



Fig. 5a, b, c: *Rebiky*: Royal councillor (*rañitry ampanjaka*) and one of his kinswomen representing the "red" ruler and follower ("white" ruler and follower in the background). *Doany* of the *ampanjaka* Soazara, Analalava, c. 1935. (Photographie du Service Photo-Cinéma de la Direction de l'Information; TY 13, no. 62-64)

"Yes, right only. If you dance with the left hand raised, people will think you don't know how (*mahay*). The left hand is not appropriate (*tsy metimety*), that's the bad hand (*tàñana ratsy zegny*)."

Sakalava in the Analalava area say that the *rebiky* enacts the battles between the "Descendants of the Red" (*Zafinimena*) and the "Descendants of the White" (*Zafinifotsy*). The *Zafinimena* (a local rendering of *Zafimbolamena*, "Descendants of the Gold") is the branch of Sakalava royalty to which the local line of rulers belongs. The *Zafinifotsy* (a local rendering of *Zafimbolafotsy*, "Descendants of the Silver") have no living descendants in this area. Some of them, who committed suicide by drowning in the Loza River north of Analalava rather than submitting to the Hova army in the early nineteenth century, are represented by spirit mediums and a supplicator at a *doany* north of the Loza River.¹⁰

The *rebiky* celebrates the conquest of the *Zafinimena* over the *Zafinifotsy*, affirming the existence of clear hierarchical differences among the various categories of participants, who are themselves united as supporters of the local line of rulers, known as the "Southern Bemihisatra" in contrast to their "Northern Bemihisatra" counterpart in the Nosy Be-Ambanja area. In practice, the *rebiky* is also a competitive dance in which the participants usually strive to outdo one another, while observers provide a running commentary on their merits from the sidelines. Only when the living ruler dances, "people don't call out; they just keep quiet and look at her" (*tsy miantso olo, mañgina foana mizaha izy*). Some spectators, especially the living ruler and the royal ancestors in mediums, reward the best dancers by giving them bank notes. The higher their status, the more they are seen to give.¹¹ The dancers take the notes in their mouths while dancing even more energetically. (The lead danc-

10 A resident of a village near the *Zafinifotsy doany* said that he had once seen people dance the *rebiky* there, complete with hats and guns.

11 This is also customary at political rallies when local government officials reward the members of *troupes folkloriques* who have been asked to perform.