls of the royal palace . Although not authorized to rule the kingdom , the Andriamasinavalona were deemed societal elders and gained the right to become " masters of the fief " (tompo @-@ menakely) and construct tranomasina on their tombs . They were also assigned the honor of burying deceased sovereigns and carrying out sacrifices requested by the king . Outside of Antananarivo , the Zazamarolahy and the Andriamasinavalona settled throughout Imerina in the individual fiefs centered around the hill towns that they governed . In this way , nobles always lived in close proximity to the people they ruled , ensured their defense and provided for their livelihood .

Andriamasinavalona established new rules to strengthen the authority of the tompo @-@ menakely over their subjects . Inhabitants of the fief paid taxes (isam @-@ pangady) to the local lord , and offered him the hindquarters of all slaughtered zebu as tribute . Parents who adopted or disowned a child paid a fee of one silver piastre to the lord , and the property of those who died without children would revert to the king , who would share it with him . The inhabitants of a fief were bound to execute any work or task ordered by the tompo @-@ menakely . The authority of the lord was highly independent and interference of the king was infrequent , in part due to the close kinship ties uniting the king to the Zazamarolahy and Andriamasinavalona sub @-@ castes .

The Zana @-@ tompo (or Andriantompokoinindra) were also considered elders , and Andriamasinavalona decreed that kings would henceforth select their wives and royal food tasters from among this caste . The rites pertaining to circumcision were another honor reserved for the Zana @-@ tompo . The king decreed that they should inhabit the countryside south of the capital extending from Ambavahadimitafo southward to Ambatolampy . Outside of Antananarivo , the Zana @-@ tompo lived in the village of Ambohimalaza .

The Andriamboninolona (or Zanakambony) , Andriandranando (or Zafinandriandranando) and Zanaralambo were considered junior nobles . They were excluded from most of the rules imposed on other noble castes and exempted from fanampoana (forced labor in lieu of monetary tax payment) . Instead , they were made responsible for maintaining a key dike that supported irrigation of the capital 's rice paddies , producing the silk used to make the king 's clothing , and conscripting soldiers for the king 's army . They were also responsible for gathering used hoes for the royal blacksmiths to melt down and then supervise the artisans as the metal was crafted into nails , shackles and other forged objects .

Within Antananarivo , the territory of the Andriamboninolona , designated generations before by King Andrianjaka , included the neighborhood of Ambatomasina (east of Andohalo) and extended from Ambohitantely eastward to Ambatolampy and north to the principal road that led to Ambavahadimasina . The neighborhoods reserved in Antananarivo for the Andriandranando , also

decreed by Andrianjaka , laid to the northeast of Andohalo and extended from Ambavahadimasina in the west to Ambohimano in the east , and from the road to Ambavahadimasina northward to Ambatonandriankoto . King Andriamasinavalona decreed that within the capital city , the Zanaralambo would live in the area delimited by Ambohitsoa to the southwest , Ambodivoanonoka to the east , and Andohalokely in the north . Outside the capital , each group had its designated villages . The Andriamboninolona lived in Ambohitromby , Fiefera , Ambohipiainana and Ambohitriniana . The Andriandranando lived in Soamanandrarina , Betsizaraina , Ambohibe , Ihadiambola and Akadindramamy . Finally , the Zanaralambo inhabited Lazaina , Ambatofotsy and Masindray .

In addition to these new roles for noble sub @-@ castes , Andriamasinavalona singled out the Antehiroka as sacred royal advisers and custodians of ancestral traditions related to circumcision . This clan was formed of the descendants of Andriampirokana and his two sons , themselves descendants of a vazimba king . Andriampirokana befriended King Ralambo and played an integral part in establishing the tradition of circumcision in Imerina . The collection of water gourds and arranging of freshly woven mats for use in the ceremony were made the responsibility of this clan . The Antehiroka were also tasked with delivering royal benedictions , receiving hasina (tribute) on behalf of the king , and wrapping deceased sovereigns in the traditional lambarena shroud . In Antananarivo , the Antehiroka were placed in Ampamahy , the location of their clan tomb . In the countryside , Andriamasinavalona decreed that they should inhabit Ambohitrimanga and Amboditsiry .

= = = Expansion of realm = = =

At the time of Andriamasinavalona 's reign , the highlands around Imerina were wracked with violent conflict among minor princedoms centered around fortified hill towns . Andriamasinavalona successfully united a number of these principalities in the territory bordering his own , thereby expanding the boundaries of Imerina to include Fanongoavana to the west , Rangaina to the north , Ombifotsy to the east and Sahasarotra to the south . As he brought each territory under his control , he restricted the autonomy of its original rulers and imposed strict submission to his own authority . His diplomatic and political conquests enabled Andriamasinavalona to extend his kingdom to its fullest historical extent , making him the first Merina sovereign to rule over the entire province of Imerina .

The first of these four territories to be incorporated into Imerina was Fanongoavana , then a principality ruled by Andriampanarivofomanjaka . Continual threats to his kingdom 's security led Andriampanarivofomanjaka to secretly travel to the Rova of Antananarivo to pledge submission to Andriamasinavalona . He was accompanied by seven advisers who eloquently communicated their master 's willingness to acknowledge Andriamasinavalona as his king . Andriamasinavalona accepted this offer and sealed the union of their territories by marrying Andriampanarivofomanjaka to his sister , Ranaivalontsimoty . Andriampanarivofomanjaka then returned to his realm , announced the union to his people , and then spoke with the leaders of the neighboring Bezanozano people to successfully persuade them to join the kingdom and benefit from Andriamasinavalona 's protection .

The territory of Ombifotsy was ruled by Andriambahoakafovoanitany , who had a friendly relationship with Andriamasinavalona . The two agreed to a challenge : each would leave his palace simultaneously on a chosen Friday night , and walk toward the other 's palace until the two met . They crossed paths at the Ombifotsy (" White Zebu ") river , so named because the two sacrificed a white zebu there in honor of their friendship and the peace agreement between their two territories of Imamo and Imerina . Andriambahoakafovoanitany 's son dug a trench along the river , where he erected a stone to commemorate the agreement . Imamo was divided into four parts , each administered by one of Andriambahoakafovoanitany 's sons .

In addition , Andriamasinavalona is credited with founding Ambohimanga , a site of spiritual and historical significance that was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2001 . Oral history recounts that Andriamasinavalona first remarked a distant hill named Ambohitrakanga when he

noticed a bonfire lit on its southern face 24 kilometers away from his rova at Antananarivo ; the visibility of the site from his capital led Andriamasinavalona to desire the hill as a residence for his son , Andriantsimitoviaminiandriana . Andriamasinavalona gave the hill its current name , and when he divided the Kingdom of Imerina into four quadrants in 1710 , he gave the eastern quadrant of Avaradrano to Andriantsimitoviaminiandriana , who transformed his rova at Ambohimanga into its capital .

= = = Division of Imerina = = =

The greatest point of controversy in Andriamasinavalona 's reign was his decision to divide his kingdom among his four favorite sons : Andrianjakanavalonamandimby , Adrianmanotronavalonimerina , Andriantomponimerina I and Andriantsimitoviaminiandriana , who received the largest share of the land and was the most powerful of the four young sovereigns . Andriamasinavalona furthermore declared that his nephew Andriambonimena , his sister 's son , would replace his own sons and succeed him as king after his death to rule all of Imerina as a united whole . The controversial decision to divide Imerina into four sub @-@ kingdoms may have been rooted in the desire to reorganize the kingdom in accordance with traditional notions of symbolic unity as represented by the four cardinal points surrounding a unifying center termed the " heart of Imerina " (Imerina efa @-@ toko) . Andriamasinavalona believed the kingdom would be better defended by four brothers than by one alone , and that they could support one another in warding off attackers from the outside .

According to oral history , Andriamasinavalona asked the guardian of Matsatso , one of the three most prominent royal idols , to ask the idol which of his sons should rule after him . The guardian hesitated to declare the idol 's choice , but after the king promised no ill reaction to the decision , the man declared the successor to be Andrianavalonimerina . However , the king had hoped that the successor would be another son , Andriantsimitoviaminiandriana . He decided to test the prophecy by sending one of his wives to the guardian 's house , where the population showed her respect by offering zebu for her to eat . The zebu cooked inconsistently , and the king interpreted this as a sign that the guardian was dishonest and intended to seize power himself , so Andriamasinavalona ordered him put to death and had the idol Matsatso discarded in a lake . He then asked the guardians of the two other idols (Kelimalaza and Soratra) to declare a successor ; the guardian of Soratra fled , while the guardian of Kelimalaza stated that only the king could choose his successor .

Oral history relates that Andriamasinavalona then gathered the people at Andohalo to announce his decision . He requested the presence of his respected adviser and elder , Andriamampandry , who rebuffed the messenger by stating " I have no lamba . " The king sent him a lamba to wear , and the elder sent it back with the four corners torn off . The king again returned the lamba , and this time the elder trampled it in the mud . Nonetheless , Andriamampandry dressed in the lamba , declaring " What 's been torn can be mended , and what 's been dirtied can be cleaned , " then attended the king 's kabary . There , the king declared that he would divide his kingdom into four parts , each one a fief to be inhabited by his four favorite sons , who would participate in royal decision @-@ making without being made kings themselves . The two northern principalities had their capitals at Ambohimanga and Ambohidrabiby , while the capital of the western principality was located at Ambohidratrimo . The southern principality was ruled from Antananarivo by Andriantomponimerina .

Andriamampandry tried on several occasions to warn Andriamasinavalona of the danger of administering the kingdom in this way . In one instance , he placed a hen in the middle of a room , then set one red rooster free in each corner . The roosters attacked one another viciously , leaving the king speechless . On another day , the elder brought four eagles to the king in a basket . When the basket was opened , the eagles flew wildly about the room , creating havoc . Andriamampandry warned the king that his realm would be no better off once his four sons got a taste of power . Andriamasinavalona recognized the danger but could not bear to choose which among his sons should be excluded from having a part in the decision @-@ making responsibilities of the kingdom , so ignored the elder 's advice . Finally Andriamampandry decided to give the king a very explicit

warning . Andriamasinavalona had gathered his people in Andohalo to give a speech , when Andriamampandry set a bull loose into the crowd . In the panic that ensued , numerous people were gored or trampled to death , several pregnant women miscarried , and the gathering dispersed in chaos . The king demanded to know who had loosed the bull so that he may be executed , but when Andriamampandry took responsibility he warned the king that yet more blood would be spilled before the earth would be quenched . He then criticized the king for his concern over the relatively few deaths at the gathering , in light of the number of people who would die as a consequence of his division of Imerina . He further predicted that the prince at Ambohimanga would unite Imerina and lead it back to greatness . Andriamasinavalona reportedly had no response to give Andriamampandry , but instead hung his head in shame .

The 19th century transcription of Merina oral history , *Tantara ny Andriana eto Madagasikara* , relates that Andriamampandry privately assessed the leadership qualities of each of the four selected sons , with disappointing results . He presented Andriambonimena of Alasora with a beautiful parrot , which the prince killed and served as food . The elder concluded that he was " a gun that loads itself . " The oldest son , Andrianjakanavalonamandimby , was given a pot of honey , which he smashed in order to eat every last drop . Afterward Andriamampandry remarked that the kingdom had become a pot of honey without a lid , implying the first one to come along would be free to reach his hand inside and take all its bounty for himself . He visited Andriantomponimerina at Ambohidratrimo and offered him a zebu kidney (considered unpalatable) , which the prince ordered to be prepared as a meal nonetheless , leading the elder to remark , " This man can 't even resist the temptation to eat the kidney . " He visited Andrianavalonimerina at Ambohitrabiby carrying a lemon and a weaver 's stake , which the prince 's wife demanded he give to them , demonstrating their greediness . Andriamampandry also visited prince Andriantsimitoviaminiandriana at Ambohimanga , carrying an axe and a rope . The prince asked to borrow the two items , then ordered a servant to use the axe and rope to butcher a zebu , put some of the best meat in a basket , cook the rest of the good meat for their meal , and set aside the neck and the ribbed part of the tripe in a second basket . The elder dined with the prince and spent the night at the village . When Andriamampandry was about to leave , the prince returned the rope and axe , gave him the basket of fine meat for his wife , and gave him the second basket , declaring " These are the parts for the axe (i.e. the neck) and the rope (i.e. the striated omasum) . " Andriamampandry was deeply impressed by the hospitality and foresight of the prince . He related these incidents to Andriamasinavalona , who decided to test his sons in turn by calling them together to his house , then observing how they slept on the bed they shared there . Andriantsimitoviaminiandriana had his head highest on the pillow , but Andriamasinavalona failed to understand the significance of this , and Andriamampandry rebuked him , remarking " You are the king , and yet you do not understand ? "

= = = Imprisonment = = =

According to oral history , Andriamasinavalona was temporarily usurped through the trickery of his son Andriantomponimerina , who ruled the western territory from his rova at Ambohidratrimo . Once Andriamasinavalona 's sons had been installed in their territories , Andriantomponimerina tested his authority by imposing a particular hairstyle upon the Marovatana people he ruled , in disregard of the promise that the king had made to respect the diverse customs and taboos of Imerina . The Marovatana reminded the king of this vow and refused to submit , prompting the king and his sons to prepare for war against the people of the fief . This conflict provided the prince with an opportunity to seize power . Upon the suggestion of the prince 's half @-@ brother , Andrianentoarivo , the prince hid himself in a trench he dug into the dirt floor of his royal residence at Ambohidratrimo , then ordered his people to send word to his father that he was " in the ground " . Believing his son to be buried alive by the Marovatana as a punitive measure , Andriamasinavalona hurried to Ambohidratrimo carrying reeds as a symbol of peace ; upon the king 's entrance into the residence , however , Prince Andriantomponimerina locked Andriamasinavalona inside and refused to release him for the next seven years . During this time the prince repeatedly offered to free the king on the

condition that Andriamasinavalona accept to transfer power to him , which the king repeatedly refused . Andriantomponimerina prevented his brothers from taking action against him by telling their messengers that the king simply preferred his company and had decided to reside with him at Ambohidratrimo .

After some time , the king 's designated successor , Andriambonimena , launched a retaliatory attack against the prince 's half @-@ brother Andrianentoarivo at Ambohipotsy and successfully chased him from his fief . Andriantomponimerina recognized the need to take more dramatic action to consolidate his grip on power and sent a messenger to the Sakalava king requesting his support . The Sakalava reaffirmed their loyalty to Andriamasinavalona , however , and threatened to attack the prince if the rightful king was not released from his captivity . According to one version of the oral history , having failed to use the king as a pawn to gain power , the prince decided to ransom his father for 7 @,@ 000 piastres to increase his personal wealth . Every citizen of Imerina was obligated to contribute , and those who had no money sold their children or themselves into slavery in order to raise the necessary funds . The money was placed in seven baskets and transported by dugout canoe to the prince at Ambohidratrimo , who released the king . According to another version of the story , Prince Andriantsimitoviaminiandriana of Ambohimanga sent two hunters of the Tsimahafotsy clan to free the king by digging an escape passage under the wall of his heavily guarded enclosure . After returning to Antananarivo , Andriamasinavalona sent a messenger who announced that the king had decided to hand power to Andriantomponimerina and invited the prince to the capital to be enthroned . The prince hurried to the palace , and throughout the city he was greeted with cheers , singing and dancing . When Andriamasinavalona received him , however , he publicly condemned the prince and stripped him of his rank and power .

= = = Resanctification = = =

Two stories exist around a ritual of human sacrifice that Andriamasinavalona conducted after his imprisonment . In one version of the oral history , Andriamampandry and his fellow royal advisers were concerned that the king 's imprisonment had weakened his authority and could lead the population to revolt against him . They suggested the king test his people by claiming to be ill and requesting a human sacrifice ; if a citizen offered his life for the king , this gesture would indicate the public was still loyal to him . Andriamasinavalona followed this recommendation and gathered the people to request a volunteer who was willing to have his throat slit with a long dagger to sanctify the king . In another version of the story , this proposal was made to sanctify the new Besakana palace that the king ordered rebuilt at the rova in Antananarivo . A man named Trimofoloalina stepped forward to sacrifice his life . In the first version of the story , royal advisers bound him with ropes and laid him on the ground to the west of the Masoandro palace within the rova compound at Antananarivo , but rather than kill the man they symbolically " sacrificed " him by pouring rooster blood mixed with water onto his throat . In the second , he was bound and hoisted to the top of the central pillar of the new building , and his ear was nicked to allow several drops of blood to fall on the top of the pillar to sanctify it . Trimofoloalina was then released and the king asked him to name a reward for his courageous gesture . The man requested that he and his descendants would forever after be exempted from the death penalty for any crime they might commit ; Andriamasinavalona agreed to grant this reward .

= = Death and legacy = =

Andriamasinavalona died in 1710 when one of his wives , Rasolomananambonitany , inadvertently pushed him from the elevated bed where they slept . He was buried in the royal tombs located at the Rova of Antananarivo . In opposition to Andriamasinavalona 's intentions , after the king 's death his sons forsook the concept of unity and instead fought one another in an effort to expand their realms . As a consequence of this decision , Imerina fragmented and was wracked with conflict for 77 years , until the kingdom was once again united during the reign of Andrianampoinimerina (1787 ? 1810)

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The reign of Andriamasinavalona is remembered in Madagascar as a golden age of prosperity , justice , abundance and harmony . He is described in oral histories as a talented politician and kind and just ruler . His name is often traditionally invoked in Imerina when paying tribute to the ancestors or making a binding pledge . Regarding Andriamasinavalona 's legacy , Ellis (1832) remarked , " The character of this chieftain is held in the highest veneration and esteem . He is said to have exercised great care over his district , and to have introduced many important improvements . His memory , laws and customs are still held in the greatest respect , and his name is always mentioned in the public kabarys with a degree of reverence . "