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Swears and swearing among Landogo of Sierra Leone: Aesthetics, adjudication and the philosophy of power

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Swears and Swearing Among Landogo of Sierra Leone:

Aesthetics, Adjudication and the Philosophy of Power

by

Clarke Karney Speed

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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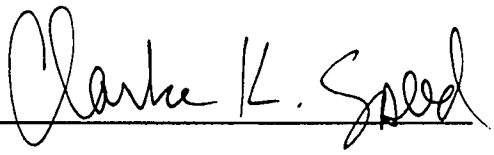
Signature 

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Abstract

Swears and Swearing among Landogo
of Sierra Leone: Aesthetics,
Adjudication and the Philosophy of Power.

By Clarke Karney Speed

Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee:
Professor Edgar V. Winans
Department of Anthropology

This dissertation discusses how swears and swearing enactments act as adjudicational mechanisms among Landogo of northern Sierra Leone. A swear (a kind of curse object) reveals power and aesthetic thought. As process, swearing articulates the moral and ethical substance of cosmological confrontation between witches and humans. My argument is advanced by case studies which offer a basis on which to analyze the interrelationship between witch crisis, swear adjudication, and swear agents with capacity. My analysis suggests certain conclusions: Landogo social reality and concepts of ideal social order are in a state of dialectical tension; various aesthetic tools and actions can be manipulated and contrived to transform some aspect of disorder; cosmological adjudication reveals a fluid and ever-changing basis of malevolent and benevolent power; and the ideology of order, through an appearance of certainty, cloaks fundamental uncertainty and disorder. Landogo systems of thought posit that the substance of confrontation is less important in the resolution process than the actual aesthetic representation of that same resolution. Hence, dramatic and performative representation creates power and control as qualities and states in time and space.

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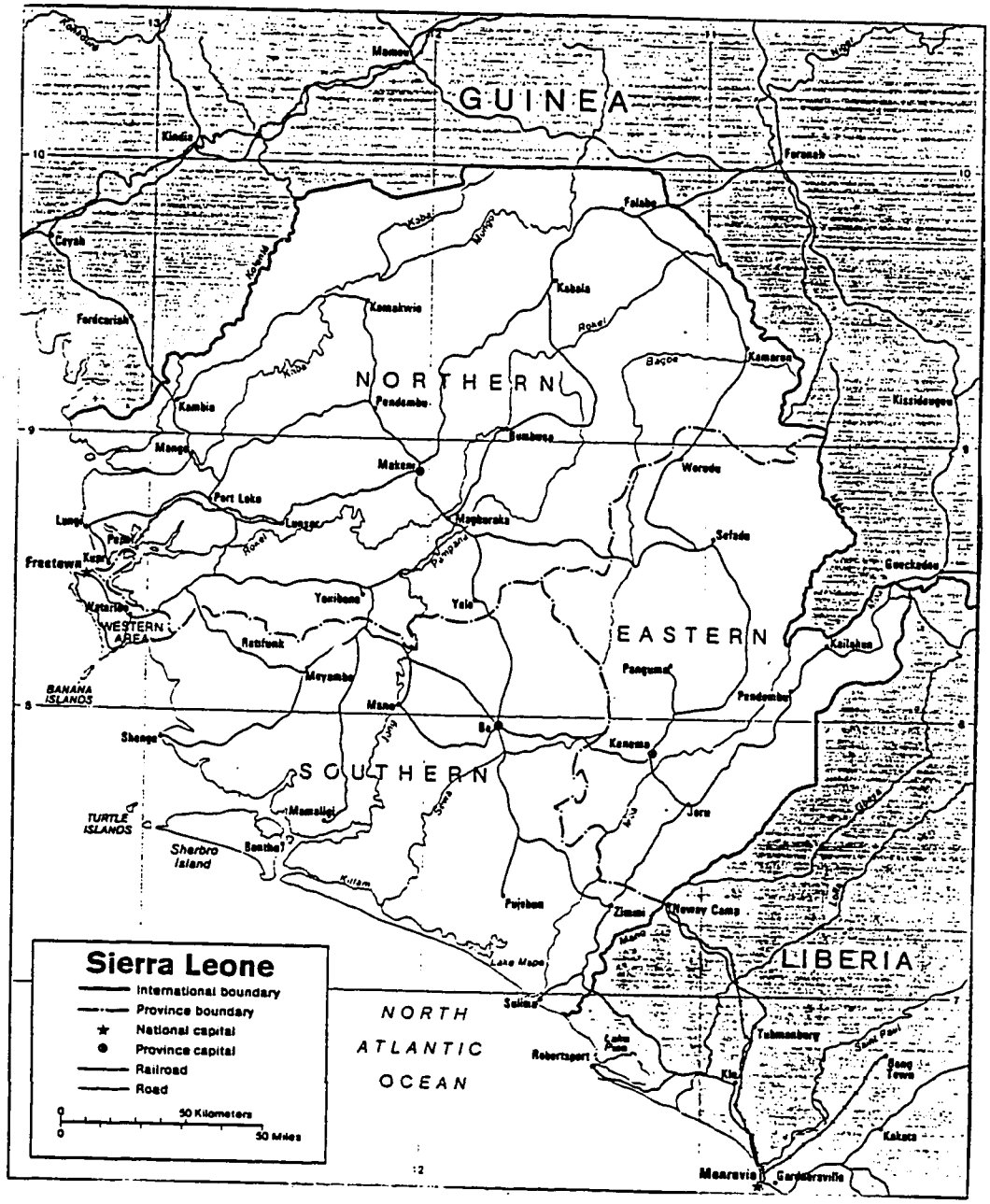
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

This work explicates a number of related anthropological problems embedded in interpretive ethnography and theory. The subject of the dissertation is a cosmological and secular reality of witches and witchcraft among Landogo[1] -- a small group found in Northern Sierra Leone (see Map #1). I concern myself with witch crisis -- how it is represented, what it reproduces, and what it reveals about social order and disorder. What follows is an excursion into the complexity of this Landogo reality, as well as into the realms of morality, imagination, aesthetic thought, and philosophy. What is found in the Chapters to come is not represented as science in the objective sense; nor do I feel this study could be exactly replicated by other anthropologists. What is achieved here is a humanistic, sometimes intuitive, venture into a cosmology of confrontation.

From the Landogo perspective, cosmology is empirical, and I represent it as they have conceptualized it. This will disturb many anthropologists bound by Western analytical paradigms. Let them think otherwise, and I am sure they will be critical of this work from its foundations onward. Regardless, I follow an ethnographic school of thought initiated by a number of anthropologists, among others Paul Bohannan, Tom Beidelman, Ivan Karp, William Merrill and Michael Jackson.[2] Throughout the dissertation, as I describe, explain and analyze this world of cosmological confrontation, I use key Landogo terms and phrases to get at their system of thought. In each case, I have tried to make direct translations; where no direct translation was possible I have made an approximate gloss -- but an interpretation, nonetheless. This makes for difficult reading. I make this statement because valid ethnography is difficult to write and difficult to read.



Map Number One
Sierra Leone

Much of what follows is far from the positivistic tradition. As a chronicle of deep thought, it will become clear that Landogo cosmology is filled with paradox and contradiction; this becomes more apparent through repetitious patterns of paradox found condensed into the same Landogo terms and phrases. Sometimes the paradox results from of my etic analysis; at other times each term and phrase means something else in different Landogo contexts. Overall, the terms and phrases reflect a larger cosmology -- a kind of paradoxical lens into how and why Landogo see some "thing, quality or process" as having importance.[3]

On a related level of anthropological concern, this ethnography and the following analyses, are not to be seen as "facts." I do not believe that it is possible to completely represent Landogo culture, society and process. What is possible is an interpretation of parts of Landogo culture. Long ago, Bohannan asserted that ethnography is what an ethnographer thinks, says and acts so he or she can successfully interact with the people they study.[4] It is with this in mind I have studied, thought, analyzed and written about a world view of witchery, witch crisis, and the use of swears (what other African societies call curse or oath objects) in processes of mystical adjudication.

I place great emphasis on disorder and misfortune, but it will become clear that Landogo also experience order and good fortune; and I also place emphasis on the lack of structure, or at least the ambiguity of structure, but it will also become clear that Landogo experience structure, order and good fortune in many situations.

BACKGROUND

My own anthropological history is also one of paradox. In the summer of 1983 I was forced to leave my first interest; African Art History.[5] However, life is full of unexpected contingencies, and in the summer of 1984, I began what I took to be a fresh start by enrolling in anthropology courses at the University of Washington. The irony is that out of a crisis of sorts, came an unlikely union of African Art Studies with Anthropology. My interests in the Arts remained while I worked toward theoretical explanations of aesthetic mechanisms in the context of conflict studies; a kind of American version of the so-called Manchester school perspective.

From 1984 until 1987, under the watchful eyes of my professors, the foundation of this research project began to take shape. Simon Ottenberg talked about his research on the "arts" among the Limba people of Northern Sierra Leone. He informed me, as most professors do, that I could (i.e.: should) work among the so-called Lokko -- an understudied group contiguous to Limba; at the same time Edgar Winans sculpted my thinking on law as process and theories of power and political economy.[6] A kind of theoretical oxymoron grew into something anthropologically relevant: Certain kinds of expressive actions used to adjudicate conflict. This was nothing new or progressive, in fact such a question had its roots deep in the works of Gluckman and Turner. The reader will find their thoughts, concerns and theories in every

Chapter as I reevaluate certain aspects of their basic paradigms. It was only after my first trip to the Landogo world (September 1987 until April 1988) that I understood Landogo conflict through the aesthetic realm of witches, witchery, and witchcraft.

Initially, what literature existed on the so-called "Lokko" was almost non-existent, and what was available provided little help in establishing some framework to begin my field work.[7] Fortunately, six months before leaving for Sierra Leone I met a Landogo man, Bai Fornah, who had completed his education in Oregon. He had lived in the United States for some time, and had recently moved to Seattle from Portland. He symbolically opened the doors of the so-called "Lokko" world. Originally, I planned to live in Laia -- a very rural and remote town in Sanda Lokko chiefdom -- but Bai convinced me to move to Gbendembu town in Gbendembu Ngonwanhu chiefdom. It was logically his older brother and his family that I first lived with on my arrival to Gbendembu in September of 1987. My first ethnographic jolt came when I was told by a Lokko that "Lokko" was a Temne word; and that "we" call ourselves Landogo.[8] Through out this dissertation I refer to Landogo, rather than Lokko.

The Fornah family took such good care of me that my life seemed very restricted. I felt very manipulated and I wanted to move to a smaller village, one that was less westernized. They would have none of it. "There are witches and bad people

in those small villages who will take advantage of you" they would say. In my mind it became an issue of their power over me. I cannot address questions related to that experience here except to add that they wanted to shelter me from the various ethnographic growing pains one goes through upon first arrival. I saw the conflict as an issue of control -- controlling me for status, prestige and power which included their desire for an electric generator and money, among other things.

My initial goal was to live in Gbendembu for a month and then move on to a more traditional village suitable for my research interests. But I stayed in Gbendembu for the next six months because I had the good fortune to meet Kempson Fornah -- one of Bai Fornah's relatives. Kempson is truly an ingenious individual. He is now in his last year at the Sierra Leone Bible College at Jui, he continues to work full time as a tailor, he teaches at a local Wesleyan bible college; and he has worked with the Lutheran Bible translators in the Landogo translation of The New Testament. He may well be the only Landogo who writes and reads Landogo, Krio and English.

He proved to be an excellent language instructor; and he acted as informant and field assistant whenever he had the chance. I am happy to say that we remain the best of friends; and without reservation it is through his help that I established Landogo as a viable research language. As my Landogo incresed, so people began to perceive me as an

accepted stranger in their community. My Landogo language abilities are still at best conversational. But this has allowed me access.

During my first six months in Gbendembu, I placed emphasis on language acquisition and I am unashamed to state that my language skills were developed while refining my taste for palm wine at various farms in the bush. The social interaction found while enjoying palm wine is such that I was able to discuss certain topics that would not have been accessible at other times.

The result was that from September 1987 until April 1988 I was oriented toward language, reportage and basic ethnographic understanding. These things had to be established before I pursued more complex theoretical problems. Another factor was that I knew I would be returning later the same year (September of 1988) and being accepted by Landogo and having them become accustomed to my presence was, in my mind, more important than pushing ahead with my specific theoretical research problem.

I constantly visited and socialized with people, went to work on farms, asked questions about religion, cosmology, witches and secret societies, and made visits to other villages. I took notes and wrote in my field journal. Yet, I suffered from anthropological guilt because I felt that I wasn't getting anywhere. I had a conscious method -- make a nuisance of myself and establish a reputation as an unusual

Kue nwoo na (person with light skin and stranger). This does not mean I tried to be "crazy," but it means that I had to prove my sincerity by fanatically learning "Landogo business." It is the case that fanatic people, at least the way Landogo perceive them, do as they please. So I became fanatical about "being Landogo" -- I thought, acted and lived as if I were Landogo, even if I am not; they allowed me to ask about and do things off-limits to whites. This freedom created a certain amount of respect and power.

I returned to Seattle in April of 1988 and made some major changes -- both personally, theoretically and methodologically. First, knowing that I was changing, and would change more, I married the woman (Leslie) who I had known and been romantically involved with before I first left for Sierra Leone. Ideally, there was really no question as to what needed to happen -- we would change together. Of course, events have their own logic. Something I learned about later. Second, I began to reread the anthropological literature that had created the foundation for my theoretical model. To my suprise I realized that I now had a focus and a problem to study. Third, I realized I needed to document as much as possible (to write everything down, keep detailed notes and a personal journal) on day to day activities of Landogo and of myself.

From September of 1988 until July of 1989 we lived in a different village -- Lagbelle -- the chiefdom headquarters of

a remote chiefdom to the north of Gbendembu town called Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu. Most of the material in this dissertation refers to those Landogo and Logo who live in villages which make up the northern part of Lokko country in Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu and Sanda Lokko chiefdoms. Logo are a small linguistic subgroup of Landogo who are found in the far north of Landogo country. My work focused on only a few areas -- I know the villages of Lagbelle, Nwawuranwa, Nyanhu, and Panhaagbo in Magbaiamba Nhonhanhu chiefdom (the place of many brooms and many palm oil trees) (see Map number Two). The chiefdom is presided over by Paramount Chief (and now Al Haji) Kande Fino II; it is geographically small, isolated and remote; it is considered by other Landogo as, at best, the backward "heartland" of their world.

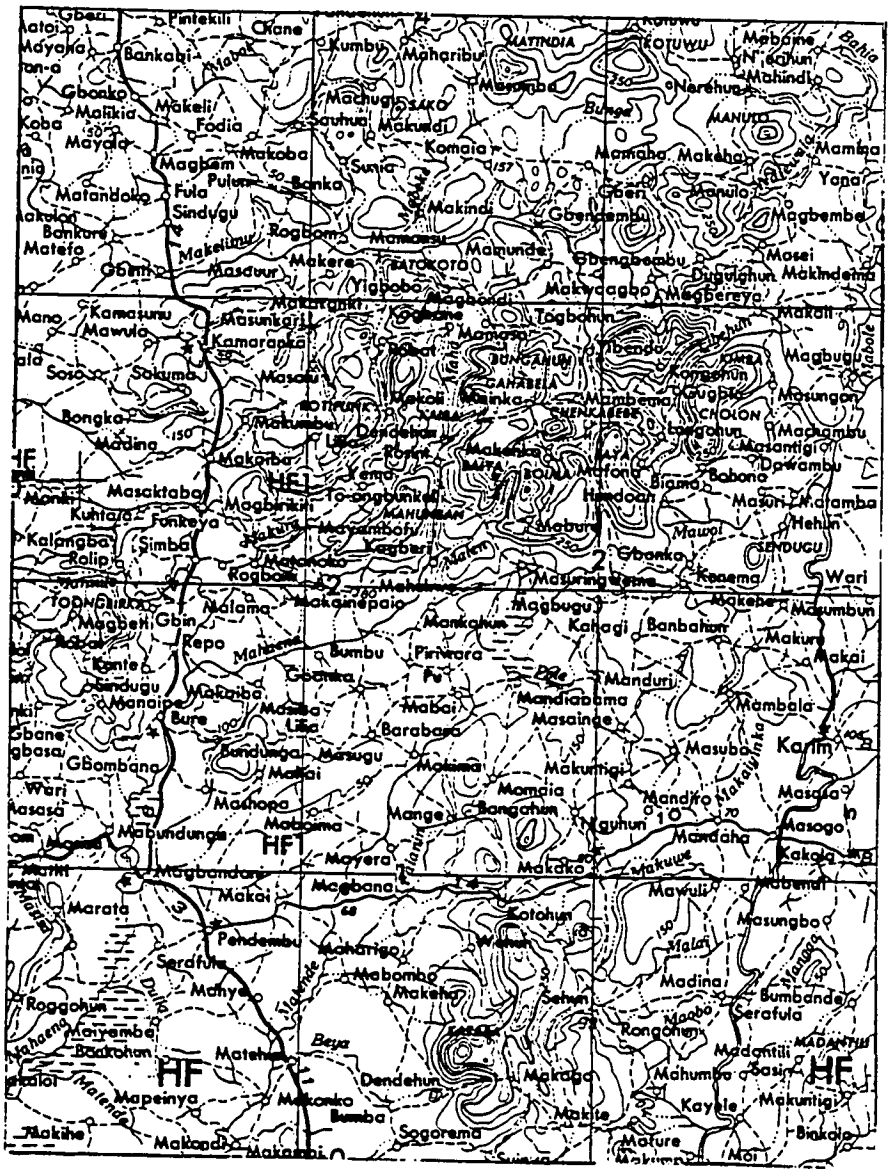
My experience in Lagbelle village was much better than in the town of Gbendembu. Many people from Gbendembu may be angered by this statement, but I learned little about what it means to be Landogo in Gbendembu. This may be the result of mission influences, Western education, and a growing cash economy. Most of what I learned concerned the politics of people who had or wanted power -- all relevant in terms of an anthropological understanding, but difficult nonetheless.

METHODS AND ETHNOGRAPHY

My discussion here refers to all Landogo as if they are a unified whole, which they are not. The chiefdoms of Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu and Sanda Lokko are rural and remote with

no major roads or population centers. Most Landogo live primarily in the well-accessed chiefdoms to the south -- Libeisayganhu and Gbendembu Ngonwanhu (see Map #2). These chiefdoms have reasonably well-developed infrastructures -- with primary and secondary schools, primary health care, and a Court bari with Court Chairman. The fact that my research took place in chiefdoms which do not really use the court system may be a factor in their emphasis on extra-adjudicational mechanisms. However, this is a topic better left for future research.

What will become quite obvious is that my field work, the resulting ethnography, the writing of Landogo analytical systems, my own analyses of that system, and this dissertation fall heavily into what was once called "The Bohannan -- Gluckman Debate."[9] That debate, although publically resolved in print, continues in contemporary anthropology.[10] I do not propose to resolve the Bohannan and Gluckman debate here; and it will become clear that I support claims from both sides. More importantly, I agree with Bohannan that relevant ethnography can be written, and that such ethnography must get at what a given people perceive about their system using their terms and concepts. Bohannan argued that the anthropologist must first get at the perception of people so as to understand how they set-up and classify realities into categories. We then study the concepts themselves as a reflection of the whole system, legal, mystical, or otherwise (see Bohannan



Map Number Two
Landogo and Logo Peoples
Northern Province
Geographical Area of Fieldwork

1963:46, Gluckman 1957:47-51 and Moore 1969: 343-344). It is at this point that we then compare the viewpoints of the substantive material (Bohannan 1969: 401). This follows Gluckman's notion that anthropology has a strong comparative, and even evolutionary perspective. Gluckman's goal was to explain so-called folk conceptions (legal or otherwise) in terms of their socio-economic structure, and then to compare those systems using Western concepts (Gluckman 1955, 1969: 342).

Given these perspectives, I place my own field research and the resulting ethnography in the context of Bohannan's emic orientation. I take this position because my goal here is to explicate Landogo reality through Landogo terms. At least in this work, I attempt to get at Landogo perceptions of time and space, and then interpret as well as translate their world. At this stage of the process this translation is not yet an ethnography embedded in the "culture of comparison." (Moore 1969: 401). Gluckman and Bohannan's differences (following Nader 1969:5) are less on the level of description, and more on the nature of analysis.

Bohannan (1969:401) argues that western terms and concepts alone are inadequate. Gluckman (1969:366) agrees that when a concept or term is unique to a particular society the vernacular must be used, but believes that careful description and clear terminology can create a foundation for comparative analysis. He cites Bohannan's use of the Tiv term **Tsav** (witchcraft substance or mystical heart-blood) as an example which is very difficult to translate. **Tsav**, it becomes clear, is very similar to the Landogo term **Nhoa na** (the witch). The importance of the term is vital to any understanding of the wider issues involved in the Landogo world; I use the term, and all its variations endlessly. Throughout this work I face a number of related problems in dealing with such a concept:

> "...an anthropologist either uses native terms and makes it tough on the reader but easy on himself, or else he

> uses no native terms and makes it tough on himself but easy for the reader." (1969: 402);
> and (paraphrasing)
>
> ...there is a pattern condensed into their words...which not only tell what each word means...but how something fits into a larger conceptual system...and why a given people say it is important...(1969: 406);
> and (paraphrasing)
>
> to completely represent a culture is impossible...it is an interpretation of only part of that culture...(1969:406).

With these ideas in mind I have studied, thought about and analyzed witch crisis, a world view of witchery, as well as swears as mystical adjudication. Anything related to witches is difficult to pursue and difficult to write up. If there is validity in what I have achieved here it is found in various terms embedded in Landogo concepts. Indeed, there is repetition that makes it difficult for the reader. But the terms are fundamental to an understanding of Landogo systems of thought. The term **Nhoa na** (the witch) is a window into Landogo structures, system, ideology and cosmology. For those who doubt the validity of this ethnographic project, I have returned to Landogo country (four weeks in March and April 1991) to ask Landogo themselves to critique my understanding and analysis, and they have found it meaningful. While I originally sought to document "expressive resolutions" to conflict and dispute, I came to understand that conflict and dispute were embedded in a larger system of action and thought of **Nhoa nhanda** (the doing of witchcraft) and **Nhoa na** (the witch). Both terms have endless variations found in all parts of this dissertation. The reader must suffer their importance.

I initially developed a methodology of participant observation of Landogo conflict. I tried to follow cases so as to see the resolution -- through various rituals, divination, and elders hearing cases. But I actually saw few conflicts and disputes ever achieve resolution. Many cases moved

"underground" or never resolved. This perplexed me and I wondered what I was actually looking for? Given enough time and reflection in the field (over two distinct periods) this ambiguity finally became an issue of how Landogo manipulated and altered their secular and cosmological relations to meet the need of particular conflict situation (see Gluckman in Van Velsen 1967: Introduction 15). The extended case method (Gluckman 1967) and the concept of situational analysis (Van Velsen 1967) helped me to understand that Landogo (far from being static and embedded in some organic collective whole) were concerned with personal position, power and control in a wider cosmological world.[11] The problem became how to understand Landogo swears, swearing, and swear people given that such things personify the world of secrets and secrecy. Because the replication of power has to do with secrecy, I had to find a method that would somehow allow me to penetrate that powerful realm of secrecy -- and that became an issue of aesthetics.

Anthropological field workers and a given social field mutually define one another. In my case, I was not objectively immune to what happened around me; I tried to balance between total immersion and objective detachment, but as I moved in the conceptual and actual world of Landogo witchcraft, I became less and less objective. This is because among Landogo knowledge is power, and power is embedded in a world of confrontation. The more I learned about the meaning and action of witchcraft as a kind of knowledge, the more I began to protect myself with the exact concepts and actions that I had learned as well as observed. My fear became a gentle or violent teacher.

I had many experiences that I cannot explain. What is important here is that those experiences exist in my mind as if they are real. Once I accepted this, it took a short amount of time to abandon my illusions about scientific objectivity. I learned Landogo cultural reality by entering into their

reality -- by debating about the existence and reality of witches, misfortune and power (see Jackson 1989:14). I learned quickly that everything Landogo do has a moral (cosmological) consequence. Soon I found myself not only observing conflict, but sometimes actually generating it and being a participant -- those actions, ideas, events, and objects transcended my analytical limitations. This led me to realize, and accept, that in local life more occurs than seen through the social scientific eye (see Gluckman in Van Velsen 1967:120 and Jackson 1989:3).

In Landogo terms, "witchness" is extensive. I pursued an understanding at the risk of being accused of being a "witch;" by asking questions about witches and witchcraft, and by doing things and going places that only a 'witch' would want to see or know about. I do not doubt that ethical questions will be raised by such a methodology. It was a risky method, yet I found it very rewarding. I was willing to take the risks despite out-right warnings and threats to forget about such things. Such a method, more importantly, is relevant to Landogo who, once accustomed to my willingness to press ahead into culturally restricted areas, pulled and pushed me to reach a higher level of understanding via experience, discussions of examples, and many failures and social blunders on my part.

THE PROBLEM

Mary Douglas (1956:369) writes that "...in the juxtaposition of previously unconnected ideas...the act of interpretation is to be found." This dissertation concerns the interrelationship between what is aesthetic and adjudicational. I here respond to Nader's (1969) phrase "Law in society;" and a more common phrase "Art in society." The notions connotated by these phrases are not applicable in the Landogo context because "Law" or "Art" do not enclose distinct conceptual domains; the result is that I focus upon dramatic processes and mechanisms which are both adjudicational and

aesthetic which not only deter, but judge and bring misfortune and illness. Some acts can execute. I will show specifically how Landogo act upon witch related events that occur in a fluid social field using a kind of aesthetic philosophy. A witch is a complex social and cosmological construction of personhood -- either good or bad, or both. The category witch is defined by the extra capacity of having four-eyes, or what some have called "second sight." The individual with Four-eyes can see, move, act and communicate in the cosmological dimension (see Chapter Two, Four, Five and Six for a more detailed definition).

The juxtaposition in which I am interested in is the manner in which certain ritualized events (swearing) are instigated by those with Four-eyed capacity and how these acts become adjudicational processes. Swearing (cursing and oathing in other African societies) has received some treatment in Africanist literature in Sierra Leone[12] and elsewhere.[13] However, few anthropologists have viewed swearing as an aesthetic mechanism which attempts to resolve both social and cosmological conflict.[14] Fewer still, argue that swears and swearing reveal moral ontology, aesthetic thought and a philosophy of power.[15]

When certain kinds of aesthetic mechanisms become adjudicational, an unusual amount of coercive power is generated as well as acts upon a given cosmological field. Swear enactments demonstrate Landogo are concerned about achieving order in a world perceived as fundamentally disordered. My analyses will explore how swear events temporarily resolve the existential problem of witch generated disorder. Temporary order is achieved by fabricating and maintaining powerful illusions about power and control.

My research generates a number of questions. Clear cut answers, however, are few. Field work suggests that Landogo individuals and groups use the gaps, contradictions, and ambiguous areas of their world to reach daily goals. Some

questions raised are: First, what does manipulation of gaps mean in terms of social process? Second, what are the various social and cultural processes that mold or form swearing as a primary adjudicative process; and therefore, does swearing determine adjudicative results? (See Fuller in Nader 1969:8-9). Last, what does swearing tell us about the nature of power in Landogo society and can this perspective be applied to other African societies?

Landogo social life is extremely fluid and negotiable -- a world full of polysemic meanings -- where individuals live in on-going process of confrontation, negotiation and compromise fused in the cosmos. Compromise is sometimes reached, and at other times it is unattainable. The fusion of aesthetic performance with conflict simultaneously creates processes that are both secular and mystical. A Landogo individual's social position, therefore, is created and maintained in an on-going cosmological competition for status, power and authority where individual public position is intimately tied to private, secret, and mystical actions. Often, but not always, power is represented and achieved in the world of witches, witchery, and witchcraft. This is an issue of aesthetic adjudication; far from unique to African society, litigation in Western societies also contains performative reference to the supernatural via oaths, costume, and oration, among other things. In either case, the performative elements create a frame where facts are seen as inevitable and supernaturally sanctioned.[16]

All agents and agencies are embedded in a Landogo cosmology that posits two worlds -- the seen and unseen -- that are causally interrelated in a state of tension. Such a synthesis of time and space results in a public world punctuated by various levels of secrecy, where both positive and negative witchcraft acts are enacted to negotiate the outcome of all aspects of daily life in a quest for power.

When and where confrontation occurs, grievances are redressed in a number of ways. Resolution and redress can range from informal meetings of families to formal meetings of elders; the problem often moves into a more formal judicial setting where elders and "big men" hear cases; and if the problem remains unsolved it can move further into realms of cosmological redress -- a realm in which Landogo swears and swearing play a major part. The costs -- socially, economically, and cosmologically become very high. I discuss the **Pee haai moo na** (the swear person/person with fighting medicine) who will **Oo pee pee ngaa** (to bring the swear to life [enact]), the **Pee haai** (swear or fighting medicine) that **Taa na nhoa nge ndaa** (cleans the village of witches).

In making this analyses I will use a number of dramatic examples that suggest certain conclusions:

> 1) That reality construction is far from ideal notions of the social order in that various "tools" from that order are appropriated, manipulated and contrived, to transform some aspect of the social order itself (Comaroff and Roberts 1981: 247);
>
> 2) That Landogo crisis adjudication reveals a fluid and ever-changing basis of power (Karp 1990);
>
> 3) High level confrontation, cosmological or otherwise, generates key disclosure of the socio-cultural order by unveiling its own inherent disorder (Comaroff and Roberts 1981: 249);
>
> 4) That Landogo use those aesthetic "tools" (representations and constructions) to adjudicate as well as reproduce certainty; and
>
> 5) That the ideology of order, through an appearance of certainty cloaks fundamental disorder (Gluckman 1955:296-301).

Landogo and Logo peoples historically occupied a much larger geographical area reaching south beyond Port Lokko. Their world is now defined by the Mabole river to the east, south and west; and by the smaller Matei river to the north.

In general, this environment is transitional between forest and savanna, lying between the drier northern regions in contemporary Guinea, and the coastal plains in contemporary Liberia.

If one were to transect the Landogo world (from around seven miles north of Makeni, going seventy miles north to the small town of Laia) one finds grasslands which give way to rolling hills with valleys; in turn the hills give way to a cluster of high volcanic domes (some reaching two thousand feet or higher) with steep slopes and lush valleys; which in turn once again become grasslands punctuated by large hills in and around the town of Laia. Landogo country is bordered by Limba peoples to the north and east, and Temne peoples to the south and west. There is one major road which serves this area, along which a number of large towns may be found. These are, from south to north, Kalangba, Gbendembu, and Batkanu. There are only a few large settlements that are far off the "main line" such as Kortonhu, Lagbelle, Nhundunwa, and Laia far to the north.

Most settlements are small, having between five and ten houses where land is interspersed by fertile valleys, swamps, small rivers and streams that lend themselves to wet and dry rice farming. Access to land, except in and around larger towns, is easily acquired. However, access to labor is not easy. Landogo and Logo country is punctuated by contrasting wet and dry seasons, with rainy season ranging from June to November, and dry season from December to May. There is a brief period of intense cold (harmattan) from December until late January (see Appendix A for a brief review of Landogo history).

ORDER OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation attempts to develop sequentially the texture and fabric of Landogo mystical adjudication. Chapter Two presents a theoretical model which combines theories of law and adjudication, witchcraft as well as African

aesthetics. I have created this model in an attempt to explain the complex aesthetic interrelationship of witch oriented cosmology with swears as well as swearing events.

This creates a context for Chapter Three -- an ethnographic chapter focused on the idealogy of order. In this chapter I create an ethnographic sense of the ideals Landogo follow in everyday life -- what they call **Ngo ila** (one word) and what I label the ideology of agreement and compromise.

In Chapter Four I deal with the ideology of disorder -- a Landogo world of witches, witchery and witchcraft. Chapter Four explains why Landogo struggle against disease, misfortune, disaster and death -- "dialectical events" often beyond human control.

My goal in Chapter Five is to reflect Landogo social processes embedded in a larger more powerful world of cosmological confrontation. I detail the confrontation between the ideal structures of human interaction and the reality of witchcraft as a world view.

Chapter Six focuses upon mechanisms of control -- witchcraft agency and the on-going negotiation for power. I also look into the source of swear power. Chapter Seven builds upon Six by analyzing swear agency as capacity; the logic of action, enactment and performance and the veiled and secret process of mystical adjudication. It is in this context that control and power are articulated. My overall goal in this chapter is to establish swear agency as access to power. The more agency one has the greater amount of control. This Chapter also looks into witch crisis which moves into a state of catastrophe. When catastrophe occurs there is a vastly different kind of community-wide response that is coordinated on a number of different aesthetic and processual levels. This should be seen as the ideology of power where aesthetic mechanisms are used to create power that transforms. My emphasis in this Chapter is on the empirical and metaphorical transformations of meaning in a cosmological field. This

occurs through a theoretical discussion of structure, agency and power, aesthetic thought and its application.

In Chapter Eight, I establish some conclusions concerning the interrelationships between Landogo aesthetic agency, moral ontology, and the aesthetic creation of power. Here I focus on Landogo aesthetics as a **philosophy of power.** Once applied, enacted and performed, the aesthetic becomes coercive power which can validate key cultural illusions about ethics and morality, but more importantly reproduce the key structures of Landogo society. It is here that one finds the cultural ideology of agreement and compromise and the existential problem of morality, witches and witchcraft through the use of aesthetic action and secrecy.

CHAPTER ONE NOTES

1. Many scholars say Lokko or Loko. Both are incorrect. The proper name used by the people who inhabit this area is Landogo.

2. See Bohannan 1957, Beidelman 1986, Karp 1980, 1989, and Jackson 1986, 1989.

3. See Bohannan (1969: 406).

4. Bohannan said this long before Post Modernism was ever fashionable (1969: 406). Here I follow such a perspective and actually write ethnography, even if the ethnography is filled with ideas, thoughts and conceptions of people rather than physical and empirical "facts."

5. Leaving is a nice way of saying that I was "kicked out," not allowed to pursue a Ph.D, suggested that I pursue something else outside of academia. This only made me pursue anthropology with greator ferocity. My life in anthropology is the direct result of Simon Ottenberg's intervention in that phase of my life and training.

6. Carol Eastman helped to train my ear in terms of African phonetics.

7. I refer to Hirst 1957, 1958, Hirst and Kamara 1958, J.T. John 1952, Fyle 1976, Haight 1968, and Sawyerr 1939.

8. Once again, this was through the efforts of Kempson Fornah who took me and made me see, think, feel, react and taste in a Landogo way. I am still learning.

9. See Nader (1969) and Moore (1969) for a summary of that debate.

10. I refer to the effects of Post Modernism.

11. See Bond's (1990) article in Sandjek's edited volume on Fieldnotes. In that article Bond argues fieldnotes are selective, interpretive, and fragmentary. This perspective exists in contrast to those of the Manchester school who saw fieldnotes as concrete things, sources of authority and validation. Both Van Velsen and Gluckman used the "Mancunian" perspective to its fullest extent via case studies of legal process. These "notes" helped to establish social precedent and regularites along with exceptions. Field notes came to be embedded in the text as both record and validation of interpretations as well as conclusions of the anthropologist.

Hence, the creation and use of fieldnotes became the "voice" of authority of both researcher and "his" ethnography.

12. The works on swears and swearing in Sierra Leone, or related to that phenomena, are Beatty 1915, Finnegan 1963a, 1964, 1965, and 1969, Ottenberg 1983 and Personal Communication, Jackson 1975, 1978, 1986, and 1989, Ndanema 1964, Shaw 1982, Parsons 1961, 1962, and 1964, Rosen 1981, Hardin 1987, Thayer 1983, Welmers 1949 and Gittins 1987. There may be others that I have left out.

13. In general, see Bohannan 1958, Beidelman 1986, Bellman 1984, Buckley and Gottlieb 1988, Gottlieb 1989, Gilbert 1982, 1989, Imperato 1977, Jacob 1988, Kopytoff 1980, Krantz 1989, MacGaffey 1990, Moore 1986, McNaughton 1988, as well as Winans and Edgerton 1964.

14. See Karp 198, 1989 and 1990, and especially Krantz 1989.

15. See Krantz 1989 and Hardin 1987 for similar analyses of different aesthetic phenomena.

16. Edgar Winans, Personal Communication.

CHAPTER TWO
THE THEORETICAL MODEL

The theory discussed here is a response to particular ethnographic patterns: disjunction between a socially constructed ideology of order and the existence of disorder. All societies attempt to create order, and yet order is never fully grasped. Order is both real and a construct of the human imagination. In some societies this disjunction is so pervasive that many social situations reflect the pervasive ideal (largely illusory) in a state of tension with reality. This produces chaotic social relations. My focus here is on a theory of problematic disorder. The theory exists in contrast to Systems Theory because I concern myself with how Landogo society organizes disorder; and in what way these mechanisms dictate their social relationships, levels and kinds of conflict, and processes of adjudication as well as resolution. To approach these questions Chapter Two merges three seemingly distinct phenomena of anthropological interest: adjudication, aesthetics and witchcraft into theoretical model. As a philosophy of power, adjudicational aesthetics is used to control, through manufactured illusions of certainty, unresolvable problems associated with evil[1] in people and in the world.

ADJUDICATIONAL PROCESS

It is clear that small social groups in restricted social fields have complex social relations. Gluckman (1967) defined them as "multiplex," in that individuals are continually drawn together and pulled apart because of simultaneous but conflicting ties and interests. Multiplex patterns create problematic social relations. Ideally, conflicted ties must be resolved and people actively sort their problems in a variety of ways: using elders, chiefs, moot courts, official western style courts, and village assemblies; and in some instances through mystical types of adjudication.

Adjudication of the many kinds of dispute often look first at the relative positions, acts, and consequences of the

individuals and groups in a specific conflict; and second at an existing body of "jural" norms, values and laws as well as processes (see Gluckman 1965, Bohannan 1957, Nader 1969, Moore 1977, 1986 and Comaroff and Roberts 1981 among others). Most of these studies demonstrate that moral, jural, or legal forms often exist in a fluid hierarchy. Low level principles tend to be precise and explicit. Medium level principles tend to be flexible and encompassing. Higher level principles most often are quite vague and ambiguous (see Gluckman 1965, Giddens 1979, Moore 1986 and Karp 1990). High level "legal" principles, in particular, very often overlap and are ambiguous: they are multireferential and indefinite. Flexible principles give adjudication a body of knowledge, rather than fixed norms, that can be adapted to a given social and cosmological situation of conflict (see Moore 1969: 345).

In most African societies, the moral ontology is inherently contradictory and ambiguous. However, at the same time these high level principles are the most powerful (See Moore 1975, 1977, 1986). Overall, moral ontology is situated in a dialectical tension between its own regularized social forms, and their situational application and adjustment. As litigants and adjudicators sort out these problematic relations, the sorting alters the social fabric of a given society by being represented as natural, factual and objectified.

While the sorting out process is filled with uncertainty, the forum of judgement and the judgement itself, is a process of certainty. Individuals who have power and authority judge others. This shifts individual and group position, status, authority and power. Judgement in dispute and conflict creates a transformation. The transformation is often more than just a shift in the position and status of the various actors involved; it is a shift in perceptions and meaning. Individual perceptions and consensual meaning are inextricably intertwined in the process of conflict and confrontation.

Conflicts in perception and meaning take place in numerous areas: ranging from how commonplace idioms are used in everyday experience, to the interpretation of conventions and traditions, on into the complex construal process of normative rules; and further still into resolution of taboo transgression which result in mystical and cosmological imbalance (Edgerton 1985: 34-46). In each of these examples there is uncertainty that must be negotiated.

In one of the most far-reaching studies of its kind Gluckman (1967:364) argued that the certainty of any legal form and process is constructed from the uncertainty of everyday social life. Those who adjudicate the actions of others manipulate uncertainty to achieve certainty. Objective decisions and judgement are paradox because such certainty is always generated out of uncertainty. The certainty of these outcomes arises from the fact that they are conscious models (essentially structures) of and for interaction.

Paradigmatic structures are both determined by actors and determine interaction (Giddens 1979 and Karp 1986). These structures, as ideologies, seem both conscious and durable. And yet, rule, law, institution, organization, custom, symbol, ritual and aesthetic enactment continually change and are thus perpetually uncertain in content. The actual boundaries of these paradigmatic ideologies change. Human actors are extremely sensitive to these changes and are quite willing to use these gaps and contradictions to maximize their social experience. The actual perceptions of individuals and shared meanings change even as the moment is given a guise of certainty.

Social actors skillfully manipulate and negotiate both the uncertainty and certainty in the context of dispute. Of course, this does not mean that life is without rule, pattern or purpose, but that reality is a janus-faced phenomena in that both uncertainty and certainty coexist. As people interact and come into conflict, the process becomes as

Edgerton (1985: 259-260) found a situation where some rules are never enforced, some are rarely enforced, others are occasionally enforced, a few are always enforced; and other situations have no exceptions whatsoever and thus require no enforcement. The range of rule manipulation and uncertainty ranges from the very fluid to the very fixed.

In most cases of conflict, adjudication and resolution in Africa, those who judge (say elders and or courts) simply find evidence needed from an expandable repertoire of normative resources. There is no absolute notion of truth or falsehood (Gluckman 1967:153-155 and Moore 1975:103). Rulings in adjudicational process are value-judgments predicated not only on social position and circumstance, but on other issues of time and space.

Comaroff and Roberts (1981:107, 249) argue that a social world has diverse modes of confrontation where the logic and meaning of the overall system are revealed. Sometimes secular processes of adjudication fail and genres of mystical adjudication are used. In some societies, mystical adjudication is a last resort used to establish responsibility and vengence. Such methods are used only when ideal and appropriate settlement directed activity fails. However, in other African societies mystical adjudication is the primary process for settlement. In those societies, the anthropologist needs to know what the various social patterns are that make mystical adjudication the primary channel for dispute resolution.

AFRICAN AESTHETICS

An overview of work on African aesthetics suggests that despite early work by Sieber (1971) and Ottenberg (1971) progress in understanding what African aesthetics represents to Africans has been minimal (see Ben-Amos 1989:33). Numerous studies exist which range from the functional to the symbolic, onward into the communicative and structural, and now also include studies of the artist, creativity, change and

politics, among other topics (see d'Azevedo 1958, Schneider 1956, 1966, and Vansina 1984, among others). These works have created a foundation, but there has been little growth. The result is that contemporary work in African aesthetics remains largely one dimensional and underintegrated with the wider context of advances in African Studies. This problem remains for a number of reasons: 1) "Art" studies tend to underconceptualize African social life, 2) A clear and concise comparative definition of African aesthetics has yet to be developed, 3) I would argue that comparative art is underconceptualized in general because it lacks a social theory; and 4)) Few studies have attempted to integrate African aesthetic thought and action with advances made in African systems of dispute resolution, knowledge, cosmology, and philosophy.

Some achieve this syntheses (see Thompson 1973, Glaze 1981, Fernandez 1971, 1973, 1976, Imperato 1977, and Ottenberg 1989 among others). A few studies have attempted to understand the interaction of aesthetic action, ethics, politics and power in African society (Arnoldi 1986, Ben-Amos 1984, Rubin 1975, and McNaughton 1988 among others). Recently Abiodun (1990:64) and Ben-Amos (1989:35) among others, have argued that new ground on this phenomena must develop where the aesthetic focus not only rejects the Western bias toward only object analysis, but moves toward an incorporation of objects, action and ideas, as an aesthetic philosophy. Such a philosophy must include African notions of sight, sound, soul, taste and sense; there must be a much more serious effort to get at African conceptions of morality.

It is clear that at the core of African aesthetic experience is a moral ontology based on social interaction (see Ben-Amos 1989, Maquet 1986, Hardin 1987, and Ottenberg 1971, 1989). Those who pursue aesthetics as the representation of moral ontology are few. Maquet (1986:4) has written that the aesthetic is, in part, an ideational configuration that

socially constructs reality. The artist finds "material" in human interaction and ideas, rather than only through visual forms. As a sum total, the material, societal and ideational elements condition aesthetic configurations and are conditioned by those configurations as well (1986:169,183). Works by Ben-Amos (1989), Hardin (1987) and Karp and Arens (1989) also get at this perspective which I detail later in this chapter (see pp. 37-53).

WITCHCRAFT MATRIX

Evans-Pritchard's (1937) work on Azande witchcraft, oracles and magic remains one of the theoretical foundations for witchcraft studies, in Africa and elsewhere. It was an original work that continues to transcend both theoretical and substantive boundaries. Evans-Pritchard's main interest remains unique because he demonstrated that Azande cosmology compelled individual belief and action in a variety of ways. His analysis delved into Azande sociology of knowledge, philosophy, and law as process, among other things (Douglas 1970: XIV-XVIII).

A brief review of the anthropological literature on witchcraft indicates that multiple perspectives have evolved.[2] Early anthropological studies emphasized witchcraft as homeostatic mechanisms of social structure and individual psyche. Witchcraft was seen as part of on-going social drama which moved from conflict, into a resolution phase, and then into equilibrium (Gluckman 1967, Kluckhohn 1944 and Turner 1968). In time, anthropological studies begin to look at witchcraft phenomena from a micro-political process {see Bohannan (1957, 1958), Swartz (1969), as well as Winans and Edgerton (1964)}.

Recent studies see the witchcraft phenomena from a variety of relevant perspectives: World systems theory, Political economy, and as a form of resistance, among other topics (see Packard 1980, Roberts 1986 and Winans (forthcoming). The study of the phenomena has continued to

evolve and now emphases and orientations have moved away from witchcraft as a deviant, negative system to a focus on witchcraft agency used for mystical and social power. Such realms are now seen as interchangeable. Once strictly the realm of religion and cosmology, now "witch" related affliction perspectives look into African notions of illness, death and disorder (see Jacobson-Widding (1988, 1989) and Reynolds-Whyte (1989), among others). More specifically, these studies use an analytical focus of witch related misfortune in understanding sickness and cure. Some of the studies have shifted so as to see mind, body and concepts of identity as the locus of disorder and witchcraft (Reynolds-Whyte 1989:292).

THE MODEL

In this model I move away from traditional Western definitions of African aesthetics and build upon advances by Karp (1988) and Hardin (1987). My goal here is to show how ethics and morality are not intrinsic to "art" objects or raw materials, but are embedded by social action. The power of a wide range of aesthetic actions (art, ritual, dance, swears and swearing, ceremonial and festival, among other actions) lies in the process of meaningful investment by actors. Some actors have high levels of aesthetic capacity in a given context within society. These actors take the material, symbolic and cosmological resources available and transform them into meaningful "things" and "qualities."

Certainty, itself a "quality" rather than actual state, is difficult to achieve, but it can be represented aesthetically. The act of aesthetically generating certainty creates meaning **for** and consensus **among** individuals. Generating meaning is control **with** and **through** constructions which "somehow" resolve that conflict (d'Azevedo 1958:708, Karp 1988, Ottenberg 1971: 5-6, and Levi-Strauss 1962). I work from four some basic assumptions.

1) Social systems do not always work elegantly for people. Implicit in this perspective is a rejection of Systems theory logic anthropologist's have prized so highly. Systems theory is a logic that often fails the people who need it the most (see Reynolds-Whyte 1989:293-300, and Moore 1977, 1978). If it is empirically true that African social life is characterized by pervasive levels of uncertainty, than we must use uncertainty as a framework for constructing models that explain meaning as well as motivate human action (Reynolds-Whyte 1989:298).

2) A given culture cannot always provide answers to its existential problems and questions. Uncertainty and unfamiliar symbols can be used to generate power and control. The way people attribute meaning to uncertainty is key to understanding both the cosmological and social transformations of the social order (Reynolds-Whyte 1989: 299-300).

3) The nature of witch crisis reveals the social order. Social order is embedded in a process where the ideology of order effects people's thoughts and behaviors; and yet it is very clear that it is the same people who alter the meaning of that ideology. Paralleling the ideas of Reynolds-Whyte and Karp, among others, I assert that what actually occurs is the result of ever-changing negotiation and judgement of morality. When conflict moves into realms of the mystical, unseen, and cosmological its adjudicational action must be represented and constructed in tangible "certain" form. To a large extent, an aesthetic process moves "law in society" to the action of "adjudicational aesthetics in society." and;

4) In one of the most penetrating recent works on African aesthetics, Hardin (1987) argues that Non-western aesthetics can be found to have a broader cultural application and instrumentality than Western aesthetics (see Osborne 1968 and 1970). For many Non-western people there is no aesthetic distinction between "art and non-art;" and that these aesthetic forms have a multiple genres ranging from the purely decorative to the purely instrumental. Many of the instrumental forms are used to evaluate and reproduce social interaction, the cultural whole, and specific meaning associated with power. The aesthetic is purposive in nature. Some forms of aesthetic action can actualize social ties of obligation because they judge individual position and character; and this action reinforces patterns of containment as well as control (Hardin 1987:40-48, 146-175).

Through an aesthetic enactment of a certain kind, for example, an idealized model of control can be enacted against anti-social forces. The enactment, be it ritual, oathing or dancing, reiterates primary concerns of reproduction of social balance between individuals and groups; and it also reproduces what is moral and immoral, and fuses it with what is social and anti-social (1987:174-175). Ottenberg (1971:5, 1989:58-73) points out that it may be clear that African aesthetic forms blend ritual, music, dance, costume, symbolic and figural representation. But, it is unclear how African aesthetic forms -- as a mechanism -- act to resolve dispute or represent a moral ontology.

The aesthetic mechanism "does" in some cases, what can not be achieved elsewhere by construing moral implications embedded in social action. Sometimes secular mechanisms fail, or cannot achieve needed resolutions. What is problematic is then moved into the realm of aesthetically doing, constructing, and representing the resolution. It is in this aesthetic context that the nature of human beings who interact in a dichotomized universe of morality and power become certainty. The problem appears resolved, even if the appearance is ephemeral.

KEY DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

I have both redefined many terms and generated new terms as well. I begin with a definitional focus on personhood, move outward into the social world, onward into the aesthetic world, and full circle into the cosmological.

There are three levels of personhood: 1) Person as reflexive agent, 2) Person with agency or high level capacity; and 3) Person who is categorized as witch -- good, bad, or both.

> I define agent as an individual with basic levels of knowledge and intention. This knowledge is used intentionally as a strategy. Individuals reflexively monitor their own actions and results as they evaluate

and are evaluated in the on-going process of daily life.[3]

> Agency is defined, in contrast to agent, as the more dynamic and selective use of individual energy, imagination and creativity. Agency is a kind of capacity of and for knowledge. Agency requires creative application to affect people, society and nature in benevolent or malevolent ways. Agency can be seen as a capacity to mediate between dimensions of the secular and cosmological world where construal and interpretation generates a social transformation in the fabric of social life.[4]

> Witch is defined as any individual who has the power of the "second eye." The eye means that the individual has "four-eyes" which is the most inclusive category of witch. Such persons have the ability to see, act and move in the other world. Four-eyed capacity can occur naturally and unnaturally existing unequally in individuals. Witchness can be socially and cosmologically defined, cultivated, sought out, fought for and protected, if it is to be kept.

Person as agent, person with agency, or person as witch are involved in on-going cosmological action.

> Action is defined as the praxis of cultural idioms of everyday life.[5]

All agents exist in a disordered cosmos.

> Disorder is defined as social and mystical interaction which result from systems of thought that create disjunction between paradigmatic structures and reality. Ambiguity and contradiction create social process characterized by confrontation and dispute over the construal of meaning.

Heated discussions often move from controlled dispute and negotiation to uncontrolled and unresolved conflict. This escalates secular conflict into the realm of cosmological conflict. Witchcraft agency is used to achieve desired states or to further one's quest for power. Both benevolent and malevolent witchcraft creates further suspicion, accusation and confession.

In this model crisis is a vital feature of cosmological process. Disaster and catastrophe are conceived to exist in an ever-impending state on the horizon, but something perpetually unknown and undefined. There are two interrelated states of catastasis and catastrophe.

> I define catastasis as escalating conflict and cosmological flux. Through witch generated complications catastasis becomes catastrophe.
>
> I define catastrophe as the actual witch crisis manifested in actual misfortune, certain kinds of disease, illness and unexplained death. In the context of witch catastrophe, hostile feelings, fear, anger, unsaid accusations and mystical retribution predictably test the illusory notions of agreement and cooperation in a human settlement.

While I am interested in the social process where catastasis threatens or transforms the social field into catastrophe, I am more concerned with how some individuals (with capacity) enact various mystical agencies that are adjudicational and propositional. These enactments respond to conflict by judging the actions of human and non-human agents: human non-witch, known and seen as witch, unknown and unseen witch, as well as undefined, non-human, unknown, unseen force.

> I define enactment as both formal and informal construal of opinions, testimony, and events. These are made public by human and mystical testimony and used as evidence (as facts) by human and non-human agents.

As a longitudinal event, an enactment is a conscious elaboration of a "second order" moral principles. A second order moral principle is an idiom -- usually abstract and ambiguous -- that is precisely formulated by an agent with high level capacity. The specialist's enactment makes the crisis seem objective, natural and right.[6]

> I define adjudication as the situational construal by both human and mystical agents. They judge (using a wide

> ranging moral ontology) an ever-changing world. Adjudication becomes transformative on a number of levels -- as an on-going individual adjustment and manipulation of a moral ontology -- objectified rules, laws, moral codes and idioms, as well as myth and belief.[7]

Adjudication influences individuals to reproduce crucial relations of power. The articulation of a moral ontology must have a mechanism which is instrumental when the process of construal is ambiguous and contradictory. In the case of witch crisis, adjudication takes place in a framed performative event. Aesthetic capacity (agency) defines the event through construct, symbol and representation. Aesthetic power is a "quality" that is generated from the ability to fuse artifice and ethics. Hence, the notion of an aesthetic ontology.

> Aesthetic ontology is defined as a system which articulates moral thought, idea and world view through symbol, image, metaphor, action, representation, and construction. As a system it includes single-strand symbols to performative events which are articulated over time. Meaning can be expressed in a variety of ways -- ranging from the intangible and underarticulated, to the concrete and tangible. What is expressed may or may not have a function. It may or may not be political.

The aesthetic hierarchy is both expressive and purposive. Purposive aesthetic action is often one of cultural critique and evaluation; the purposive is almost always a political process because it comments on relational issues, or on a more complex level of ideology.

> Adjudicational is defined as the action that judges people and events, as well as changes the social fabric. It can be used to reproduce or transform ideology, and is the realm of coercive political power. As the highest level of aesthetic action it alters through redress, the cosmological world.

Purposive aesthetic action usually has high degrees of stylized and embellished action. The forms, symbols, and ideas used are complex, polysemic and multivocal -- whatever it may

be, is meant to maintain, validate, and reconstruct the efficacy of a tenuous world that is in a state of conflict or confrontation.

The process is designed to set in people's minds the veracity of a given interpretation of the world. Purposive aesthetic action, as one of the primary venues for the creation of power, has the ability to coerce even the individual who sees through the transparency of the aesthetic production itself.

> I define performative enactment as framed and situated practice in time and space. These agents use artistry -- setting and stage, act, style, embellishment, symbol and artifice to make authentic claims about social reality. These aesthetic tools define an aesthetically framed "event."[8]

That quality created through aesthetic capacity is relational. The realm of aesthetic thought helps to create perceived qualities in objects, ideas, and in actions. And while it is achieved through the subjective experiences of individuals, it is given the guise of certainty, factuality, and objectivity. It is in this context that people evaluate moral reason, intent, as well as character. The performance, as an enactment with aesthetic devices, is not at issue because, being non-problematic it takes on a meaning of its own -- a meaning beyond audience and performers, ritual objects and acts.[9]

> I define aesthetic philosophy as tangible and intangible formula that bring together material odds and ends. This inventory is used not only to make things, but to generate meaning through things. The aesthetic (an ideational blueprint) synthesizes intrinsic properties and concepts of thought as well as belief with other linear notions of dimension, space, time and context.

The agent who manipulates the social world does so by aesthetic representation -- accentuating some things and concepts while concealing as well. What is aesthetically

brought together effects human imagination and action, and then it is mystically authenticated. Those individuals with high aesthetic capacity can make various symbolic or metaphorical "forms" which structure interaction. The aesthetic bricolage reconstructs and reproduces those ideational configurations about the nature of the world.[10]

> Structuration is defined as the ideological reproduction of "order." The reproduction is not one of actual structure, but the reproduction of virtual ideologies. The process may, or may not, be transformative, and most often occurs in the context of crisis where individuals become agents **for** and **of** control.[11]

Structuration is a dialectical process where meaning oscillates and evolves. Conscious agents reflexively and recursively monitor the moral setting and relationships in an attempt to rid their world of witches. In the process of seeking who is a witch they are also defining aspects of themselves as non-witch. This constitutes the duality of structure -- where agents generate structure and structure guides agents. Ideology is reproduced by situated events which become both medium and outcome.

As Hardin (1987:203) argues, structure and power are best understood as sets of properties that exist on a paradigmatic level.[12]

> Power is the capacity to transform. This occurs through mediation of potentially disordered energy (in the natural world) and socially created ordered energy (in the material world). Power, as a kind of compromise and being far from ideal, is achieved through conflict and conflicting ideals -- the actual conditions of existence.[13]

Individuals create and define power in terms of social and mystical relations of domination and resistance. Power must be seen as a sum total of the interaction between what is natural, social and supernatural. As a human and mystical

artifact, power is both "real and not real," generated from human imagination and creativity; yet it is ethnographically found to have an iron grip on all forms of human social relations.[14]

Power is used by individuals to both control and counteract moral and cosmological uncertainty. Control is a vital element of human society, even if, at best, temporary and illusory. Notions of power cannot be properly understood only through analysis of who controls material resources, or who has authority.[15] Power is situationally determined rather than fixed by public position and institution. In most African societies, power oscillates as the capacity of different agents change in time and space.

Quite often, but not always, power is the ability to redirect various mystical resources for benevolent and malevolent goals. The nature and application of power is always complex because it is situated, transformative capacity which reproduces social form, or manipulates that form to respond to a changing world.[16] Power functions to achieve efficacy in pursuit of domination, resistance, support, and acquiescence -- essentially an issue of control.

> Control is defined as the imagined or real efficacy resulting from the application of power. Control is a moment in space and time when the human world seems ordered, factual and as it should be.

What then is order; how is order defined? Is there such a "state" in any society? Implicit is the notion that there is no such thing as a fully and finally ordered social state. Conflict, confrontation and disorder can always move towards

order, but order itself can never be achieved. The state of unresolved disorder is an inversion of western concepts of a so-called "normative and natural social order."

> Order is defined as an ideological construction or configuration. It exists in the human imagination as an ideal, moral state. Order is a world of on-going utopia, or absolute dictatorship.

Notions of order, like notions of structure, exist at the virtual level of paradigmatic thought; yet are fundamental because they reference what should happen, rather than what does happen. In this model, disorder is paradoxically "normative" because it asserts itself as a dominant force in the social world. The existence of uncontrolled disorder, as both concept and experiential reality, forces individuals to confront their own lack of control. Lack of control and purposive action aimed at capturing control are fused with the most fundamental moral issues: human reproduction, material production, power, disease, misfortune and most importantly loss of life. Unexplained death is linked with social failure.

These definitions build upon conceptual insights established by a number of anthropologists who argue that phenomenal boundaries between law, conflict, aesthetics, medicine and witchcraft are largely chimerical.[17] Among many societies aesthetic thought and representation are firmly embedded in the agencies of power. The phenomena of witchcraft, is really a phenomena of power and knowledge -- a political process. To continue to use western distinctions concerning aesthetic criticism and evaluation of form is to ignore the power non-western aesthetic action and thought possess. If disorder conceived to be caused by witches, witchery and witchcraft is an on-going problem, then humanity attempts to counter such force through the use of capacity and aesthetic action which represents control.

My point of departure builds upon assertions by Rigby (1968: 168-169), Karp (1988:36) and Ottenberg (1989:58) that the content, meaning, and symbolism of expressive action, may or may not follow, an overt function. This means that expressive genres often derive their meaning not so much from the content of what is achieved, as from the style, mode of expression and content of achieving it. More specifically, harmony and cohesion may not even be at issue (Rigby 1968:168-169) since deeper social questions may be articulated concerning disorder and existential contradictions (Karp 1988:39-47).

Most powerful enactments are framed and situated through the use of artistry, style, embellishment and artifice. They are purposive in that they must cloak and veil their own contradictions. The symbolism becomes polysemic and multireferential allowing for highly contradictory issues to be brought together that fuse mood and conviction with certainty. Following Moore (1977:199) the symbol(s) come to stand for the firm belief that the given state of affairs is as it should be, portrayed as historically correct and proper, a true social fact that is inevitable and natural.

The contradiction of this process is expressed in terms of its deep structure and ideology. If life is disordered and full of witch related events, how do individuals and society make it ordered? If life cannot be ordered, then how do people make it appear ordered? [18] In both centralized and non-centralized African societies power is often generated through control over representation. Access and control over representation can be paradoxically used to cure or to kill.[19] The agent who has the knowledge and capacity to aesthetically

represent moral action is a vital nexus for understanding power and ontological issues of moral order and disorder.

It is clear that all societies have a hierarchy of aesthetic thought, representation and action where symbol, icon and image, as well as metaphor construct the world. At the first and least complex level of an aesthetic system is the purely decorative. For example, the design found kitchen utensils, pots and baskets. The next level is that of the expressive where meaning can often be articulated, but not required. What is expressed may or may not have a function and may, or may not, be political.

The next level of complexity is the dialogic. The dialogic communicates information without necessarily having function or affect. Its "function" is commentary. A further level of aesthetic complexity is reached by aesthetic actions which are both dialogic and purposive. The aesthetic action, such as ritual, ceremony and festival, is designed to achieve a function and affect. On a even more complex level is aesthetic action where the purpose becomes critique and evaluatio of meaning for individuals and groups. At the highest and most complex levels of aesthetic action is that which is adjudicational. The action judges people and events. The social fabric is either reproduced or transformed. What the transformation achieves is coercive power. At the most complex and powerful aesthetic level is action which not only adjudicates the social world, but can alter the cosmological and mystical world as well.

Ottenberg (1989:58) has shown that ritual must use high levels of artistic activity. He suggests, while art can exist outside of ritual, ritual has a difficult time existing without art. The power of various aesthetic forms is that they use both tangible and intangible resources to synthesize, veil and cloak, resolve and make right that which may have no resolution.[20] In African societies the hierarchy of moral ontology and law is often found embedded in various aesthetic

dimensions; aesthetics and ethics are not always conjunctive with one another, but quite often the performative enactment displays aspects from social life that are in a state of tension. The manipulation of aesthetic forms can both reinforce and deny the social order at different levels, situations and times within society (see Ottenberg 1985: and Vansina 1984: 132-133). In this way African philosophical speculation (a moral ontology with contradictions) manifests itself through the manipulation of various aesthetic forms. The aesthetically defined enactment takes confrontation and clarifies it through its own manner of adjudication. It is transformed so the problem appears resolved (see Karp 1990). The aesthetic process, by its nature, is a paradoxical process of making an ambiguous and situational universe of forms and values appear certain. (see Abiodun 1990: 64 and Ottenberg 1971: 9-10, 1990: 130-131).

The range of aesthetic thought and action in any society is complex and varied. However, I attempt to articulate only one dimension of Landogo aesthetic thought and action which deals with moral and ethical concepts related to cosmological confrontation. One of the methods of confrontation and control is found in aesthetic creation of those things and actions as qualities power. I argue that at the heart of Non-western aesthetic thought and action is the conceptualization of aesthetic power as control. This control is embedded in aesthetic processes: to tie, to put, and to circle, square as well as enclose. These processes create protection, closure and containment in the world by keeping disordered (witch generated destruction) in its proper place. The agent with this specialized aesthetic can create these states -- they have the capacity to cure, heal and kill.

CHAPTER TWO NOTES

1. The term evil is not the best translation. More specifically, I will use localized terms of bad things happening, and very bad things happening to represent the various kinds of misfortune and death brought about by so-called "evil" forces inherent in the world.

2. A brief review of the so-called classical witchcraft studies, beyond Evans-Pritchard's were Lienhardt (1951), Gluckman (1955), Middleton (1960), Marwick (1952, 1965), Mitchell (1965), Winter (1963), and Turner (1967, 1968) among others, demonstrated the pervasive interest in functional explanations. All these thinkers analyzed witchcraft as a morality-sustaining mechanism mobilized for measuring the cyclical changes of a given social system. Another focus was the effects of social, political and economic change on witchcraft systems of thought. In particular the works of Swartz (1969) and Bohannan (1966) looked into why witchcraft accusations may, or may not decrease with the growth of urbanization. See Austin's work on witchcraft as resistence for a further view in Crummey's edited volume Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa.

3. See Karp 1986:136.

4. See Karp 1990:83-84, Giddens 1979.

5. Karp, Personal Communication.

6. See Karp 1989 and Giddens 1979.

7. See Gluckman 1967: 269, 291-326.

8. See Karp 1988 and Ottenberg 1989.

9. See Hardin 1987:43, 48.

10. See Levi-Strauss 1962:16-33).

11. See Karp 1986:136 and personal communication.

12. See Giddens 1979:105, 256, and Karp 1986.

13. Karp (1986: 133-136, 1989, 1990)

14. See Karp and Arens 1989: Introduction, XII-XXIV and Beidelman 1986:23-24, 27-28, 140-161).

15. Here I refer to ideas generated by Gluckman 1965, Comaroff and Roberts 1981, and Karp 1986, 1990; and to my own work as well Speed unpublished manuscripts. Landogo make no distinction between the secular and mystical worlds -- they are dialectically fused in one cosmos; and second, Landogo conceptualize the world as one of confrontation between human order (**ngo ila**) and witch generated disorder (**Nhoa nhanda nyou o**).

16. See Karp 1986: 136, Giddens 1979, Bourdieu 1971 and Lukes 1978.

17. See Beidelman (1986), Comaroff and Roberts (1981), and Karp (1986, 1988, 1989 and 1990). This model also builds on early works of Bohannan (1958), Winans and Edgerton (1964), and more recent related works of Gilbert (1982) and Gottlieb (1989).

18.See Rigby 1968: 170.

19. See Imperato 1977 and McNaughton 1988.

20. See Merrill 1988:53-57, Karp 1986:135 and Giddens 1979:49-55 for parallel arguments.

CHAPTER THREE
AN ETHNOGRAPHY
OF IDEOLOGICAL ORDER

The rice was harvested and tied by a group of men, women and boys. The group, called a work company, was composed of lineage relations and friends. The day had been long and the sun was heavy in the sky. To arrange for this number of people for the harvest had been difficult and expensive. Kempson's wife and his mother had cooked plenty of **Mbaa na** (rice) and **Nyie na** (fish). The sauce was rich.

It was a successful harvest, a joyous occasion. There had been much laughter and discussion throughout the day. There had been plenty of **Kue ndou na** (cold palm wine) since many of Kempson's friends were "palm wine tappers." **Ndouna** took the edge of the long day and made the work seem easier.

It had been a long day for me because I wasn't used to long hours of hard manual labor. Yet, I was determined to prove that I could work hard. It appeared to me that the group had harvested a large amount of rice. As we sat I thought to myself that while the men worked much quicker than the women, the men missed a great deal of the rice. In contrast, women cut much less, but were meticulous with what they cut. Women rarely missed a kernel.

Everyone agreed that the harvest was a good one. The moment came to go and everyone got up to leave. It was a joyous two mile walk back to the village. But I had been to other farms where the harvest was small.

At another harvest, everyone walked back in silence. Perplexed by their attitudes, I began to wonder why people saw their individual efforts as being defined by amounts of rice. The man whose harvest was so small was clearly dejected. Only much later, in a situation far removed from his harvest, did someone explain how the harvest had been seen to encompass other meanings.

The events and feelings associated with the harvest were summarized in another man's statements when he said: **Kpindi lo nja aa lee ndaa.** I didn't understand what this meant since it was a complex proverb. Later, I found out that the literal translation of this statement meant: **Water falls in the night.** My confusion did not change.

It was only later, after I had returned to Sierra Leone for the second time that I understood the implications and metaphorical logic of this proverb. The farmer, it was explained, had used this proverb **Evil things are done secretly**

to mean: **Witch business is always done under the cover of darkness**. Someone had "witched" the man's harvest. In contrast a single factor might explain Kempson's success: he had protected his farm from malevolent witchcraft, and the other man failed to do so and someone brought misfortune to his harvest. There are other factors, but I do not deal with them here.

It took almost two years for me to penetrate the cloaked meanings of witchcraft embedded aspects of Landogo life. Good and bad fortune were often referenced through the use of proverbs. **Kpindi loo nja lee nda** was such an expression, initially not understood by me and now so apparent. Someone with bad intentions had performed witchcraft on the second man's farm. This action was responsible for his poor harvest. Later, the same farmer explained that someone close to him (likely within his family) with **Ndii nyou** (either conscious or unconscious bad feelings of jealousy) and **Ndii gbaai** (ugly and angry heart) had translated these thoughts into witchcraft actions. These actions had brought about his bad harvest.

In this chapter I attempt to explicate ideal Landogo paradigmatic structures. These ideals compose an ideology of order. This Chapter explains that ethnographic order.[1] My focus in this Chapter is formed through male perceptions of what is a moral world. The emphasis on morality is my etic interpretation since Landogo have no term for moral, or morality. However, they do have an analogous term **Ndii kpende** (strong heart).

This Chapter has a male bias which is not meant to ignore women's roles or their perceptions. Yet, such a bias is difficult to avoid since the Landogo world is separated by gender. My few attempts to understand the world of women were

Landogo social process as they are manifested in a larger, socially constructed world of **Ngo ila** (one word). This ideology exists in contrast to **Nhoa nhanda** (the action and power of witches, witchery and witchcraft). We can see the contrast between structures through a brief commentary from Pa Sorie Kamara (village headman from Panhagbou). He states:

> Remember this: Any family you see, there is palava (conflict) in that family. Let me tell you this, any time an elder dies, there is competition for his possesions -- land, creatures, house, wives, even his children. In the old days the eldest son looked after the family. Now those same sons compete with one another. Each son wants to develop his own swamp, make many animals, have a big powerful family. The problem is that there is only so much within a family.
> Well, it is the eldest son who takes care of the father's property even if there is conflict between the sons. The eldest will always have a major role in how the land, money, property, animals are divided. Why? Well, it is the eldest son who knows the father's secrets -- his debts, secret associations, his personal powers. The father will always puts his trust in his eldest son, except if the son is very bad.
>
> The man's brothers shouldn't interfere with the son, but they often do. The dead man was their brother and they want what he had. So, if your are the oldest, you become the family. When Karem's father died he became the family. Now he has plenty of responsibility. For land, momey, animals, even marriage, you must go through your father. And when he dies, your people go through you. People will come to Karem now. They will want his land. Some get land from their father; some get land from their father's brother; some get land from their mother's brother; and some get land from their wife's father. This last way is a shameful thing. Your family becomes property. At his death, his sisters children (**Njagbe**) will dig his grave; at your death your sister's children dig your grave.

A more indepth discussion of family conflict will be undertaken in Chapter Five where I begin to explain the interplay of witchcraft cosmology. However, for now I approach

the most basic Landogo social and economic adaptations: the family as a rice farming enterprise.

THE LANDOGO FAMILY

Landogo practice patrilineal descent, live in patrilocal communities, and marry exogamously. Ideally, lineage members marry women from other lineages and practice polygyny when they are financially able. Similar to other non-centralized societies, Landogo family structure is both the major source of labor and access to land, as well as the vehicle for socialization. Each village usually has a dominant lineage, although in larger settlements there may be more than one.

An ideal Landogo family extends far beyond the realm of the **Keege na** (father), **Yai yoo na** (wife-mother) and their **Ndeegaai na** (children). Within the average **Nguu ngaa na** (extended family household) one often finds the father, a senior wife and her children, usually a **Bi nje golo** (junior wife) and her children, and almost always one or more **Bi taala na** (grandparent). In a single household, one might also find **Njagbe** (uncle or aunts), some "fictive" relations, and possibly some of their children. Quite often, but not always, wives come from another village and remain formal strangers in the village, well into later stages of their lives. They return to the village of their father, off and on during their marriage, and some return permanently after a marriage fails. Others remarry often and move to another man's village.

In general, Landogo concepts of household are fluid and elastic. One finds a number of unrelated people living within the same structure. As long as they contribute to the household they are "family" members. I found many examples, especially in the large town of Gbendembu, but also in smaller settlements like Lagbelle, and even in little villages such as **Makuranko** where certain individuals with statuses of "blood" were really fictive kin. Such individuals regularly play an active role within their respective "families."

Landogo practice polygyny, and while most male Landogo prefer polygyny, only a few are able to muster the necessary resources. Men believe that polygyny is a natural outgrowth of the plans of **Ngebo nwa** (God) for "proper relations" between men and women. Men also assert that polygyny was created by God to insure prosperity and growth in the extended family, as well as to provide a support system for wives who must bear children as well as continue to perform domestic work.

Men also suggest that polygyny eases a number of problems such as the fears of senior wives who have difficulty in conceiving, or who are barren. They also say that the practice counters an excess of women. Rather than divorce a troublesome first wife, men can take a second wife who can incorporate children into the man's family. In an agriculturally based society, a large family is a vital in the acquisition of wealth and status. The more wives a man has, the more prestige he has as well.

In contrast, it seems clear to me that Landogo women see polygynous relations from a negative perspective -- it creates perpetual tension between co-wives because it is virtually impossible to avoid jealousy since most men tend to favor one wife at the expense of another. Most husbands, desiring more male children, will seek a second or third wife.

It is also of interest that polygyny also creates conflict and hostility between Landogo fathers and their sons. While a father should use accumulated resources to help his sons acquire a first wife, the father may keep the resources as bride price to acquire a younger wife for himself. Both men and women believe that women should have children until they are biologically unable. Nevertheless, there are many examples in which women use indigenous forms of birth control available from the **Haai haai nwoo na** (female herbalist) to manipulate their reproductive cycles to achieve certain goals with their husbands. Successful reproduction and large families are always an issue. If a husband, for example, fails to treat his

wife well, i.e. give her needed cloth for clothing, a respectable house, and enough rice to feed her children, she will often retaliate by controlling her pregnancies. This is usually a temporary strategy since a woman needs children, especially males, for status and security in old age. A woman without sons has no social status and is considered by most to be a witch.

Landogo notions of personhood are established early in childhood. Each child grows up knowing what it means to be a producing part of a family. Gender roles are strictly defined by early training, and later by socialization in various male and females initiation societies. Those individuals who deviate from gender specific roles, except in certain ritualized contexts, are categorized as witches. The process of socialization is primarily concerned with imparting not just the gender specific roles and values, but also into more extended matters such as world view, cosmology, and philosophy (see Chapter Four for a more detailed discussion).

Landogo place great emphasis on children, both male and female. However, male children are prized because they are the symbolic currency through which a mother's or father's success in life is measured. First- born children are almost always expected to die, and this is not without empirical justification, since at least half of all Landogo children die in the first two years of life. Many children have generic names until they reach four or five years of age when they are less likely to die.

A healthy baby represents **Kamaa nhanda** (a happening of affairs [a wonder] that is God's work). The notion of **Kamaa nhanda** is a sign of God's will for healthy children. The amount of happiness represented by healthy children is paralleled by the deeply felt fear that witches will "eat" the life force inside children. To "eat" the sweet internal organs of a child is to kill its life force, and a child's life force

represents the life force of **Landogo** society itself. Healthy children must develop into moral adults.

A properly socialized Landogo child will be continuously scrutinized for evidence of **Kpau na** (sign) "witch-like" behaviors: **Fahayaa** (persistent badness or lacking humility), **Foondi** (selfishness), and **Kuafuu** (wastefulness), **Kpa naa** (wild or troublesome behavior) that a given child is **Moe moe nwoo na** (someone who willfully goes against Landogo rules and laws). In the early years of life Landogo children are showered with love and affection. I was impressed by the high levels of attention and physical contact given to infants and young children. In general, Landogo spoil their children, but this early attention is followed in years to come by little, or no, attention. By the ages of eight to nine years they are hard at work -- on the father's farm, or assisting the mother with cooking and household chores.

While few Landogo have Western education, they are socialized through a hierarchy of initiation societies. Such activities are highly formalized. The **Manhaangaai** and **Bondo** (male and female initiation societies) are not purely mystical associations.[3] The day to day activities are rigidly structured. The most prominent action is that of circumcision, but many other activities are vitally important also. Such activities are choreographed and controlled by various instructors. To transgress or deviate from the norm during initiation often results in death because the process is both social and cosmological. Sometimes male initiates actually die, and other times the men's society removes the bad-eye (witch abilities) without killing them.

The **Manhangaai** (little chiefs [those boys undergoing initiation]) is a means for teaching "ideal" male interactions that balance the world of **Bunda nhu** (the world that we see) with the world of the unseen and unsocialized world of **Nhoa nhu** (place of witches). And while the ideal social goal is to create men who become proper "chiefs," the ideal cosmological

goal is to kill those initiates who are consciously or unconsciously witches.

Manhangaai is highly symbolic of Landogo notions of containment: not only of the protection and closure of space, but of time as well. The Landogo notions are **Kammba** and **Ka hei mba** -- (to make a circle and to protect). The goal of **Manhangaai** is to educate, and therefore to control, destroy and generally deter **Nyaai mbaallai** (spoilers/people who destroy things). This cosmological confrontation is, once again, reiterated by the fundamental problem of misfortune and death. For example, one must always seek out the advice of the diviner who dictates when and where the circumcision bush will take place. If an initiate dies, the cause is always known as the "good work" of the larger and more powerful men's **Kpangbani** society of which **Manhaangaai** is an extension.[4] When a death occurs the initiate's body is buried in the initiation bush -- it is never brought back to the village. Nothing is ever spoken about the matter -- it is said that the secret society devil has eaten him. **Kpangbani** carves a crude face on a small termite mound and deposits it in front of the dead initiate's father's house. From that moment on the initiate will never be discussed again; everyone will know what he was (a witch) and why he died. When the new initiate comes out of the bush he is called **Manhaa nyie** (new chief). Whether a group, or an individual, the new chief moves from house to house to receive gifts of money and rice. The community marvels at their healthy bodies -- for they are now "moral men" with rights, but more importantly, obligations.

In Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu chiefdom, this kind of education remains more important than Western education. This can be attributed to few Western style schools and continuing subsistence labor needs. However, in the larger towns such as Gbendembu and Kalangba, there are now secondary schools which many local children of elite family's attend. In these larger settlements, where a fair number of students attend school as

far as Form Five, initiation schools are less important than in the past. In Lagbelle (the headquarters of **Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu** chiefdom) for example, there is one primary school (classes one through seven) with roughly thirty-five to eighty students in an over-all population just over two thousand. Most students who attend do not advance past Class Three or Four due to lack of school fees, or their being needed in various farm capacities. A few go on to higher levels and three have attained college degrees.

Landogo have a relaxed and permissive attitude towards sexuality. There is little stigma attached to sexual expression or Western notions of a virginal bride. However, public display of affection is frowned upon. There is no evidence of incestuous relationships, or at least none that I could find. Most young people become sexually active long before marriage, and there is no stigma attached to children born out of wedlock. While marriage should restrict sexual relations, most adults take lovers, and this is a consistent source of conflict in all sizes of settlements.

Cases where "women damage" is adjudicated are the most prevalent subject for local courts of elders. While sexual expression is an activity and topic that everyone joyously participates in, it is a man's prerogative to have extra-marital affairs; while a wife, if caught, must "call name" and her lover must pay a "woman damage fine" for having abused the husband's "sexual property rights."

Landogo make it quite clear that they conceive moral individuals as the mechanism for reckoning of moral time, space and thought. Each day, for example, has its own moral ethos -- certain things must and will happen (both benevolent and malevolent) on certain days. Time (day, week, month and year) like person, space and thought exists within a "idealized" matrix of moral categories:[5]

Ngaa goe logo -- "with time and departure;" or things are happening; or the day where all good and bad is initiated and completed. It is a day of contradiction and corresponds to Tuesday.

Logo banda -- "time doing," or the day which one frees oneself from bad things and misconduct. On this day all sacrifices must be begun and completed. This time corresponds to Wednesday.

Ngo mbu logo -- "time becoming warm and moving quickly." This corresponds to Thursday.

Maanha logo -- "time of chiefly decisions." It is a day of power and corresponds to Friday.

Logo nyou -- "time bad, or the day where all things happen twice." In this time (Saturday) period things come out badly.

Logo waa -- "time big" or the beginning. This time corresponds to Sunday.

Logo golo -- "time small" or not quite great. This time corresponds to Monday.

MORAL TIME AND SPACE

The notion of how things are morally reckoned is vividly seen through the matrix of farming. Beyond Landogo enjoyment of **Ndou na** (palm wine) and participation in the activities of various esoteric "knowledge" societies, the average male is primarily concerned with his farm. The farm is the yard stick of success in social and political pursuits (a individual's place in the social hierarchy is inherently tied to farming). Males spend the year preparing their farms for actual planting or harvesting. In the periods between planting and harvesting a man and his sons can be found driving birds and various rodents, making fences, and weeding. The intensity of work varies seasonally. During certain periods, like brushing and clearing land, planting, and harvesting, labor time is intensive, at other times more relaxed.

To be successful a man must call on his own people, and beyond in terms of friends, distant relatives, and members of

his wife's family. A farmer who cannot call a significant number of workers to his farm during these periods is not considered successful. Farming is a social activity where morally upright and politically powerful males achieve power. A Landogo man plants both upland (dry) and swamp rice farms. Swamp rice tends to be planted in the same swamp each year. While upland (dry) rice follows fallow cycles of intermittent slash and burning. Upland farms often intermix **Mbaa na** (rice) with **Peeni na** (millet). Contiguous sites are used for **Njagaa na** (groundnuts), **Kpee noo na** (guinea corn), **Wonjo na, Togo na, Binji na** (various kinds of beans), **Tanga na** (cassava), **Tiniga na** (cassava leaf), **Ngau na** (yam), **Boogu na** and **Boogu Laga na** (potatoe and potatoe leaf), **Bondo na** (okra), **Tea na** (pumpkin/squash), **Tamatis na** (tomatoes), **Yabisi na** (onions) and **Koho na** (eggplant).

Landogo supplement their basic rice diet with produce from small gardens and plantations. They raise fruits -- ranging from **Mbowa na** (oranges), various kinds of **Mapoti na** (small yellow banana) to **Manawaa na** (long green banana), **Pilati na** (plaintains), and **Mango na** (mangoes), among others. Cassava root is used to supplement rice scarcity during the rainy season. Cassava can be prepared in a number of ways, the most common being **Fufu** (pounded and fermented cassava). Most Landogo plant large cassava farms made up of clustered beds. Dry land cassava takes almost a full year to grow, while swamp cassava grows in three months. When the cassava is harvested the root is pulled from the earth by the large stalk that has grown, cut into foot long sections, saved and replanted as next year's crop.

Ground nuts are also an important supplemental source of protein. After a farmer's upland rice is harvested, he may turn the same soil for planting groundnuts. Groundnuts badly deplete the upland soil which must be left to fallow anywhere from four to seven years. The main source of protein is fish -- either locally caught or dried fish brought in from the

coast. Hunters also sell locally killed game (what most people call "bush beef") and there is occasionally **Nika nhua** (cow beef) from local Fula for those who can afford it.

While there is no fixed point to begin a discussion of the farming cycle, I begin with the period just before the rainy season -- around April and May. Throughout the dry season the sun scorches the earth. But by **Waliwali** (April) it is extremely hot, dusty, and dry. At this time most farmers are shifting their attention back to farm work from dry season activities such as initiations of sons and daughters, as well as their own activities of men's and women's society. Dry season, despite the intensive heat, finds many farmers and work companies brushing land for upland farms.

By **Loto** (May) the first rains cool the earth and farm work starts in earnest. A farmer will harvest groundnuts planted in the swamp, as well as prepare swamps, make fish traps, and complete the brushing and burning of upland farms. A farmer may also turn the soil so as to plant upland rice, groundnuts, guinea corn, potatoes, yams and pepper. Each crop will be ready at a different time of the coming year -- beans in five to seven months, different variations of rice in three and six months; and potatoes, yams, and groundnuts in three months. The variation provides a continuous rotation of food sources. People harvest **Bonga** (palm kernals) and some plant tobacco as well.

THE MORAL FARMER

As I have suggested successful swamp rice farming is analogous to the successful politician. For the average Landogo, the success of **Njaa nhee landaa** (swamp rice farming) hinges on **Bi mba hugu na goli** (finding good seed) and **Bi mba na huufuu** (sowing good seed in wet earth away from swamp), and then **Bi mbi na le** (waiting three weeks). The analogy is that a successful farmer has a network of family and friends that he can count on in his time of need. Not only can he count on them, but he displays patience, wisdom and social concern for

them, and for other farmers as well. He manifests **Ndii kpende** (strong heart).

During this waiting period, the farmer **Mi guun buuee i manhu ila ngaa lee, Bi nja naa haga** and **Bo mba huufuu na hii nga** (after three weeks you brush, turn the soil to raise beds in the swamp; then you pick all the rice that has been germinating in the dry land heaps and wash them; and then you plant them in the swamp. Then one waits for the rains).

Wolo (June) is really idiomatic for "those individuals who have not prepared for rain" -- those who did not hoe and make beds for swamp rice. Not only is that farmer considered "left behind," but by being late his heart is considered weak -- he has no moral or social character. While his "failure" is **Nhanda nhu gbou ma nwoo** (the actions of an unfortunate person), such action occurs because the person suffers from **Ndii haa** (dead heart or one who never prepares for success). The farmer who failed to prepare his swamp stands in contrast to the individual who did complete the work -- what that moral farmer achieves is **Nhanda gbekpe** (of good habits and ways).

Whatever the case my be, by **Soesoe** (July) it rains everyday, off and on all day. Those "moral" farmers who have harvested swamp cassava, groundnuts and potatoes have food to eat. Even if they have no rice, at least they have **fufu**. Farmers who are without a strong heart have no rice, cassava, groundnuts and more importantly their families go hungry. That farmer is considered **Moe nwoo na** (a very foolish person who labors at life).

Landogo say the heart of the rainy season is a time of **Kpala** (of pretending speech). For the farmer who didn't, or couldn't prepare, they speak loudly that they wish they had. If they are lucky, their rice is still germinating and their hunger will be temporary. Those farmers who have good ways and habits have been busy planting swamp and upland rice, millet, konsho beans and potatoes. They may be hungry as well, but their hunger is short in comparison.

But **Soesoe** (July) is a time of **kiti** (difficulty) and **Ndoe** (hunger) for all people. It is a month when many families become **Kpaha nwoo na** (people who are tired and unable). Entire families are at the farm from sunrise to sunset. The work is long and difficult; a wife may transfer all of her cooking utensils and supplies to the farm hut where the whole family will stay, except to sleep at night.[6] By July and **Laanwa** (August) whatever rice a farmer had stored has been consumed for seed rice as well as for feeding workers and family who helped with the planting. They may sleep with hunger.

In August, September, and October Landogo say: **Ngau ngi ila aa lee boo mba nhu gua, kele Mba na aa gua nhu noia kpea** (after one month the rice comes, so do birds). The farmer, his male children, as well as young male relatives spend from sunrise until sunset at the farm driving small birds. In **Mueemindenhu** (September) those that planted early begin to harvest millet, potatoe, and groundnuts. This is a time of intense hunger. Those with millet eat it; however, millet cannot satisfy Landogo hunger like rice. If a farmer hasn't planted rice, at this point it is too late because the water has now settled on the land making it very hard to plant. The physical hardships are often exacerbated by social tensions of jealousy and greed, outright anger and violence.

In **Mueemindenhu** (September) the notion of political farmers, becomes a social reality when a farmer must "know" his relatives (both urban and rural). "Knowing" one's relatives means the moral farmer will literally and metaphorically know those who are **Ndoe** (hungry). The weak of heart and unprepared will "hunger" after a successful farmer's "hard work." Some relatives live in the city and do not farm; other relatives planted late and have not yet harvested; others did not plant at all. The problem for the farmer is that regardless of their status and reasons, they are all relatives who have "right" in times of need to call on those who have "plenty."

The hard working farmer will strike a moral balance between his sense of obligation to individuals in his extended family and his need to feed his family. Whatever his decision, that decision will be judged in the most rigid of moral terms -- the helped will speak of him with great praise, those left without will speak that he is **Njafa nwoo** (someone who suppresses others and destroys good family relations). The moral farmer is therefore, problematically bound by what he seeks to avoid: greed and jealousy. This kind of tension is endlessly expressed in proverbs. For example:

> 1) **Ndogbo na baa lege nhu, naa nwee bi ili ngeha aa gua na** -- one often gets a rope and ties oneself to the bush which one has already neglected. Metaphorically: what one neglects always turns out to be what was most important and beneficial. Be prepared;
>
> 2) **Tai pondou lo nyii gboe ma** -- an orphan should not be sent to feed on a breast. Metaphorically: you cannot allow a person who is in great need to satisfy him or herself at the expense of another's share. Guard the results of your hard work.

Fonjofanja (October) and **Koeau** (November) are months of God's anger. The rains ease -- huge clouds populate the sky by day and thunder bolts and lightening animate as well as illuminate the darkness of night. **Nuugbuaukolo** (December) is a transitional time before the coming of the **Harmattan** cold. The **Harmattan** is most difficult for older people because it is cold, dry and dusty. Five to six months have passed since the farmer first planted -- now he harvests. Those who planned ahead **Mba na aa be boo teea** and **Boo mba bu kpou mbu** (they harvest the rice when the size is right, let it dry and then store it in the farm hut or in one's house). Some farmers also harvest yams and potatoes as well. For the unprepared the work remains difficult -- hours spent at the farm are tedious,

waiting for the rice to "turn," driving birds and weeding. For most Landogo it is a time of happiness because their "bellies" are heavy with rice. There are plenty of **Mbowanna** (oranges) for juice and cold palm wine to drink. Plenty of food creates a time of joy. Many Landogo celebrate Christmas and New Year (even if they are not Christian) because it is a time of good fortune and revelry. Some families begin to plan for male and female initiations for their children.

Nuungbuaumbaa (January) remains a time of cold. By late January the dry season starts with the onset of light dew on the leaves of trees. Landogo say January is the month of "disappointed rains." Farmers can harvest swamp rice, pepper, yams, and oranges. Others are planting upland cassava, groundnuts, swamp corn and okra. For the most moral farmer, he is ready to brush new land for an upland farm and turn swamp heaps for cassava. Such a farmer's harvested rice has been threshed and transported to dry storage areas in the house, or to rice storage huts on the farm. Families with children who have come of age, are now preparing for **Bondo** (girl's initiation) and **Manhangaai**[7] (boy's initiations) if they are financially able. **Baangeekolo** (February) and **Baangeembaa** (March) are "times when the earth grows hot and dusty." The earth is said to "cook" and the landscape slowly turns from a green paradise to a brown desert. The work is light --in the early mornings or very late afternoons only. Some plant cassava, goundnuts, and swamp potatoe. Women will harvest beans, konsho, Beni seed, dry potatoe.

An upland farm is always a major concern. Landogo ask: **Ti ndogbo na gbee ina oo biti** (is the bush strong enough for farming?). The process of testing soil fertility is achieved by measuring the regrowth of brush and small trees on a given plot of land from a fallow period of up to seven years. After the fallow period, the farmer brushes and hires a work company to help him. He must **Ti ndogbo na haga** (brush the bush). After brushing, Landogo dry let the brush dry in the hot sun for a

month or so. This is called **Ti gbe ndogbo naa i be wiki fee ngau ila fanwa** (let the brush sit and dry for one month). After the brush has dried Landogo farmers will **Wiki fee na aa lee too monga** and **Too ngea nga koo na nwo nga** (burn everything to the ground, collect what hasn't burned in small piles, and burn it again).

At this point the farmer will **Too mba na hainga too puunhea** (scatter rice by hand and then turn the soil). From then on he will **Ngau ila aa lee mba nhugua** (weed when the ground becomes strong and maintain his farm). After the rice is planted, the primary maintenance job belongs to the farmer's sons who **Nhugalo aa lembi too noi na gbea** (as the rice grows, you must drive the birds who come to eat the rice). Last, the Landogo farmer will **Mba na aa kpau ngau ngi yoo ngohita na nwa too teea** and **Taa mbila aa yeendaa too pu kpou mbu** (after five or six months the rice will "bust," you harvest it and store it at the farm hut or on the rafters of your house). This completes an ideal cycle.

MORAL FARMERS AS POLITICIANS

I previously suggested that because farming is a cooperative effort, it is a political process. Farming is integrated with the hierarchy and structure of public power and authority. A Landogo farmer has use rights to land owned by his lineage ancestors. The farmer has access to land through his father, his father's brothers, and if necessary, through his wife's father's land. While land ideally belongs to a lineage, where access resides in human control, the sanction for such access resides with the ancestors of one's lineage. In this way, the farmer works that land "given" to him by his father, as well as land sanctioned by the "old people."

A moral farmer uses labor reciprocity. He ideally helps all the family relations if called upon, and calls upon them as well. To actually achieve this balance is next to impossible. The moral farmer is always caught in situations of

push and pull. The proverb **Kpoo na aa ge nhee nheei ngombu nwanhu alee aa gbanhi nwa** (gourds that hang over the fire will always hit one another) suggests that as long as people live together there will be quarrelling amongst them; the level of conflict will depend on how much **Njigbanhu** (to lean on, or how much has been trusted to and from whom) the farmer has developed.

Landogo males are hardworking which translates into social and political skills that achieve the ideal of being a "Man of Influence." One of the most vital skills is the ability to speak well. It is through this that the farmer gains respect for his insight and advice. One needn't be a headman or chief to be respected. It is enough to speak well and influence individuals and community wide decisions. To speak with authority is to be seen as a junior or senior elder. However, to be respected is a paradoxical process because one must "take sides" in family or community wide conflicts and disputes without overtly taking one side or another.

Regardless, this means the moral-farmer-politician must always negotiate his position in his community. Such negotiation is an on-going process where males continually monitor their positions in **Nhoa nhu** (the world of the unseen) and **Bonda nhu** (the world of the seen). Both dimensions of space and time make up the sum total of **Nge lou na** (the world). The moral individual continually uses preventative maintenance as farmer and politician. Because males strive to become respected elders, the goal is to become a Village Headman, a Chiefdom Councilor, or possibly a Section Chief. These positions of authority achieve the position of **Ojuku** (a strong man).

There are many sources of power needed for **Ojuku** that one must have specific knowledge of to "control." This application of control is a metaphorical process because the ideal-moral-farmer-politician must become **Ndakpai indi kpekpe ngu kpo** (he

becomes a big man among others). The big man uses his charismatic capacity to "cool people's hearts and minds," and he can go well beyond this level of control by accentuating his charisma through use of higher leels of cleverness and advice.

The "big man among others," hence, achieves a metaphorical process Landogo call **Nee nwaa haagoo** and **Nee nwaa hembe** (the big individual has the gift of straight mind). To a very large extent such Landogo ideals of authority, knowledge and power exist metaphorically and paradigmatically. The "big man among others" must attempt to achieve the following:

Bi mbieo aa njepe laa ningaa le -- He talks with sweet mouth [in an encouraging way] to people.

Nana bee baa mooli fanwa oo ngoa bieya -- Whatever you ask of him, he will try to help you. He is generous with his resources.

Kungo aa fama kpo. -- He greets and is greeted by everyone. He is friendly to the powerful as well as the poor.

Aa kpelle leea ningaa aa logo bee. -- He helps any person who has difficulties -- both family, friends and strangers a like.

Kungo aa hota ngaa lengaa kpo. -- He always wants to welcome strangers.

Ndongo aa ndege lengaa kpo and **Yatigi mboola gbinhia lo ngeya.** -- He has love for his people and has many friends.

Kungo aa ngenge kpo. -- He is a very hard worker.

Ngi ungaai hou mahieo kpo. -- He treats his family, wives, children and relatives, well.

Mbieo aa nhanda laa laandaa mba. -- He knows how to arrange things for people.

Mbieo aa malei gbete ndaa. -- He knows how to get people to do things.

Ndaa haa nieo kpo. -- His "sweet mouth" can persuade people to do many things.

Ala nwaa uei o. -- He is humble.

Ai nuu nhu ohe. -- He doesn't favor people.

Nuu nwee kungo aa go ngi ungaai fanwa Kpo. -- He is a man who will fight for his people.

Ai loni aa njii yia and **Aa oo nhee naa ndege lengaa nwa.** -- He doesn't make trouble and he will listen to people; and

Ala lee ngo and **Aa oo nhee naa ngi ungaai ti laa.** -- He is a just and righteous counselor who knows how to listen. He knows older people's advice will increase his knowledge.

These concepts suggest a number of very interesting points. What is clear is that power and authority are not the same things. Authority can exist without power. Power can be devoid of any coercive leverage. For example, when a chief is powerless it is because he fails to achieve accepted idioms of power -- such a man hasn't the social respect of his people. A Landogo man can act as if he is "a big man among others." But this is only an act. If the man doesn't have the "sense" to know what is in his people's hearts he will fail. It will be inevitable that such a man will instigate conflict, rather that resolve, persuade, and publicly reconcile it.

For example, it is the village that gives him that ability -- such power is not innate or fixed and must be sought and maintained. Landogo say that people who have power or people who want power will use whatever means are available to achieve and secure that power; "big men among others" certainly must perform various forms of **Nhoa nhanda bee nda** (the actual doing of witchcraft). In fact this perception is quite true since power, success, good health, among other things, result from **Chaga na** (sacrifice), **Maa nhu gbe** (protecting what you already have); and **Ndii ila** (balancing previous and current relationships). The interaction of the

secualr and mystical clearly come together in "shared decisions of the heart" that represent **Nhanda gbekpe** (good habits and ways). (See Chapter Four and Five).

While "the big man among people" can't always be impartial, people will respect him because he is willing to make decisions which, although unpopular, are seen as just and certain. They resolve ambiguity. Such a skill is power personified and is called **Kiti lee ndaa ma** (to clarify, permit and authorize which makes things right). A "big men" who does not achieve this is seen as someone who ruins, favors those people with money, and accepts bribes to influence the "way his mind works." Such a "big man" has a weak form of power that is defined by his position -- as chief, councilor or headman, rather than from the respect and support he receives from his peer group and constituents. A big man who abuses his position, in contrast to the **Ojuku** concept is called **Njafa** (a person who suppresses and persecutes good things). This suppression destroys, spoils, and creates animosity among others.

The overall public structure of authority and power, hence, is based upon a loosely organized continuum -- from uninitiated boys to initiated young and slightly older men who are active members of the community; on into junior elders, upwards into village head-men, councilors, ceremonial and section chiefs, court Chairman, chiefdom speaker, and finally paramount chief. However, at the highest level of authority and power are are **Mbaa waa ngaai** (very big people) who are very senior elders who are either dead or very close to being dead as the unified, collective spirit of dead ancestors; and individuals who have **Ngau na** (four-eyed witch capacity) such as diviners, herbalists, secret society heads, swear persons and the like.

NGO ILA: MAINTAINING AGREEMENT AND ONE WORD

As I have argued, power is expressed through individual and group loyalty to a moral "big man" rather than his

position in a rigid hierarchy of officials.[8] Some examples will clarify the point that moral principles and concepts of power are quite closely related. Pa Koroma Kanu (former Ceremonial Chief of **Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu** Chiefdom) states:

> A big man has a pure and kind heart. That doesn't mean he isn't powerful. He will always provide food and greetings to strangers; he will always "talk fine" to people. When a big man hears cases, people will tell him the truth because of his manner. When I hear a case I try to get all the facts, you must determine what is right, what is wrong. Truth always creates agreement. We need unity (**Ngo ila**) because there is so much witch business. When a case comes I never accept a bribe that sways my decision; the truth will always come out. I say: don't accept bribes, you must be above it. Righteous people are powerful people. They are what we call **Ojuku**.
>
> A chief that is a "bend bend" person can't hear cases; people won't give him any respect. Before a case comes to me it has gone to the elders of the families. Then it goes to the elders of the person's village. Small money is brought to hear the facts in a case. If the case is big, well then all the elders will be called and the case will go the Kande Fino.

Pa Alimamy Konteh (section chief of Kagbere) also states:

> If you show good behavior then people will see it. If you become a head man you become that person forever. If someone steals from you, or cusses you, then there is palava (conflict). That person will have to come put money before you and beg. You must be firm. The old people had real sense. Before the British came and before paramount chiefs -- only the real big people judged cases. If you had that kind of sense, people looked to you to solve problems, for leadership, and for judgement. If you wanted to be a big man or an elder you had to pull (bring and give) many fine things for the people -- kill a goat or cow every year, cook rice, have plenty of palm wine, give money when needed. The elders looked to you for leadership. Whoever pulled the most was given the staff of leadership. We didn't have chiefdoms then. Then people begin to bring you cases; you take small money from them and summons a person. In the old days we didn't have chiefdom police, we had messengers. The messenger would go and call that person. The person would have to cook rice and give the messenger rice as payment. That was the messengers pay. There wasn't money then. The person summoned comes to you and must pay you as well just to have the case heard.

> The big man asks why the defendent didn't pay the fine? We have the power to confront people. Are you guilty? If the person says YES.....and then gives two bushells rice then the case is over. Big people know what is fair. A big man will always be fair because he knows the right word to talk. If the big man doesn't talk the right word his people will rise up against him.

In both of the cases, Pa Koroma and Pa Alimamy allude to that big man allow their people to freely speak **Ndii nyou** (bad [evil] thinking and [ugly] thoughts that they have in their hearts) so as to both control, avert and redirect conflict as well as cosmological confrontation. If the big man understands all the metaphors of power he can effectively stand "inside" confrontation and force agreement. Indeed, Landogo see conflict and dispute as an issue of **Nee nwaa aa heela** (disagreements that occur when people who are trying to achieve the same goals). People in actuality as well as metaphorically cross minds and paths -- that is the nature of life. Similar to the farmer who knows his farm, a big man knows his village, section, or chiefdom -- who has done what for him, what he must do for his people, who is well and who is sick. He gauges the secular and mystical health of the village by planning for and implementing sacrifices by seeking the advice of a diviner. A big man has the knowledge and power so as to be actively involved in the cosmological confrontation between **Kili ina kpo** (wonderful things), **Nhanda nyou** (bad things happening) and **Nhoa nhanda** (bad witch things happening). Here, I deal with only the first two categories and leave **Nhoa nhanda** to Chapter Four. As Pa Koroma suggested, a major function is to hear the conflicts of his people and to hold them well. A major part of this is in case resolution.

POWER TO ADJUDICATE

One of the mains goal of a big man is to adjudicate conflicts so as to maintain the appearance of **Ngo ila** (one word). One word is the process of construction shared agreement which leads to consensus. This is achieved mostly

through hearing cases and mediation. As I have suggested, a big man uses the same moral idioms that he, himself, lives by. Through analogy, metaphor and rhetorical question he will use moral idioms to persuade people. The man who is well versed at "pulling parables" will almost always win the support of his fellows. Many litigants are persuaded to seek compromise by the "sweetness" of a big man's words. Words become part of the negotiation process in dispute resolution. Words become as important as so-called facts.

Pa Koroma Kanu (now deceased Ceremonial Chief of Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu Chiefdom) says:

> Some cases are **Kpende ngo** (too heavy) like physical damage to a person or a witch case, I send the case to the Paramount Chief. Cases are always difficult because to summon someone is a very expensive process. Once I begin to hear a case I know how the case will work. I cross-examine the individuals until the facts come out. We (the elders and chiefs) will hear the words that become the facts in the case. Facts can't lie.I will hear all the sides, facts and testimonies; then we will render a decision. Most cases are built on the spoken word. Then we hang heads.
>
> Sometimes someone won't listen to our words (judgement). That person and the case will be sent to another place. When I hear a case I stick to tangible evidence, I have the sanction of government and can fine guilty people. It is immediate. If you are guilty, you must pay. Sometimes cases go further: we need looking ground evidence. If it goes to swearing, the swear is the final say. The swear becomes an issue of death or life -- the person dies, he was guilty; if the person lives, he was innocent.

It is clear that cases are not judged solely in terms of accusation, guilt and fine. Most general cases are concerned with public confession (acceptance of fault) a public beg (asking for forgiveness), a fine and then reconciliation. Through adjudication a big man ideally builds his power base as he controls his people -- he is "the mouth piece" **of** the village, and yet "the mouth piece" **for** the village.

Power, therefore, must be maintained through accepted inequality. As paradox, the big man's power and domination is

legitimated through his constituents; he continually "thanks" his people for their efforts; he must speak well of them because they represent his ability to create and maintain **Ngo ila** (agreement). Hence, his power comes through those that he tends to dominate the most. Landogo have proverbs for this paradox: **Mii ungaa ai sousou taa nhu** (we are not all equal in height at home because we are not all equally powerful and important), and **Baa to baa ndanwa ngohe fefe ndubaa** (when you gather fruits, you must thank the wind and that the **Ojuku** [person with power] is nothing with [person without power]). This ability to orchestrate creates compromise concerns a manipulation of **Chambo njia** (those words that disgrace in endless disputes).

However, these moral ideals often fail, or work in strange and unpredictable ways. Another statement by Pa Koroma Kanu illuminates this problematic area as does the case study that follows. Pa Kanu suggests:

> The problem with cases and hearing cases is that if a big man is wrong, steals, or is guilty of some witch business, he is rarely subject to justice. The reason is simple: almost all powerful people are witches. They have four eyes, have a devil and are too powerful. Sometimes they can't even be driven from a village. People are afraid and will "bend bend" (change their story) rather than go against the rath of the powerful person.
>
> But if you are poor it's different -- witch business, swear business, looking ground business, illness and disease "fasten quickly"(they are more suceptable). We all know that if you are rich and powerful witch business doesn't bother you too much. But if you are poor, well then witch business and misfortune are your neighbors.

A CASE STUDY: GBENDEMBU TOWN.

The case includes Pa Lansana (village headman from **Magbana**), Pa Alimamy Fornah from **Maqui**, Yai Yabu Kargbo of **Maqui**, and Pa kargbo, father of Yabu, also of **Maqui**. This case was tried both in Landogo and the lingua franca of Sierra Leone -- Krio. At first the case appeared to me

to be a simple case of one man claiming woman damage from another.

My first impression, as the "facts" came out was that Pa Lansana was guilty of having sexual intercourse with Pa Alimamy's wife -- Yai. Pa Lansana had been caught in the conjugal act inside Yabu's house by Pa Alimamy. Everyone agreed that he should "pay compensation." Initially this seemed clear. Despite the fact that he is a well respected counselor to Kande Saio, he appears guilty. It appears the **Ojuku** (big man) is guilty if one only heard Pa Alimamy Fornah's testimony.

When Pa Lansana finally spoke it became obvious that that the case entailed much more -- three separate but interrelated cases had to be heard. As Pa Lansana's testimony continued it became clear to all that the case had conflicting principles. Court Chairman James Kanu said this was a situation where each case would be heard separately. The roles that each person took, their actions and implications would be heard. Each person would testify, words would give details to each persons past history, and how the conflict had developed.

As the facts came out so did the complexity of the case: 1) Pa Alimamy (Yabu's first husband) had not supported her, nor given her rice, for over three years, 2) he had not had sexual intercourse with her in three years, nor lived in the same house, 3) Yabu had six children with Alimamy, 4) recently, Alimamy's brother had sexual intercourse with Yabu; and 5) the same brother has also recently had sexual intercourse with Yabu's oldest daughter.

All of these various acts were taken to PMC Kande Saio who fined Alimamy and his brother one-thousand Leones and one cow. Alimamy and his brother had only payed six-hundred Leones and two goats. Paramount Chief Kande Saio declared that this was a witch case, and that (pending more mystical fact finding) a sacrifice must be pulled (enacted).

Through more testimony it became clear that Pa Lansana: 1) has been with Yai Yabu for over two years, 2) he had supported her for the same amount of time, 3) he had "put kola" (brideprice) to her father for rights to Yabu, 4) he (Lansana) claims Yabu has been his wife since she put kola for her.

People watching the case sense Pa Lansana is wrong. Pa Alimamy claims that Yai Yabu is still his wife. Yai Yabu admits that she is not yet divorced from Alimamy.

Technicaly, Lansana owes Alimamy woman damage. Alimamy requests a high amount.

Court Chairman Kanu says that Yabu's case is a criminal case-- she is married to two men. Pa Lansana is guilty of fighting with Alimamy and woman damage. Before he answers who the rightful husband is, he asks why Yabu's father gave her to Pa Lansana when she was still married to Alimamy? That is clearly wrong.

The case is put off until the next day. There is much discussion between court chairman, elders, court scribe, litigants and the audience. The next morning, the Court fines Pa Kargbo (Yabu's father) for allowing her to be married to two men. He is guilty of taking the "Law" into his own hands. Yabu should been officially divorced by her father.

In a suprise, the Court rules that Pa Lansana is officially married to Yabu Kargbo. He owes no "woman damage" to Pa Alimamy. The Court tells Alimamy Fornah that he can take all six of Yabu's children. He is heavily fined for attacking Pa Lansana when he was found having intercourse with Yabu. The Court also finds Pa Alimamy guilty of the previous witch case and fines Alimamy and his brother again. The witch case (still pending) is considered a very bad village wide problem. Alimamy and his brother have had sexual intercourse with the same woman, and his brother with her daughter. They have spoiled the lineage, the families and houses, as well as the entire village of **Maqui**. They have broken a taboo and brought shame on the village. Kande Saio orders them to pull sara at the house of Yabu Kargbo where they must atone for the bad actions of both the brothers.

What is of interest here, is that Alimamy and his brother have never paid the fines, nor completed the sacrifice. Pa Lansana was never found guilty of anything. Yabu, Alimamy, and Yabu's father were all found guilty and fined. Pa Lansana took Yabu as his rightful wife and the status quo was maintained. After documenting this case, a number of questions grew in my mind? Was Pa Lansana's status a factor? Did Pa Alimamy wait until he knew Pa Lansana had put the kola (bride money) to find him with Yabu, confront him and then beat him? Did

Alimamy's previous case influence not only the evidence and findings of James Kanu and the council of elders?

CONCLUSIONS: CONSTRUCTING ORDER

A gulity individual can often beg (**Nma neeina**) for forgiveness. In some cases a beg will suffice. However, most cases a beg is refused. That person might say: in one month bring me a new cast iron pot, or bring me a female goat. But all too often the bad feelings remain, the wronged person will accept the beg, but will never see the iron pot or goat. All to often the same problem remains -- there is no real means of secular enforcement. This Chapter has suggested that Landogo, indeed, have well-defined patterns of action and moral ideals. These represent structures. As a set of idealized constructions they exist in contrast to Landogo reality. Reality is something else, altogether. Concerning this reality a truely big man, Pa Ndambia Wotou of **Wangi** states:

> That is a good question -- there all kinds of cases. The most frequent cases are debt cases, but we have woman damage cases, cow damage cases (destruction of farms), and then theft cases, insult cases, murder cases and then witch cases. The worst case to hear are **Nhoa njia** (witch cases).
>
> A witch case is always long and it will always spoil everything.The basic problem in any village or family: there is always conflict. You can never know what is in your relative's "heart". Some are **Ndii banda** (good hearted).Some have hearts with bad feelings and intentions; some want to bring misfortune; some have four-eyes. You can have one word in the world of the seen and unseen. But because you can never know the heart of another, a village can look like it has one word in the seen, but really have **Ngo ila** in the unseen. Witches can have one word -- what we call **ngo ila nhoa aablaai** (agreement amongst a group of witches).
>
> Just up from here (Wangi village) is Pa Alpha Sesay's Suka dala section. It is very remote with only three villages. There is plenty of witch business. Yana section also has a lot of witch cases. There is also a lot here in Pa Alimamy Bangura's section Mambiamma -- especially

> between here and Togbonhu and small Lagbelle. He has also has Makuranko, Gbondombua, Yana, Majakabie, Magagu, Makumbu Kagbungoo, Nerenhu, Makindi, Makeha, Mamina, and Makale villages --witch business is there. It is very bad.
>
> The government in Sa Lon (Freetown) doesn't have ways to prove guilt in these cases; so it is up to the chiefs, elders, and traditional ways and means (divination and swearing) to prove guilt or innocence. We use diviners, swear people, secret society, what ever it will take.

Implicit in Pa Ndambia's statement is a social reality driven by a contrasting mechanisms -- of witch generated disorder and human constructed order. If ideals are somehow related to the problematic of Landogo cohesiveness, then it is dispute, conflict and crises that represent reality. What is of interest here and my primary concern in Chapter Four is that Landogo are, most often, the primary source of their own disorder. Although Landogo "muck" about in witchcraft and often run amok, they also glorify and rely on its use in most aspects of life. With this in mind, I shift to a discussion of the acts, agencies, existence, and state of **Nhoa nhanda** (witch business happening). I explain this world throughout the following Chapters.

CHAPTER THREE NOTES

1. I use existential struggle to mean that process where Landogo are involved in so-called "dialectical events" that are beyond human control. For example, when death occurs it is often seen as having other worldly origins. If the cause of death is by a witch, there is some element of control over the process of death even if the individual has become terminal. If a spirit decides to kill, it is usually terminal. However, if witchcraft agency is used by one agent to affect the life of another, there is a high degree of reaction (using witchcraft to fight witchcraft) and therefore control.

2. My male bias should not be used to suggest that Landogo women are powerless. While they are subordinate to men, and dominated in many spheres of life, they do have power and agency to affect daily life. It is my sense that Landogo men both fear and respect the power of Landogo women. For a more detailed discussion see my recent paper 1991 presented at the Satterthwaite Conference, Forthcoming somewhere in the next year.

3. **Manhaangaai** refers to both the initiation process and the initiation society.

4. I do not deal with the men's **Kpangbani** society because it is a well guarded secret society. As a member I have "taken the swear" -- essentially killed the medicine which would kill me if I revealed the secrets of the society.

5. Winans suggests that a seven day week very likely represents Christian influences and that such a construction of time is very rare in African cosmologies.

6.Some families sleep at their farm huts. Most, however, fear sleeping in the bush as it is an uncontrolled place filled with powerful forces.

7. Please see Finnegan 1963: 242.

CHAPTER FOUR
AN IDEOLOGY OF DISORDER

The village of Makuranko is found hidden in a wide valley surrounded by the hills of Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu Chiefdom, Northern Province, Sierra Leone. In late November, 1988 a young man named Fari suddenly lost his first child. This was the third young baby of the village to die in consecutive days. People were suspicious. Fari went to a **Ngau nwoo na** (a diviner) who pointed out that all the deaths were the result of a large witch coven who were in the process of crowning a "female chief" for their village. They needed to eat children to insure the crowning. The diviner told Fari that he must bring a swear from far away to kill the witches inside Makuranko. Fari went to Mabure village -- around six miles away near the top of **Boima** mountain -- where he requested the services of a well known **Pee haai moo na** (a swear man) who lived there. This was done in secret.

All Landogo do this kind of business secretly. Fari knew this and brought a swear from far away that would spare no one. Later at dusk on the following day, the sounds of a swear were heard approaching in the distance. Secrecy and surprise! Catch the witch people. The swear man approached quickly and unannounced -- the witches had no place to hide. A sound came from an esoteric witch-finding tool (a slit gong drum called **koondo**) carried up and down the village; a sound that paralyzed the witches. The sound is fearful -- it is the **Ngafoo na aa goo nhu gua** (the spirit is cleaning its jaws). Women, children, and men ran for shelter. Witches heard the devil's "jaws" and ran for cover. They seek safe places: a woman's womb, in an orange tree, or at the place of a friendly spirit. The village becomes a place of fear.

People don't greet the swear man and his assistants because he brings death by dancing and playing his medicine. The swear will find, drive and finally kill most of the witch-people. The swear people will play all night in the empty center of the village.

In the morning witches will have died. It is always that way. More people will confess. The most powerful will refuse to confess. But they will die as well. It is certain. In the night the swear man (**pee haai moo**) found that the witches were still congregating under a particular tree. Another powerful swear (**pee haai nwa**) had to be activated. The swear man found that the witches were still eating eating children.

An empty village represents what Landogo call "closed down." The swear man decides to "put the medicine" in the

earth at the center of the village -- the spirit of the swear alive. He knows how to talk to it; he will show it what work it must do. Landogo call this **oo pee pee ngaa** (to bring the swear alive).

That first night the swear man chose **Toto na loo ngaa** (witch net) and the second night called for the women to dance **Nyanha haai njonjoma bee haai** (women's medicine that is recklessly danced). The **Toto na loo ngaa** net encircles the village and kills the witches inside. It looks like a simple vine stretched above a village but it is powerful medicine. Hanging from the line are small bundles filled with special leaf (**Chaba nwa** and **Faanha nwa**), small pieces of mat (**heega heega bee haai na**), old cooking utensils, bits of cloth and rag, and other material odds and ends. The bundles of leaf attack witches within the village, while the pieces of mat metaphorically create an enclosure around the village that keeps them out. It will remain powerful until it falls down or is replaced.

The women of the village later enacted a combination sacrifice and swear called **Nyanha haai njo njoma bee haai**. This is a kind of swear dance where most women (mothers with very young children, unmarried women, and old grannies) perform a kind of swear dance. The dance is what killed the witches. It is a kind of medicine that only women can create. No men are allowed except for a diviner whose job it is to point out the exact spot where they "put" the swear, i.e. where they place the collection of rice pounding sticks (**ngete na**) that are wrapped with shreds of cloth. The women dance naked except for the rags they where on their bodies.

The next morning an old man named Pa Foday came and did **Keege Keege** (tell-tell [confessed]) to an old woman who danced: **he** was one of the male witch chiefs in this valley; **he** helped "eat" the previous three children; he confessed that his witch friends would eat seven more children; and he proclaimed that he would insure the witches would eat seven more.

"The sticks had killed him in **Nhoa nhu na** (the world of the unseen and witches)," he said...in a short time his confession circulated through the village; the **Toi moo na** (the village crier) announced that all women should keep their children in their houses, not to carry young children on their backs; and not to have children play in front of the houses, or in the village center.

Many people recalled how Pa Foday came near their children sometime in the past. Rumors flew that people

saw Pa Foday "knock" each of the dead children in the back of the neck with a **Gbing gbe** (a witch club). There is no known remedy for this kind of witchcraft.

It is only a matter of time before someone kills Pa Foday in the other world. He is powerless and can't communicate with his witch friends, and it is likely that some other witch has taken his place as a chief. He is met with derision...people through small stones at him; the women sing in unison:

"here comes **Hapa Foo Boo** (older male person of selfish pursuits) leave us alone, we don't want you bringing your destruction here."

Women take cooking pots,tin bowls and wooden spoons to tap out iron on iron -- a sound of warning. The noise acts as a kind of ad-hoc swearing sound that will drive him away.

Pa Foday passes by without noticing them, their chants, or the sounds coming from the cooking utensils. While Pa Foday's body is still alive, he is dead. He is a non-person. When he dies his children will bury him, but no one from the village will come to his funeral. No one will honor him at his death because he is **Nhoa oo benga** (a confessed witch). A confessed witch is the worst kind of evil, with no social respect or value.

In the morning, the swear man announced where the witches were found and how many were killed. Other people will die in the village, he says. They will have illness'. It will take such and such amount of time before death comes. He leaves silently. Business finished, he had performed **Taa na nhao ngee ndaa** (to clean the village).

Villagers come out of their houses filled with fear and awe, but glad that the witches will die. The rest of the children will live. People share **Ngo ila** (one word). While agreement and consensus may exist, deep in their hearts they remain afraid. Who has the swear killed? They think. No one knows. Was it a close family member, a friend, neighbor, or a lover.

DISORDER IN SPACE AND TIME

Chapter Three focused on the moral ontology of big man-ship and power. In this Chapter I focus on how witchcraft agancy generates failure, hunger, illness, and death. I shift from empirical ethnography to meta-empirical ethnography --

witches, witchery, and witchcraft. The above case study illuminates witch-like behavior and witchcraft agency. Fari states in retrospect:

> The thing about that witch business was that it made me suspect someone I never suspected before. When someone confesses this proves to you that there are always secret enemies within your family and village. You would never suspect them, they don't seem like witches. That is why we call witches "secret friends." God, who is great, put swears and swear people in the world to find out who ate or sold my child. A swear is a wonderful thing -- it comes from the other world and finds the responsible witch. The swear will begin to "eat" the witch until they confess, or until they die. This happens in the other world.[1]

An initial reading of this case reveals a confusing number of dimensions, agents and agencies. All exist in an interwoven dimensions where human agents and mystical forces negotiate power and position. Landogo, for example, reference God with great regularity, but as an agent God is essentially powerless, withdrawn and distant. However, all other mystical and human agents are sources of power -- the most powerful forces (power itself) are found in the "other world." This domain includes:

1) **Bonda Nhu:** The seen (empirical) world.
2) **Nwoo na:** The mortal person.
3) **Nhoa nhu:** The place of witches as the unseen.
4) **Nhoa nwoo na:** The actual witch person.
5) **Nhoa na:** The act of a witch.
6) **Nhoa obenga:** The confessed witch -- good or bad.
7) **Nhoa nwoo na nyou:** The bad witch person.
8) **Nhoa nwoo na hie hie:** The good witch person.
9) **Nhoa nhanda:** The events caused by a witch.
10) **Nhoa nhanda nyou:** The bad events caused by a witch.
11) **Nhoa nhanda banda:** The good events caused by a witch;
12) **Nhoa nhanda nwa hie hie:** The wonderful things caused by a witch.

These twelve categories can be broken down into: 1) dimension, 2) agent as human, human witch, and non-human, 3) categories of witch-status' -- good and bad, and confessed

good and bad; 4) events ranging from act and events bad, into very bad culminating in crisis, and then into acts and events good -- culminating in events wonderful.

The doing of witchcraft has some pattern to it. In most cases it is far from indiscriminate. What is revealed is the "Hobbesian" nature of the world of doing witchcraft. It is within this structured and unstructured world that Landogo seek, covet and manufacture power. Once controlled, power can be applied in the world, but its acquistion is dangerous. Landogo are optimistic brokers of power who manipulate all of the agencies, spaces and dimensions of "The world" to achieve both malevolent or benevolent power. What this initial case study suggests is that **Nhoa na** (the general act of the witch) is a negotiation for power. At the heart of the highest level of power is malevolent witchcraft. This kind of witchcraft is a kind of uncontrolled disorder. Other kinds of powers exist in nature that can be "constructed" to help humanity. Witches and witchcraft are at the heart of power and its negotiation; it is inherently disordered.

There are **Nhoa mbaalaai** (witches [plural] -- both good and bad who enact **Nhoa nhanda** (the doing of witchcraft). They all have malevolent **Ngau na** (the eye, [four-eyed capacity]). These are all similar phenomena which exist integrated in highly ambiguous states of cosmological disorder -- what Landogo call **Nhoa nhanda nhanda nyou pou** (witch happenings/action very bad). The act of witchcraft is the redirection of power and force found in the world to alter events and agents in the world of the seen.

The major difference between a witch and **Nwoo na** (a person) is that the witch has the capacity of **Ngau na** ("four-eye") -- a metaphor for the capacity to see and travel in the various worlds that comprise **Nhoa nhu** (the place of witch people). **Nhoa nhu** is a second dimension within what is seen. The witch person can see what is normally unknown and unknowable to most. They penetrate and define the world of secrets.

Witches are most often humans who unconsciously perform and think immoral thoughts and actions, they consciously manipulate powers in the world for personal gain. Because the world is filled with conflicting forces and processes; and everyone and everything can be an ally as well as an enemy. Most witches are **Nhoa nwoo nyou** (people that have gone bad), but some witches are **Nhoa nwoo nwa hie hie** (good witch person who does wonderful things) because they reveal bad people's intentions. This category of witch is responsible for all that is **kila ina kpo** (positive) and are considered to be in this world because of God's benevolent intentions. Most swear people fall into this category.

WHY THE MORAL WORLD FAILS

The origin of witch action is in thought and feelings that are translated into action. All too often the social world is defined by the disorder brought about by unsocialized witches. Witches block success, destroy crops, and most of all "eat" children. Their actions are destroy **kila ina kpo** (nything that is a very fine thing). More specifically, malevolent witch action is brought about by **Ndii nyou** (ugly heart) that leads to **Nee nwaa gbindi** (bad thoughts). These lead to dark and displeasing minds that apply powers of **Nhoa nhanda nyou** (very bad actions and ways, i.e. of witch business).

Recalling the moral foundations of the "big man among others" we can see that they have **Ndii nwaa** and **Ndii ila** (with a " big big" heart). The moral big man is someone who does more than is expected in the shared decisions of heart. While all mystical agents are the creations of **Ngebo nwa** (God) they represent different powers. For example, a moral big man can have a devil -- what Landogo call **Ngafoo na** -- that gives them power. A devil is considered to be of bush origin and is disorder. But that devil can be used to bring goodness. If one has a devil, this is through a contractual relationship that is either malevolent or benevolent. Some big men gain

malevolent power, for example by giving up the life of one's child. The **Ngafoo na** once in a contractual relationship with a human will rarely let the human withdraw from that obligation. **Ngafoo na** have higher power than witches, but to have a **Ngafoo na** is to be a witch.

Other human agents use the mystical power of a **Yina**. A **Yina**, on the other hand, is considered to be a spirit (a soul) of a **Ohaa nwoo na** (dead person). **Yina** can be malevolent or benevolent as well. Some are unsettled spirits that wander aimlessly through space and time. Other **Yina** are seen as analogous to the **Landogo** conception of life force -- **Ndee nhu na** (spirit inside a human which makes it alive). This life force exists in contrast to **Haa nhu na** (inside of death). When someone dies they lose their **Ndee nhu na**; a witch, if caught, will be forced to lose its life force.

The witch person is almost always considered of village origin. Landogo say most witch-people are born as witch with power passed from generation to generation. Other individuals become witches because they suffer from jealousy and greed over money, farms, animals, sexual partners, influence and of course power. These kind of people might go to a bad devil and exchange a child for the power of four eye. In general, witches do their evil work under the protection of night. Nighttime, like secrecy in general, is a time and space that is covered. Bad things and feelings can become reality without being known. Some witches act alone, while others act in groups. The witch individual shares nothing, gives bad advice, knows how to talk evil and badly of others, and won't help in farm work. Most importantly, they will never have **Ndii goe** and **Ndii lei** (a calm and cool heart) -- essentially someone who plays down offense and exists without worries. A witch person's heart and mind become part and parcel of bad things, events and people.

The reasons are many and varied. Some Landogo argue that

"witchery" is not related to any particular status, position, gender, or personal proclivity. To identify a witch is difficult. Some witches, for example, are said to have "bad stomach." That witch person may seem far from "bad" in that they walk, work, and greet as if normal. But witch people crave **Nhua** (meat). The craving for raw meat is a sign that the individual craves human flesh. A person can be a very bad witch, and yet have no knowledge of it. It is of interest that at death many Landogo confess, or **Keege keege** (tell, tell). In many cases, confession plays a major role in mystical adjudication. Some witches confess due to accusation and mystical proof. Although unsaid accusation exists to a high degree, public accusation as I will show in Chapters Six and Seven, is a grave matter.

Landogo categorize a witch who has confessed and still lives as **Nhoa obenga** (confessed witch). A confessed witch will "go public" for a number of reasons. One of the most important is that something (usually a swear) with greater power has fought them and brought suffering. Witches, like people, hate suffering and will confess so as to relieve the suffering. When a witch confesses, her or she may be put to death in the other world of **Nhoa nhu**, or may be kept alive and taken to a **Haai haai nwoo na** (person who uses medicinal leaf) that washes their "bad-eye" away. Some witches have been public since early childhood in that their agency has always been used for benevolent means and confrontation with other bad witches.

Confession instigates a series of hearings that must be substantiated by proof from the world of the unseen. If a witch person is accused, for example, he or she will state: "What is the proof. How many children did I eat. Bring a diviner and swear me to prove your accusation." Such information will come from a well-known specialist whose reputation and past history are well-known. Mystical evidence is always correct -- the individual either lives or dies.

There are a multiplicity of social and cosmological contexts for the practice of the witch doing witchcraft. But it is clear that the family is the most volatile context for **Nee nwaa aa heela** (conflict and dispute). Landogo families are analogous to a group with very fixed assets -- at any time, especially if someone dies, there is competition for the dead person's possessions and status in the family hierarchy. Family members will compete for swamp land, animals, money and status, and any secret powers of the family. The relationship between men and women (as husbands and wives) is always problematic. Pa Alimamy Konteh (section chief from Lagbelle town) states emphatically that men need women for children, wealth and power. He can't be powerful if he doesn't have wives. He states:

> A man without a wife, equals a man without children. No children, or few children, means no power and certainly no status. The children you get from your wife always belong to you because of bride price. A man can send a wife away. But if she does witch business, that is something else. It happens often but we never know because women are so secret.

Pa Koroma Kanu also equates wives with respect:

> Well, women can get children and without children a man is nothing. If a man doesn't have children he is looked upon as being very low. Not having a wife equals no respect. The problem is a big one. What does a man give to his wife? She remains low in the family until she is older. Her power is always from other sources. That is why they do so much witch business.

While the most frequent agents to practice "witchcraft" against one another are husbands and wives, there are other social diads that enact witch power -- sons and uncles, brothers, co-wives, siblings from different mothers but having the same father.

The "problem," building upon comments by Section Chief Pa Alimamy Konteh, is that Landogo women are categorized as

strangers with dangerous powers. They are not trusted. Sometimes the husband will send the woman back to her own people, he will "drive" her and it becomes a "house case." The families discuss it together, the father of the wife will give his daughter a stern lecture and send her back. At other times the family will allow her to stay at her natal home because her husband is known to be wicked. The father will have to pay back the bride price money. A man must pick a wife "in a saful way" (carefully) or it will happen again. In a family, these kinds of conflicts enivitably make the children suffer. The wife may send the "wealth of the house" (usually rice) to her lover; then her children don't eat.

Concerning women, power and secrecy, Pa Kobi of Lagbelle village says:

> Men will never believe women. If a man has secrets he should never tell his wife. He should never tell his secrets to any female, not even to his mother. Women cannot be trusted. From one end of the village to the other end women know our secrets. They know who has lovers, how much that man gives to a particular woman, who has power over whom; and women even know our secrets that they shouldn't know. How do you explain this kind of power?

Pa Alimamy Konteh also suggests:

> Men should never allow their wives to have secrets. That is wrong. The problem is that husbands can't control wives. Women will always deny and a man must have **Ndii gbende** (iron heart) and **Ndii goe** (cool heart) when it comes to dealing with his wife. He must confront her and her secrets. She can beg. The husband will accept the beg because he has **Ndii gue** (white heart, or goodness for others). But if her secrets continue (she refuses) he will beat her and treat her cruelly. He will bring a swear. If she hates him, for any reason, she will probably witch him. Women do witch business much more than men. God knows who does witch business. God will come and take her life. There is evidence for this because women die more than men do. Women do more "bad things" then we men do.

Many Landogo men have suggested to me that women do witch business that is far superior than their own. They also argue that women are jealous by nature and would "eat" their own children if the situation warranted it. Women, I'm sure, would articulate the exact opposite because their children represent their security in a strongly patrilineal society. Pa A.K. Sesay suggests along these lines that:

> Women know your secrets even if you hide them. We men will never know their secrets. You suspect your wife of witching you. You go to the looking ground and begin to fight her. The confrontation between the swear and your wife-witch is "witch against witch" or "iron against iron." It spoils. Most swears kill that wife. But some women are so evil and have so much power, the swear can't find her. She knows where to hide when the swear comes looking for her. You must drive her.

Men believe that women are inherently more powerful. Most men, for example, state that women can witch their husbands through numerous ways. One, in particular, is through the act of sexual intercourse whereby women give men sexually transmitted diseases. Landogo men see such sexual diseases (like syphilis and gonorrhea) as women's diseases, and not male in origin, or in terms of transmission. These diseases are secretly transmitted. A man will never know his wife is doing witchery until it hits him.

Women have other ways to witch her husband. Sometimes a wife resorts to putting a swear on him. There are always signs that the wife is doing witch things. Most threatening is sexual impotence because it seemingly reduces the big man's status and abilities (see Chapter Three). The man must go to the diviner and find out who is witching him and why? All to often the diviner finds it is his wife. The diviner strongly advises the husband to perform **Chaga na** (sacrifice) and **Oo pee pee ngaa** (enact a swear) on her. He will do this secretly.

The swear will fight his wife in the world of witches until she is very sick and ready to die. She will confess and

beg for forgiveness so that the husband will have the swear revoked. Some husbands remove the swear and others will cure the wife with **Chaba nwa** (a very powerful leaf); and others still will allow the swear to continue -- the swear kills the wife. To cure someone of being a witch is called: **Too ala la ngi aa** (you have done witch business, but now we have cured you).

In many cases, the wife is not a witch, but takes lovers (see Chapter Seven). The husband gets **Ndii gbaai** (very angry heart) and force her to call name -- expose her lover -- by putting **Koo mai loo na** (a swear that brings sickness and disease to a woman's womb) or **Nyanda mana kambi** (a swear which takes away the good parts) that spoils her or her lover's body -- such as eyes, penis, or vagina. The goal of having the wife call name is not only to stop them from further intercourse, but to obtain woman damage from the lover. In the recent past (1987/89) woman damage fines ranged from between one-thousand and five-thousand Leones,and in 1991 the fine had escalated to as high as ten-thousand Leones.

Not all cases are between men and women. Other cases of witch business occur. Many are kept in the house -- called a house case. Sometimes the case goes to the court bari, to the chiefs and elders. Quite often the case is settled between houses where the "big people" of the families settle the dispute. In **Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu** chiefdom the court bari is the last option (it is so seldom) and most cases go to the village headmen, and then to swearing, if necessary.

A young, unmarried man, (Momodu Kamara of Gbendembu) observes that conflict and dispute (what Sierra Leonians call **palava**) is an on-going process. The nature of the conflict dictates how it will develop. The first thing a person will do is beg. A beg should be seen as an act on contrition, acceptance of guilt, and a temporary placement of self "under" someone else. The beg is a moment in time when the injured party is dominant, correct and all-powerful over the guilty.

If done correctly, this sense of subservience is accepted. If a beg isn't acceptable the person will try to put a small amount of Leones in the person's hand to right the injustice.

The size and kind of palava often depends on the village. If the settlement is very small, (four or five houses) then the village will always attempt to talk **Ngo ila** (one word) to create agreement. If a person does something very immoral, small villages often banish that person from the village. Regardless, inside a single family or village there will be trouble and conflict. Momodu Kamara suggests:

> You can never know what is in your relatives "heart". Some have **Ndii banda** (doing good heart). Some hearts have bad feelings and intentions; others love misfortune. In the family **Ngo ila** can appear as if it exists (in the world of the seen). But, **Ngo ila** can never really exist in families because families are **Nhoa nhu**. You can try, but you can never really know the heart of another unless you do witch business yourself. A village will look like it has **Ngo ila**, but, it reality they have **Ngo ila** in **Nhoa nhu**. The witches have agreement among themselves to bring havoc to good people.

Conflict, as I discuss it here, is not just between husbands and wives, but between relatives, villages and between villages as well.

THE WITCH AND ITS ACTIONS

The act, event, result of a witch's capacity must be activated. Power does not exist as an independent entity, but is found, energized, and redirected to a task. The system of doing **Nhoa nhanda** has two main distinctions: natural things and manufactured things. Natural things can be used: stone, animal horns, teeth, bones, tails, jaws, and blood, cowrie shells, leaf and vine, clay, water, unprocessed palm kernels, snail and tortoise shells, peanuts, eggs, and meat among other things. Things of human manufacture are almost of an endless variety: kinds of white, red and black cloth, mixed color cloth, various libations such as water, locally made gin, and palm wine; rice, kola nut, and various kinds of prepared foods; money, coins, glass, bottles, and other containers;

pieces of iron and old tools, manufactured constructions with symbolic meaning like small cast iron pots, knives, and needles; black, white and red thread; fishing net and mats, locally manufactured black soap; and most importantly bodily waste, or body parts used in non-natural ways.

In general, anything of symbolic or material value -- natural or manufactured can be used. These "things" as objects or symbols with special qualities become objectified power. The most powerful **Nhoa nhanda** constructions are those things that manifest paradoxical relationships, or oxymoron-like qualities. Once constructed and enacted (actually given direction by an agent with a specific intention) the power of the **Nhoa nhanda** construction can effect a person, place or event. An example of this construction is a swear bundle I was given. The bundle was used to protect a small grove of kola nut trees and its contents. The swear was made up of old rotting batteries, leaf from the bush called **Fanhanwa** which has mystical properties that fight witches, another kind of leaf used to wrap the contents, red cloth used to rewrap, and then red thread used to activate, close and contain the ingredients.

A number of things must occur in the construction process. The agent must know what materials to use; or have a diviner explain them. It is clear to me that almost all Landogo use various "witch" materials with some regularity in daily life. The construction process of these materials is one of "aesthetic assemblage." I use the notion of "aesthetic" because it implies conscious articulation, manipulation and artifice of Landogo knowledge and action. It is as if Landogo use certain materials to achieve a given state; in turn the state forces another individual to respond. The construction of **Nhoa nhanda** is almost always a kind of "bricolage."[2] Individuals make symbolic and metaphorical constructions which use cultural and material fragments. Sometimes these fragments begin as items of worth; and if they have no worth they often

become items embedded with worth. Most often they are left-over material bits and pieces of rubbish, or they are strange odds and ends. A formula for creating power exists. The specialist knows how to recombine certain material elements with ritual liturgy and litany. The application to an individual, spirit force, social group, and event embody meanings of power and control.

Let me repeat that Landogo conceptualize any form of witch power as a dimension of deeply embedded cosmological disorder found in the world. Such disorder was placed by God and then left to its own devices. **Nhoa nhanda** has many uses: It can cure or kill; it can subvert cultural idioms of ethics and morality; and on deeper levels **Nhoa nhanda** can create cosmological more disorder. The most moral form of **Nhoa nhanda** is the deliberate use of disorder attacking other forms of disorder in an attempt to recreate order.

There is a complete range of **Nhoa nhanda** power ranging from a single cowrie shell to stationary, "shrine like" constructions that are annually placated. The examples used here are only a small sample of witch tools. All of the manifestations listed here are initially neutral power, but once directed they take on the intention of the human agent.

> **Nyie na** (the female breast). An agent who desires to bring misfortune to someone else might go into **Nhoa nhu** and buy a woman's breast. He will take this "tool" in **Nhoa nhu** and "knock" someone (male or female). He will usually knock that individual on the head. The person will feel the force of a tremendous blow in **Bonda nhu**. The injured person will die instantly. There is no remedy. Wherever you are knocked --head, stomach, genitals, or elsewhere, it will create an ugly bruise that is fatal. The diviner can tell a family what has happened, but the attack is incurable. There is no **Gbingbbe** (looking ground), **Chaba nwa** (leaf), or **Haai nwoo na** (a society head) that can bring life force back to that person. He or she is **Ohaa** (dead) in **Bonda nhu**.
>
> **Koro tee** (the witch knife). The witch knife looks very similar to knife used to cut millet. In **Nhoa nhu** the witch person will cut the insides of the victim; he or she will bleed to death in **Nhoa nhu**. There is no remedy.

Ufaan nkie (the witch broom). This tool resembles a broom with a bundle attached to it. If you strike someone -- witch or human -- with it, they will die in **Nhoa nhu**. If the individuals are witches, they get sick, but it will take longer for them to die. If it is a human, he or she will quickly become sick and die. But if a diviner finds **Ufaan nkie** as the cause, the illness can be cured by special leaf.

Koa nhoa gbende (the witch gun). A person who has been shot in **Nhoa nhu** by a witch gun will have sickness throughout his or her body. Landogo say that the witch cartridges are inside all the important organs. A **Ngau nwoo na** will be able to see that someone fired a witch gun. The cure is to use the leaf to 'pull' the illness.

Kee nheege na (a mixture of broken bits of glass, certain kinds of leaf, and kola nut). These three ingredients are masticated and then spit into the person's eyes in **Nhoa nhu**. Leaf must be used to cure this witch business.

Gbing gbe (the short stick). This tool is used to strike a person's body and create a severe hemorrhage. The stick is about eight inches long and quite large in circumference. There is no remedy.

Kai nii na (the snake bite). This is where a witch person changes [shapeshifts] into a snake. As a snake it will go to where its victim works -- maybe the farm -- bites and kills that person. This happens in **Bonda nhu** even though it is the action of **Nhoa na**. There is usually no remedy.

Koo baa na (the menstrual cloth of women). A woman wants to witch her husband so she takes her used menstrual cloth and places it in her husband's secret place of power -- maybe a very private corner of their bedroom called **Kundo** (a private corner). Women's menstrual blood is powerful and it **Nyaai** (spoils) the husband's **Kpundu** (secrets) until he becomes weak. With **Hegbe** (sickness) he quickly **Ngoo oha** (dies).

Kai na (the witch powder). Witch powder is a combination of powerful substances that are dried and ground into a fine powder. It can be sprinkled on any threshold and it will deter a witch. It can also be used to kill a human being by sprinkling it in someone's food; or by being blown into someone's face. It has no remedy if used in the world of witches.

Witchcraft capacity, as discussed in these examples can be either benevolent and malevolent and therefore used to achieve **Nhoa nhanda** (events caused by a witch). It is clear that Landogo make little distinction between witchcraft, witch, and medicine. They make no distinction between witchcraft and sorcery. Any individual with **Ngau na** (the eye) is classified as witch and can effect people and events in the world. Most illness, disease and suffering are found in a matrix of witch generated affliction and misfortune: **Hegbe na** (normal illness or disease) exists in contrast to **Nhoa abelaai ti hegbe** (illness or disease related to witchcraft). Landogo believe that most forms of **Nhoa nhanda nhanda** and **Nhoa nhanda pou** (any problem, bad luck, and misfortune) are symbolic of the action of someone else's power. These intentions are causally manifested in signs, events, actions, omens and sickness.

The materials listed above are but a fraction of the overall material (and therefore power) found in the world of **Nhoa nhanda**. I argue that what is most conceptually important is that Landogo consciously and reflexively monitor the world they live in (natural, socially constructed and cosmological) through witchcraft symbols, metaphors and actions. As a sum total these embody notions of power and morality. An example might help to clarify this observation. If a Landogo greets another, the first question of any polite (i.e. moral) individual is: **Aa bi ganhu na** (how is your stomach?). Here the question is: how is your health? The answer, if the body is well (without sickness) is: **Kahee Ngebo nwaa** (I thank God). We thank God for our good health and fortune. However, a Landogo person will sometimes answer: **Nya gaanhu na eigwee** (my stomach is not well). That is, my health, and possibly fortune, are not good. An individual's stomach can be bad for a number of reasons, some of which embody the cosmological confrontation between humans and witches that exists in the universe.

Landogo are keen observers of the various signs of witchcraft. I can detail only a few, however. One of the most prolific is a sighting of a snake on a road or bush path. Such a sighting is almost always a **Nhoa nwoo na** (a witch person). A Cobra, for example, that rises up, down and tries to strike is the aggressive act of a witch. This means the witch person has **Ndii nyou** (bad heart) for that individual or someone in their family. A Cobra, as witch, can injure by looking at, following, or worse yet, by biting. All of these acts of **Nhoa nhanda** are related to **Kaai nii na** (the witch snake attack). It is resorted to when a person with evil intentions has been unable to defeat his or her adversary in the world of seen. The response is to use powers in the world of **Nhoa nhu**. If the witch snake refuses to move (sits down in the road or path) explanation must be sought. Only a foolish individual would fail to go to a diviner to ascertain the reasons for this. In general, if Landogo see a bush animal which is not afraid of people, they know it is a witch who has shapeshifted into an animal. These kind of witches can look like a normal human, but their bodies have become like those of animals. Sometimes a hunter kills an animal who turns into a human at death. Those animals are witch people who were using their animal forms at the time they were shot.[3]

If a house, or an individual is struck by lightning, it is taken as a powerful sign of **Ngii na** (the thunder swear). If someone is crippled, burned, or dies, this is a sign that someone has gone to a Thunder swear specialist and paid to have the **Ngii na** attack a victim. Very bad feelings must have existed between these people because use of **Ngii na** is a wiicked form of revenge. Thunder and the work of thunder is never a natural occurrence. **Fonjofanja** (October) is called the month of God's anger because the thunder and lightening violently mark the night sky. If **Ngi na** has been enacted it will attack its victim during this period.

Martha Fornah of Gbendembu town has suggested to me that the death of both mother and child during childbirth is usually seen as a witch event. When a woman dies in childbirth, the child must be surgically removed from her body and buried separately from the mother. This must be done by the head of men's society. While this does not occur frequently, it means that the woman or the child were most likely witches. In special cases the woman confesses to being a witch as she dies. If this kind of confession occurs, the woman and dead child must be killed in the world of the unseen by the **Kpangbani** secret society. Such an event is a very bad omen of further witch related events to come.

Another example of **Nhoa nhanda** is a dead person who plays tricks on the living. Landogo have multiple categories of death: good or bad death, partially dead, completely dead but wandering, among others. Some individuals die, but were not ready to die. If this is true, the dead person may demonstrate their refusal by moving arms, head, or feet while on the funeral ladder. Other people die, but their soul wanders. These dead people want others to die so they will have company. They may send a dangerous snake into the village to kill someone who thus shares their experience. And other events can happen as well. Recently dead people can send a swarm of bees to bite those who dig the grave, or a family member can die and be buried when a short time later the family finds **Nge aa bia nhu** (death "sores") on the grave. This is a sign that the dead individual had an unresolved **Njia na** (a case) -- essentially a conflict with someone in the immediate family or with someone who came to his funeral. That someone keeps "bad feelings" about the dead person after death. The dead individual now knows this and will move the grudge into witch attack. He or she is communication their displeasure through the "sores" on their grave. Being unsettled at death brings misfortune and death. The power of **Haa nwoo na** (a dead person) is rarely questioned. Death sores

on a grave mean that a **Toto bee moo na** (a specialized looking ground person who communicates with dead people) is called. The diviner will spread rice over the dead person's grave, a chicken is put on top of the grave -- if the chicken eats it means the dead person is no longer holding the grudge. If the chicken fails to eat, it means the grudge remains and the living person must perform a larger **Chaga na** (sacrifice) to appease the dead individual. The process can be repeated numerous times and may become very costly.

Another sign of **Nhoa nhanda** is any bad cut while doing farm work. Landogo say this kind of misfortune is symbolic of **Maa saa maa. Maa saa maa** occurs when an individual, unknowingly, brought a swear against an individual inside his family -- usually a brother or sister. The sister dies unexpectedly. She is buried with the proper ceremony and a white **lapa** (a cloth). The individual doesn't yet know that it was the swear he enacted has caught someone in his own family.

Later, another family member dies. The problem of the swear is still unknown. Finally, the swear attacks the individual who originally had it enacted. He goes to a diviner who informs him that the swear will continue to attack him unless he revokes it. The diviner explains why the swear was put on the witch inside the family, why it caught family members; and how it must now be recalled by the **Pee haai moo** (the swear person).

In general, any sign of witchcraft is a process shrouded in secrecy. Landogo expect misfortune to occur because its existence is embedded in their world view -- disorder is fundamental to their system of thought. Whatever the manifestation, as sign or actual event of hunger, sadness, death or having a dreaded disease, Landogo question the particular form, timing, and effects of witchcraft action. In most cases it cannot be left unresolved and must be acted upon.

COSMOLOGY OF CONFRONTATION

The case study used to begin this Chapter, while brief, illustrates how Landogo conceptualize a cosmography that is merged, multi-dimensional cosmos populated by multiple agents.[4] As this meta-empirical ethnographic section developed, two important interrelated modes of Landogo thought should have become clear: Landogo make no distinction between the secular and mystical world. Landogo conceptualize their cosmology as one of confrontation between the agreement and consensus of a socially constructed order and witch generated disorder). In Chapter Five I explore the agency of witchcraft as it determines both order and disorder. When family and village conflict remain unresolved, Landogo seek other agencies for leverage and justice. When unsocialized witch becomes public, already endemic tension is exacerbated. It may escalate into outright destruction of the social fabric because in a world filled with conflicting forces and processes, everyone and everything can be an ally as well as an enemy.

CHAPTER FOUR NOTES

1. This case study was discussed by numerous Landogo. However, I owe my information, clarification, and interpretations to Kempson Fornah and Momodu Kamara. It is through their insight, experience, and understanding that case studies like this were actually written by me. They are my good friends and informants and allowed me into a largely secret world of Landogo witchcraft.

2. Please see Levi-Straus' (1967) for a more complete analysis. My use of the term here has slightly different applications.

3. See Jackson's recent works on the topic of "shape-shifting" among the **Kuranko** of Northern Sierra Leone in Jackson and Karp (1990),(1989) and "Structure and Event: Witchcraft Confession among the Kuranko." in Man 10 (3) : 387-415, (1975).

4. The only work on Lokko, Landogo and Logo religion is by Hirst (1958). It is a very incomplete source.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE DIALECTIC

Chapter Four established that witchery, witches and witchcraft are paradoxical phenomena among Landogo. As action, personhood, and state forces of **Nhoa na** can be both malevolent and benevolent. The nature of this paradox not only impels Landogo action, but impels speculation and imagination concerning the existence of disorder as well as the need for socially constructed order. In the Landogo context, order, disorder and witchcraft capacity interrelate in a way that leads to witch crisis. In turn, witch crises leads to a complex process of judgement and mystical action that reproduces Landogo notions of order -- what they call **Ngo ila** -- that state of affairs based on moral agreement and consensus. It seems to me that such a statement parallels much of what is found in Gluckman and Turner's works. Indeed, they might have agreed with this interpretation. Regardless, I will argue that what is involved is more complex than a ritual reversal which reproduces social order and structure, or a dramatic ritual performance that seeks communitas. What may be occurring in Landogo witch crisis, in fact, is reproduction of the ideology of order -- a kind of structuration -- rather than actual order and structure.

In the examples of crisis discussed to this point, the use of swears and swearing is based on the belief that malevolent witchcraft creates disorder and that benevolent witchcraft achieves order. Following Bohannan's lead (see Chapter One) I use Landogo terms to validate this interpretation. When I discuss disorder, although the term disorder is a gloss of the Landogo term **Nhoa nhanda nyou o pou**, I want to make it clear that disorder is far from a mere gloss. Analogous terms are clearly embedded in the **Landogo** lexicon, they are found in all forms of speech acts, and they are also found being discussed in philosophical speculation. In particular, such terms are especially manifested in the

context of witch crisis -- a moment in time when Landogo society reproduces itself.

As I have argued, Landogo define order as a state of **Ngo ila** -- essentially a state when people, ideas, words and speech [as processes] are in agreement. Landogo definitions of order are far more complex in comparison to Western Systems Theory and Equilibrium models because they are multidimensional. Order and disorder cannot exist individually because each is an aspect of the other. Order, as an ideology of agreement, is referred to constantly, but only achieved now and then. This does not mean that order is never achieved -- for example, people have good harvests, healthy children, success as well as general good fortune. But such good fortune is limited by a focus on a reality defined by misfortune and witchery. A brief case study gives a glimpse of the pervasive influence of misfortune as disorder.

A Case

> John Kargbo was the former "information officer" for the one-time Landogo member of Parliament Mr. A.B. Foofonah until six years ago when he became very sick. His body became very dry (he lost a great deal of weight). Later, he was diagnosed as having tuberculous. He went to other hospitals in Freetown, but was incurable. He returned to Gbendembu and hired one of the most powerful diviners from Kalangba to do looking ground (find out about) on his case. The diviner brought two assistants who went into trance with special leaf medicines.
>
> The diviner saw that John had much success, wealth, and even political power in his life. He had a fine house, big farm, his children and wives were healthy, there was **Ngo ila** in his family. He even had a car. John went to Freetown regularly and was seen as a big man in Gbendembu town and in the political union of Mr. Foofonah.
>
> However, the diviner also saw that John had an older brother who had never been successful and lived in a bush village about five miles from Gbemdembu. Before John became sick, the brother had unexpectedly died. The diviner found that before he died, because he was jealous and envious, he had witched John.

> When the brother died he felt that John should die as well. The diviner saw the bitterness still existed, and that the sickness was because John was still being witched by his brother.
>
> Other things came out. The diviner also "saw" that the brother was still alive in his grave, that the body must be unearthed and killed for a second time. This time the body must be ritually cut into pieces and scattered in the evil forest. John's brother was a very bad witch and was the cause of John's illness.
>
> When the brother's body was unearthed, the body was fully alive with no decomposition; there was blood in his veins, he wore his finest Ronko, and his Islamic hat had not moved. When the diviner removed the cap, the body begin to protest by shaking. As they pulled the body out, the spirit fought back. Finally, the diviner cut his body into little pieces and they were thrown into the evil forest near his village. Once the brother was ritually killed John's health stablized. John still looks the same, his health is not much better, but John still lives to this day.

As this case suggests, order as a human construct, is based on the dialectical tension between conceptions of order and disorder. Landogo define disorder, as this case study suggests, as a social reality rife with human dispute, conflict and eventually crisis. The world is one of social crisis controlled by various kinds of legitimate and illegitimate **Nhoa nhanda** (witchcraft). Section Chief Pa Alimamy Konteh of Lagbelle village explains this paradox by saying:

> A man who lives long must have **Ndii lo** (a heart of patience and understanding). Long ago, there was enough food, there wasn't as much death, and we didn't have these witch problems. Why do we have these kinds of problems? Why are things the way they are?
>
> Well, you know life has both sweetness and sadness, good people and witches. Sickness is in this world too much. There is so much bad in the world. There is good, but not

> as much. Witch people will always be there to destroy your happiness and success. We cannot sit back and let this happen. We fight them in this world and in the other.

Momodu Kamara, a young man from Gbendembu town states:

> There is so much jealousy in the world. That is why people need swear medicine, divination, and sacrifice. It is all because of the power of jealousy. Jealously causes hatred and envy. These things make bad hearts and displeasing mind. This is why the world is divided into those who have and do not share. They suffer from **greed**. Those who don't have anything desire and want from others. They suffer from **envy**.
>
> If a person is filled with these feelings and he doesn't have **Ngau na** (four-eyes) to do his bad deeds, that person will go to a **Nhoa nwoo** (witch), a **Ngafoo na** (devil), a **Pee haai nwoo** (bad swear man) or a **Ngau nwoo** (diviner). They will either pay to find out how to bring misfortune and death to their enemy. That is how jealously works. We covet the success of others at any cost, even if we become a witch to get it.

What both Pa Alimamy and Momodu demonstrate is the way in which Landogo conceptualize a negotiated world of confrontation and partial success. In all phases of life individuals negotiate for power and control. Sometimes this negotiation process is individual and other times it is more oriented towards family, group and village. The use of witchcraft agency occurs for many reasons, but a central reason is to spoil the success of others in the family, and more importantly to create power where none existed before. The details of another witch related case study helps to illustrate this point.

Below I detail the case of Pa Kapri and misfortune (illness) brought to him by Aie (his first wife). Aie uses witchcraft agency because she was filled with anger over what she felt was poor treatment. She brought misfortune to Pa Kapri and her son (her only source of financial support) by using malevolent witchcraft against both father and son.

WITCHCRAFT IN THE FAMILY

Pa Kapri first wife was named Aie. Kapri had two children by Aie: Abdulai (was 40 years old when he died) and Yeanor (who was the first child, but who died when she was 45 years old).

Pa Kapri wasn't happy with Aie and took a second wife -- Nannah. He divorced Aie before Nanah had her first child -- Martha (now in her mid thirties). Nanah went on to have: Kempson, Neneh, Kama, Baba (a twin) Nyama, Johnson, and Samuel).

After the divorce Pa Kapri came and took Abdulai and Yeanor home to live with his new wife. Aie wanted to know what Kapri would do with "her" children because he was poor. He couldn't send either one to school. Eventually Yeanor got married and Abdulai became a tailor's apprentice.

Abdulai saved his money. He and Pa Kapri went to Makeni and bought a used sewing machine for his work. Abdulai stayed in Gbendembu, but would take all the money he made and give it to his mother who had moved to the village of Makpuke. Pa Kapri became "vexed" (angry) when he found out, and he drove Abdulai from his house.

Abdulai moved to Makeni. He kept the machine and continued to do tailor work. He saved money and begin to trade. As time passed, he became very successful. Abdulai and Pa Kapri made peace. But Aie was still angry with Abdulai because she felt he no longer took proper care of her. She felt he never gave her rice, cloth or clothes, lest of all money.

One day one of Abdulai's children became very sick. Abdulai went to a diviner in Makeni who told him his mother was witching the child; that she had made an arrangement with a devil so as to be rich and powerful. Aie had given the child to this devil as part of her contract for money and power. The child was now sick because the devil was eating the child's internal organs.

Abdulai and Pa Kapri confronted her. Aie denied having done any witchcraft.

Pa Kapri then went to one of the most powerful Mori men (a Muslim diviner) in the town of Gbendembu named Pa Beemba. Pa Beemba diagnosed that Aie had indeed sold the child of Abdulai to her devil. Pa Kapri knew that they must do whatever Aie requested, or the child would die.

Aie sent her brother (Pa Sesay) to Pa Kapri. He told then what Aie requested -- a white chicken, one pan of white rice, two five cent coins, two jiga (cowrie shells), and one needle. She took these things and gave them to her devil in a family ceremony.

Her brother, Pa Sesay, performed the ritual where you remove the devil from the child. He put the child on a mat with all the things Aie requested. Aie came and sat with the boy and said **Loouta** three times. This is the word she uses when she pays her devil. She goes on to say:

> I have taken you (the devil) to get money, food, clothing. I had given you this child in payment. This was wrong and now I am pulling this child from you. I was wrong.

Her brother forced Aie to swear an oath on **Sasa pee haai na** (the Sasa swear). She agreed to never again sell this child, or any of the other children to any devil. Pa Sesay brought a powerful leaf [given to him by a **Haai haai nwoo na** (a herbalist)]. The whole family drank the liquid, and rubbed it over their bodies.

Pa Kapri fought hard for the life of Abdulai's son, and eventually the boy became well again. But things were not really right. Even though Aie was sorry she hurt the child, she remained vexed (angry) with Pa Kapri because she felt he had publically disgraced her. Trouble and sickness started again.

Later, **Gbenggbe nhanda** (divination) revealed that she had returned to the same devil. At almost the same time a sickness "fastened" (attacked) Yeanor's body. She became so sick the mission doctors couldn't do anything. Yeanor came home to Pa Kapri's house in Gbendembu to try to get well. They began looking ground (divination) business. Abdulai came and left money for her care and for the looking ground business. Yeanor died before anything could be done. The money was left in a bundle of her things.

Pa Kapri found the bundle. He untied it and found money, an old tomato tin, and a devil's stone. Pa Kapri took the money, but left the tin and stone. Yeanor was buried properly by Pa Kapri, but almost immediately after her funeral he became **Mouhegbe** (crazy).

Kempson took his father to Pa Beembe who again found that Aie had gone back to her devil. More importantly he found that Pa Kapri shouldn't have untied Yeanor's bundle, handled her devil stone, nor taken the money from the "tin". The only person who rightfully had the power to untie the bundle was Aie. The reason being that it was Aie who had witched Yeanor.

Pa Beembe found that Pa Kapri's craziness was being caused by Yeanor's spirit who wanted her money, and Aie's devil (who had killed Yeanor). Pa Beembe said that the family must act quickly or Pa Kapri would die.

Kempson and Abdulai took Pa Kapri to another very powerful diviner -- Pa Alpha Amadu of Majolo. He has a reputation throughout Landogo country for knowing medicinal leaf that can remove **Mouhegbe na** (craziness) from a person. Pa Amadu gave Pa Kapri the leaf for three weeks, but he didn't improve and only became more deranged.Kempson took his father to the Wesleyan Mission Hospital in Kamakwie. They diagnosed his illness and gave him Western medicine. He became better. They discharged him. By the next day he was crazy.

Finally, Kempson and Abdulai took him to the famous Pa Soli Koogo (a feared diviner) to find out the nature of Pa Kapri's sickness. Pa Soli made **Haka na** (ladder made of sticks for burial) on which he tied various kinds of leaf and bits of white cloth. Two female assistants carried it around the village, they begin to tremble and call out the reasons for Pa Kapri's craziness -- That Yeanor's and Aie's powerful spirit and devil "have fastened" on Pa Kapri and will destroy him until he dies. It is also found that Abdulai will be attacked as well and will die because of Aie's witchcraft if he doesn't protect himself.

The business cost 80 leones, which is considered a great deal of money. Pa Soli agrees to try to cure Pa Kapri, but says the Aie must come to Gbendembu. She refuses. Kempson takes the case to Paramount Chief Kande Saio who agrees that she must come to Gbendembu.

Aie comes to Gbendembu and all go to the burial forest where Pa Soli chews some leaf and goes into trance. He

travels into the world of witches and forces Aie to admit to "witching" Pa Kapri and Abdulai. She confesses to all the family members her guilt, but has reasons. She begins to "talk on" all her grievances against Pa Kapri, and even on her son Abdulai. She states that she was never happy about Pa Kapri taking a second wife, nor that he divorced her; She was also angry that Pa Kapri drove Abdulai away and took the sewing machine. This made it harder for Abdulai to support her. She is mad that Pa Kapri took Yeanor's bundle. The money, because she witched Yeanor to get it, belongs to her.

Pa Soli says to Yai Aie: "We have come to beg you to release Pa Kapri. What do you need to do this?" She answers: 1 white white fowl (chicken), 1 pan of white rice, 2 cowrie shells, 1 half yard of white cloth, two coins, and one needle. Once she has these things the entire family came and talked to Yeanor's Yina. Pa Soli dug a small hole on the grave and put his divining bottle (the neck first) into the dirt. He said a few words and put some liquid on the grave. From then on he talked to Yeanor's Yina (spirit) in the world of the unseen.

He told the collected family that Yeanor requested all her things inside her bundle before she would release Pa Kapri. All her things were returned to her through Pa Soli. Inside the bundle was a iron ring, rock, feathers of a white fowl, the money and a needle. She requested white rice to be put on a white cloth over the grave. A fowl was brought. If it ate the rice it meant that Yeanor accepted. The fowl refused to eat the rice. Yeanor had refused.

Pa Soli then asked Aie to come and kneel on the grave: she clapped her hands and begged Yeanor to release Pa Kapri. Yeanor said to Pa Soli that he should give all her things to her mother. Aie accepted the white fowl only. She gave the rest of Yeanor's tools to Pa Soli. The family came back to town. Pa Soli gave Pa Kapri leaf medicine to drink. Once again, everyone rubbed it on their bodies. One week later he was well. He is well to this day.

In the above case study, Pa Kapri's actions create Aie's hostility and need to use the capacity of **Nhoa nhanda**. Aie's use of witchery was manifested in misfortune for a number of different individuals within their extended family effecting Abdulai, Abdulai's son, Yeanor, and Pa Kapri. After her divorce from Pa Kapri, Aie looked to her son Abdulai for

support. Initially, he supported his mother through his tailoring business. The structure of patrilineal relations created a situation where Abdulai was caught between his emotional ties to his mother and his ties of paternal obligation to his father. Angered by this Abdulai's action, Pa Kapri disowned Abdulai who left the house. Aie retaliates by bringing illness to Abdulai's son. However, the individual she is really trying to hurt is Pa Kapri.

Eventually through a very tangled set of secular and mystical actions, Pa Kapri becomes deranged. He is diagnosed as having three mystical forces attacking his body and mind: 1) Aie's witchcraft, 2) Aie's devil, and 3) Yeanor's spirit.

A sequential summary is as follows:

@ Aie witches Abdulai's son.
@ Pa Beembe divines it is Aie.
@ Aie admits to having a powerful devil.
@ Aie agrees to have the devil removed from the boy for certain witchcraft materials.
@ Pa Beembe uses **Sasa na bee haai na** (a powerful swear) to prove she has pulled the illness from the child.
@ Pa Beembe uses **Chaba nwa** leaf medicine to protect the child's body from further illness.
@ Aie is still very angry with Pa Kapri so she attacks her daughter Yeanor with her devil.
@ Yeanor dies in this world.
@ Pa Kapri finds Yeanor's devil bundle with money and other things. He takes the money.
@ Pa Kapri becomes crazy with **Mouhegbe.**
@ Kempson goes to Pa Beembe who finds out through divination that Aie killed Yeanor, and Yeanor's spirit and Aie's devil was attacking Pa Kapri.
@ Kempson takes his father to the herbalist Pa Amadu whose leaf does not wash away the craziness.
@ Kempson takes his father to the Wesleyan Mission Hospital in Kamakwie. The treatment doesn't work.
@ Pa Soli Kargbo is brought in to use very powerful divination and medicine called **Haka na** (the funeral ladder). He finds that both Yeanor and Aie are witching Pa Kapri.
@ Pa Soli begs Aie with witch materials. He performs an enactment which communicates with Yeanor's spirit and Aie. The two agree to stop the confrontation and free Pa Kapri. Pa Soli washes him with special leaf. Pa Kapri becomes better.

Aie either had, or acquired, the capacity of four-eye witchness. I do not know whether she was born with four-eyed capacity. Regardless, she knows and can see what is normally unknown and unknowable to most people. Her power, like other individuals who use witchcraft, is paradoxically malevolent or benevolent. In this case, the acts and events result from her basic witch capacity. She can use witchery so as to control events in any of the three major ways the Landogo conceptualize them: **Nhoa nhanda nyou** (bad events caused by a witch); or **Nhoa nhanda banda** (good events caused by a witch); and **Nhoa nhanda nwa hie hie** (wonderful things caused by a witch). The result is the creation of power through malevolent means.

When told of this particular case Pa Alimamy Konteh observed that:

> This things always happens inside a family. A man should have the same affection and love for all his wives. He should treat them equally, but it can't always happen that way. Because of this some woman take a different road in the family -- they steal, take lovers and try to destroy the husband's success. Normally, a man won't drive a wife for fear of hurting his children. But some women fight back in the world of witches. A wife can make him sick, have a bad harvest, or even kill him. If the husband gets sick and he can't figure out why, he will go do Looking ground.
>
> The man will call his family together. The brother or uncle asks that the witch among them. No one confesses. The uncle states that they are going to bring a swear. If the wife then confesses the matter is left and the man gets the leaf to cure his illness. But he won't trust her again.
>
> If she still won't confess they set a date and bring the swear man who announces when the swear will catch. She will confess. He will divorce her. Once the swear is set the husband should never have sexual intercourse with the wife or the swear will come after him as well.

In this case study **Aie** used witchcraft (found embedded in the various objects) to create power where she had none

before. **Pa Kapri's** misfortune is the result of his taking a second wife which filled his first wife with jealousy and envy. Aie enacted certain things to witch his success and to bring misfortune to his family. However, in this case the jealousy, greed, and use of witchcraft was kept within the context of the Fornah family. However, the reproduction of order is not always achieved in the family. The confrontation escalates and witch as well as swearing action moves to the level of tension into the social field of an entire village. Greed and jealousy in that context are transformed into fear, accusation and confession, and then death.

WITCHCRAFT IN SETTLEMENTS

In Chapter Four I detailed the case of Fari Konteh. At the death of his child, he went to a diviner who found that his daughter's death and two other recent deaths were related to a "large coven" of witches crowning a "female chief." This case should be considered a village-wide witch crisis. In contrast to the family case of Aie, who used witchcraft for issues of personal power and control, the experience of people in Makuranko was a shared community wide threat.

Fari's response was to send for a swear known to as **Ngafoo na aa goo nhu gua** (the devil that cleans its jaws). While I cannot go into a detailed review here, the swear found, drove and finally killed witches by "playing" all night in the center of Makuranko. By morning there was consensus in the village that the witches were considered cosmologically dead. But the very next night the certainty of their deaths had been once again transformed. People, in fact, were far from sure that witches had died at all, and if they had died, how many?

In many of the cases I have discussed normal disputes escalate toward higher levels of tension and conflict. It is clear that conflict is all to often resolved through compromise. Most conflicts, because they remain unresolved, move into witch crisis. In the case of Aie and Pa Kapri,

normal agents used witchcraft against one another. However, only Aie was found guilty of using malevolent witchery. Through divination and swearing, she confessed. Her malevolent use of witchery was kept in the context of the immediate family. However, in the second case Pa Foday's confession of malevolent witchcraft led to a village wide crisis. Why he used witchcraft and confessed remains unknown -- it is a factor of indeterminacy[1] -- yet it illustrates the dialectic tension between Landogo conceptions of order and disorder.

Disorder, as a force, brings different kinds of crisis and misfortune. Order is socially constructed and brought about by divination, swears and swearing, and confession of guilt. In Makuranko, for example, by morning after the second night of swearing, an old man who had an unusually successful garden and rice farm (Pa Foday) confessed to being a witch. He did what Landogo call **Keege Keege na** (tell, tell, [confessed]) to an old woman who had danced the **Njonjooma** the night before. In terms of her own power, she later publically claimed she knew he was one of the male witch chiefs and that he was involved with those who helped "eat" the previous three children. Pa Foday's response (one of power) was to further confess that they enjoyed three, but now needed seven more children. I am told that Pa Foday declared this in an almost boasting manner -- he would insure his witch friends would complete their task before he died! His confession instigated another speculative process concerning initial perceptions of the entire event.

In general, Landogo say that the process of killing witches is called: **Taa na nhoa nge ndaa** (to clean the village of witches). In the morning after the witch net was enacted the swear agent and village underwent a unique interrelated process: that witches were found in some space of the village, how many were killed, a confession was generated, a transformation occurred through the individual who confessed;

and if needed, other witches would be found who would confess and die.

In the two cases described, a confession proves a number of vitally important issues: witches exist, they can be killed, and that they will continue to be killed. Another point emerges which is that the overall crisis reproduces both certain and uncertain structures of secrecy. The crisis and the structures it represents remain forever in a state of indeterminacy because of the reality of escalating conflict and crisis. This process is generated through the paradoxical usage of witchcraft agency that seeks power.

REPRODUCING THE DIALECTIC

On a more abstract level, both examples of family and village-wide witch crisis and confession reproduce structures which maintain the dialectical tension between seen order and unseen disorder. Such a dialectic is achieved through the mechanism of secrecy, suspicion, and the search for mystical power. In both cases, witchcraft was used for various individual goals. In each case, there is a family, group or village response that forces confession. The crisis and resulting confession reproduce a conceptualized world where an individual's most feared enemies are inside the family and village. And yet, to publicly accuse another individual is to bring suspicion on one's self. Therefore, most accusations remain unsaid.

Unsaid accusation is a mechanism in the escalation process. One can privately suspect another individual, but such feelings and intentions almost always remain secret. Aie and Pa Foday (on the surface0 don't appear to be witches. As crisis evolves over time it becomes clear that many Landogo have not only engage in secret actions, but have many "secret

friends" as well. If we return to Chapter Four (Fari Konteh's baby died suddenly) a single death does not arouse suspicion. However, his daughter's death was the third infant mortality in Makuranko over a short period of days. Fari thus used the powers of a diviner whi should be seen as a negotiator and broker of secrecy. That diviner asserted that the deaths were evidence of witch crisis -- what I label catastasis. As a penultimate level of tension, it is paralleled by penultimate levels of secrecy.

Catastasis is that set of events (as in the final scenes of a drama) which lead to, and thus require, a final act -- a kind of catastrophe. Landogo firmly believe that witch crisis leads to catastrophe. This state culminates in events that seemingly rectify, make right and moral. In most cases a witch crisis, swearing and confession creates paradoxical feelings of fear and awe. A swear event produces certainty. Certainly nobody doubts that the witches have died during the night. Swears never fail to work unless a witch has made a pact with a very powerful devil that protects them. It is absolutely clear that the rest of the village's children will live and that these kinds of moments are where words of agreement and consensus are shared. There should be no reason to fear an attack in the near future.

However, it is clear from discussions with members of many small settlements (like Makuranko) that people remain afraid and suspicious even after the particular witch event is said to be complete. The event, while represented as certain is essentially indeterminate. Uncertainty, while not verbally articulated, is symbolically and metaphorically articulated in people's actions. Despite this unsaid uncertainty, the enactment appears certain. Witches die. The swear works. A close family member, a friend, neighbor, or lover dies. No one

knew that the individual was a witch. Someone will versed in secret society witch business (Alimamy "YY" Konteh) states:

> Witch business is bad because it always makes you suspect someone you never suspected before. When someone confesses, it proves that there are always secret enemies within the village that never appeared to be witchlike. That is why we call witches your "friend." In some way they were your friend before until they became your enemy.

I argue that disorder is a normal state of affairs which escalates from catastasis to catastrophe in daily life. Such processes play off one another not in terms of equilibrium, but in terms of oscillation. Not only do these configurations dialectically reproduce and maintain one another, but they are embedded in a larger world view which conceptualizes the world as a confrontation of opposed forces. The confrontation, however, in the final analysis is unresolvable. Lived reality is a story of disorder whose existence is exacerbated by a vast majority of Landogo.[2] The concept of social chaos applies, in part because malevolent and benevolent witch action creates the chaos. Neither action is more organized than the other. Malevolent witchcraft is just as organized, rule bound, and processual, as its opposite is.

Some anthropologists have discussed such circumstances through the use of the concept of entropy.[3] Entropy, however, has a precise Western analytical meaning of progression towards random chaos. My understanding of Landogo does not reflect a progression toward chaos, but rather a regular level of social and cosmological chaos manifested through malevolent and benevolent witchcraft. While Landogo social life is not entropic, it also manifests social process with conflicting relationships, ideas, and forces that all too often require use of both benevolent and malevolent witchcraft. This pathos predictably destroys **Ngo ila's** thinly veiled illusions and allusions of agreement and cooperation. When catastrophe occurs, individuals, families, villages move dangerously close

to a permanent inversion of disorder over order. Indeed, this happens where misfortune is so pervasive that an entire village destroys the settlement and moves.

I have previously implied that numerous swears exist that respond to a case of witchcraft. But there are limited ways to initiate a response -- 1) The diviner's knowledge; and then 2) Through the agency of the swear and swear agent's control over his swear. Swearing in a witch crisis must be community wide because the complications go beyond any single individual. The entire settlement is at stake. It is through a catastrophic state of witch disaster that people are forced to come together in a state of agreement. The more a village seeks concerted action, the higher the levels of overt suspicion and accusation. What I mean here is that the village must kill witches, but as they exterminate witches the swearing kills a host of people to whom one has close ties.Of course, these may also be enemies of long standing. In a **Nhoa njia** no one is above suspicion, people live in continual fear of one another, and in fear of one another's thoughts and actions. Witch crisis is on-going, and therefore so are the suspicions and fears.

CHAPTER FIVE NOTES

1. I use Moore's 1975, 1977, and 1986 term to represent those things clearly out of the region of individual control.

2. Such processes are referred to as entropic by other Africanists. Please see Kopytoff 1982 for a more detailed analysis.

3. Kopytoff (1982) in an article on Suku of Zaire suggests that entropy is a fundamental force among African societies. Karp has also referenced this concept in numerous articles while not referring to such a force as entropy.

CHAPTER SIX
CONTROL and CAPACITY

Chapter Five described witchcraft agency as a dialectic between order and disorder. This dialectic is articulated through benevolent and malevolent witchcraft capacity enacted, collectively or individually, through actions, representations, and complex constructions. Daily life involves a complex process where confrontation occurs between these kinds of power that have different uses and moral implications. Benevolent power is moral and legitimate, and malevolent power is immoral and illegitimate; yet at the heart of Landogo social process is the acquisition and use of power.

Power among Landogo is associated with use of esoteric knowledge and its representation. Once applied through representation and action, knowledge can direct or impede, heal and protect, as well as injure and kill. At the heart of confrontation between human constructed order and witch generated disorder is control -- the aesthetic capacity of some individuals to enact both individual or collective agency[1] that can transforms, alters and terminates human life.[2] Whoever controls such power, controls life.

This observation results from a number of ethnographic assumptions about social interaction. Their social system does not always work elegantly, which exists in direct contrast to the clean structural logic of processual equilibrium utilized by many anthropologists. This is not to say Landogo are devoid of structure, yet their interaction is characterized by pervasive levels of uncertainty. If uncertainty is an ethnographic reality, than it can also becomes a lens for understanding meaning and motivation in situations of witch crisis.[3] In retrospect, it is now clear that Landogo don't always have answers to their most pressing existential problems and questions. Certainty is fleeting and yet swears

and swearing processes create power and certainty out of what has run amok. This is achieved through certain symbols, actions and constructions.

Another case study illuminates this confrontation as well as illuminates my theoretical perspective on the power of representation. Here I use data collected on Landogo twins.

CASE STUDY

> Well, twins (**tua waa**) are something from God (**ngebo nwa**) but they are four-eyed (**ngau na**) witch people (**nhoa nwoo na**). They die so much. You must treat them specially because they are so jealous...you give them the same clothes, food, bed, joining society at the same time...all equal. If they fit you, they grow to help. Maybe they will bring good fortune to a family because they often become big people -- diviners, leaf and swear people, even society heads. If they don't fit you, they scatter your family. From the start they show their wickedness by killing often, sometimes for no reason. You must wash them with special leaf (**chaba nwa** and **faha nwa**) which controls them and protects them from other witches.[4]

Landogo twin representations, reveal the ideology of witch, witchery and witchcraft. A twin, as witch, often generates failure and death in a family and must be controlled and coerced through the benevolent witchcraft agency of the twin mother (her use of medicinal leaf).[5] Once again, Landogo conceptualize agency as being defined by having "four-eyed" ability to see and move in the world of the unseen.

The twin, and the agency of the twin mother manifest Landogo notions of the capacity for control. Quite often this control is the power to mediate between existing disorder in the world and its dissipation in the socially constructed ordered world. Benevolent agency allows for construal and interpretation -- the capacity to control twins. The capacity to control a twin-as-witch must have a specific agent and field within which it is articulated or enacted. Enactment, as

I use it here, is a framed and situated practice in time and space. In a sense, the swear agent and the twin mother attempt to achieve the same goal: where conscious control is put into practice. Most twin enactments are precisely formulated and propositional, and they share the same ethos of swearing in the context of witch crisis. Therefore, twin as witch, Pa Foday as confessed witch, or Aie as practicing witch are conceptually the same.

In general, Landogo enactments judge the actions of other human agents, as well as non-human agents. Enactment is an adjudicational process where formal and informal (secular and mystical) construl of so-called opinions, events, and testimony becomes "facts." A twin (or its figural representation carved after its death) makes the existential clash of moral and immoral worlds visible and tangible. African peoples have varied conceptions of twinning. Some view twins as anomalous negative births which confound the moral reproductive cycle.[6] Kopytoff (1987) for example, finds that among Suku of Zaire infant mortality and female reproductive capacity is infused with social tension, ritual authority and power. Among Bambara and Malinke, Imperato (1971, 1975 and 1977) finds that twins are a blessing from God (**faro**) to be treated with special reverence. From the Landogo perspective, twins are an on-going focus of ritual action that gains only partial control over the twin-as-witch. Control can never be complete.

The medicinal leaf used in Landogo twin ritual is part of the same system of powerful medicines embedded in swears used by Landogo swear agents in their continuous confrontation with witches and witch crisis. I have used other examples which clarify the on-going negotiation process in the cosmos. For example, if a man wants the position of village headman, he will attempt to secure that position through speech making, calling in political debts, and giving gifts of various material goods to potential supporters (see Chapter Three).

These strategies appear to be secular political actions. But the same candidate secures his desired position through benevolent and malevolent witchcraft agency -- going to a leaf person who washes his body making it impervious to the mystical agency used by other candidates. The candidate may also seek the advice of a diviner, who will clarify existing hurdles and enemies, as well as prescribe certain sacrifices and swear medicines that ensure future success and protection.

In analogous ways, a Landogo family's actions follow a similar pattern because twins are as equally powerful in both the seen and unseen world. At their conception, twins confound the normal "moral order" of single births as a double "witch" event. They are a volatile reproductive departure from moral time and space. As witch, a twin is strong willed, extraordinarily clever and strong, yet consumed by jealousy and envy. Envy and jealously, as immoral states of the heart and mind, lead individuals to use socially destructive witchcraft (see Chapter Four and Five). Because of these tendencies, families with twins are forced to negotiate with the twin to attempt to create order out of their never-ending disorder. In all the examples used in this dissertation, various agents want to ensure success. Each Landogo consciously applies the same panoply of supernatural knowledge, technology, and medicine used in all forms of confrontation.

In the case of twins, the family confronts their pervasive anxiety about their twins by negotiating with it. The negotiation is about power. The emphasis is on the negotiation since control, resolution and even transformation of twin-as-witch as disorder may, or may not be achieved (see Beidelman 1986: 103, Kopytoff 1987: 186-187).[7] In each example, all of these ritually enacted agencies share a similar conjunctive logic -- natural substances found in the world have benevolent and malevolent power. Both can be used for control; blame for human misfortune and failure, for that

matter, is channeled to higher level cosmological witch agent and witch process (see Kopytoff 1987:202). The ritual's action, logic and meaning embodies notions of control in a volatile cosmos where witches prevail.[8] A more detailed description explains this.

TWIN ENACTMENTS:ALIVE

As a whole, twining rituals reflect a number of interrelated spirit agencies: 1) **Chaba nwa** leaf, which controls, activates, and directs the power of the twin spirit, 2) **Faanha nwa** leaf, known as "big rock" because of its protective as well as aggressive properties, 3) The twin (**tua moo na**) or twin representations (**tou haga moo na**) and 4) Ritual negotiation with a twin spirit(s) situated in a shrine context. Despite the largely tentative nature of such control, I argue that enactment embodies the construction of power. A proverb partially explains Landogo conceptions of power: **Tee lo aa kua tee la.** This means: "a chicken pulls power from the mouth of a chicken."[9] This suggests that power is more than strength itself, that real power is the ability to apply knowledge; and that power needs energy. Energy must be found and accessed.

During the early years of a twin's life a family may enact **too to loo nhi nya** (pinning the waists on the ground). This ritual puts the twins in a place of disorder, i.e. in the bush or on the garbage heap and "pulls leaf medicine" which redirects their "bad-eye" toward moral pursuits. Making the twin "fit" its family is achieved through the placement of the twins within their own matrix (an inversion where disorder is fought with disorder). Ritual washing occurs using **Chaba nwa** (big ceremonial leaf) which ritually activates and focuses all the various participants, and **Faha nwa** (big rock leaf) which then protects those same participants

Chaba nwa and **faha nwaa** are ground together into a viscous liquid which is rubbed over the bodies of mother and twins.[10] The mother performs a brief litany which asks the

twins, twin, or carved representation of dead twins, to use their powers to help the family rather than destroy it. To help is construed as being moral. Once again, there is no distinction between a live or dead twin since either is a force to be reckoned with. "Washing" temporarily controls a twin as witch who is not naturally inclined to help those who bring them into the world. The leaf "washes" their bad eye away, makes them moral humans, and momentarily gives the illusion that the confrontation in the cosmos is stalemated.

TWIN ENACTMENTS: DEAD

Another twin enactment is the creation of a twin shrine and subsequent ritual negotiation with the dead twin's spirit. Twin death is an ambiguous event; families mourn briefly and bury the body with little ceremony. A twin's death directly affects the mother and she must be washed with **chaba nwa** and **faa nha nwa** leaf to protect and close her off from the twin who will want to take her to the spirit world. If both die, the twin mother must be washed by a mother of living twins. The dead twin is never again mentioned because Landogo believe that the dead twin will hear its name, become jealous, and kill the mother so as have her in the world of witches (**nhoa nhu**). Therefore, Landogo say: "your brother or sister has gone to buy salt."[11]

At death a figure is quickly carved by a blacksmith or a local carver. Figures range from the highly elaborate and embellished, to the simple and unadorned.[12] Twin figures are the most public figural representation in a society where most art and representation are used secretly and tied to the symbolism of esoteric societies.[13] It is placed in a simple mud shrine enclosure found on the front porch of a family's house. The shrine is most often populated by a single twin figure who sits on a small mat, although there are other configurations. A bottle is almost always found which contains the liquid mixture of **chaba nwa** and **faha nwa** leaf, as well as **Boke me na** (two bamboo stick gongs) used to call the dead

twin's spirit. The "stick person" is often dressed in shorts or white lapa.

The process of negotiation with the dead twin (or twins) occurs on a regular basis. Families can negotiate for good rice harvests, money, good health, protection from evil, for many healthy children and good fortune. An entire family may approach the shrine, but it is the mother who is the primary ritual agent. She pours the **chabba nwa** and **faha nha nwa** leaf mixture into her hands and rubs the mixture on her body, on the living twin if there is one, and on the "dead" twin in the shrine. She will sit in front of the shrine and knock the sticks together which summons the spirit of the dead twin. The ritual litany is deceptively simple and the mother might say:

> **Tua waa indi ngi gbee o ngi gbe nhoa nyou nyou lo mbe. Nhoa belaai lo bei taa na nhu india. Kangaa tuu wa indi ti mingaa nyou kpe, ka nhoa belaai natiinii taa ndegaai foha na bendi. Ngoo ngulu indi lenga Foha oa ngeya, ka ngenge Ka nahoo ka Koonhunee ka ndengaa. Kanga ngulu indi i gula togee. Ndaga na nwooli na Kangaa i bi nwanhu gbee nhanda nyou nhu ina ba ge ngenge nwa.**[14]
>
> These twins each have a powerful witch. There is witch-business in this village. Let these twins prevent bad people, evil and witches from unlocking this family's power. We have come to "talk" to this stick {the twin}. Give us power, job, money, happiness and children. Let the stick "come down" [the twin's spirit] safely. We ask the leaf for protection from evil which might come in our work.

The mother will ritually feed rice and plasas [the sauce put on the rice], give palm wine to drink, and possibly sacrifice a fowl to the twin's spirit. If the family's request is a large one, she will also give a new white lapa (cloth for a skirt or shirt), earrings and a few coins. Because of the volatile nature of twins, this negotiation process will occur again as the situation merits. I argue that the twinning

phenomena is a visible and tangible manifestation of the same volatile confrontation found embedded in Landogo witch crisis. As a cosmological process, twin as witch and disorder, must be controlled and coerced (via the agency of leaf) to be moral and kind, have good habits and ways. But control over a twin as an agent with extreme power is temporary, situational and fleeting. Such a dialectical struggle is characterized by oscillating agreement. What seems clear is that ideals of certainty in life, as an ideology, always exist in contrast to the existence of conflict and witch generated misfortune, suffering, disease, and death.

In the case of twinning rituals, the meaning is generated by modes of thought which fuse twin representations and problems of biosocial reproduction as evidence of cosmological disorder. Twin representations are vital aspects of the ritual reproduction of Landogo knowledge and society. Twinning, is both a tangibly real biosocial complex and an exercise of moral and representational imagination (see Beidelman 1986 and Merrill 1988). Ritual washing with **chaba nwa** and **faha nwaa** embodies the most powerful Landogo esoteric knowledge, thought, and action concerning a human agency's using leaf medicine (**haa haa nwa na**) in an attempt to control a non-human agency.

The twin mother (**too nga ti ngi**) is an agent with special capacity for control: she "puts" medicine (**too kpau**) which "ties" (**ngii be**) the twin(s) and "protects" the family by "closing" them off in a metaphorical "circle" (**ma nhu gbee** and **kamba na**). In this example, knowledge is capacity, and capacity is power. The twin mother is the only family member, other than various ritual specialists discussed elsewhere, with power to redirect the "four-eyed" nature of twin-witch. The mother controls, but cannot stop the misfortune, disease and death that plagues the family as a result of the twin's power. Hence, mystical enactments with high levels of disordered power, be it the witch net, the Women's dance with

pounding sticks, or even a twin ritual, are concerned with control, and more deeply with morality and its adjudication.

It should be clear that a witch is not always an immoral individual. A witch can be a category of moral individual, action, moral as well as event. Hence, the categories **Nhoa nhanda** (witch things happening), **Nhoa nwoo na** (the witch person), and **Nhoa na** (witch capacity) are not always disordered or disorderly. A witch, as a contradictory category of person with four-eyed capacity, must always play some role in the existential battle between forms of disorder and order.

For example, a swear man or diviner are both found embedded in the category of **Nhoa obenga** (confessed witch who does good things). One aspect of their confessed witch agency is a public willingness to perform good things -- such as fighting and killing **Nhoa mbaalaai** (bad witch people). One can find an endless series of paradoxical categories that need not be resolved. In fact, to resolve them would be to take their inherent power and divest them of meaning.

To understand the actual mechanisms of the mystical swear adjudication it is best to "unpack" the events, forces, actors and performances: 1) **Pee haai nwa**: the powerful swear (the mystical agency itself); 2) **Pee haai moo na**: the swear agent (who controls and directs the powerful spirit agency which can cure and kill); 3) **Oo pee pee ngaa**: the actual enactment (the mystical enactment of bringing the swear alive); and 4) **Taa na nhoa nge ndaa**: the transformation process (the mystical agency "cleans" [kills]) of the village and witches.

Landogo **Pee haai** (swear medicine that fights) is a vast and complex matrix of mystical force and power. While **Toto na loo ngaa** and **Nyanha haai njo njooma bee gbaea** are some of the more powerful examples of swears, a full range exist from the weak to those even more powerful. Regardless of their level of power, they have efficacy in that they act on both humans and witches in the world of the seen and unseen. In general, swears (what other African societies sometimes call oaths,

curses, or fetishes) are really power objects, spirit containers, medicine bundles and protective devices.

Many African societies have such mechanisms; these mechanisms help one to understand the manner in which the society construes causality, social order and cosmological disorder. Among Landogo swears have a variety of functions. Some swears exist as generalized deterrence, others are used to force confession by bringing sickness, others make an individual deranged, others exist as threshold protection at the entrances to farms, gardens, and on trees that bear fruit; others still are used to protect human spaces such as houses, bedrooms, kitchens, bodies and body cavities. Some swears need only brief evocation, some none at all, and some are enacted by a complex ritual. In general, they can be made by a specialist, or by a non-specialist using specialist's instructions and can be hung in, on, or at the place that needs protection. There is another genre of swear primarily used in secular disputes to prove innocence. The goal of these is to force confession, but not to kill.

When **Nhoa nhanda** (witch business) occurs, the swears used are very powerful and difficult to control. This level of swear is called **Pee haai nwa** (very powerful swear). These swears initiate a process of sickness, confession, and then metaphorical or actual death. This level of swear is highly secret and mystical, and often the focus of an entire men's or women's "secret" society. In swear has its own particular logic, meaning, methods and results. Such knowledge is strictly controlled by a few individuals so that the swear's actions and results are public (in that they kill witches) but only a few individuals really know what, when, how, and upon whom the swear will act. There are cases where the swear man knows only that the swear will act and kill. But such conscious awareness shifts, and is indeed, situational and changing.

THE BIG SWEAR AS BIG MAN

Here I focus on the "big swear." While most big swears are portable, a few are stationary, shrine-like architectural spaces. For the most part, a portable swear is carried to a given job in its own bag or case. Once at the site of swearing, the swear is set up, awakened, fed kola nut, given new clothes, informed of the job at hand, and then asked if "he" will perform that job. Swears are conceptualized as volatile antropomorphized spirits. They are placated in ways similar to the "big man among others" who have powerful wants as well as desires. When an individual or group negotiates a swear, they do so using political analogies: a swear is a "big man among chiefs," and "we give you proper ceremony and honor." Swears like money, animals and wearing big [powerful] people's clothes made of bright cloth. You must adorn them with plenty of cowrie shells, horns, mirrors, rope and brightly colored red, black and white string. From a western perspective it is difficult to conceptualize a swear object as having intentionality and consciousness. But, Landogo have little trouble with such a perspective -- if one fails to treat a powerful swear with respect it becomes indignant and might take revenge. Accordingly, when a client goes to a powerful swear, the client puts money or things of value in the metaphorical "big swear's hands" as a word of greeting. Depending on the case, a client might also give things of value -- cloth, a goat, sheep or even a cow, rice, and Leones. Concerning the feisty nature of swears Kempson Fornah suggests that:

> Well, you have a bad problem. Maybe it's inside your family. But you don't know. You go to the swear man. He says he doesn't know if the swear will hear your case. Well, you give that swear some kola nut so that it will awaken from its sleep. Then you give it money so it will become hot. To be 'hot' means that its eyes and ears will see and hear, especially if the case is big. Then, you give the swear a goat so that when it "bites" the guilty person that its jaws crush. If you pay a swear to do your business you must continue to feed it well. Maybe the swear man will ask you for a sheep or goat, or at least

a chicken. You go and beg them. Then you cook plenty of rice.

SWEAR VARIATIONS

Swears have endless variations and anomalies of medicine. In contrast to western concepts of medicine, swear medicine is part of the larger matrix related to knowledge and power. It is difficult to conceptualize Landogo medicine in the western analytical sense, because among Landogo medicine refers more generally to things powerful, rather than only to things curative. Swears, for example, need not necessarily be codified only in objects, but can be found in processes like enactment, in single strand symbols, secret sounds and music, and in specific anti-witch function tools. In many cases, words and complex liturgy are tied to object or group of objects.

Here I describe a number of typical swears as used by Landogo in **Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu** chiefdom. I want to make it clear that most of these are unique to this specific geographical area, and that within a range of ten to twenty miles the manner in which swears are constructed and represented changes substantially. They all share a general conceptual logic as mystical mechanisms. One of the most powerful and fearful swears is **Ngai Mbaka bee haai** (the iron swear/or blacksmith's tools). This swear (see Figure number 1) is made, as well as, enacted by the village black smith. **Ngai mbaka** drives witches from a village. While it has some variation in construction, it is normally found in a small square enclosure (made of sticks or logs) that is filled with small stones or sand. Some variations have an old sword inserted into the ground near a pile, or grouping of stones (see Figure number 2). Many of the stones have had their shape altered by a chisel and mallet, and although not ornately carved, represent the black smith's control over a very hard natural substance (see Figure number 3).

Other examples of **Ngai mbaka** are more complex and made from old bellows pipes (**Fuu ee na**) used in iron working (see Figure mumber 4). I have seen and documented other examples where a rifle barrel is used. The **Fuu ee na** are inserted into the ground and a small iron pot (**Ka boo na**) is put directly next to it (see Figure number 5). Small bits of iron are "fed" to the pot called **Ngaigo nhee**. Landogo also use other "iron swear" variations. One of the simplest is two pieces of iron (**Ngai bee haai**) knocked together mimicking the sound of iron working. Knocking the iron, especially at night, is believed to scare any witch person who has come in the shape/form of a bird. The bits of iron are knocked together to make the sound of "iron-on-iron,"or as Landogo say "witch-on-witch."

Another powerful example of Landogo swears is called **Kpona** (the small house). In **Kpona,** The swear spirit is contained in a miniature house (see Figure number 6) often found on the outskirts of a village. While most likely of Temne origin, some Landogo villages which are contiguous to Temne groups have **Kpona.**[15] At the village of **Wangi** (nine miles north of Lagbelle village in **Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu** chiefdom) one can find a **Kpona** swear on a path nearby the village. This swear is primarily used for retribution. If someone has done a very bad thing to someone else like theft, insult, adultery, and even witch business, they might use this swear though it is very expensive.

One young man that I know from both Lagbelle village and Gbendembu town -- Basi Konteh -- has been afflicted by **Kpona** for some time. He claims to undergo periods where he cannot control himself, where he acts crazy and steals. He claims that one of his father's first wives put "Pa Kpona" on him for something he did to her when he was younger. I do not more about the conflict except what he feels it has done to his life -- he suffers from one misfortune to the next.

Kpona always has a swear agent -- a person who acts as the voice of the swear's spirit. If an individual has a

serious grudge against another, he or she goes to the devotee and pays for a special stone to "talk on" (really to attach one's grievences to). After you list your grievences against your protagonist, the stone is put inside **Kpona's** house. Landogo say **Kpona** "eats" the stone, and by so doing eats the clients's words and grievences. **Kpona** will "catch or fasten" (actually meet, confront and attack) the antagonist. In a set amount of time that individual will become deranged with **Kpona's** mental illness, i.e. they have been caught by **Kpona**. Individuals afflicted talk to themselves, urinate as well as defecate in public. They are without shame and considered truly sick.

Landogo say that this swear is usually incurable. If the person has an early diagnosis, through divination, a family might be able to find a cure. The cost is prohibitive. The person's family must go to **Kpona** swear agent and "beg" to save that person. It is an expensive because the agent must call twenty-one other devotees of **Kpona** who come and enact the cure. These specialists are said to "pull the medicine" from the crazy individual. The family of the crazy person must buy rice, meat, salt, pepper, palm oil and leafy greens for the **Kpona** devotees to feast upon. The family usually gives a goat to **Kpona**, and one of the devotees will sacrifice the goat, cut the neck, and let all the blood spill onto the afflicted individual. The devotees wash him in the blood and then wrap him in two white lapa (cloth). The crazy person must eat "chop" (rice, beef and plasas) mixed with special leaf known only to **Kpona** devotees. He eats this special chop until he improves. Some individuals are so crazy that they never improve.

Another swear example is called **Haka na bee haai** (the burial stick ladder swear). Of all the swears I have seen and documented, **Haka na** is aviolent representation of death (see Figure number 7). Found in the small village of Njalinhu near Makuranko, **Haka na bee haai** uses a pounding stick (similar to

that used by women in **Njonjooma)** and a small representation of a funneral ladder used at Landogo burials. Bits of white cloth wrap the ladder together. The ladder is then placed in a split pounding stick and inserted into the ground.

A number of informants from other villages have interpreted this photo. All suggest that this is a very bad swear that kills. **Haka na** is a metaphor for: if you, as witch, come here and bring havoc as well as misfortune, then the swear will put you in your grave; i.e. it will put the witch person on a funneral ladder for their own death. This swear was created by a specific individual -- I do not know whether a diviner or swear person -- with high level capacity. People fear this person's work. I have seen a number of this individual's other creations and all share similar aesthetic logic -- use of the **Ngete na** (rice pounding stick) and other everyday material objects embedded in a split at the top of the pounding stick (see Figure number 8).

Landogo say, in general, that to split a stick is similar to rthe process of carving. The process changes and activates **Ngete aa bia gbing bou nga** (we have split the pounding stick). Once the stick is firmly in the ground they will say: **Ngete abia gbon nyaa** (split mata pencil, please help me?). In this case the function of the pounding stick is transformed into a complex multivocal symbol that has many applications. The example of the women's **Njonjooma** dance where the sticks activate the swear is obviously important, however, there are other examples that are very interesting as well.

The pounding stick can be found at crossroads, paths, near and over door ways, or at farms (see Figures numbers 9, 10 and 11). One very simple swear and sacrifice is called **Ngete chaga na** (pounding stick sacrifice). It is sacrifice that fights for a woman's children (see Figure number 12). Another powerful variation is called **Chaga Tee bee haai na** (dead fowl in the pounding stick swear). This is also considered a very violent swear that has as its goal to bring

death (see Figure number 13). This swear was found in the very small village of Makonko (around four miles south from Makuranko and Njalinhu) and it is likely that this swear was designed and made by the same individual who created the **Haka na bee haai na** (Please see Figure number 6).

One of my good friends and field assistants, C.S. Kamara, suggested when we passed this exact swear that: "this is a bad-bad swear because it is "the death of a living creature." Part of its constructed materials was an entire, dead and rotting, chicken, with its neck wedges into the split top of the stick. C.S. suggests that the chicken was left to die, or had already died as its neck was broken, and that this swear was very similar to the **Haka na** because both swears metaphorically state the same powerful point: "this is what we will do to you if you are a witch person." After passing through the village (after I took numerous slides of the swear construction) C.S. stated: "This is a very fearful place." and "this is evidence that there were many witches in the village." We left quickly.

However, I do not want to suggest that all swears are as powerful as these. There are many mid-range swears that deter and fight, but do not kill. On such swear (see Figure number 14) is called **Nyie Too haga bee haai na** (the fish net swear on the farm). Similar in many way to the logic of the rice pounding stick, fish net has a number of different applications -- it can be worn on the body, made into a bundle and placed on a path, or placed in a container like a gourd or pot (see Figure number 15), or hung on a doorway, or at a farm (see Figure number 16). Old fish net, no longer functioning, has many mystical uses. The net represents a number of complex Landogo concepts concerning protection, catching and fighting. In normal life, the net catches small fish and crustaceans. They are used extensively and when wear out are thrown to the rubbish heap. The logic of swear construction follows that the

net's material function can be transformed into analogous mystical function which becomes a new dimension of power.

Concerning the fish net swear, Section Chief Pa Alimamy Konteh states:

> This is a fish net bundle/swear at a farm entrance. People put rice kanda (the husk) inside with special leaf. They then tie it in a bundle. It can be used at the entrance to the village, or anywhere witch people like to meet. It is both a swear and a sara (a sacrifice). You hang it up or put it on the ground. The breeze will pick up the witch medicine (rice kanda and medicine) and carry it to the witch people as they bring havoc to the farm. When witch people come to the farm they come in the form of birds, and they will eat your rice. As they eat the swear catches an they die.

Pa Sorie Kamara (village headman from **Paanhagbou**) suggests a rich and detailed description of the fish net swear:

> These people feared witch people. They brought this swear. This is a farm swear which uses rotten things to give it power. The thing on the two sticks is a rotten mata pencil (for pounding rice), there is a rotten fish net from the garbage heap, and then they mix it with rotten rice kanda. There is leaf inside as well. Well, then you hang it up and wait for your "friend" to come and visit you. Your "friend" will turn to bird and "eat" all of your efforts. The net will catch the witch, the kanda will poison it, the leaf will start to kill it, and then the pounding stick will finish the witch off by knocking it (**Gbagbana**). That is power. The witch is finished.

Once the fish net is reused and reconstructed it becomes transformed materially, conceptually, and cosmologically into controlled, although disorderd, power. Pa Sorie's perspective is highly instructive because he places emphasis on the rotten state of the fish net and pounding stick. As items no longer useful to humanity they have been discarded to the rubbish heap. Rottenness in this case, (a disordered state and process) is not without power or purpose; it can be mystically transformed and reused if one has the knowledge.

In the example shown in this particular fish net swear the farmer was suspicious that witches were eating his rice. The fish net becomes a mid-level swear medicine that requires a few specialist skills (in terms of preparation and enactment) but practical consciousness suffices because it is the farmer who finds the materials: old fish net, mata pencil, rotten rice kanda, special leaf medicine, and then he will put up the fish net swear.

It is put at the various entrances to his farm. He will say:

> "Oh Papa God, protect this farm that I have made. Some witch man, I don't know who, is trying to ruin my rice. Since I have pulled this swear and sara let it catch any witch that comes here; let the swear fight them. This is all that I ask."

The "putting" **Nyie too haga bee haai na** is a rather simple process, in comparison to other more powerful swears, but it still represents power. The enactment of the fish net instigates a process of reflection, speculation and heightened consciousness -- WHY was this done, to WHO is it directed at, and WHEN will it catch them?

Another powerful swear is called **Luba. Luba** swear medicine has many variations -- some are oriented toward protecting a family, others toward controlling a particular wife, and others toward protection of an entire village. One variation I have documented is called **LUBA BEE HAAI** (the Luba swear with an anti-witch stone, see Figure number 17). It is usually found in front of a family's house or compound represented by a carved stick inserted in the ground (see Figure number 18). On the flat top of the carved **Luba** is a small stone that fights witches.

If the stone falls off the stick it means that the swear has fought a witch person. This kind of **Luba** is used to protect a family. They will periodically give the **Luba** rice flour as a sacrifice. There are other variations found in numerous areas of Landogo and Logo country. One variation is

called **LUBIAYA BEE HAAI** (the Luba swear who lives in the stick). This **Luba** swear (see Figure number 19) is used to control a man's wife and her lovers (see Chapter Seven). Men feel that if a wife is barren, or if she continually loses children in child birth, it is because she has extra-marital affairs; she may even be a witch. The husband will have a **Lubiaya** devotee from another family come and ritually wed his wife the the **Luba** spirit. The wife then becomes a devotee throughout her life. If she has sexual relations with someone other than the husband, **Luba** will catch her. When she has sons, the first wife of the oldest son will be forced to marry their family's Luba spirit. In this way Luba is passed on from one generation to the next.

Another kind of **Luba** exists that protects the entire village. It is called **Luba kpangba nwa** (the stick that knocks hard). Landogo consider this version as a swear (see Figure number 20) that fights witches and acts as a shrine to the old people (ancestors). It is found in numerous villages in **Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu** chiefdom. Characteristically, it has a square enclosure (much like the enclosure of **Ngai mbaka na**) filled with sand or pebbles. A **Luba** stick is inserted in the ground, and in some cases an old cast iron bowl which has bits of iron which are said to feed the **Luba** spirit.

At a lessor level of power, there are other swear genres found in various kinds of bottles, bowls, gourds and pots. This kind of swear is called by various names which reference the actual medicine inside the bottle -- **Kali Chaba bee haai na** (or **Chani chaaga na**), **Kali kain bee haai na**, and **Kali Firo na**. These are all swear bottles. One of the many bottle swear variations is called **Kali firo na** (see Figure number 21). This variation has a Koranic verse inscribed on a piece of paper contained inside the bottle. The verse has intentionality, fights, protects, and in some cases kills witches and evil people. Most bottle swears are hung at the main door to a house, somewhere inside his house, or placed somewhere on the

farm. This swear will then fight anyone who wants to "spoil."

In general, bottle swears fight by going inside a witch person's stomach and intestines. They will eventually vomit, have diarrhea, and lose weight. The **Kali Firo na** "knocks" (makes the person sick) until they finally confess. Because of the confession the individual must go to the Mori man (an Islamic diviner) who made the verse. The Mori man will remove the verse through washing the guilty person with special medicinal leaf and Islamic water taken from a writing slate. Another bottle swear variation is called **Kali kain bee haai na** (see Figure number 22). This nas a similar purpose and function to the Islamic bottle, except the substance of power is **Kain na** (witch powder). Once contained, the bottle fights, repells, or attacks any witch person who might pass the protected space or individual. Still another variation is called **Biti laa chaga na** (to knock something) which (see Figure number 23) contains ground-up medicinal leaf mixed with human waste -- urine and faeces. The fluid fights witches, threatens evil people, as well as drives thieves away. It is usually buried in the ground. The swear achieves the power of **Tua alaa kpagbanga** (knocks the earth).

Another version is called **Ndogo na bee haai na** (the horn swear). While I have no slides, this swear is hung on doorways, entrances to farms, or put on an object of value. A number of ingredients can be used ranging from medicinal leaf, witch powder, and other objects of power such as a red egg from a chicken. **Ndogo** is often packed and activated by red, white, and black cloth as well as thread. It is considered by Landogo to be a "personal" swear that will attack a protagonist's stomach if activated properly.

A very public kind of swear is called **Koo he hoo la na** (hot oil pot swear). It entails a public rather than secret ordeal. Palm oil is heated by an "ordeal man" until it comes to a boil; bits of iron are added, heated, and then placed on a banana leaf. The accused is forced to pick up the pieces --

those who burn are guilty, those who are unaffected are not guilty. Another mid-range of swears is **Sasa na bee haai na** (the articles of food swear). **Sasa na** is mixed millet, rice, cassava leaf and **Fanhaa nwa** (medicinal leaf that fights). The bundle is usually wrapped in red cloth; and then bound by red thread. **Sasa na** can be used when an individual seeks retribution from a known protagonist -- usually in cases of theft. The client must pay the "owner" (it is not really a question of ownership, but rather who controls **Sasa na**) to come and "put" (to enact and direct the swear) the medicine. The owner will talk to the **Sasa na** (he awakens the swear who is considered to be sleeping) by saying:

> It is me (Pa Yangi) who owns you.
> I have brought you here because a
> person has asked me to find out
> who has tiffed (stolen) his cassava.
> And who has stolen his palm wine.
> We are here to swear the person
> who has done these bad things.
> You must catch that person.
> First, bring illness to that person's body.
> Then force that person to confess.
> Please catch the thief but
> leave those who are innocent.

The owner of **Sasa na** will put his "big man" on the floor and give the individual with the grievance a stick that calls out his request. The owner packs up **Sasa na** and as he goes on his way he states that his swear will catch in one month. In less than a month **Sasa na** will bring sickness to the guilty person's body -- they ache, get dry skin, joints hurt, and they can't defecate or urinate despite the fact that they continue to eat and drink.

They will know why they are suffering and eventually confess their guilt to someone who passes the confession on to the owner of the swear. To revoke **Sasa** the guilty must confess

to the swear man; pay the swear man, pay the swear, pay for the ritual enactment which revokes **Sasa**. Last, the guilty person must publically beg the client and pay back the damages. There are other food swears, like **Fangala na chaga bee haai na** (mixed food swear). Similar to **Sasa na** this swear is made of rice, millet, konsho beans, gari and then tossed onto the road or path. It has the same effect as **Sasa na**.

There are other swear objects which are codified in single symbols or objects, for example like **Gba maa nde bee haai na** (bell swears, see Figure number 24). Bell swears are quite common -- found on children, doors, hanging from rafters, on walls, and hung from a long pole by white cloth in front of a family's house. Another variation is called **Nda nhoa nwa** (sling swear). Normally a sling is used to drive or hunt birds. However, the sling has now been mystically transformed into a swear object that functions to kill witches in the world of the unseen. This sling swear was found hanging from the doorway of Pa Manso Kanu of Makuranko village. Pa Manso is the village blacksmith and in charge of many swearing activities. He is considered a very powerful man and is feared despite his good nature. On doors, for example, one can find bell swears, sling swears, leaf swears (called **Ndaaga na bee haai na**), and **Kau na** (the swear where cement and sand go inside), and **Heege heege bee haai na** (the mat or fence swear, see Figure number 25).

Another example is found protecting the house of Digba Turey, also in Makuranko. This swear is called **Kooto na** (red bundle swear)and is wrapped in **Fande gbou** (red thread), **Fande lei** (white thread), and **Fande wei** (white thread). Also called **Chaaga booto na** this swear protects the body (see Figure number 26). Other single symbol and object swears exist, for example **Tee au na** (egg shells used as swear), **Paa moo na** (swear made up of two fish hooks together wrapped in cloth), and **Kokondogobee haai na** (the tortoise shell swear, see Figure number 27).

Last, are swears for protection on farms -- usually from thieves -- such as **Tanga bee haai na** (cassava swear, see Figure number 28), and **Kondei bee haai na** (banana swear, see Figure number 29). What is of interest here is that informants believe these are swear copies made by the enterprizing owner of each individual farm. Kempson Fornah has suggested to me that he will often make a fake swear and enact it on his farm rather than go to the swear man and pay for one to be constructed. I myself have made my own swears for my cassava farm. While the swear scared everyone else, it did not scare the cows which ate all my cassava.

SWEARS AS PARADOX

In the witch crisis discussed in Chapter Four, the witch net was initially not powerful enough to kill all the witches. A higher level of power and confrontation was needed. In this particular case, the women's reckless swear dance was enacted. **Njonjooma** is a paradoxical swear because Landogo women seem to have little institutional or public power. However, most males suggest that it is women who the most powerful swear medicines.

Swear agents, like diviners, healers and politicians understand this paradox because the world is a mixture of natural and fabricated (socially constructed) reality. Not only do swear agents enact the swear as empirical fact, but they also generate key illusions and artifice. These illusions become mechanisms of belief, as well as power and control. In a crisis state, powerfully held cultural and social conventions tend to come into question, at other times they actually break apart. This breakdown moves most individuals and groups into a state of realization: people are without real power and any real sense of control. Although not completely powerless, witch crisis makes this lack control seem very immediate.

NJONJOOMA BEE GBAEA: THE PERFORMANCE AND BRICOLAGE OF THE POUNDING STICKS.

I discuss the women's medicine that is danced in a reckless way through out the rest of the Chapter because it is amenable to analysis. **Njonjooma** is semi-public and secret (see Figure number 30). For analytical purposes, assume **Njonjooma** is a response to the problem of crumbling social order moving toward cosmological disorder. Paradoxically, in the highest moment of transparency that the highest level of power is generated. At most paths which converge on every Landogo village, one usually finds multitiered constructions composed of clustered sticks wrapped together with bits of rag (see Figure number 31). The rags are a mixture of faded colors and white. These main aspect of these constructions are made up of **Ngete na** (pounding sticks) situated inside what is called a mataodo -- a large wooden mortar used to pound the husk of rice, millet, as well as used to mash fish, pepper and other items of food (see Figures numbers 32 and 33).

Regardless of regional variation, **Njonjooma** constructions represent the what is considered one of the most powerful and violent tools used to fight witches. **Njonjooma** is shrouded in the private secrecy. It is composed almost exclusively of women, although there can be a single male participant (the diviner) who knows through mystical process, where the **Ngete** sticks must be placed, how they must be tied, and what other articles must be used, if necessary. Pa Chandi of Gbendembu suggests that he (as the diviner) has the right to dance with the women. This seems unusual, but clearly **Njonjooma** is female medicine. The majority of women who participate seem to be those who are post-menstrual (most often the ad-hoc leaders), younger women with children and those with very young babies. The key physical and symbolic processes of **Njonjooma** has to do with women's physical and social ability to have and nurture children. And while obviously a vital element in any society, the key element of power is a woman's ability to curse her own children with the same body that produced them. Achieved collectively (with numerous women) the action becomes highly

smbolic of coercive power. At issue here is the nature and meaning of children and why some move away from humanity to become a witch person.

Children, as I have already suggested, are the weakest link in the Landogo hierarchy of personhood and therefore power.[16] Except in exceptional cases, like twins, most children are easy prey for **Nhoa abaalaai ti hegbe** (the sickness brought by witch people). One example of witch generated disease is **Geele hegbe** (bad diarrhea) -- which results from a witch eating the sweet intestinal organs of a child. As Landogo conceptualize it, too many children die from this and other kinds of attacks. Their deaths are not taken lightly. The symptoms of witchcraft are predictable and symbolic: a child's stomach begins to ache, it frequently defecates yellowish liquid, the body becomes weak and thin, joints become swollen and ache, and the eyes become recessed with large circles.

The way Landogo families respond varies. Some see a child who has **Geele hegbe** as already being dead, without hope for life. They will do nothing for the child. Other families respond immediately in a more optimistic way. A few might take the child to the Chiefdom's Primary Health care facility (if it exists), or to a Church Mission Hospital if there is one nearby and if the family has the financial resources. However, most go to the diviner for a clarification and diagnoses of the illness. The diviner will use a variety of mystical tools: divining stones, cowrie shells, mirrors, found objects and materials to see "inside" the illness.

If a diviner finds witch business the family faces a serious battle for the child's life. They are not powerless and there are various ways to fight back. But in the minds of most Landogo the child is already near death. Some families respond with leaf medicine. There are times that leaf medicine can help cure the child, if it is not already too late. If it is determined that the child's life is forfit, then the

family's response is to swear the rest of the village so as to save other children. This, Landogo might say, is why **Nyanha haai njo njooma bee haai** exists in the first place.

NJO NJOOMA AS AN EVENT IN TIME AND SPACE

A reconstruction of the events in Makuranko suggest that after finding conclusive evidence, the diviner stated:

> **"Tee pee haai ai kuma, ka nyanha haai gbaea alee aa kuma."** If they want to kill this witch and control other witches inside this village, the women must **Gbaea** (dance) the reckless medicine that kills.[17]

Because each diviner has individual ways of knowing what kind of witch business has occurred, each prescribes unique swear medicine.[18] In Makuranko, the diviner called for **Njonjooma** because it has power to kill where the witch net had been impotent. On a given night women will meet on the outskirts of the village to prepare for the dance. The logistics of the dance are quite specific: all the women remove their clothing. Except for various tattered rags and bits of clothing which they wrap around their waists, over breasts and back, and down between the legs, they dance naked.

The point of the rags is not to cover the naked body, but to expose and emphasize the body. In this case the exposed body, both of the young and the old women, becomes a potent metaphor of power. The women begin to move through the village using a dramatic combination of symbolic tools that have specific usage, bodily actions and movements, sexual images and sounds, as well as vocal genres of singing, sound, rhythm and performative motions. Most important, is the overall system of thought that these "tools" come to represent as qualities of power.

I have never seen this swear ritually enacted because as a male I am excluded.[19] However, men and women have freely discussed **Njonjooma** with me; women from villages other than Makuranko have reenacted **Njonjooma** for me so I could see the performative dymanics of that swear event. As the dance

begins, each participant carries the primary symbolic tool of a witch's death -- the **Ngete na** (a five foot long wooden pestle approximately six inches in diameter, used to pound millet, rice and other food staples, see Figures number 33 and 34).

Landogo women suggest, and my own documentation agrees, that sometimes the main symbol is **Ngete na** -- an old broken pestle that had been relegated to the rubbish pile. The fact that the object comes from the rubbish pile, and has the status of rotten, is very important in the logic of **Njonjooma**. In this case it represents something rotten being turned against other things rotten -- like witches. In most of my field slides of **Njonjooma** constructions, there is at least one useable pestle, a rotten one, and then most are recently cut facsimiles.

The pounding sticks have a primary symbolic function. Each woman vigorously knocks the sticks onto the ground. In this sense each woman "taps" her **Ngete** into the ground. It is a rhythmic tapping that activates the swear medicine -- the women move up and down the village clearing (see Figure number 35). They tap the ground as they dance a kind of two-step, sliding the feet from side to side. Each woman moves left, then right. As she pivots from one side to the other, she bobs up and down at the waist. They bounce up and down as they tap the ground twice. Simultaneously, the women bellow out a song filled with ribald sexual imagery. These songs are formulaic in that they also activate the power of **Njo njooma**. As they begin to dance they sing in unison:

> **Tuee taa soogo. Too ge wole wole. Nuu na nyanha ai ndeni Kaboa chaaga ka baa gba hamba.**

I interpret the text to mean:

> "Person who is not born of a woman, we sacrifice [swear and curse] that person."

The women dance and sing throughout the night giving special emphasis to the spot where the witches of the village were said to congregate. The dancing and singing has repetitious aesthetic and performative elements. It is through such repetition that the swear medicine comes alive and seeks out the witch or witches. **Njonjooma** dancing and singing have powerful sexual themes that are sexually provocative. The women expose female genitalia, as well as mocking the act of sexual intercourse. However, no men are present, and while the dance is obviously a humorous event for the women, it is a serious threat to men. The men of Makuranko village stay inside their houses. As long as each male does not see the movements of the women they will have "no shame." It is difficult enough to hear the content of the women's song; however, this is exactly what the women want the witches, male or female, to do. In part, the witches are drawn to their sexuality and to the capacity to nurture -- this proves their status as witches.[20]

THE LANGUAGE OF SHAME AND THE POWER TO CURSE

Some of verbal constructions help in understanding the nature of this kind of "medicine." One series is as follows:

Keegei ngaa to gei na ala nwee aa bi logba laa gboloo kpauku.

My translation of this means: The mouth and head of men's penis' are very dirty. The are other similar kinds of examples -- male shortcomings as lovers; or:

Njengaa ti gei na ala nwee aa bi boli nhu gbouo kai.

My translation of this means: The vagina of a woman is very red and therefore powerful as well. The color red references both the color of a woman's genitals, as well as the color and substance of menstruation -- not only of blood but the inherent power in the ability to conceive. As an inversion of normal sexual order this kind of action, sexuality and language would normally be strongly repressed in daily life. And while this sexuality is very open, such public displays by

women are non-existent, only occurring in the context of private sexual affairs. Of course there is a reason for this behavior and performance. The use of such levels of sexuality in a ritual context is a radical reversal from normal life. Through direct reference to sexuality, genitalia and menstruation the women attack anyone who would not be ashamed by such behavior.

Just prior to daybreak, the group moves to a spot pre-designated (found by the diviner) where the **Njonjooma** comes alive. The diviner has either dug a hole in the ground, or put an old mortar (a mataodo) on the spot. The group dances around the spot until they collectively "thrust" their pounding pestles into either the ground or mataodo, rip off their rags, and **Ngii be** (to tie or bind) the cloth around the **Ngete** sticks. This is said to **Too kpau** (to put). To tie and put is to activate and contain the power of the swear medicine. More specifically, the symbolic meaning of "tying" soiled cloth is **Ngoo kamba** (to circle) and therefore to **Ma nhu gbee** (to close) a space or thing from outside forces. In Makuranko this is exactly what occurred. The construction is one of power and might, and until **Njonjooma** falls down or is removed it will fight any witch that passes by on the path, keep witches out of the village, and kill those who are inside as well (see Figure number 36).

The sticks kill. That is a Landogo fact. A day, month, year, or years later, someone from Makuranko will become sick. That individual will seek out the advice of a diviner. The individual might ask: "What, or who, is under my skin. Why am I sick. What have I done?" The diviner will know the cause of the individual's sickness. He or she will say nothing because they know that it is the **Njonjooma** who is responsible. The diviner won't accuse the person of being a witch, because he or she knows what the course of events will be. The afflicted person becomes very sick. They still refuse to confess and begin to die.

THE CONFESSION

Landogo, like many groups in Sierra Leone, use confession as a regular part of the process of death. Many Landogo confess to being witches at death. In a sense it is their last act of power. But, in general, the more power an individual has the more likely it is that they will confess at death. As the witch starts to die, he or she will publicly call out for their mother for sympathy. In any case, they will confess. Initially in their illness, most witches refuse to confess. But when a witch really suffers (reaches the stage where he or she calls out for the comfort of their mother) that is seen as a sure sign that the individual is guilty and ready to tell-tell.

After the confession, the witch's family hope for further confession because if the witch fails to make a complete confession the **Njonjooma** medicine will attack the entire family. **Njonjooma** acts quickly. Only a deranged individual -- someone who is just as immoral as the witch who is being sworn -- would come to the aid of a witch. A witch is so publicly abhorrent that even the individual's mother refuses to comfort him or her. It is quite likely that it was her very own swearing action that caught the witch person.

Such a process of death is highly paradoxical because no one wants to see their own flesh and blood die an agonized death. On the other hand, no one can afford to be seen as a witch sympathizer, even if the witch is their child. The witch person cries out repeatedly for the security and warmth of "mother." But it is "mother" who is "killing" the witch. Her sexuality and procreative abilities are instrumental in the death of that immoral person. The family, they must publicly disown the person; and more importantly events will reach the stage where the mother publicly curses her ties of blood to that person. Such a curse is terminal in a social and mystical sense.[21]

Since the mother curses her own flesh and blood, such an event must be agonizing to the mother and family, although I have no direct knowledge of their emotions. I can only venture that people in these kinds of situations are both brought together and pulled apart by the social ties that bind them. A small amount of understanding can be found through the mother's curse:

> **Ka baa bi gboha na leege. Ngi nje na oo kee aa ala aa keelaa ngulu na kuai ngoi na gbonhu hali. Ngi nje na oo kea aa ala aa keela kaa haa gbo. Nje ngaa ti haai na ala nwe i goo ma. Nuu ai na beio aa ngulu haai indi gua. Ka haa gbo. Nuu indi ngi nje na oo wasasoa aa keelaa ku ha gbo.**

My interpretation of this public curse is:

> "You cannot blame me for your death, you must blame yourself. It is the **Nyanha haai** sticks that have fought and killed you. There is no medicine to help you now, and you [as witch] must die. The mother publically gives up the child."

The father must also give up his filial relations to a confessed child-as-person-as-witch. If he refuses he risks the same **Njonjooma** wrath. To his witch offspring he will curse:

> **Ngi keege na ai kola gue ngeya alee hali. Gbeanhailee ege ai nhoa nwoo le. Ndegaai gbenhio. Ngila kee na kaa li gbo. Ngi gola na i gbani nhu alee gbo taa ndoogu la. Tai go ndoogu aa kola-o-kola. Awa tai go kende hali.**

I translate the father's curse to mean:

> "I don't even have a white [funeral] cloth to wrap you (him or her) in at your death. You (he/she) are a witch. A father cares for his real children. The clothes the witch dies in, those are the clothes he/she will be buried in.

These enactments carry a powerful moral message. To be a bad witch is to cause your own death. The pounding sticks, the dancing that exposes women's genitals, the singing and general ribaldry, and finally the cursing, used together kill the

witch. The **Njonjooma** can kill even the strongest witch who might have enough power to be immune to most other swears (see Figure 37).

THE DEATH

Eventually the confessed witch dies. The illness and death is one of isolation and pain. No one, not even the woman who brought the witch into the world will care for him or her. As conceptualized by Landogo the worst kind of public shame is to die alone, essentially isolated not only from the community, but from family, and ancestors. That witch person carries, in life and in death, the stigma of being a witch. To be a confessed "bad" witch is to admit the most repugnant of all transgressions. Such a person becomes a non-person by publicly confessing. This was, and is, the state that Pa Foday lives in up to this very moment. He is alive, and yet he is socially dead.

At death, a non-funeral occurs. No one comes to pay respects -- a death that occurs without social confirmation is the worst way to die. The witch's family quickly puts the body in unclaimed ground, or in the evil forest, hoping that the witch stays dead rather than coming back to haunt the world of the living. People of Makuranko village repeat again and again:

> Witches bring their own deaths, and no witch has power greater than the most powerful of human medicines.

While a few witches, in fact, are so strong that they cannot be killed by **Njonjooma**, most do not have that level of power. When enacted, **Njo njooma** becomes a moral ontological process of immense power. Mortal Landogo will hide inside their houses because they fear and are shamed by the sight of the reproductive organs that brought them into the world. But a witch is not like a mortal human being. They will want to see a woman's genitals and "live" in her womb. As witch, such individuals have no shame and desire the womb's warmth and

protection. Of course, their desire and use of the womb is parasitic in that they will "eat" it to satisfy their selfish desire for human flesh.

Recall from Chapter Four, that the morning after the **Njonjooma** was danced, Pa Foday came and confessed to one of the old woman who had danced the night before. Pa Foday confessed he was a male witch chief and that he had helped "eat" the previous three children. He also proclaimed (a kind of confession) that he would insure "they' ate seven more. He admits **Njo njooma** has killed him in the world of witches. In a very short time his confession circulated through Makuranko -- the **Toi moo na** (village crier) announced that all women should keep their children in their houses, women should not carry babies on their backs, and children should not play in front of the houses, or in the village center. In mystical terms, Pa Foday is dead because he can no longer communicate with his witch friends, and some other greedy witch has already taken his place as a chief. In the world of the seen he is still alive. His death will be a matter of days, weeks, or even months, if he is very strong. He is met with overt contempt and hostility. Before the confession he was a respected elder, but now he is non-person.

The case of Pa Foday demonstrates that it is the ideology of order and disorder generate meaning in Landogo social process. The tension between these two ideologies can be characterized by the meaning of **Kpala na** (pretending speech and actions). **Kpala** represents the dichotomy between public words and actions in tension with private intentions and actions. On a more complex cultural level of meaning, **Kpala na** represents a thinly veiled structure of secrecy.

I have argued that aspects of power, control, knowledge are both revealed and hidden in events like **Njonjooma.** In many cases, the action of a single swear alters the social fabric of a given village. Some swear agents only enact the spirit they control. The spirit itself does the mystical work. Other

swear agents are more reflexive and conscious about their work. Depending on their intentions they can sustain the appearance of conformity to the ideology of agreement and consensus, or make a choice to alter it. Despite suggestions from others that a swear agent can't possibly have this level of consciousness and power, I am convinced that some swear agents indeed have this level of reflexivity in that they consciously manipulate the social field through their knowledge, interpretations and actions.[22]

For example, in the witch crisis found in Makuranko the swear agent could have stated that the swear killed someone in the other world, and left it at that. The crisis is over, and in this instance no one dies in the world of seen reality. On the other hand, that same swear agent might come and the swear the village with the intention of destroying the village's ideology of agreement and consensus. This would be achieved through deaths of village members now and at some time in the future. The death of members confirms that there were people who were secretly witches and that the crisis was real. It would also prove that the sear agents powers are unquestionably valid. In either case, the death or metaphorical death of members of the village, as witch people, paradoxically reconstrues reality. Through death, the disorder generated by witchcraft is transformed (reproduced) into order. The dialectic between order and disorder is, once again, maintained. It is through a swear agent's capacity that Landogo society adjudicates upon unseen aspects of threatening disorder. Fundamental to the capacity of the swear agent is their ability to direct the swear to kill, i.e. to terminate life for the community. Why is death so important? In cases of witch crisis, the representation and enactment of violence generates death so as to reproduce order in social life.[23] As such, swearing represents the human capacity to aesthetically fuse reality with constructed and fabricated reality.[24] (see Chapter Seven).

It is clear that Landogo are a people who are committed to an ideology of communal agreement. They cope with their own areas of problematic disorder, among other mechanisms, through swears and swearing.[25] It is through various levels of conflict and most of all through witch crisis that the veiled logic of the social and cosmological order is revealed. What is revealed is a pervasive level of disorder which paradoxically acts to organize the secular and cosmological world. Someone will be found guilty of being a witch -- now, in the near future, or far in the future. Death, in the case of Landogo witch crisis, is the ultimate level of adjudication which requires the ultimate level of aesthetic representation.

In the case of **Njonjooma** an old arthritic woman, well past her child bearing years brought other women together to **Gbaea** (dance) and call out **Chambo njia** (words that disgrace). These words attracted **Foondinwoo na** (the foolish person) who was **Koogbolomba** (gluttonous) and had performed **Nhoa Nhanda nyou o** (a bad trick). A simple malevolent act of **Nhoa na** (the act of a witch person) became **Njafa nwoo** (person who destroys). Because he or she who is witch person brought destruction, they are destroyed as well. The death of the witch person is called **Mbombou na.** (it is great).

In summary, I recently asked Pa Sangita of Makuranko village (considered to be one of the more powerful diviners in the area) to comment on swears and swearing after a crisis in Makuranko (1991). He replied:

> The day that old blacksmith died was a powerful day. Bad things happened. It was late when we all heard those sounds in the distance. At that point a witch would have no place to hide. That sound was a secret witch finding tool. It is a bad-bad sound that can paralyze any witchman. The sound is so fast that the witch has no place to run.
>
> You saw it. All the non-initiated men, women and children immediately ran for shelter. You ran as well. We all knew that you were afraid. We saw it in your face. Well, the witches heard the devil's jaws as well, try to hide witchman; we will find you anywhere. It was wonderful. By

> God's power, all the witches must have died. Yes, wonderful. The swear man arrived, the village seemed empty. I was outside. I saw it all. You, your eyes were shut tight just like your door. Yes, I saw that as well. You were afraid like everyone else. Makuranko was "closed down." It is a wonderful thing.

Indeed, I have seen these things and I admit I was afraid. But I also now that Landogo children continue to die. As a cultural reality this is empirically proven as children become sick and quickly die. They are mystically weak and have yet to develop **Ndii kpende** (strong heart).

In terms of the model applied here, some of the ambiguities embedded in swears, swearing and swear agents adds to the efficacy of the model rather than bring into question its validity.

As Stoller has argued (1980:424-425) paradox in a given system should not be discarded or edited out as irrelevant "epistemological noise." In fact, following Karp's edict (1988) anthroplogists need to pay close attention to uncertainty and structural inconsistency. If I ignored such inconsistencies the validity of my interpretation would be diminished. This raises a very thorny question (at least at this point in the dissertation): do all Landogo believe in the efficacy of swears and swearing? Recalling that while moral Big men ideally maintain and validate the system of dispute resolution and adjudication, they themselves are often able to subvert the system for personal benefit. Big men are too powerful. The average individual is afraid to bring a case against one for fear of retribution.

This paradox can also be applied to swears and swearing. Do swears always "catch" the right person. Can they make mistakes? Can they be purchased to perform revenge killings?

These questions have perplexed me for some time. However, I am arguing that the entire Landogo social system, swears and swearing included, is filled with structural problems. Along these lines, Ottenberg has suggested a number of interesting questions. For example, a Landogo man becomes sick. The sickness persists. He seeks clarification from a diviner who sees a "witch under his skin." The diviner tells him to enact a swear. Shortly, his wife dies and it is clear to the husband that she was a witch and the cause of his illness. For the husband and his family, the efficacy of the mystical swearing system is maintained and validated. But what about the woman's family and relatives? What do they think and feel?[26]

The family of the woman suspects the husband of witching her. Her brother knows that she was ill-treated by the husband, and maybe it was he who witched her? Her family visit another diviner. The evidence is clear -- a witch killed her. The family enacts another swear, and the husband dies. What occurs is an ever-escalating cycle of death, illness, suspicion, divination, swearing, and then death once again. In light of what I have discussed concerning witchcraft as well-used agency, how can Landogo know if the dead person was malevolent witch, or benevolent bewitched person? Do they need to know?

I would argue that the dialectic of order and disorder creates a structure of secrecy -- a kind of shadowy world partially seen and unseen. In this social context, secrecy, antagonism and confrontation are some of the key variables their world of power.[27] Secondarily, although witchcraft is disorder, it clearly has regular rules of operation, set procedures and expected results. This Chapter has looked in witchcraft as agency and power used by most Landogo. In summary, I agree with the thoughts of Paramount Chief Kande Fino who states:

> The most powerful swear man all around is Pa Chalia in Maiyambanwa up in Sanda Loko. What he can do is **Kili ina**

kpo (wonderful). He has the most experience. There are others -- Pa Balasama in **Kadubayia.**, the Fula, Pa Chernor Jude from **Mamama**, and there is another in **Mayiamba**, but I don't remember his name. There is also Pa Sipo Kargbo and his son Manso from **Neenwaanhuu** near **Mambiama.** In **Makuranko**, ask for Pa Sangita. He will teach you. **Mindoan** has two swear men, but it is a fearful place because there is a lot of witch business there. Pa Koba is there and Pa Kondema as well. Even in **Manhauguii** there is Pa Sorie Konteh and Pa Lamini. Pa Lamini is an old fashioned diviner, he uses **Totogotu na** (the stones). It is hard to know who has the highest power. But they all have power. I am just a mortal man, I don't know why they work, but they do. We use them. That is our tradition.

What you must learn is that while we have many swears, witch people are very smart. You must pick the right one and outsmart them. Some are big swears, some are **Chebe na** (power objects), and some are **Chaga na** (sara, sacrifice). Witches will try to destroy you at any time. My own swear is called **Bot moni**, it is a Temne swear. It fights every day...it is a little bell on the end of some white cloth, it is very powerful. When it rings you know that it is fighting.

There are different swears for all kinds of witch business. These things are very difficult, a big man must know which one to pull. Most swears are similar in that they all bring sickness, some scare, and some are used to kill. A swear is like a big man. It is just like me -- if you want to talk to me you come and say: **Fama oo nwe aa indi** (this is a word of greeting). How you talk to me, what you bring and what you feed me creates the road for what I will do for you. Well, swears are of the same. As a kind of witch, they go where and to whom you direct them to. Sometimes you don't know. But, each swear has its own ways. If you don't know its ways it will kill you. Me, I have this Chiefdom. I am the Chiefdom. Well, a big swear has his own Chiefdom and everyone is under them.

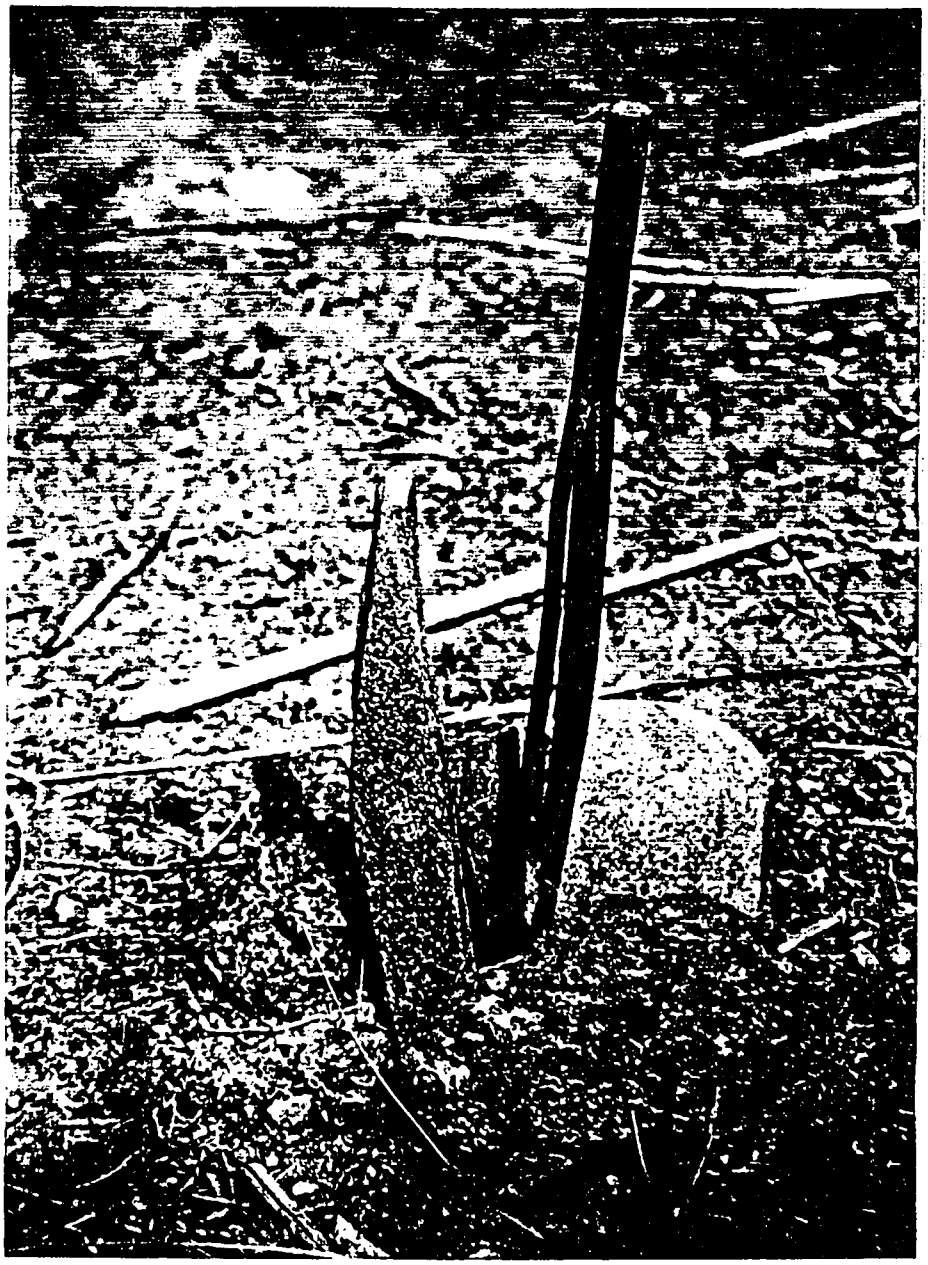


FIGURE NUNBER ONE
Ngai Mbaka -- black smith swear
Mangiroma Villiage
1989

FIGURE NUMBER TWO
Ngai Mbaka with old iron sword and stones
Makaangbe Village
1989

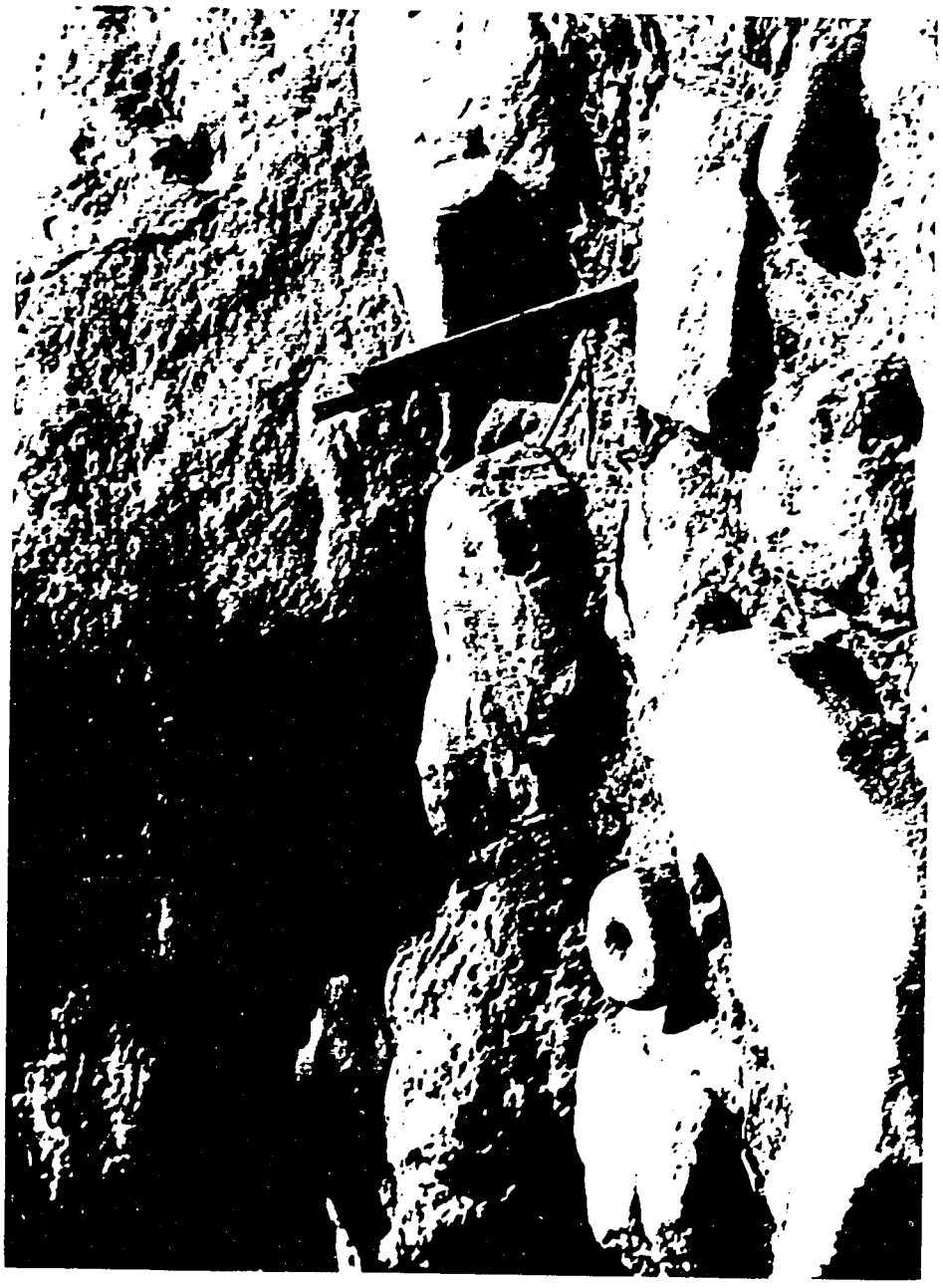


FIGURE NUMBER THREE
Fuu ee na (the bellows pipe)
Masoongboo Lokko Village
1989

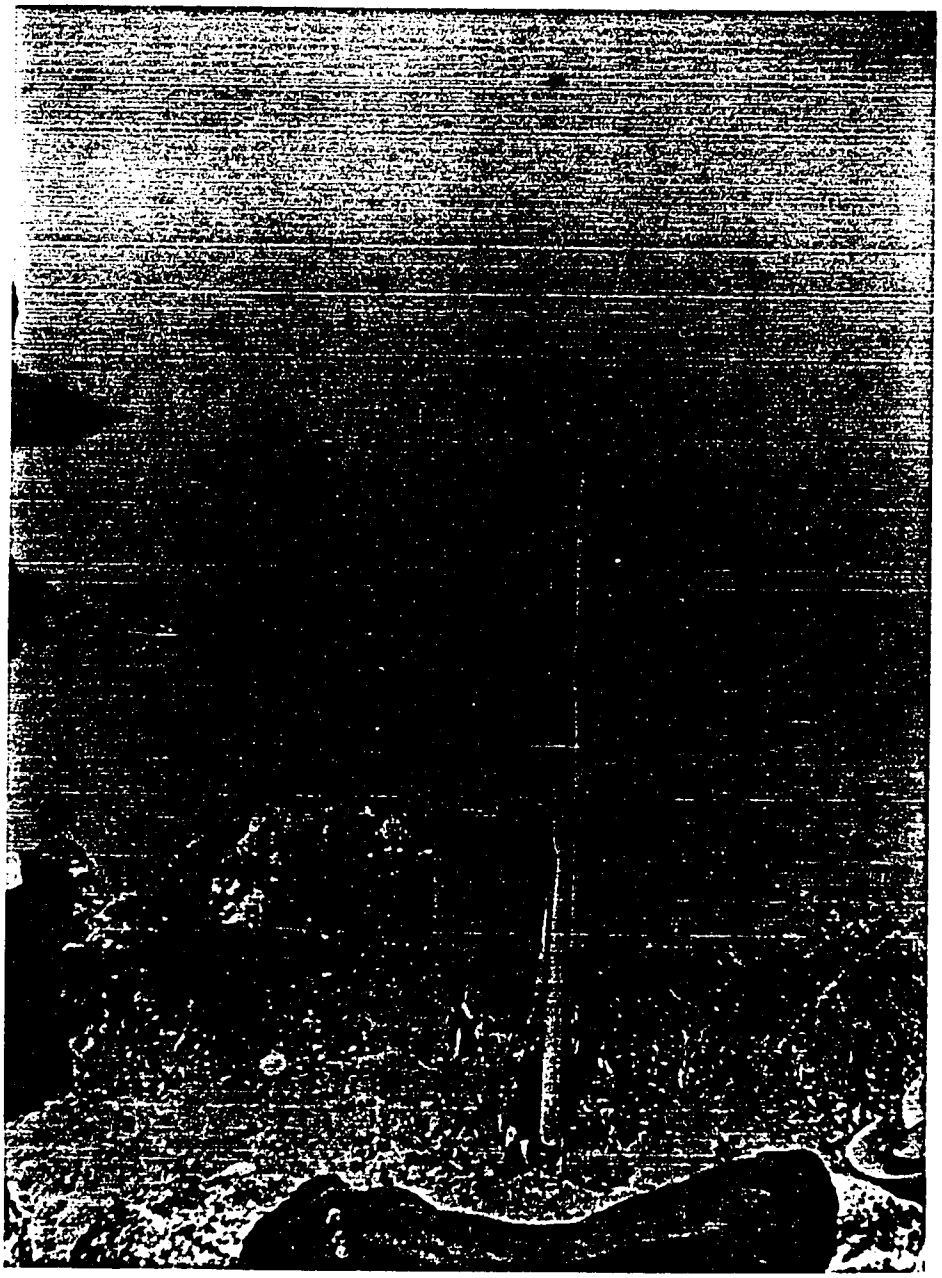


FIGURE NUMBER FOUR
Ngai Mbaka with Luba stick
Makana village
1988

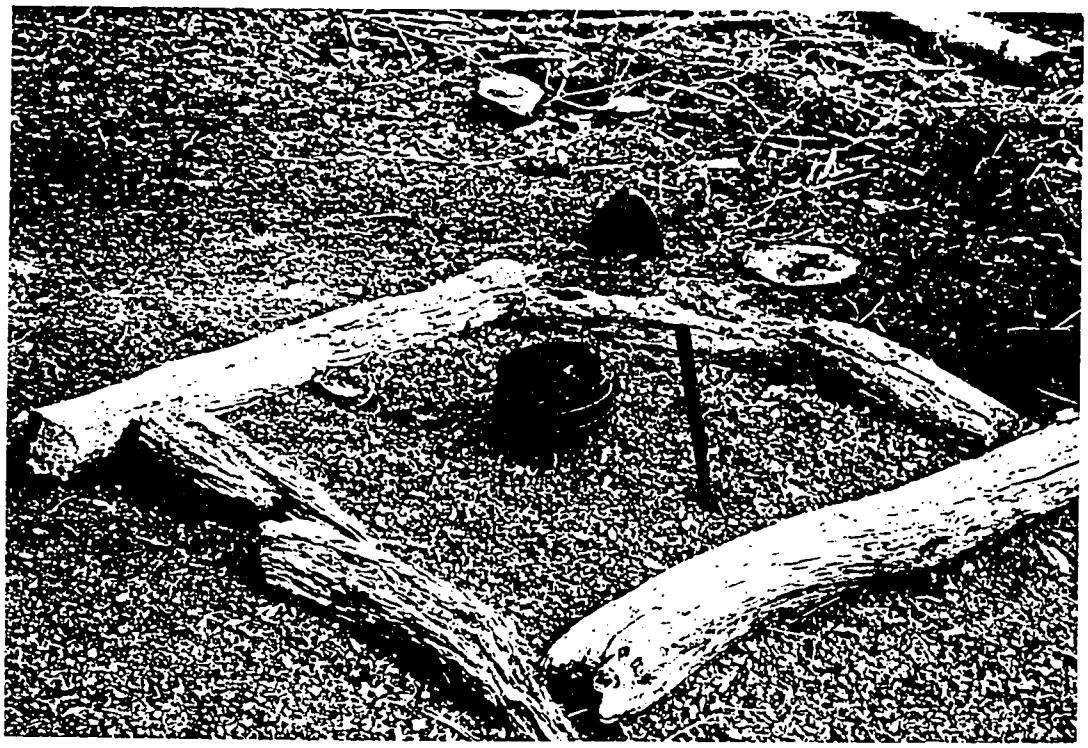


FIGURE NUMBER FIVE
Ngai Mbaka with Ka boo na (old pot)
Makuranko Village
1991

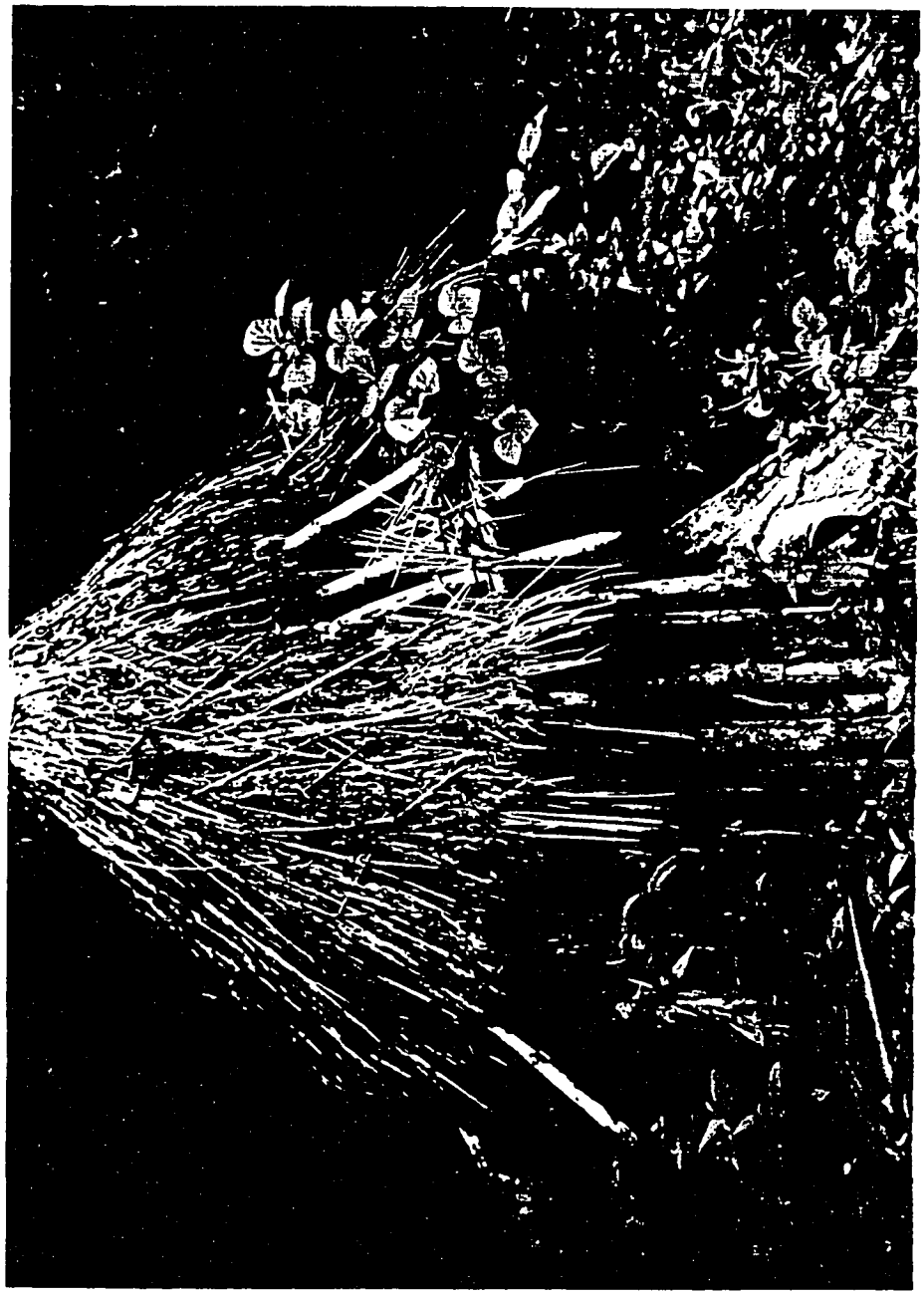


FIGURE NUMBER SIX
Kpona (the swear hut)
Wangi Village
1988

FIGURE NUMBER SEVEN
Haka na bee haai na (the funeral ladder)
Njalinhu Village
1988

FIGURE NUMBER EIGHT
Ngete na with bundle
Nwanwurunwa Village
1991

FIGURE NUMBER NINE
Ngete na (a split pounding stick)
Makonko Village
1989

FIGURE NUMBER TEN
Ngete na bee haai na (pounding stick across path on farm)
Lagbelle Village
1989

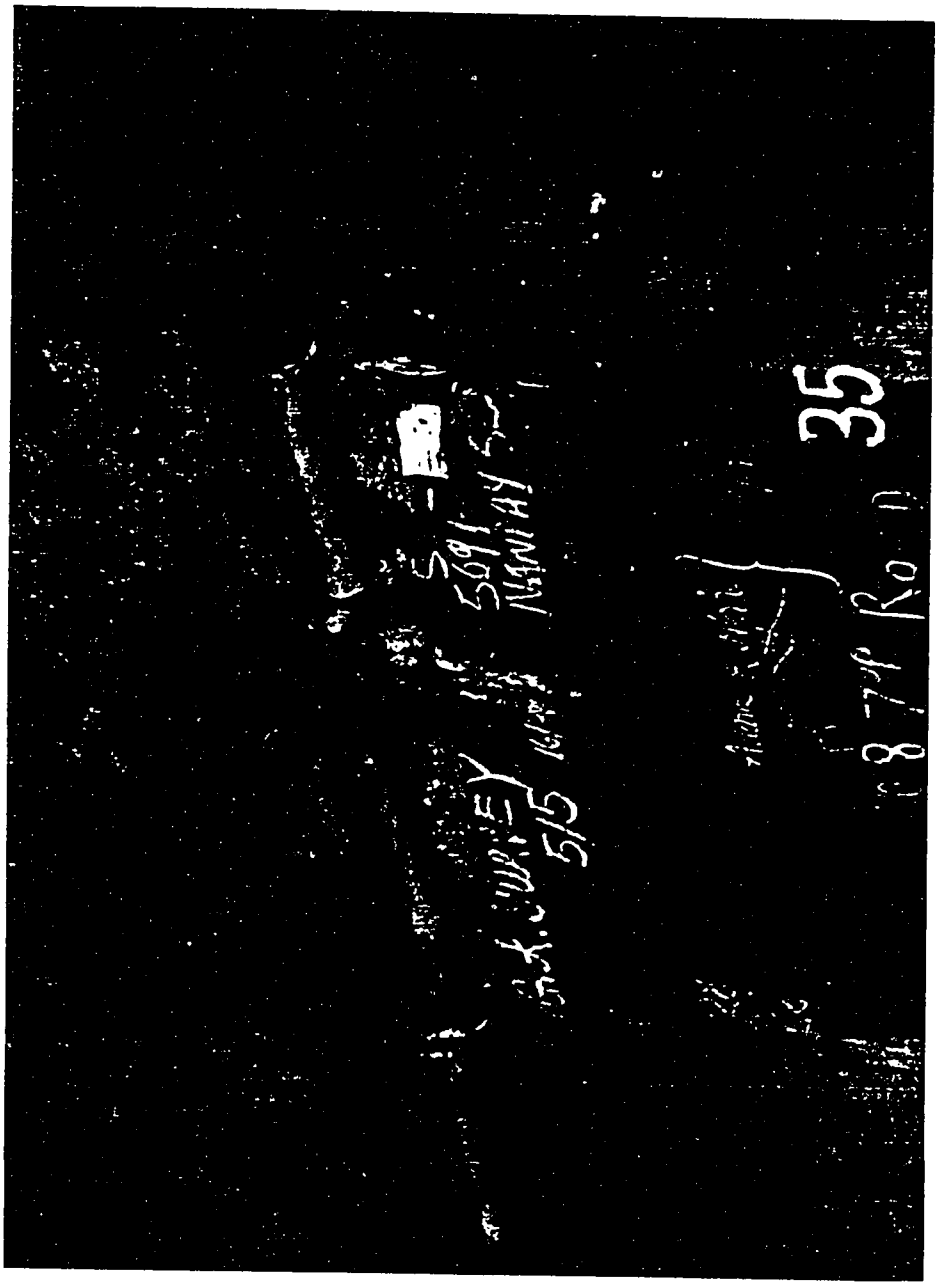


FIGURE NUMBER ELEVEN
Ngete na (pounding stick over doorway)
Makuranko Village
1991

FIGURE NUMBER TWELVE
Ngete chaaga na (personal pounding stick swear)
Lagbelle Village
1988

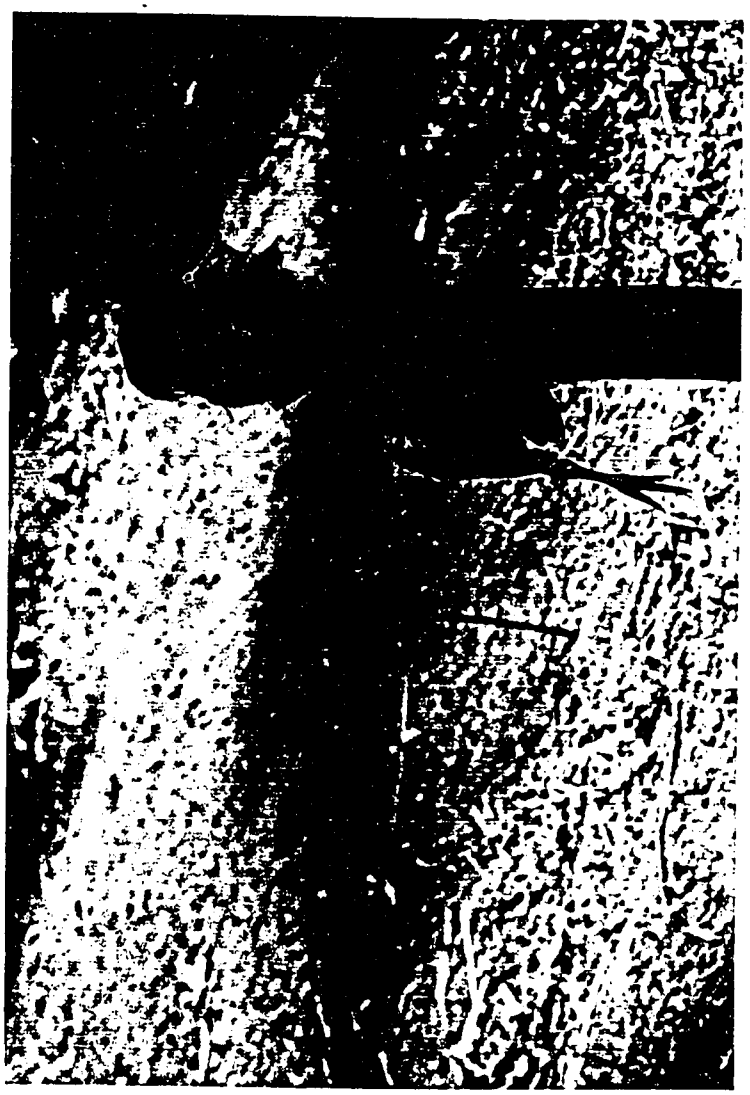


FIGURE NUMBER THIRTEEN
Chaaga lee bee haai na (the dead fowl swear)
Makonko Village
1991

FIGURE NUMBER FOURTEEN
Nyie tuu haga na (fish net bundle on pounding stick)
Makonko Village
1988

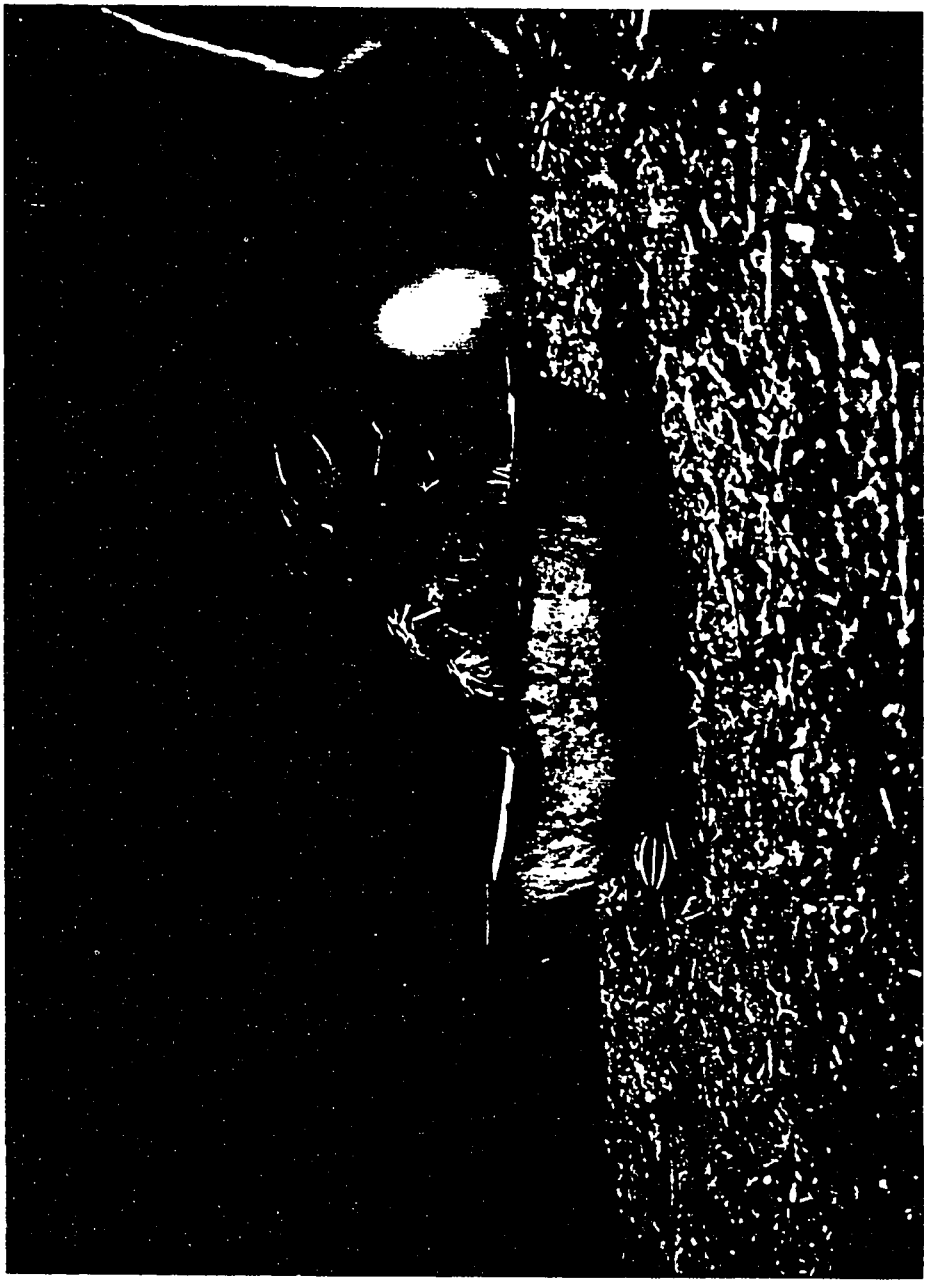


FIGURE NUMBER FIFTHTEEN
Nyie Tuu chaga bee haai na (fish net bundle in bowl)
Gbendembu Village
1987

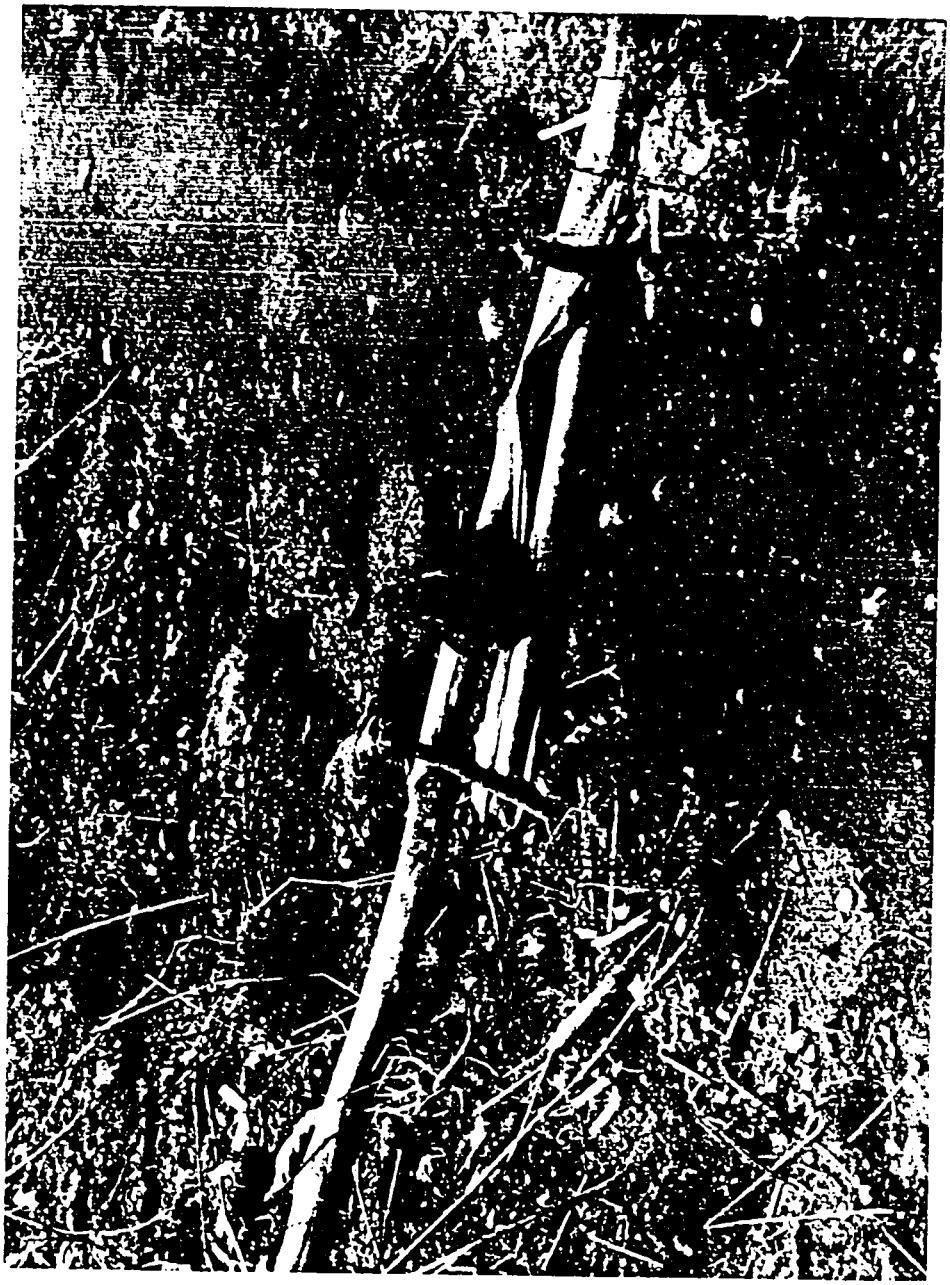


FIGURE NUMBER SIXTEEN
Nyie tuu haga na (on path)
Mabure Village
1989

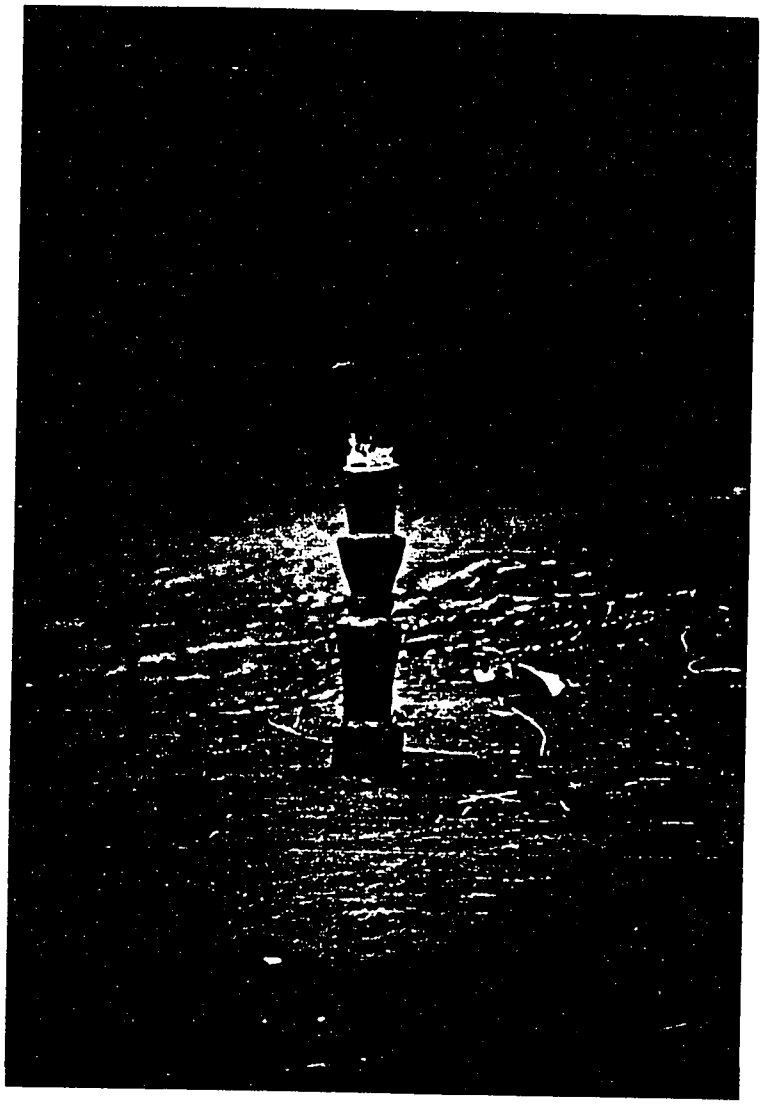


FIGURE NUMBER SEVENTEEN
Luba ukpe (family swear stick used to fightwitches)
Paanhagboo Village
1989

FIGURE NUMBER EIGHTEEN
Luba ukpe (Luba with stone to fight witches)
Gbemdembu Town
1989

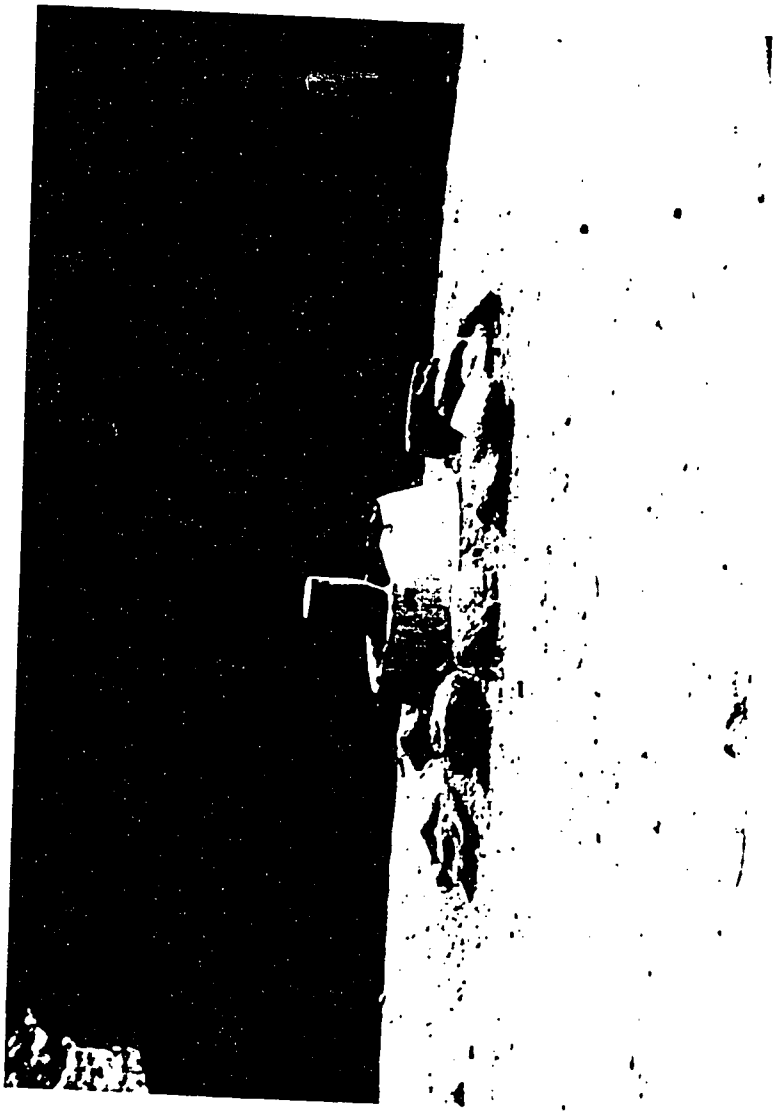


FIGURE NUMBER NINETEEN
Luba ukpe (Luba swear for a wife with lovers)
Pilliwara Village
1989

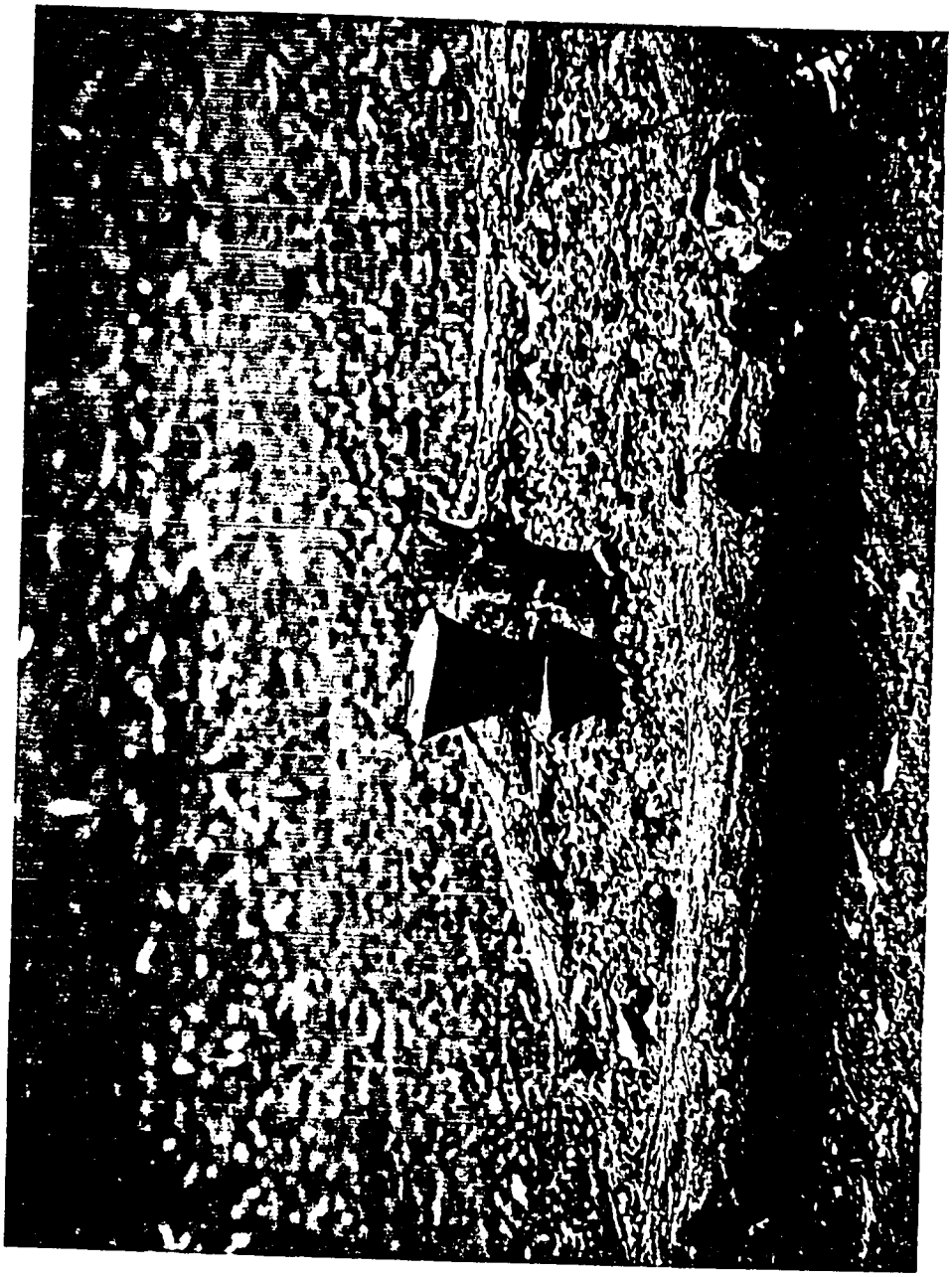


FIGURE NUMBER TWENTY
Luba kpangba nwa (village Luba swear)
Nhundunwa Village
1988

FIGURE NUMBER TWENTY-ONE
Kali firo na (Koranic bottle swear)
Mabure Village
1989

FIGURE NUMBER TWENTY-TWO
Kali kain na (Seven-Up bottle swear)
Paanhagboo Village
1989

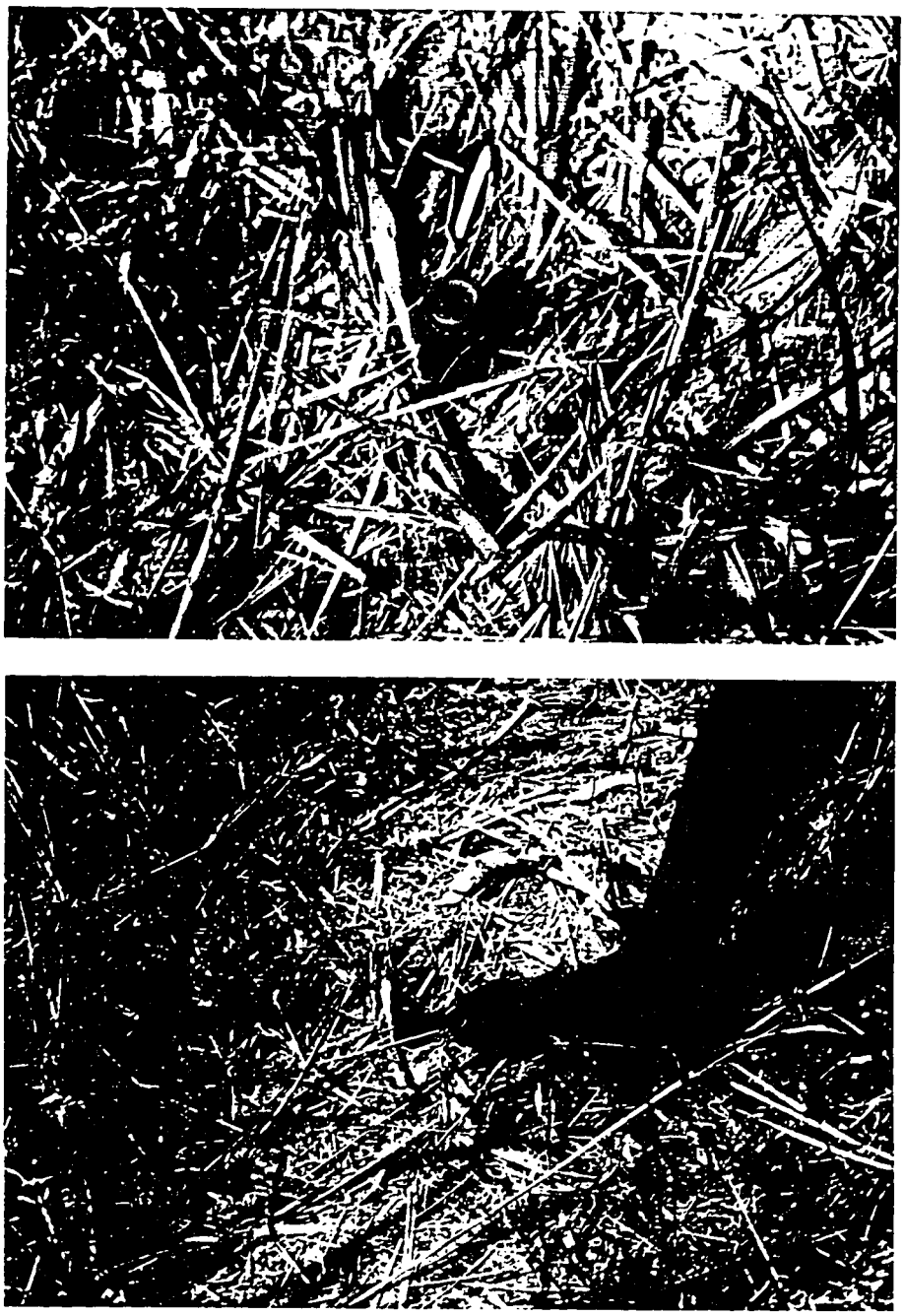


FIGURE NUMBER TWENTY-THREE
Biti laa haai na (bottle swear with leaf)
Makuranko Village
1991

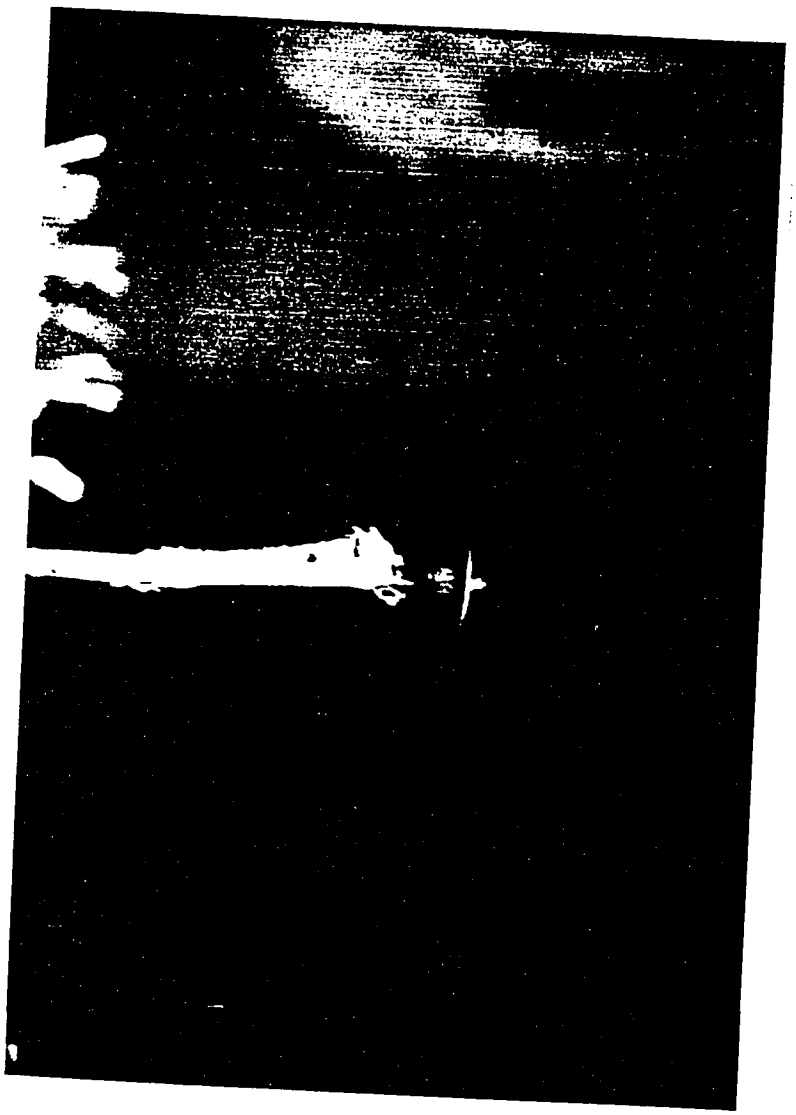


FIGURE NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR
Gba maa ndee (bell swear)
Lagbelle village
1988

FIGURE NUMBER TWENTY FIVE
Heege heege bee haai na (mat/fence swear)
Paanhagboo Village
1989

FIGURE NUMBER TWENTY-SIX
Chaaga booto (woman holding anti-witch packets)
Makuranko Village
1991

FIGURE NUMBER TWENTY-SEVEN
Kokondoogobeehaai na (the tortoise shell swear)
Gbendembu Village
1987

FIGURE NUMBER TWENTY-EIGHT
Taanga bee haai na (the cassava farm swear)
Lagbelle Village
1988

FIGURE NUMBER TWENTY-NINE
Kondei bee haai na (the banana farm swear)
Dendenhu Village
1988

FIGURE NUMBER THIRTY
Njonjooma (the pounding sticks)
Makuranko Village
1991

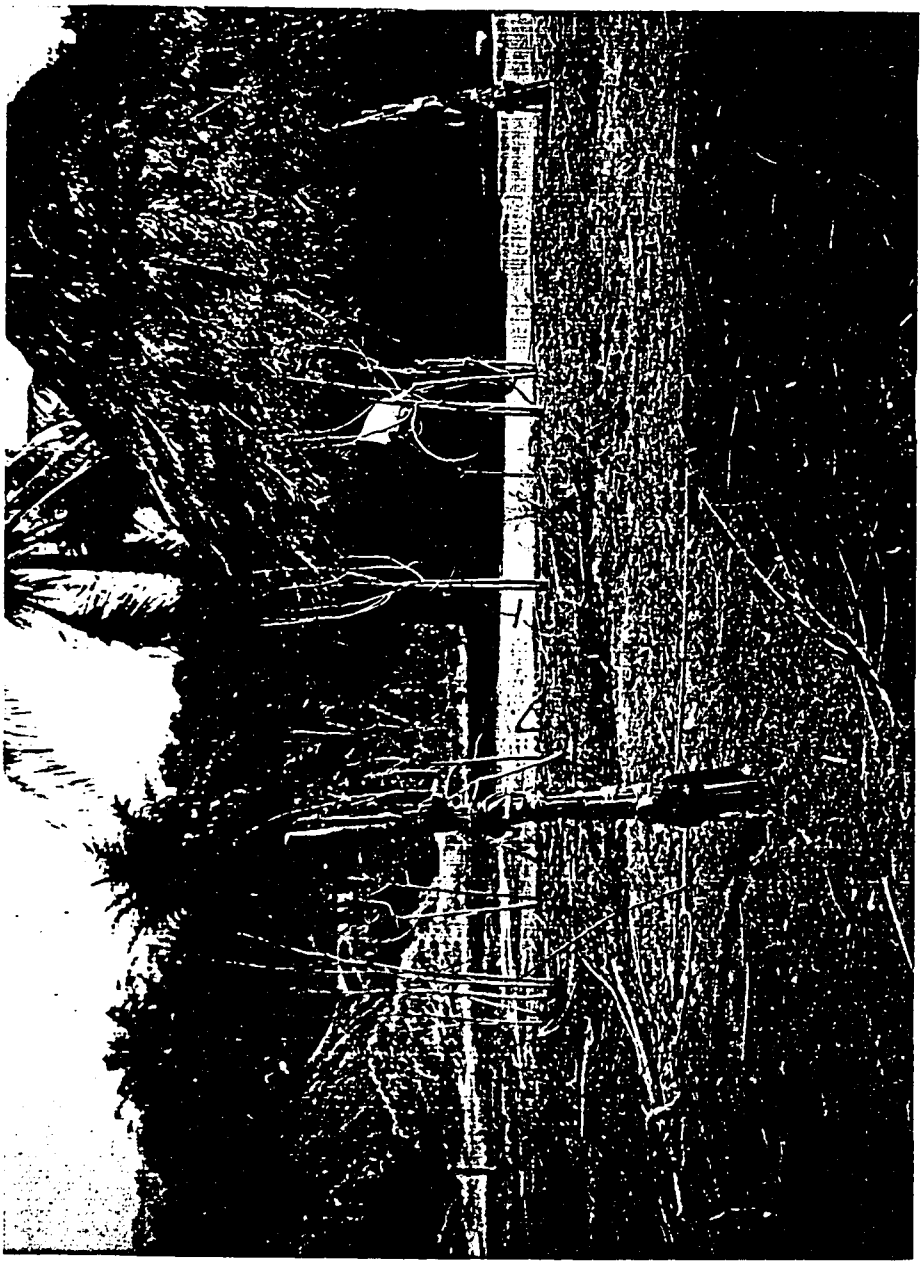


FIGURE NUMBER THIRTY-ONE
Njonjooma (wrapped with rags)
Makwii Village
1988

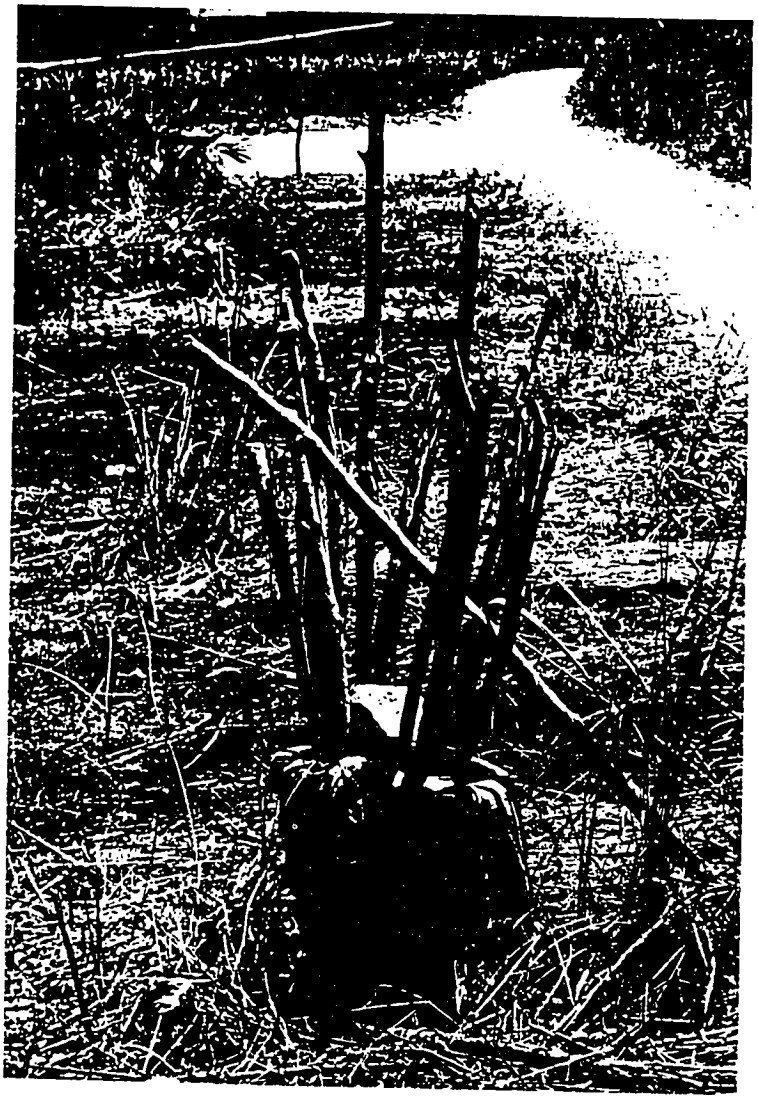


FIGURE NUMBER THIRTY-TWO
Njonjooma bee haai na (the pounding stick swear construction)
Paanhagbo Village
1988

FIGURE NUMBER THIRTY-THREE
Ngete na (pounding sticks)
Nyanhuun Village
1991

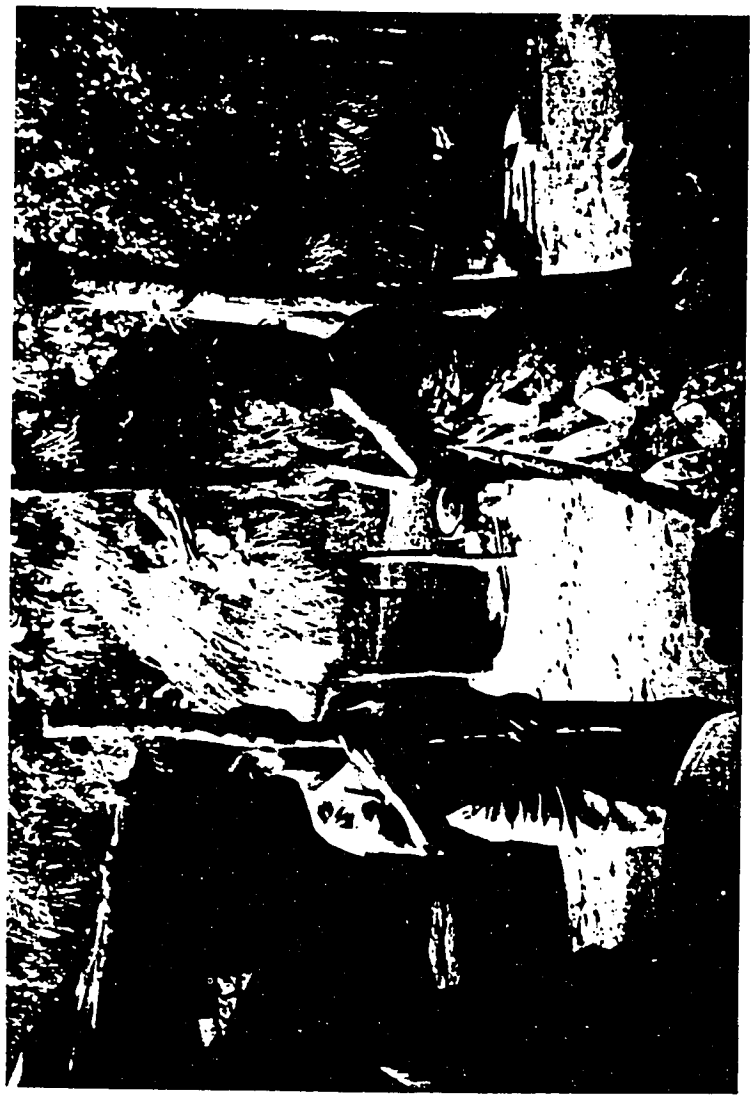


FIGURE NUMBER THIRTY-FOUR
Ngete na (women pounding rice)
Lagbelle Village
1989

FIGURE NUMBER THIRTY-FIVE
Njonjooma (women pounding the earth)
Gbendembu Town
1988

FIGURE NUMBER THIRTY-SIX
Njonjooma (women dancing the sticks)
Gbendembu Town
1988

FIGURE NUMBER THIRTY-SEVEN
Njo njooma gbaea (tied and contained)
Wangi Village
1989

CHAPTER SIX NOTES

1. Here I refer to herbalists, blacksmiths, diviners, looking ground, society heads, swear people, thief catchers etc.

2. The concept of the chaos dragon and its role in social life has been well-articulated by numerous works by Moore, most recently 1986.

3. See Reynolds-Whyte 1989:298.

4. This text and its translation was achieved with the help of Kempson Fornah -- friend, field assiatant, and Landogo language tutor.

5. Certain Leaf (**haa haa na**) exist in the bush which can be used as medicine to heal, protect, defend, close, cure etc. Some leaf can terminate life. Leaf is a gift from God.

6. See Beidelman 1986 on Kaguru conceptions of order and the role of twins. For analyses of Temne twinning see Lamp 1979 and Hall 1928.

7. Twin medicine is the same as men's society medicine. For a further analysis see Speed 1990 and forthcoming.

8. This idiomatic expression, as well as others, was collected and translated with the assistance of Kempson Fornah, A.K. Sesay and Momodu Kamara.

9. There are other natural agencies used as well that cannot be dealt with here, but that are fundamental "tools" in the application of both positive and negative witchcraft.

10. "Gone to buy salt" has a number of symbolic meanings. Most evident is that salt, as a coveted commodity, represents good things over bad things. To be able to buy salt is to have wealth.

11. The carving process is a complex process where the agency and power of the carver are tested by the inherent disorder of the world. While a fascinating topic it cannot be effectively dealt with here.

12. Here I refer to the secret, private and esoteric tools of the Kpangbani society which are used to find, flog and kill witches. The most powerful medicine is associated with Kpangbani and such data is best left secret. However, see Hart 1990 for a very brief visual survey of some Kpangbani carvings.

13. This text and translation was achieved with the help of Kempson Fornah.

14. Landogo have another version of a swear housed in a small hut, but it is associated with the men's secret society and I cannot deal with it here.

15. I want to qualify these translations as interpretive. They are just my translations and not to be considered a verbatim transcription by a trained linguist that all Landogo would agree with.

16. There are some diviners that are also swear agents as well. Often, swear people are also herbalists.

17. It is said that if I observed this swear, first my penis would no longer function (I would become impotent). Then, both my penis and testicles would fall off. Last, my insides would become rotten and if I didn't get a particular medicine form one of the women who danced **Njonjooma** I would die. To see **Njonjooma** if you are a male is fatal. Thus, I have never really seen it in this sense.

18. Ottenberg points out that this is specifically oriented toward male witches who are drawn to female genitalia. He wonders what happens if the witch is a female. Does it work against them as well? I do not have the answer to this question.

19. See Chapter Three and the discussion of family, kinship and conflict.

20. Here I refer to many discussions with Simon Ottenberg, 1989-1991.

21. See Beidelman 1986, Bourdieu 1977, Giddens 1979, and Karp 1986, 1988.

22. See Beidelman (1986) for a more detailed analysis of the concept of moral imagination.

23. The idea of cultural failure and disorder is seen in the works of Kopytoff and from Winans (personal communication).

24. Simon Ottenberg, Personal Communication.

25. Simon Ottenberg, Personal Communication.

CHAPTER SEVEN
AESTHETICS, ADJUDICATION AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF POWER

In this Chapter I pursue a specific theoretical question: How do African societies in general, and Landogo society in particular, resolve the tension that exists between individual freedom and societal constraint?[1] In answering this question a number of related issues develop. Does this tension explain more complex concepts of social order and disorder? Can social conceptions of order actually fail, and if these constructs of order do fail, how can notions of order continue to exist when overwhelming reasons suggest that disorder prevails? Ottenberg has commented on my work and analysis by stating:

> "What you have done in this dissertation is talk about how mechanisms are supposed to function, and in fact the functions don't work."[2]

His evaluation is correct. Therefore, what are the major mechanisms for the creation, maintenance, and reproduction of ideologies of order and disorder, and how does aesthetic thought and action play a role in that reproduction? It should be clear that all swears and swearing among Landogo are seen as elements of doing witchcraft. Underlying all Landogo witchcraft is secrecy as a fundamental belief, idea, action and structure. The reproduction of order is essentially concerned with a contradictory process of revealing and cloaking what is secret, and what needs to be hidden. As Chapter Four and Five suggested, Landogo reality is both what is seen and unseen. It is this context that each individual is concerned with presenting the appearance of good and moral intentions, but at the same time hiding their own greed, jealousy, envy and suspicion. Hence, Landogo social relations have an ethos of tension, where those one relies upon the most, are also those that one suspects the most -- family, co-workers, friends, extended family and relatives. Those who are 'close' are likely to turn malicious feelings into malevolent witchcraft.

Like many societies, Landogo social interaction is concerned with appearances, both in terms of surface and inner meaning. This occurs to the degree that there is an aesthetic to one's representing their hidden feelings and intent. An individual, for example, can see the smile on his friend's face, but he cannot know the friend's real intentions or malevolent actions. Thus, a kind of pathos of secrecy, secret practices, and representations of secrets as well as secrecy exists which embodies the dialectic of order and disorder (see Chapter Five).

In another study, Bellman (1984) has demonstrated that there is a unique language of secrecy.[3] Building upon Bellman's analysis, I argue that aesthetic representation and secrecy are fundamentally interrelated. Like language and metaphor, aesthetic thought, representation and action are mechanisms which can both hide and reveal. The function of hiding and revealing generates that relational quality called secrecy. Secrecy is paradoxical because it is an analog (no secret can ever be complete). Someone must "know" the secret for it to be construed as a secret. Secrets are constructed, and furthermore must be shared by some at the exclusion of others. It is clear that Landogo individuals evaluate daily life -- status and position, success and failure, power and authority or lack of it, security and happiness, number of children, rice and prosperity among other things, not just in terms of what is socially known, but by what is socially unknown.[4]

Landogo, like humanity everywhere, attempt to control what they cannot and do not know about. As a people I would say they optimistically protect what they have and strike back at what is unknown rather than passively wait for what they do control to fall apart. This may, in fact, explain why individual use of both benevolent and malevolent witchcraft are institutionalized -- a system of thought and action where the ambiguous and understructured become fused with secrecy.

These things become aesthetically represented as certain and ordered.

UNSEEN CRISIS AND THE NEED FOR CERTAINTY

In response to witch catastrophe, Landogo instigate a mystical process that is fundamentally terminal -- it kills. Such a process is primarily one of aesthetic construction because of its overwhelmingly unknown nature. Not only does the aesthetic process represent the substance of the crisis, but it represents adjudication and resolution of the crisis as well. In the various case studies used in this ethnography, swear and swearing represent certainty -- in terms of reproducing ideology and in the application of power.[5] But the swearing does other things as well that are less public than they seem.

One of the most important functions that are achieved is the reproduction of secrecy as a structure. What I mean by this is that the actual crisis remains overpowering and threatening. The swearing may, in fact, cloak the fact (keeps secret) the possibility that resolution of witch crisis may not have been achieved at all. This appearance is a vital goal, since the crisis is really uncertain. Yet, it will be represented as certain. Such a paradox has stimulated numerous ethnographers and social theorists. I would argue that at the foundation of this process is a cultural "science" of construction and symbolization predicated on an aesthetic system of thought -- essentially a philosophy of control and power embedded in the process of representing certainty.

In what remains one of the most far-reaching studies of its kind Gluckman (1955:364) argues that the certainty of any legal form and process (essentially a move toward order) is generated from the uncertainty of social life (essentially a foundation of disorder). Gluckman shows with great clarity, using numerous case studies, that those who adjudicate the actions of others often manipulate uncertainty to achieve certainty. What appear to be objective decisions and

judgements are often paradoxical because certainty is generated from uncertainty.[6] What is represented and reproduced as certain becomes a model of and for ordered human interaction.[7] Along these same lines of argument, Comaroff and Roberts (1981:107,249) have shown that Tswanna peoples have diverse modes of confrontation as well as resolution. Such an observation is applicable to the Landogo context where witch conflict (the actual confrontation, the mystical adjudication and the hoped for resolution) reveals the logic and meaning of the Landogo normative world.

As I have shown for Landogo, and in contrast to Tswanna, there are times when Landogo processes of secular adjudication seek and achieve compromise. At other times the same secular adjudication fails outright and genres of mystical adjudication are the primary mechanisms for resolution. Among Tswanna, mystical adjudication is a last resort (only when ideal and appropriate settlement directed activity fails) used to establish responsibility and gain vengeance.[8] Among Landogo, such mystical adjudicational mechanisms are clearly used with regularity.

As my case studies demonstrate, Landogo swearing enactments (whether it be a food swear, the witch net, or the women's dance with the rice pounding sticks) provide an ideal situation to analyze the manner in which swearing transforms the micro-fabric of a particular village. Among other aspects swear action represents:

1) A conscious and practical knowledge of the disordered nature of the world,

2) An aesthetic creation and manipulation of power through a redirection of disorder; and finally

3) The application of that power (swears) in an attempt at perpetuating "certain" social order in a problematic disordered world.

The extensive use of divination, a witch net and finally the assault be village women through enactment of pounding sticks

created an adjudicational mechanism of immense power. These aesthetic actions represent a wide variety of events, forces, things, objects, qualities, normal agents, agents with varying degrees of capacity, witches, and spirit forces that interact and are interrelated.

REPRESENTING POWER

In all the cases discussed in this dissertation, Landogo saw swearing and swears as vital.[9] It is clear that Landogo conceptualize success in life as resulting from the use of both malevolent and benevolent witchcraft agency -- of which swears and swearing are a part. In extreme cases, individuals who want power use whatever means are available to achieve and secure power. Most Landogo are less extreme and use swears and swearing to combat the forces of disorder, negation, witches, misfortune, illness and death. In either case, the use of swears and swearing reveal a matrix of power.

As I have tried to suggest, the creation and use of coercive power is far from an idealized causal relationship. There are many aspects of power that are, privately and sometimes publicly, contested. For example: Who was killed and why? How were they chosen? Why some individuals and not others? Were those killed always guilty? These questions pose other kinds of inquiry: Why do only certain individuals have the capacity to terminate or extend life? Who gives them these powers? These questions suggest that Landogo, indeed, have many concerns about how and why mystical capacity is used in Landogo society. Yet, it is also clear that few, if anyone, publicly questions the logic, legitimacy, and efficacy of the overall world of power, or the mystical capacity of a given individual.

Concerning this process, Pa Koroma Kanu (the now deceased former Ceremonial chief in **Magbaiamba Ndonhanhu** chiefdom) suggests that uncertainty pervades such events:

Many cases become witch business because "one-word" is more important than assigning guilt. A person can be guilty of some wrong doing, and yet remain an active participant in the village. Guilt, in a lot of cases, does not carry severe penalties. So many people hold a grudge because they have failed to receive the kind of decision they expected. It becomes witch business.But witch cases are heavy.

When a witch case occurs another kind of procedure must be used to find evidence -- divination and swearing. If a witch case happens it is an issue of life or death. If the person dies, it means they were guilty. If the person lives, it means they are innocent. But witch cases always "spoils" your children, your farm, and most of all your happiness. That is the way tradition is. Tradition are the things that we have had for a long time. These things come from God; swears come from God. Swears are wonderful, but they spoil things. Our forefathers were warriors and they left all these traditions to us, the people who live now.

THEORETICAL APPLICATIONS

In this chapter I integrate theoretical perspectives on aesthetic action, power and transformation. My goal is to explain what swears and swearing, as aesthetic action, reveals about the structure of everyday life. Some of the ideas of Karp (1985, 1987) are relevant to the Landogo case. He argues five interrelated points, among other things:

1) Local systems of meaning provide answers to numerous questions,

2) Cosmologies should be seen to exploit a vast range of human experience through the interpretation of experience,

3) Both cosmologies and systems of thought are produced and reproduced in practical as well as ritualized action,

4) Quite often the ritual mechanisms are not only tools for recreating order, but also tools issues of power and the subversion of order; and

5) In the context of crisis, reproduction of indigenous theories of action, concepts of personhood, and ideas

about unique capacity and power are revealed and articulated.[10]

In the context of witch crisis, we see the reproduction process of indigenous theories of individual capacity and power, to notions of action, and into concepts of personhood. Most Landogo enact limited amounts of mystical forces usually in the form of:

1) **Nhoa nhanda bee nda** (the actual process of doing witchcraft); or

2) **Chaga na** (the act of giving a sacrifice).

The goal of either is **Maa nhu gbe** (to protect what you already have); to create **Ndii ila** (balance in previous and current relationships which is construed as "shared decisions of heart"); and to maximize **Nhanda gbekpe** (good habits and ways). These relational actions must be performed regularly to insure social, political, and cosmological success in life. Such action is achieved not only in terms of individual personhood, but with one's family, lineage, peer group, and village.

Seen in this light, doing witchcraft is far from a deviant action -- it can be used for safety and security, for wealth, for success in farming, as well as for protection and retribution. And yet, not every Landogo individual has these abilities, and because success cosmologically is so important most Landogo turn to those who have the necessary capacity. Following theoretical foundations established by Giddens, I would argue that all Landogo are agents because they have knowledge, intention and strategy. However, there are other agents, who reflexively monitor their actions to a higher degree than others. These agents have what Karp calls performance-oriented means of self expression.[11] In the on-going process of daily life, these agents represent and enact power through their unique reflexive capacity; and in so-doing

such individuals influence and dictate the flow of daily life. Such individual use of energy, imagination and creativity makes them both agents **for** and **of** power and control.[12]

It is clear from Chapters Four and Five that Landogo conceptualize such individuals as witch. Agency seems almost inappropriate as a term to describe Landogo who have some variation of four-eyed witch capacity. I state this because these individuals have knowledge and creativity to apply esoteric knowledge. Knowledge, and those processes associated with it, is aesthetically and performatively applied in the mystical manipulation of various forces in space and time. Mystical manipulation occurs in a number of dimensions: temporally, spatially, symbolically and ideologically. These dimensions create a continuous flow of what seem to be purposeful and accountable "events-in-the-world."[13]

In the Makuranko witch crisis, the swear agent (as actor with this creative knowledge and aesthetic capacity) actually engages in conscious reproduction of that micro-world called Makuranko. Not only is the structure of Makuranko reproduced, but in another sense the entire Landogo society. What I want to make clear is that there is continuous interchange between normal Landogo actors, those agents with some form of specialized knowledge, and those agents with malevolent witch agency. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, the interaction of these actors is most often heightened and focused by conflict, crisis adjudication, and the sense of order created through their resolution.

Regardless, a relationship of dependency continues to exist whether the resolution of witch crisis is achieved or not. Through divination and sacrifice, swears and swearing, as well as medicine and healing, normal Landogo agents come to rely on agents with special capacity to generate various kinds of transformations in the current and future structure of social relations.[14] Normal Landogo need these agents so as to access the power of the moral and ordered world. To access the

moral is to create control. Regardless of the degree of crisis or transformation, what actually occurs between agent and agent with capacity is what Giddens has theorized as "the dialectic of control." When the dialectic of control is elevated to conscious practice, a hierarchy of moral principles become referenced and articulated. These moral principles are then represented to have actual form as well as certain meaning. This is what swears and swearing functions to achieve -- the representation of moral order in bounded space and time.

Why does space and time need bounding? The point is that bounded time and space is moral. Recall from Chapter Three where I suggested that Landogo conceptualize a progression of moral children, farmers and farms, as well as moral big men. In each case, the person, thought, action, and space is moral. Moral means contained. One might argue that all Landogo settlements are already bound and contained. The average settlement averages around four extended families -- what Gluckman (1967) conceptualized as a restricted social field, and yet a field with "multiplex" relations. As Gluckman might have seen them, Landogo are continually drawn together and pulled apart through the conflicting ties and interests of interrelated families.

The structure of their relations (see Chapter Three and Four) creates various tensions -- some can be left unresolved and others must be resolved. There is the well-articulated social ideal of **Ngo ila**, that I reference ad nauseam, but Landogo pay little attention to its social meaning in some of their conflicts. Sometimes it appears to me that there is no logic or reasoning to its use or disuse. But Landogo rarely allow witch crisis to pass unresolved. Pressing secular and mystical problems are resolved in a limited number of ways -- mostly through the mystical types of swear adjudication that require agents with special capacity.

SECULAR CONTROL

Despite my initial impressions, Landogo adjudication is quite patterned, in fact, under renewed scrutiny, I found adjudication dictated by the nature of the dispute. In most cases of conflict, those who judged (say elders and or courts) simply found needed evidence from a vast repertoire of normative resources. Similar to other African societies, Landogo have no absolute notion of truth or falsehood (Gluckman 1967:153-155 and Moore 1975:103). For example, elders and those who hear cases also look at the acts relative positions, and consequences for the individuals or groups in a specific conflict. If the case cannot be solved in one manner then they turn to an existing body of "jural" norms, values and laws to find some other manner.[15]

My ethnographic research also strongly points to a higher and more complex Landogo moral ontology that is highly fluid and hierarchical. During my first field work period (1987-1988) this fluidity appeared to me underdefined and ambiguous. I felt there was little structure or pattern. Of course, most of these Landogo principles are far from ambiguous and my first impressions were simple the result of my own rudimentary knowledge of such concepts. My understanding grew throughout my second and third periods of field work (1988-1989, and 1991). While cases are fascinating to watch, they are difficult to follow and document; and witch cases are even more difficult. It takes time to train oneself to see and hear what is being transacted. I have watched elders and chiefs apply low level moral principles in a very precise and explicit way. The person was "guilty" of something. Other cases were less clear cut, they are convoluted and complex, and I watched the same judicial actors apply medium level moral principles that were broadly conceptual. These were hypothetical models, of a sort, that could be applied to many different kinds of social dispute. These models were broad, flexible and encompassing.[16]

I also watched those same actors apply higher level principles. These perplexed me, being quite vague and ambiguous, and I often had to have these principles explained to me. Later, I learned that they were also explained to everyone else as well.[17] As Landogo conceptualize them, high level "legal" principles tend to overlap. They are ambiguous because they are meant to be multireferential and indefinite, and they give Landogo adjudicational processes a flexible body of philosophy. Rather than use fixed norms, ones not easily adapted to a situation of mystical conflict, they use an esoteric philosophy that easily fuses the secular and mystical.[18] This level of moral ontology is what one finds embedded in higher level swears and articulated by swear agents in swearing enactments. Such an ontology is neither easy to see, to understand, or to find clearly embedded in a single event where Landogo will discuss its meaning. The ontology is mostly revealed in crisis and then returns to a state of claoked secrecy.

MYSTICAL CONTROL

Landogo ontology, like others found in African societies, is inherently contradictory, ambiguous and inconsistent. It is meant to be this way. Its manifestations are found everywhere and yet not codified anywhere. Such ambiguity creates the need for interpretation. The process of interpretation of these high level principles is, for the most part, a replication of power relations and ideology rather than a replication of these moral principles themselves.[19] In Chapters Three and Four I demonstrated how Landogo moral ontology is situated in a dialectical tension between ordered (regularized and secular) social forms and disordered (situational and mystical) cosmological forms. This dialectical process is always in a state of tension and adjustment, but has its most radical form in witch crisis. On the mystical level, when a Landogo agent with special capacity sorts out problematic relations, the mystical judgement is made natural, factual and

objectified because it is shown to be generated from non-human sources. While the swearing process (as a sorting out process) is filled with uncertainty. As I have already argued, the judgement of the swear (as seen in swearing) creates and reproduces certainty.

The swear man, who has mystical power, authority and sanction, literally judges known or unknown others who have confessed to being witches or are found to be witches. What actually happens in the village is a shift in the perception and meaning of order resulting from how the disorder and confrontation are represented. As Karp suggests for another African context:

> power...resides in the quality of the performance...the efficacy of symbols...is created and recreated in what people do and often in the ephemeral embellishments through which they enhance their actions. These embellishments are not referentially empty...they both assume and refer to what is known and shared between audience and performer...to the contexts of everyday life...this judgement is aesthetic.[20]

Building upon this observation, each Landogo perceives meaning that is inextricably tied to the existence of witch conflict and the inevitable confrontation that must occur with those witches. But there is a sense of tragedy in this process because swearing embodies, in fact, a kind of pathos. Karp alludes to this pathos for Iteso people, but a pathos that is nonetheless applicable to Landogo -- a people's hopes for their world are controverted by their own attempts to control that same world.

Some Landogo skillfully manipulate -- a kind of negotiation -- both the uncertainty and certainty embedded in the Landogo universe. This assertion does not mean that Landogo social life is without pattern or purpose. All this means is that they live in a social reality which is janus-faced by the coexistence of uncertainty and certainty; and on a deeper level by the coexistence of disorder and order. Landogo who can manipulate and negotiate uncertainty and

certainty through aesthetic agency manipulate, in part, through swearing events. What is it that these swear people manipulate? As I have argued before that body of knowledge they manipulate is an aesthetic philosophy. And while this is my etic conceptualization and term, it would appear that some Landogo agents have this kind of creative capacity.

Aesthetic philosophy, when fused with secrecy and mysticism, generates an immense amount of power. In the context of swearing, some Landogo use aesthetic philosophy so as to successfully represent their particular interests as validated by social consensus and mystical sanction. This validation can mask the structural contradictions of secrecy that pervade daily experience. It is as if secrecy, once validated, becomes an acceptable form of coercion and power. Where this coercion and power to be uncloaked, such experience would expose the social and cosmological imbalances of a world ruled by witches.[21]

Aesthetic capacity embodied in swears and swearing, is the ability to create, construct, symbolize and represent the doing of moral witchcraft. Moral witch agency is both malevolent as well as ordered. In general, I argue that aesthetic capacity often, but not always, generates a state of transformation -- either and actual social or cosmological one, or one based in individual perception and understanding. As a sum total, this transformation comes about from a particular swear agents ability to fuse artifice and ethics. The individual who has this aesthetic capacity draws on a body of thought and representation -- essentially a fused aesthetic and moral hierarchy.

DEFINING AESTHETIC PHILOSOPHY

In Chapter Two I defined aesthetics as an evaluative system of representation where created and natural forms are symbolized, constructed and articulated. At the foundation of such a system is that body of thought which concerns various kinds of power. Aesthetic philosophy allows an agent to bring

together material odds and ends (from a never ending cultural inventory) to generate things and meanings. The aesthetic action takes an ideational blueprint and synthesizes thought as well as belief with notions of space, time and context. Aesthetic ontology is a fused body -- a system which articulates moral thought, idea and world view through symbol, image, metaphor, action, representation, and construction. As a philosophy it finds expression in a number of ways, of which swears are one genre. In the last Chapter a number of swears were both discussed and illustrated. We saw a range of swears -- some expressed in simple single-strand symbols, some were visual metaphors, others are more iconic in nature, and we also saw those that were complex performative events articulated over time. What is important, is that meaning can be expressed in a variety of swears which use a number of resources -- ranging from the intangible and underarticulated, to the concrete and tangible. What is expressed in one swear may have be a political function, but what is expressed in another swear is at the level of expressive dialogue. Each swear level, as an embodiment of aesthetic philosophy, communicates 'information' without necessarily having an overt function or affect. It is a system of clear moral messages and sometimes it includes contradictory moral messages.

Landogo swears and swearing have other aesthetic levels as well. Some swears are enacted to be both dialogic and purposive. Here the aesthetic action is designed to achieve some end such as cultural critique and evaluation. Not only is the aesthetic action of these swears purposive, but it is part of the process of construal of individuals and groups; such swear action is almost always part of political processes that make up ideology. My main point here is that swear aesthetics not only reproduces or transforms the world of witch confrontation, but reproduces and transforms ideology as well. Swear and swearing should be seen as a mechanism for coercive power -- political or mystical. With this perspective clearly

stated, I now move this analysis into the framework of a detailed analysis of two swears and swearing enactments: 1) The **Njonjooma** as discussed in Chapter Four and Five; and 2) Another swear called **Lubiyaa bee haai na** discussed briefly in Chapter Six.

THE AESTHETICS OF NJONJOOMA

The nature of this philosophy is best seen through a detailed exploration of one highly visible swear. Of all the swears discussed here, the **Njonjooma** is amendable to this kind of analysis. Its forms, symbols, and ideas are complex and multivocal because they effect an entire village -- as they did in Makuranko. The swear **Lubiayaa bee haai na** also is complex and multivocal. However, this second swear is more involved in family cases of suspected or confirmed witchcraft. In both, the enactments reveal how Landogo conceptualize crisis, how they reproduce theories of action, how concepts of personhood are generated and maintained, and how ideas about malevolent witch capacity (as power) are redirected.[22]
The goal of purposive swear action [23] is to maintain, validate, and reconstruct the efficacy of a tenuous world that is in a state of confrontation. The process is designed to set in people's minds the veracity of **Ngo ila** as the proper interpretation of the world. The purposive aesthetic action of swearing has the ability to coerce even the individual who sees through the transparency of the aesthetic production itself.

Only a few Landogo swears are enacted in isolation and secrecy. However, most are enacted in a performative context that is situated in public time and space. This public nature is crucial because the swear man has the goal of influencing the conscious world views of those at the swearing event, and those in the social field of a village. The swear itself has its own intentionality. But quite often the results of the swearing action is channeled through the power of the specific

swear agents. In cases such as those I have already discussed, the swear agent uses his artistic and performative abilities not only to set the stage, but also his dramatic style and personal embellishment as a complex artifice to symbolize the swear mechanism. Music, movement and dance, rhetorical speech, and various other objects are brought together to authenticate claims about the changes that will have, or will take place, in the social field.[24]

The swearing enactment of **Njonjooma** is an adjudicational process where formal mystical construal of malevolent witch, witchery and witchcraft is made public by a group of women. The women dance the pounding sticks and find mystical evidence as facts for judgement. **Njonjooma** mystically elaborates -- represents as certain -- ambiguous moral principles that construe unseen and unknown witches who have participated in a recent mystical confrontation. **Njonjooma** is clearly an enactment of objectification where the judgement of witches, and their eventual death seem natural and right.[25]

As a process of objectifying moral idioms, **Njonjooma** is a situational construal of the so-called actions of witch people by the mortal women who dance the sticks, the diviners who found the information, and the swear man who enacted the witch net. It is not just the swear that kills the witches, but other human agents in the village. They judge as well using the same moral ontology. The "facts" used are represented as certain, but in fact the actual secular and mystical adjudication used in the **Njonjooma** was ever-changing -- a fluid constitution of moral ontology. In this case, the **Njonjooma** becomes an on-going process of reproduction and representation of knowledge. It is because of this that **Njonjooma** should be seen as a transformative process, where a

change occurs on the village and individual level. What is transformed is an adjustment and manipulation of a moral ontology -- where objectified rules, laws, moral codes and idioms, and mystical beliefs are fused to be certain facts.[26] However, another swear (see Chapter Six) called **Lubaiya bee haai na** helps to understand the how and why of transformation in the context of crisis -- but on a more personal level of the family.

THE AESTHETICS OF LUBAIYA

While the **Njonjooma** presented a more village wide example of swearing, there are other kinds of swearing that are focused within families or on known individuals. This example should provide further illustration of such a process. Pa Chande and Ya Kai (his wife) have a **Luba** swear in front of their house. The swear is embodied in a carved stick -- some simple and others with highly embellished with designs. Pa Chande's wife was ritually married to this **Luba** swear by Pa Chande's mother, and the mother was also married to the same swear when she was much younger. As in the case of **Njonjooma** the **Lubaiya** represents benevolent witch action used to reproduce order in a given family. He states:

> **Luba** is a swear devil. It is protection for many things -- mothers who are breast feeding, for infertility problems, protection against witches and bad people, and mostly to control a wife who takes too many lovers. **Luba** can bring a family good fortune, harvests, money, and most of all children. We have good fortune.That is why my wife has it. She is in charge of it. She feeds it. My mother gave it to her before she died. A man is really the one of owns the "stump." There are reasons why the husband gets a **Luba** for his wife, or wives. Let's say his wife is barren inside. The man has intercourse with her regularly and she doesn't get pregnant. He goes to the diviner. The diviner tells him that he must "pull" **Luba** for his wife. So he sends his wife to another **Luba**

devotee, or he gets it from his own mother if she has it.

My mother had **Luba**, so she gave it to my wife. My mother gave my wife all the rules and taboos she had to follow. She can't take **Kona kona** (lovers) ever again. A wife must not have intercourse with anyone -- even her husband -- when she first gets the **Luba**. Now that she has married **Luba** she has intercourse with the swear. At night it will come to her and have intercourse with her. If a man has intercourse with her while this is happening he will surely die.

Well, the next morning she is now a devotee of **Luba**. She must go to the bush and pick the special **Ndaga na bee haai na** (the **Luba** leaf). As she picks the leaf, the **Luba** is swearing her -- you will die if you have intercourse with any other man than your husband. If you are unfaithful the leaf will catch you.

The **Luba** devotee brings the leaf to her husband's house and pounds them into mash. She makes **Haai haai gati na** (three balls of medicine) called **Yegbe haai** and gives it to the experienced devotee. The three leaf balls are put on a mat and the new devotee is asked to chose one. The middle ball of leaf is the only proper choice. If she picks either of the outside balls she is seen as "not yet pure." If she chooses the middle ball it means that she is ready to be faithful to the husband and to the **Luba** swear.

Many women pick the outside balls, because they don't believe **Luba** will see they still have lovers. They pick and then the older devotee says: you are still tampering with men -- call their names! The two devotees will argue. They will enact this again and again until she confesses. But eventually, the **Luba** medicine will force her to speak the truth. She will grow to fear it. She might even hang heads [talk] with her people about the problem. She will also talk to the devotee -- but she will "call name" (reveal her lovers).
Finally, she will tell her husband because the swear medicine will force her. She will comply. The husband will take her lovers to the elders to collect his women damage. By now his wife is married to **Luba**. She will always pick the middle ball (the truth). She will become a **Yegbe haai haai nwoo na** (woman medicine person) herself and put all her tools into a basket or calabash (see Illustration #35).

She is now formally married to **Luba**. The old devotee will take her to the **Luba**. She must walk around the **Luba** six

> times, then she stands over the stick, and then she straddles the stick. She will call out the words and then give her the leaf. She does this five times and on the sixth time she drinks the liquid. Then she is washed with white clay -- on feet, breasts, thighs, back, stomach, sides and especially forehead. Afterwards, she is now a real devotee of **Luba** and she can initiate other women. She goes home and never has intercourse with any other man than her husband.

The **Luba** swear is quite popular -- especially with male individuals. While all of the insight I have is from a male perspective only, the discussion, in part, explains some of the structural and experiential problems between men and women as husbands and wives. Pa Santige Konteh (village head man of Lagbelle) states:

> When a son is mature enough you ask him if he is ready for a wife. Getting a good wife is a difficult thing; you must find out the ways of the woman; her family may know most of her ways, but not all of them. It is often left to God, maybe you get a good wife for your son, maybe you don't.
>
> Once she comes to you, you watch her: if she is bad, steals, fights, causes trouble etc. If this happens, you just send her back and get your bride price money. Some fathers don't even care about the money. Bride price is never set -- it ranges from four-hundred Leones up to over twelve-thousand Leones. If you send her back to her people and they "beg you to take her back" well then you must decide. A woman who causes trouble demonstrates that she as well as her family doesn't have any training.
>
> Men get Luba for their wives for many reasons. A good wife always follows her husbands words even if there are clashes between them. But, wives always take lovers. When a man takes a wife he gets many new family obligations....if his father-in-lw dies he must supply white lapa, goat, rice, and money for a proper burial. A wife will cost plenty. He has obligations even if he suspects his wife. The children he gets from his wife always belong to him because of bride price. But the wife -- she can be a real problem. She can do him real harm -- harm much worse than kona kona business (affairs). It is this other business that he must watch for. The husband has choices -- he can send her back, he can divorce her, or he can pull [enact] **Luba**.

Maybe a man suspects his wife of witching him -- there are signs. Witch business happens, but secretly. Sometimes the husband doesn't even know he is being witched. Why would she do this kind of thing? If a woman wants out of he marriage she can go to the chief and give him 400 Leones. The chief hears her case and then sends for the husband to hear his side. If the chief decides she can leave him, her people refund the bride price. That is it. The marriage is over.
But the other trouble happens. True, a man can send her away at any time. Look at Pa Kitima. He has three wives now, and he has already driven four away. Pa Koroma had three, but two have already died. He has **Luba** for his second wife. Those are men who have power over their wives. Their wives respect them.

What you should know is that we men are public and known. But women, well they are private and secret. Women will always keep their secrets to themselves. We men will never know what they think or what they feel. A man can't know the truth of a wife's world. A man never has real power over his wife.....he can watch her, her things, her ways, her money. Sometimes a man will take all of his wife's things and store it in a box so he will know exactly what she has and how much she uses it. If he suspects her he makes her take the **Luba** swear. It will hold her fine [control her].

If the wife takes lovers, or if she witches her husband, the man must take strong measures. You pull (enact) strong medicine. This kind of thing always happens inside the family. Ideally, a man should have the same affection and love for all his wives. He should treat them equally. But sometimes he can't. Well, one gets vexed (mad). Some women take a different road in the family -- they continue to steal. They take lover after lover and the whole village knows about it. A man won't want to drive a wife for fear that she will hurt his children. Sometimes a woman fights back in the world of witches. She will try to make him sick, have a bad harvest, or even to kill him husband and his children. This can happen in the world of witches.

Well, **Luba** helps we men because we will never believe women. If a man has secrets he should never tell his wife. He should not tell his secrets to any female, even his mother.If women have their ways, then we have **Luba**. Most often a woman will witch her husband through the act of sexual intercourse. They can give him woman's diseases which you don't even know that you have (syphillus and gonorrhea). These diseases are very bad, a man will never

know until it hits him. She can witch him directly. Or maybe she can put a swear on him.

There are always signs that the wife is doing witch things: the man's sickness -- impotence -- that is when a man needs **Luba** the most. If the man becomes impotent it is a sign. He goes to the looking ground person (diviner) and finds out who is witching him and why? The diviner tells him it is "inside" his house. He knows that it is his wife. He put a **Luba** swear on her. He does this and the swear will fight his wife in the world of witches until she is sick, very sick, or if she is very powerful, until she is ready to die. She will come and beg for forgiveness. She will confess, and she will call name.

The goal of having the wife call name is to stop her and to obtain woman damage from the lovers. You take the cases to the elders, sometimes it is kept in the house and is called a house case, sometimes it goes to the court bari, and sometimes it goes to the chiefs, and sometimes you swear the lovers. When there is kona kona business it is the man's children who suffer because she sends the riches of the house (usually rice) to her lover; then the children don't eat.

If the husband gets sick and he can't understand why, he will go to the diviner. The diviner tells him who has witched him and why. The man will call his family together and have his brother or uncle ask the witch among them to confess. When no one confesses the uncle will state that they are going to bring a swear. If the bad wife confesses, the matter is left. The man gets the leaf to cure his illness. But he won't trust her again.

If she still won't confess they set a date and bring the **Luba** swear. He will publicly announce when the **Luba** swear is coming. She knows she will have to confess and stay with that family forever. Once the **Luba** swear is set the husband should never have sexual intercourse with the wife until the swear has accepted her.

Well, you now see the problem. If a man doesn't have a wife he has no respect. Why? Well, women can get children and without children a man is nothing. If a man doesn't have children he is looked upon as being very low. A wife who respects her husband, she will do fine things for him. He will have many children. But the wife who always takes lovers, she shows him no respect in the house or in public. She won't bring increase to his house.

Finally, she will behave so badly that he must confront her with **Luba**. "You must clean yourself," and "your heart

is dirty with bad feelings and shame," he will say. He can force her to take **Luba**. Maybe he forces her to take a hot oil swear. When the husband pulls **Luba** and cures his wife with leaf she becomes a faithful wife.

Some men are so mad at their wives that they let the swear kill them. To cure a wife of being a witch is called **Too ala la ngi aa** (you have done witch business, but we have cured you). Women do witch business much more than men. God knows who does witch business. If you take the life of another mortal person, God will come and take that person's life as well. The evidence for this is that women die more than men, it must be because they do more bad things then we men do. It is a fact: women do more witch business than men do. Period. Most men feel that women will eat their own children if they needed to. They will know your secrets even if you hide them. You will never know their secrets. Well, that is why we have **Luba**.

AESTHETIC QUALITIES OF ORDER

In Chapter Three I suggested that order, structure and morality are all important to the public ideology of agreement and consensus. However, I have only infrequently seen the actual social consensus and agreement (that ordered construct called **Ngo ila**) between men and women, between siblings, in villages and social groups, and on a larger scale of Landogo society itself. That does not mean **Ngo ila** fails to exist as a patterned structured ideology. But is is really an on-going construct, rather than a fixed structure. In contrast, I have heard the **Ngo ila** term referenced in numerous situations of conflict, dispute, and especially in the context of swearing. In the **Luba** case, a man wants to create **Ngo ila** with his wife, or wives. Sometimes it isn't possible and the husband must divorce one of his wives. Other times the husband must use mystical means such as **Lubaiya bee haai na** to create order and control -- he reproduces these qualities of perceived order through **Luba** enactments that adjudicate on the sexual and reproductive failures of his wife. A **Luba** enactment is a moral act. It is the reproduction of a moral ontology that fuses proper marriage relations within ritualized aesthetic action.

It is in this context that the husband and his family evaluate the moral reason, intent, and character of his wife as either moral human being, or as immoral witch. The **Luba** performance, as an enactment represented through aesthetic devices, continues to effect people long after the initial enactment has been concluded. The performance extends beyond itself because it takes on a meaning of its own -- a meaning beyond audience and performers, ritual objects and acts, as well as beyond esoteric knowledge and medicine.[27]

What remains after the **Luba** has been enacted and performed is a moral inventory -- a kind of ideational moral blueprint that synthesizes ambiguous moral properties and concepts of thought into linear notions of dimension, space, time and context. The wife becomes person as witch because she did such and such a thing. She was caught by the **Luba** swear; she became sick; and then she confessed, and then she married the swear spirit. These are facts that people in the family remember generation after generation.

STRUCTURATION REVEALED

In the case of the **Njonjooma**, the swear agents (the women) manipulate the structure of village thought and perception. In the case of **Luba** the same process occurs whereby a husband manipulates his wife's thought and perception. In either case, it is a process of reproduction. Reproduction recreates the duality of structure. It is not a question of whether or not the swear is real or faked, or if the swear has intention or not, or if the swear agents have real or imagined power. Because, in fact, the **Njonjooma** agents enact a powerful social construct. They do so through aesthetically accentuating some things over other things. Reproduction and structuration from the analytical perspective are not ideal events. They are not clean because they are at the root of power and coercion. For example, the **Njonjooma** can emphasize malevolent agency of the witches as powerless in contrast to the power of benevolent mystical forces and

concepts. Second, the same swear can reproduce the need for secrecy and control -- a process of concealing some information while revealing other kinds. What is used is aesthetically brought together by human imagination and behavior, and mystically authenticated.

The notion of a duality of structure suggests a very simple, yet exceedingly important idea -- that agents actively constitute society in the same space and time that society constitutes the lives of those same agents.[28] This suggests that swear agents with high aesthetic capacity create various symbolic forms (which they activate in the context of crisis) with conscious involvement of their society. The swear -- either the **Njonjooma** or **Luba** are aesthetic bricolage created by swear agents as bricolers. As sophisticated constructors of the symbolic and meaningful world, Landogo swear agents use their aesthetic philosophy to fuse various material items, moral ideas, and enactments. This action both consciously and unconsciously reconstructs and reproduces (a powerful kind of structuration) a set of ideational configurations about the nature of the Landogo world.[29] Structuration equals order, and order equals a morally constructed world.

The goal of the kinds of swearing events discussed here -- used in witch crisis where death and disorder impel action -- clearly reconstruct meaning. But what kinds of meaning are we refering to since meaning is multireferential? Surely, the specific variables of swearing are concerned with the world of power -- its creation, maintenance and validation. Such a process is on-going rather than static. Most Landogo swearing events are rife with the paradox of order and certainty being generated from disorder and uncertainty. This paradox may explain why the use of aesthetic philosophy and tools are so important to the process. Given that the substance embedded in aesthetic events are oxymoron, those agents that traffic in attempted resolutions must already have enough cloaked

coercive power so as to not completely reveal the structure and foundations of their power.

Recall from Chapter Four and Five that most Landogo never publicly question the efficacy of the swear or swear agent. In private some individuals do question. But the enactment remains paradoxical because a swear agent aesthetically constructs the ideology of order, they are doing so through acknowledgement of overwhelming existence of cosmological disorder. A second paradox is that it is ideological discontinuity rather than continuity (exacerbated by social tension, conflict, dispute and crises) that generates the most powerful Landogo ideas about the nature of power and power itself. What is important is that I refer to power more as an idea and quality, rather than as a thing or fixed state.[30]

Let me reiterate that among Landogo there are many forms of structuration. As one of those forms, swearing reproduces "order" through adjudicational action upon crisis states. Structuration also occurs through divination, initiations, healing, child birth, the sharing of food and especially palm wine. From my perspective, structuration is not the reproduction of actual structures as physical entities, but the reproduction of paradigmatic models and ideologies. In the process of seeking who is witch, Landogo define witch and non-witch. Thus constituting a duality of structure and reproducing as well as maintaining the dialectic between order and disorder. This process occurs through conscious action by swear agents and conscious acceptance by members of the village. In this sense crisis generates the need for structure and order, and the community reproduces those configurations which define order -- **Ngo ila**. This is the matrix where the Landogo world is ideologically reproduced by situated events which become both medium and outcome.[31]

If this is true, structuration produces a meaningful sense of control that is paralleled by production of coercive power as well. Structuration, power, control, and meaning,

however, should not be seen as the same phenomena. These variables may share ideological boundaries, but are fused between boundaries. Such processes of structuration parallel the observations of Hardin (1987:203) who argues that social structure exists as a paradigmatic model embodied by aesthetic action.[32]

THE REALM OF POWER

Swearing events are, therefore, a key mechanism for structuration, and they are often but not always, mechanisms for power and control. In this society, power is that relational quality generated from either a benevolent or malevolent witch agent's four-eyed capacity. Both the benevolent and malevolent agency mediate and transform disordered energy (in the natural world) and apply it to socially constructed ordered energy (in the material world). The results depend on intention. Because the individual and social ideals of **Ngo ila** are only realized occasionally in life, meaningful power and control are the next best thing. But power and control should be seen as a representation and state of compromise -- the actual conditions of Landogo existence being far from ideal.[33]

Control is very difficult to study and write about because it is ephemeral. The best way to approach the issue of control among Landogo is to discuss it as an imagined quality -- a quality that nonetheless creates actual efficacy resulting from applications of power. Control is a moment in space and time when the human world seems ordered, factual and as it should be. This suggests that control, like power, is a relational concept dictated by the syntheses of human perception, sense and feeling with reality. Individuals, groups and villages, for example, create and define power through control over social and mystical relations. This control is defined through on-going confrontation between human and non-human entities.

This does not mean that power and control is purely mystical, and that there are not secular variables to power and control as well. My point is only that power and control must be seen as a sum total of cosmological interaction between what is natural and social. In this way, the nature and application of Landogo power (in all its dimensions and definitions) can itself be seen as human construct. Power is real and yet it is an artifact generated from human imagination; an aspect of human creativity found in all forms of human social relations.[34]

Power is used by individuals to both control and counteract moral and cosmological uncertainty. What this suggests is that Landogo notions of power cannot be properly understood only through analysis of who controls the material base and means of production, or who has what position of authority.[35] As the Landogo material suggests, power and control are situationally determined by the capacity of certain agents. Sometimes their power is innate, other times their power is a created capacity, and other times still, their power is borrowed.

Such a fluid conception of power exists in stark contrast to our own western, rather mechanistic and static, notions of power fixed by public position and institution. Among Landogo power oscillates with the changing capacity of different agents, those with secular agency and those with witch agency [good or bad] change due to time, space and place. In part, this explains why confontation and negotiation is so fundamental to Landogo existence. If power and control is fluid, so indeed are the agents who access those things.

Earlier in this Chapter I argued that secrecy is a fundamental structure among Landogo. Beyond the notion of secrecy as a structure, it seems clear that swears and swearing are also embedded in the paradox of secrecy as well. Despite the fact that swearing recreates and reproduces Landogo notions of order, there is never a circumstance (at

least that I have seen) where the conditions of the ideological reproduction of consensus and agreement become totally revealed to all Landogo. What is reproduced is both revealed and cloaked. There is a powerful reason for this: to unmask the experiental, structural and philosophical contradictions would be to "pull the plug" of those structures (as ideational configurations) which drive Landogo society.

Among Landogo, it is clear that many contradictions are continually exposed through on-going lower level conflict. The world continues without problems despite this. Swearing at this level is oriented toward deterrence. However, where contradictions become exposed by intense conflict, antagonism, accusation and confession (for example in witch crisis) the swearing action is powerful and transformative. Such action is designed to remove individuals from the social fabric of a given village -- to achieve death.[36] Overall, swearing embodies power relations, although some are more coercive than others. Among other things, the swear man, his client or clients, the guilty individual or individuals (as witch or witches) are to some degree conscious of their respective positions in a everchanging secular and cosmological hierarchy predicated on power, and its difussion.

Returning briefly to the village of Makuranko, all the agents were conscious of the nature of power, and therefore power's need for confrontation. Power itself, like the aesthetic tools used to represent it, and the aesthetic performative events used to enact it, is parasitic on what it controls. Power cannot exist alone in a social vacuum. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, power is the ability to redirect various mystical resources for benevolent and malevolent goals (for temporary control in both public and private spheres) rather than some static state or position. From this perspective things like agency and capacity are crucial variables for the creation of power and control. Once again building upon ideas of Karp (1990), even though the

nature and application of Landogo power is complex, power is the situated, transformative capacity which produces or reproduces (through manipulation) some quality of social form in the world.[37]

My analysis suggested that the structure of Landogo society is not always parallel to Landogo aesthetic action. Quite often the structure of society and the societal aesthetics are in a state of disjunction. This is especially true in the context of crisis and swearing. The ideology of order is, indeed, reproduced. But the reproduction occurs through the redirection of subversive disorder. Seen from this perspective, order and disorder, as well as contradiction and ambiguity are vital to the reproduction of Landogo structural configurations. On a daily basis, disjunctive principles come into tension with one other; they contravene one another as an ambiguous normative repertoire stimulates conflicts and crises. Conflict and crisis must be resolved, or at least given the guise (appearance) of being resolved.[38]

When the Landogo cultural world is focused by crises, the structures that are reproduced are often given concrete form despite their intrinsic inability to fall neatly into one domain or another.[39] Landogo society demonstrates that conflict and contradiction almost always coincide in some form. I have concerned myself here with a number of interrelated questions. It appears that Landogo committed to an ideology of communal agreement, cope with their own endemic cultural conflict through the agency, aesthetics and mechanism of swears and swearing. What is actually reproduced is a fictive and fabricated ideology of **Ngo ila** (literally: social order as agreement and compromise).

This Chapter has posed certain questions that can, in part, be answered at this point. First, Landogo do have an ambiguous body of norms and values that make up a what we call a normative order. As a moral ontology, some forms are used regularly, and others are used infrequently. States of crises

and flux only exacerbate the paradox, contradiction, and ambiguity of this moral ontology. It is through conflict and dispute that the logic of the Landogo social and cosmological world is revealed. In Landogo thought there is one level of social order and another level of cosmological disorder. The threat of disorder is a fundamental organizing force of the Landogo world view underlying social all forms of interaction.

Like other societies, Landogo process is both reality and illusion, and is defined by the malevolent and benevolent use of witches, witchery and witchcraft. Power and control, as structuration, is achieved in part through swears, swear agents and swearing. Swear agents have the capacity to reproduce ideologies which continuously alter the fabric of reality. Ideology and structuration, as both Giddens and Karp have argued, are virtual processes of power.[40] When witch crisis reaches its highest levels Landogo ideology begins to be overwhelmingly revealed to the community. As the fabric of the ideological structure of compromise and agreement begins to unravel. As a conscious process, both normal Landogo and those agents with special capacity must confront their worst fears -- that their lives are fundamentally based upon the existence of the uncontrolled disorder and negation brought about by malevolent witches. Confronted by such a vile threat, the ideology of order must paradoxically draw upon the existence of disorder to reproduce itself. This is an inversion where one kind of disorder is used to subvert other forms of disorder so as to achieve order.

CHAPTER SEVEN NOTES

1. This is a central question pursued throughout most of Gluckman's work. See 1965.

2. Simon Ottenberg, Personal Communication, 1991.

3. Bellman's work is among Kpelle of Liberia, but his analysis is applicable in the Landogo context.

4. See Bellman 1984, Teft 1980, and Simmel 1950.

5. See Giddens 1979:193 for a more detailed analysis of this theoretical question. Also see numerous articles by Karp, in particular 1986, as well as Merrill 1988.

6. See Moore's Epilogue, 1977.

7. See Bourdieu 1977, Karp 1985, 1986 and 1988, and Moore 1975, 1977, and 1986.

8. Comparatively, one needs to know what the various social patterns are that make mystical adjudication the primary channel for dispute resolution.

9. Please see Comaroff & Roberts 1981: preface 7.

10. See Karp 1985:223-225 and Personal communication.

11. See Karp 1987: 138.

12. See Karp 1986:136 and personal communication.

13. Please see Giddens 1979:55-57 and Bourdieu 1972: ???.

14. See Giddens 1979:256.

15. See Gluckman 1965, Bohannan 1957, Nader 1969, Moore 1977, 1986 and Comaroff and Roberts 1981 among others.

16. This mid-range moral ontology is very similar to Gluckman's concept of The Reasonable Man (1955:82-83,125-130,153). Among Barotse the reasonable man is that individual who is **mutu yangana** (a man of sense). Sense and sensibility result from straightforwardness.

17. See Gluckman 1965, Giddens 1979, Moore 1986 and Karp 1990.

18. See Moore 1969: 345.

19. See similar kinds of arguments in Moore 1975, 1977, 1986.

20.See Karp 1987:141.

21. See Anthony Giddens (1979:194-197).

22. See Karp 1985:223-225 and Personal communication.

23. I have seen this term used both by Ottenberg 1989, Personal communication and Karp 1988, Personal Communication.

24. See Karp 1988 and Ottenberg 1989.

25. See Karp 1989 and Giddens 1979.

26. See Gluckman 1967: 269, 291-326.

27. See Hardin 1987:43, 48.

28. See Giddens 1979 and Karp 1986.

29. See Levi-Strauss 1962:16-33).

30. See Karp 1986:136 and personal communication.

31. See Giddens 1979:105, 256, and Karp 1986.

32. See Ivan Karp (1986: 133-136, 1988, 1989, and 1990).

33. See Karp and Arens 1989: Introduction, XII-XXIV and Beidelman 1986:23-24, 27-28, 140-161).

34. See Giddens 1979: 144.

35. See Karp 1986: 136, Giddens 1979, Bourdieu 1971 and Lukes 1978.

36. See Giddens 1979: 141-144 and Comaroff and Roberts 1981: 62 and 74.

37. See Comaroff & Roberts 1981: 62 for a parallel theoretical argument and ethnographic context.

38. Giddens 1979 and Karp 1986.

CHAPTER EIGHT
CONCLUSIONS

The dissertation has described and analyzed a Landogo world of cosmological confrontation. What I attempt is an interpretation of Landogo philosophy contained in the logic of Landogo witch agency. I have shown underlying connections between seemingly disparate realms of Landogo behavior and thought as contained in: A) Social processes of conflict; B) Aesthetic thought and representation; and C) Methods of adjudication. This syntheses indicates how African societies use aesthetic philosophy (as a system of representation and constructions) to control and adjudicate unresolved, and unresolvable, aspects of cosmological disorder.

As Beidelman (1986) has shown, neither imagination nor morality are easily found or ethnographically defined. World view, cosmology, and the universe of causality are constructed products. These constructions constitute and are constituted by human imagination which gives shape to a people's views of themselves and their surroundings, and allows them to control who and what they will be. It is through aesthetic imagination that Landogo measure, assess, reflect, control and change the reality of their experience.

Among Landogo the construal of moral reality most often occurs in the context of witch crisis. Swears and swearing, constitutes the mechanism and means for moral criticism but it is achieved through the subversion of human order -- the use of death. Order is a moral action. It is a choice derived from judgement about the way the world is and should be. Judgement impels and informs a moral order that Landogo assert is empirical, imagined, and lived as real.

My work has been stimulated by the sophisticated analyses of anthropologists such as Bohannan, Jackson, Beidelman and Karp. Each has argued that relevant ethnography can be written, and must get at what a given people perceive about their own culture and existence using their terms and concepts. Such a perspective is far from recent. Evans-

Pritchard's (1937) work on Azande witchcraft set a theoretical and substantive precedent fifty years ago because he demonstrated how Azande cosmology compelled individual belief and action in a variety of ways.[1] Later, using a similar conceptual perspective, Bohannan (1969) argued that anthropologists must get at people's perceptions so as to understand how they set up and classify their universe into categories. This must be achieved through understanding a people's language and language use, but also through their social action, symbolism, and conflict. As a sum total, we can then study meaningful cultural concepts as they reflect a wider world.[2]

I have followed Bohannan's dictum throughout this dissertation. In many cases it is clear that Landogo concepts or terms are so far from English that the vernacular must be used. This problem cannot be avoided. But I use English terms only when a clear and adequate translation or description is possible. While use of English terms creates a foundation for comparative analysis, comparison is not the goal here. I acknowledge that my representation of the material and extensive use of Landogo terms has made this work difficult to read. Yet, as the reader struggles through the text, I hope patterns of meaning have emerged. Many terms have multiple uses in a variety of contexts and reflect a unique "quality" associated with some situational aspect of time, space and action. Such things and qualities act as windows into the texture of Landogo meaning.[3]

If the anthropological mind and eye are not well tuned to a particular culture, many terms and concepts which reflect the larger conceptual system are missed. A complete ethnographic represention of any culture is impossible so I represent what I thought, said, did, felt, and most of all,

Introduction suggested, Landogo witchcraft was a difficult topic to pursue. There were problems. Sometimes the problems resulted from the secretive nature of the topic, and sometimes the problems resulted from the onery quirks of my personality. As I encountered difficulties they helped me move to a deeper and more fundamental understanding of Landogo cosmology.

Landogo people think deeply about the nature of their world. They articulate their speculation and posed questions to me that I couldn't possibly answer -- at least not here. However, Landogo allowed me into their world of witchcraft. As a window into Landogo structures, ideology and cosmology, witchcraft resonates with other aspects of Landogo society. I have received criticism suggesting that my approach should have been more objectively detached. This would have entailed an entirely different perspective. I have not effectively dealt with that here because my emic emphasis. Rather than impose a western perspective on the material, I have struggled to understand and see things from the Landogo perspective. This does not deny that much of this analysis is etic -- the dialectic of order and disorder. What I have avoided is a Western scientific perspective that suggests Landogo witchcraft doesn't exist, swears don't really kill people, diviners and swear agents only manipulate people's insecurities and fears, and mystical adjudication is only an extension of structural tensions. It appears that swears and swearing have a more vital and complex role.

Among Landogo, conflict, ritual action and aesthetic thought are all part of the same moral dimension. Such things deal with contradictory, unresolvable aspects of society.[5] At the heart of conflict and crisis are issues of aesthetic thought and representation. I have discussed these issues through processes of mystical adjudication. The aesthetic capacity of certain agents in the context of witch crisis is

crucial to an understanding of order and disorder. It is through a swear agent's use of swear representations and constructions that a transformation occurs. The swear man can kill a witch-person; he can aesthetically represent, enact and perform their death. In either case, the witch person's death is seen as an empirical fact. Landogo are, indeed, aware that there is a distinction between real versus metaphorical death. However, as we have seen in the case of Pa Foday, he is alive, but socially dead. A metaphorical death may be more perverse than actual death, but actual and metaphorical death are considered by Landogo as one and the same. Landogo live in a fused cosmos, with mutually interchangeable categories, agents and dimensions. Western distinctions simple don't fit.

In a witch crisis there are complex issues at stake. As witch crisis is represented and constructed it becomes transformative. It forces human agents in restricted social fields -- such as villages -- to adjust to the changing substance of secular **and** cosmological life. This situation is not an idealized social order temporarily moving through crisis into "social equilibrium." Gluckman (1955 [1967]), for example, argued that this process occurred through rituals of reversal. Turner (1968) elaborated upon the move toward equilibrium by seeing the same process as a social dynamic of schism, ritual drama, redress and continuity.

At least in this context the concept of social equilibrium is misplaced. Landogo social process can be understood without imposing notions of a bound, stable, organic social order. Landogo have particular ethnographic patterns of disjunction based on a constructed ideology of order and the endemic existence of disorder. There is a strong emphasis on disorder throughout this work. This does not mean Landogo never experience order, nor moments of **Ngo ila**. In fact, there are many ordered things about Landogo society. Order, structure, and agreement are manifested in emotions and feelings of families with successful farms that produce large

rice crops, and in male and female initiations,, weddings, and funerals.

Landogo clearly have four levels of disorder that mitigate and influence order. The first level is a secular one generated from interpersonal relations based on multiplex social processes; a second level is human agents doing witchcraft (both in the world of the seen and the unseen); for agency and power; a third level of disorder is that of the secret and unseen (non-human agents -- witches, spirits, devils and ancestors); and a last level is a highly ambiguous cosmological dimension where order and disorder are forces naturally embedded in the universe, and most likely placed by God.[6] As a sum total, these levels of disorder generated my theory of problematic disorder.

To understand such phenomena I have brought together seemingly distinct anthropological and art historical concerns and merged them to create a new theoretical model -- adjudicational aesthetics. This theory concerns African philosophies of power. Overall, the theory attempts to explain how certain agents use aesthetic thought and applications for control and power. In the Landogo context, control and power are manufactured illusions of certainty that result from unresolvable problems associated with disorder in the universe.[7] These allusions of power are efficacious and coercive.

Certain kinds of death, misfortune, disease and illness result from the action of witches, what Landogo call **Nhoa mblaai**. I have approached Landogo swears and swearing as a system of adjudicational agency and power. It is clear from earlier chapters that Landogo have a variety of adjudication and dispute mechanisms. All of these mechanisms have aesthetic components which represent, although in analogue form, Landogo philosophy. For example, elders hear cases, and often use oratorical ability to construe facts. In cases where witchery is involved, the aesthetic and adjudicational components are

fused. It includes word, symbol, construct, and action. As the realm of the unseen, witch adjudication is the human capacity to fuse the real and seen with the unseen and unknown. This allows for not only the reproduction of ideas, but the reproduction of society itself. Society represents as **Ngo ila** -- a construct that seems natural, objectified, and legitimate.[8]

In a small way I have moved away from traditional Western definitions of African aesthetics by integrating aesthetic thought with social process. In part, I have built upon the aesthetic thoughts of both anthropologists and art historians -- Hardin (1987), Karp (1988), Ben-Amos (1989), Ottenberg (1989) and Abiodun (1990). In each case these Africanists have worked on the interrelationship between cultural ethics and aesthetics. Each finds that in a given context morality is far from intrinsic to art, object or raw material. Morality and ethics become embedded by social action. The power of a wide range of aesthetic actions (art, ritual, dance, ceremony and festival) is that such things must be generated by the interaction between normal agents and agents with high level agency. Those with high levels of aesthetic capacity (dictated by context and situation) take various symbolic and cosmological resources and transform them into locally meaningful things and actions.

These fabrications reflect qualities, rather than states of order. The order of **Ngo ila** is such a quality. It is constructed certainty, rather than an actual state. But as a vital aspect of Landogo ideology, it must be represented, performed, discussed, remembered, and eventually forgotten through the interaction of individuals. When secular mechanisms fail, or cannot achieve needed resolutions, the problematic is then moved into the realm of the mystical. By aesthetically constructing, and representing the swear resolution, the relationship between humans and witches is dichotomized in a universe of morality.

There is order in the use of disorder; aesthetic action can represent the need for control. Quite often the content, meaning, and symbolism of swearing action like **Njonjooma, Toto na loo ngaa,** and **Luba** may not follow overt empirical expectations. In the case of Landogo swearing, the witch does not have to die to maintain the efficacy of the matrix of power. The witch person can die a metaphorical death (a death in the world of the unseen) which is seen as a legitimate, empirical death. This fact has a crucial implication for our study of conflict and aesthetics. Generating meaning is a kind of control achieved **with** and **through** constructions.[9]

Through the aesthetic enactment of swearing, an idealized model of control can be directed against witches -- anti-social forces that represent moral disorder. The swear enactment, be it in an object, shrine, ritual, oath or dance, reiterates primary concerns of reproduction of social balance between individuals and groups. This reproduces concepts of what is moral and immoral, and aesthetically fuses these concepts with what is social and anti-social.[10] While it is clear that African aesthetic forms blend ritual, music, dance, costume, symbolic and figural representation, it remains unclear as to how African aesthetic forms act to resolve dispute or represent a moral ontology. In the case of swears, the swearing process achieves what can not be achieved in other adjudicational dimensions. From this perspective, swear performances construe material from social life, and judge not only the behavior of a witch, but elevate the moral implications embedded in the witches behavior to consciousness among individuals and the group.[11]

This suggests that aesthetic or expressive genres often derive meaning not only from the content of what is actually

achieved, but also from the style, mode of expression and content used in achieving it. As numerous authors have pointed out (concerning ritual in other African societies) harmony and cohesion may be minor issues, or may not be at issue at all. Often, more complex cosmological questions such as the problem of disorder, or commentary on contradictions are articulated.[12] The problems of contradiction is aesthetically framed and situated. Through the use of artistry the swear agent creates purposive action that cloaks a number of powerful contradictions. The most powerful contradiction is found embedded in ideology. In a situation such as this, the symbolism used to cloak and control ideological contradiction must be polysemic. This kind of symbolism allows the contradiction of uncertainty to co-exist with certainty. The swearing action can fuse uncertain mood into certain conviction. Of course, it doesn't always achieve a perfect synthesis, but most swearing events come to stand for the firm belief that **Ngo ila** (that state of affairs where agreement dominates) exists as it should, correct and proper, an inevitable and natural social fact.[13]

Another contradiction concerns the use of power by a few and its application into the world of the many. The agent who has such knowledge is a vital nexus for our understanding of ontological philosophy and its relationship to power. More specifically, the given agent must have the power to construct and fabricate the moral ontology and make it appear objective and ordered. The Landogo ontological world is both something real and fabricated. It can be aesthetically articulated in different situations and times. Landogo aesthetic thought ranges from the purely decorative, to the expressive, on into representation as an expressive dialogue that communicates information and meaning; and culminating in expressive action which is both dialogic and purposive.

PERFORMING THAT WHICH JUDGES AND KILLS

Purposive aesthetic action has coercive political implications because it comments on human relational issues that are either reproduced or transformed through creating stasis, catastasis, or catastrophe. When transformation must be achieved due to witch crisis, an unusual amount of coercive power is created which not only adjudicates on the various agents of the social world, but also adjudicates on the unseen world as well.

The more powerful the swear, the more stylized and embellished its forms, symbols, and ideas become. As Beidelman (1986) notes, the changing conditions of life make subversive aesthetic action vital to society because it reflects both the acceptance and rejection of power and authority. Secondarily, it represents the "wily manipulation" of norms and values to alter that same power and authority. The performance takes on a life of its own, it creates a quality of power which is uniquely coercive, which in turn transforms both audience and performers. In this sense the swear performance inverts the normal social order through subversion. **Ngo ila** is attacked so as to reproduce **Ngo ila** itself.

As a kind of ritual performance, it can become both more and less than what it portrays. A swear performance is both real and an aspect of the Landogo imagination. This space and time is what Beidelman calls "murky interstices" where a person negotiates role, value, as well as belief, and the public, private, known and unknown.[14] As a kind of ritual judgement swears both judge and are judged by people. This judgement is achieved in a complex manner -- where aesthetic forms evaluate not only the content of what happened in the witch crisis, but also what needs to be achieved in life, and more importantly what can be achieved. At certain times what cannot be achieved in life, can be achieved in a swear performance.[15]

In a parallel analyses, Ottenberg (1989:58) has shown that ritual must use high levels of artistry. He argues that

while artistry can exist outside of ritual, ritual has a difficult time existing without artistry. Furthermore, he shows that the power of various forms of artistry is that they use both the tangible and intangible to synthesize, veil and cloak meaning. In so doing the action resolves and make right those things which may have no resolution. From this perspective, aesthetic thought, capacity and artistry may be vital features of the reproduction of ideology.

While aesthetics and ethics are not always conjunctive with one another, swearing enactments reflect aspects from Landogo social life that are in various states of tension. In this particular society, the manipulation of aesthetic forms can both reinforce and deny the social order of **Ngo ila** at different levels, situations and times. There are Landogo examples where aesthetic action and form parallels and reinforces the structure of Landogo society. However, I do not deal with those examples here.[16] The aesthetically defined swear performance takes confrontation, clarifies it through seemingly certain adjudication, and then through the death of witches transforms the uncertainty so as to appear resolved.[17] Any high level aesthetic process, by its nature, is paradoxical in that it makes an ambiguous situational universe appear certain.[18]

If it were possible to conflate those concepts they would be: to see, to know, to learn, and, interestingly enough, to fear. As a sum total these moral concepts come together to mean: to be able to see, is to know and learn about the world. To see, know and learn is to understand that witches embody some of the destructive disorder found in the world. To understand the power of witches, witchery, and witchcraft (as empirical facts) is to realize that an on-going confrontation exists between what is good and bad in the world. Knowledge also brings acceptance that the bad forces in the world predominate over those that are good. This is a recognition of the need for continuous confrontation.

I have argued that at the heart of Landogo aesthetic thought and action is the conceptualization of power as control. In the case of swearing this control is embedded in aesthetic processes: to tie, to put, to circle, to square as well as to enclose. These processes create protection, closure and containment in the ordered social world by keeping the disordered (witch generated destruction) in its proper place.

I am not the first anthropologist who found a world that was constructed, embellished and performed.[19] In the Landogo case there is a constant process of cultural and social embroidery. Human interaction is an on-going process, it is filled with various kinds of conflict -- some are resolved, and some remain unresolved. Secular methods are used to resolve problems. Other times mystical methods are used. In each case, a situational reproduction occurs as a result of problematic dilemmas. As conflict or crises are represented and enacted by specialized agents, those same agents conceal and reveal only what is necessary to create a sense of order.

Among Landogo order is a quality rather than an actual state. Landogo are a reflexive people who seek not only answers, but power and control in a world of confrontation. They go as far as using various kinds of witchcraft for protection and gratification.[20] Swearing is such a process. This usage need not be explained as resulting from failed Landogo social structure, but should be seen as a vital part of structure itself. These inconsistencies are fundamental to all societies and are not meant to be resolved. As Landogo, as well as other African people interact, the meaning of the social field changes, as does the so-called structure. In my own study of the Landogo, I have, once again, been confronted by Gluckman's notion that social life results from the tension between conformity and conflict.[21] When conflict occurs, it references structure and order in a situational manner. It is conflict that generates and structures form. Structuration is a dialectic of control and power. As a process structuration

conflict that generates and structures form. Structuration is a dialectic of control and power. As a process structuration makes experience meaningful as well as certain. However, I would go further and state that Landogo witch crisis isn't meant to be resolved. Non-resolution reveals the logic and meaning of disorder.

CHAPTER EIGHT NOTES

1. See Douglas 1970: XIV-XVIII.

2. See, once again, Bohannan 1963: 46, Gluckman 1957:47-51 and Moore 1969: 343-344.

3. See Stoller's (1984) on "Eye, Mind and Word in Anthropology," in L'Homme (34).

4. Here I followed Bohannan (1969: 406 and 1957).

5. This builds upon some of the ideas and concepts developed by Beidelman (1986:3).

6. This is a complex question and issue that I cannot deal with in this disseration. However, this is a very interesting question that requires more in-depth research. Landogo believe that there is disorder in that world at a very deep level. It has been placed by God.

7. See Karp 1988, Ottenberg 1971: 5-6, and Levi-Strauss 1962.

8. See Hardin dissertation (1987:174-175).

9. See Ottenberg (1971:5, 1989:58-73).

10. See Beidelman (1986:4, 9).

11. See Karp 1988:39.

12.See Abiodun 1990:64, Ottenberg 1971: 9-10, 1990: 130-131 and Gluckman 1955.

13. This is what Bohannan found for Tiv, Gluckman found for Barotse, Turner for Ndembu, Moore for Chagga, Comaroff and Roberts for Tswanna, Beidelman found for Kaguru, Ottenberg for Limba. Thayer for Susu and Hardin for Kono.

14. See Beidelman's discussion of Kaguru moral imagination (1986:203).

GLOSSARY

-B-

Baa ngee kolo: the time period analogous to February
Baa ngee mbaa: the time period analogous to March
Bi mba hugu na goli: find good seed
Bi mba na huufuu: sowing seed in wet earth
Bi mbi na le: waiting three weeks
Bi nja naa haga: you pick germinating rice and put it in the swamp
Bi nje golo: junior wife
Bi taala na: grandparents
Biti laa haai na: the bottle swear with leaf medicine
Bo mba bu kpou mbu: dry the rice and store it in a dry place
Bo mba huufuu na hii nga: you wait for the rains
Bondo: women's secret society
Bondo na: okra
Bondo gbolo: traditional women's dance
Bondo nhanda: women's circumcision
Bonga: palm kernals
Boogu laga na: potatoe leaf
Boogu na: potatoe

-C-

Chaba nwa: leaf which protects
Chaga booto na: anti-witch amulets
Chaga lee bee haai na: the dead fowl swear
Chaga na: sacrifice
Chambo: disgrace
Chambo njia: words that disgrace
Chebe: a small power object worn on the body
Chooke: disturbing noise

-F-

Faandaa: entertainment with food
Fagoli: to offend
Faha yaa: lacking humility, or persistent badness
Faanha nwa: leaf which fights
Fonjo fanja: October
Foo ndii nwoo: selfish
Foo ndii nwoo na: the selfish person
Fuu: great (always used with lies)
Fuu ee na: bellows pipe used by the blacksmith

-G-

Gba maa ndee: the bell swear
Gbako: edge of things (water, land, Landogo country)
Gbeng gbe nhanda: process of divination
Gbing gbe na: the short stick
Gbingbe nwoo na: a diviner that can see a problem but not give a remedy
Geele hegbe: witch induced diarrhea

-H-

Haa: death
Haa haa na: leaf medicine
Haa nhu na: inside death
Haai: medicine, devil, or "secret society"

Haai: to cure

Haai gbolo: secret women's dance
Haai haai na: medicine
Haai haii nwo na: cure person
Haai nwoo na: the head of a secet society
Haka bee haai na: the funeral ladder swear
Hake: to sin
Heege heege bee haai na: the mat swear
Hegbe: sickness
Henga: to dream
Hota: stranger

-K-

Ka hei mba: to protect
Kaa: he/she should have to
Kaa nhu:health
Kabi nwo na: the black smith
Kahe: fine paid when a traditional law is broken
Kai na: witch powder
Kai nii na: the snake bite
Kala gala suma: to bully and create advantage
Kali firo na: the Islamic swear bottle
Kali kain na: the witch powder swear bottle
Kamaa: a miracle done by God, but through humans
Kamaa nhanda: a happening which results from God's efforts
Kaamba na: the circle
Kaanhu: health
Kee nheege na: bits of glass
Keegee: confess (tell-tell)
Keege na: the father
Kele mba na aa gua nhu noia kpea: and the birds come as well
Kele mu: fault, crime
Kele mu nwoo: criminal
Kili ina: idiom for a very fine state
Kiti: difficulty
Kiti lee ndaama: to clarify, permit, authorize
Koa nhoa gbende: the witch gun
Koan: news and information
Koeau: the time period analogous to November
Koho: argument
Koko ndogbo bee haai naL tortoise shell swear
Koo: fight
Koo baa na: the menstrual cloth
Koo gbo lomba: gluttonous
Kondei bee haai na: the banana swear
Koofu: a Landogo men's society
Kooma: a Landogo men's society
Koondo: slit gong drum
Koro tee: the witch knife
Kpaai: pain, hurt, or anger
Kpaau: sign or symbol
Kpee: to look

Kpee: to forsake
Kpee noo na: Guinea corn
Kpangba: to knock with force
Kpaha: tired and unable
Kpakpahaga: the stick coffin
Kpala: pretending speech
Kpate: create or make
Kpa naa: wild or troublesome
Kpaa nha nwoo na: person who is tired and unable
Kpau: to take or pick
Kpau na: sign or symbol
Kpeebaa: overjoyfulness
Kpeegbe nwoo: soothsayer
Kpekpe: good
Kpekpe: important
Kpekpe nwoo na: a smart and good person (usually a diviner)
Kpehegbehe: smart
Kpele: difficult
Kpeleendaa: to stop
Kpende: strong
Kpende kpende: danger
Kpoe haai haai: medicine to drink
Kpona: the Kpona swear
Kpou kpou hegbe: leprosy
Kpundo: a private corner
Kpundu: secret
Kuafuu: wasteful, prodigal
Kuague: resemble, alike
Kualaa: from a place, from a time
Kue: to owe, or a debt
Kue: cold
Kue nwo na: the light skined person
Kulagula: contribution
Kuun: agree

-L-

Laa nwa: the time period analogous to August
Laamine: prayer
Laanee: faith
Logo banda: time of doing
Logo golo: time not yet great
Logo nyou: time of bad
Logo waa: time of beginning
Loobi: fault
Loto: time period analogous to May
Luba kpangba nwa: the village Luba swear
Luba ukpe: the family Luba swear

-M-

Maabee: to humble
Maalei: peace
Maanei: shadow
Maanogo: dirty
Maanwou: sad, sorrowful

Maayei: to obey
Maa nhu gbe: protecting what one has
Maa saa ma: situation of self inflicted misfortune
Maaiiloongo: warrior shirt which resembles Ronko

Maaneesi: water collected from an Arabic slate
Manhaangaai: boy's initiation society
Manhaangaai: little chiefs
Manhaa logo: time of chiefly decisions
Manhaa nyie: little chiefs
Manwou: sadness, sorrow, compasion
Mayogokpolo: traditional men's initiation dance
Mba waa ngaai: very big people (elders)
Mbaa na: rice
Mbaa na aabe boo teea: harvest when the size is right
Mbaa na aa kpau ngau ngi yoo ngo hita na nwa too teea: after six months the rice will bust.
Mbagama: offend, offensive
Mbagbou: ceremonial rice for the dead

Mbee: honor
Mbeei: skill, experience
Mbeei mbelaai: people who know, people who are qualified
Mbema: right, correct
Mbema mbema: correct behavior
Mbenhu: agree, united
Mbihe: praise
Mii guun buee i mahu ila ngaa lee: after three weeks you brush and turn soil
Mbo: sting
Mbombou ngo: it is great
Moa: to cut or to wound
Moe moe: to do things that are against rules and laws or against one's health
Moe nwoo: a poor person who labors at anything
Mouhegbe na: the crazyness

Muee mindennhu: the time period analogous to September

-N-

Naa naa: troublesome
Nda nhoa nwa: the sling shot swear
Ndaa gbende: abusive mouth, strong words
Ndaa gbende moo: one fond of strong mouth
Ndabi: loud shout
Ndakpai indi kpekpe ngu kpo: he is a big man among others
Ndee gaai: children
Ndee nhu na: the life force
Nee nwaa haagoo: gift of straight mind
Nee nwaa heela: disagreement which occurs when people attempt to achieve the same goals
Nee nwaa hembe: clarity of straight mind
Ndei: calm

Ndii banda: graceful heart
Ndii fee: two hearts (needs all)
Ndii gaai: bony heart (wicked to self and others)
Ndii gbaai: anger (literally heated heart)
Ndii goe: cool heart (literally play down offense)
Ndii gbaaihegbe: disease of bad heart (literally heart complaint, pained heart)
Ndii gbei: shaky heart (hasty)
Ndii gbekpe: good heart (literally think good of others)
Ndii gbende: hard heart that is cruel to self and others
Ndii gue: white heart (goodness for others)
Ndii haa: dead heart (never prepares)
Ndii hite: reached heart (ready to harm)
Ndii hufu: sound of heart (hungry person)
Ndii ila: same heart (literally shared decision of heart)
Ndii ila: balancing previous and current relationships
Ndii lee: sulky, unhappy (literally a person who has unwilling face)
Ndii lei:without worries
Ndii lo: able heart (patience)
Ndii nhulaa: warm heart (quick to act)
Ndii nwaabe: dry heart (literally boldly wicked to others, but not to one's self)
Ndii nwoa: wounded heart (temper resulting from accusation)
Ndii nyou: ugly heart
Ndii waawaa: big big heart (does more than expected)
Ndobeyaa: forgiveness
Ndoe: hunger
Ndomayaa: love
Ndou na: palm wine
Ndua: fear
Nduua: rotten
Neenwaa: mind
Neenwaa aa heela: disagreement by people who are trying to achieve the same goal (crossing minds)
Neenwaagoho: doubt (literally mind that judges)
Neenwaafee: inconsistency (literally never keeps to one)
Neenwaague: pleasing mind (literally white mind)
Neenwaagbate: self assured (literally prepared mind)
Neenwaagbindi: displeasing mind (literally dark mind)
Neenwaahaa: poor understanding (literally dead mind)
Neenwaahembe: advice (literally gift of mind)
Neenwaaholo: understand (literally to get mind)
Neenwaala: hope (literally to lay mind)
Neenwaalo: promise (literally to send mind)
Neenwaahiilee: clever (literally straightness of mind)
Neenwaahupu: disturbing (literally mingle mind)
Neenwaaila: unanimous mind (literally of one mind)
Neenwaanyaai: discouraging mind (literally spoiled mind)
Neenwaasege: disappointment (literally to move mind off)
Neenwaasia: to think and answer (literally to walk the mind)
Neenwaayaai: slow understanding (literally dizzy mind)

Neenwaasogbe: study (literally mind that watches)
Neenwaayogobee: worried mind (literally confused mind)
Ngafoo na aa goo nhu gua: the devil is cleanibg its jaws
Ngafoo kotu: devil stone
Ngaa goe logo: time of departure

Ngai mbaka na: the blacksmith swear
Ngau na: the eye
Ngau na: the yam
Ngau na: the moon
Ngau ila aa lee too monga: weed as the ground grows strong
Ngau ngi ila aa be boo mba nhu gua: after one month rice comes
Nge lou na: the world
Ngebo nwaa: God the powerful
Ngee ngeemoo: someone who acts like a buffoon in all that he says and does
Ngei: curse, abuses
Ngete na: the pounding stick
Ngete chaga na: the pounding stick sacrifice
Ngo ila: one word
Ngo ila nhoa aablaai: one word among witches
Ngo mbu logo: time that moves quickly
Ngoa sanwooe: serious hypocrite
Nguu ngaa: extended family
Nha nwoo: a dead person
Nhanda:a happening of affairs
Nhanda baamba: free (has no guilt)
Nhanda banda: kindness
Nhanda gebele: different actions
Nhanda gbe kpende: a difficult thing
Nhanda gbekpe: good habits and ways
Nhanda gbo gbogo: reluctant actions
Nhanda nhanda: problems
Nhoa nhanda nhanda nyou pou: very bad witch things happening
Nhoa nhanda nyou o: bad witch things happening
Nhanda nhu gbouma nwoo: unfortunate person
Nhanda nhu neema nwoo: fortunate person
Nhanda nhu gbou ma nwoo: actions of an unfortunate person
Nhanda nyou: bad trick, or very bad actions and ways
Nhanda nwa nhi nhie: nice or fine actions
Nhanda pou: bad luck
Nhee: to hang
Nhoa nhanda bee nda: the act of doing witchcraft
Nhoa nwoo: a witch person
Nhoa na: witch
Nhoa obenga: confessed witch
Nhoa njia: witch talk (case)
Nhoa nwoo hie hie: confessed witch that does wonderful things
Nhua: meat
Nhugolo aa lembi too noi na gbea: as the rice grows you must drive birds
Nhu koo: to know

Nhu longo: wise
Nika nhua: cow beef
Nii: to bite
Njaa nhee landaa: swamp rice farming
Njaabi: tell off, judge
Njaayaai: lazyness
Njahanjanha: carelessness
Njaga na: groundnuts
Njagbe: cousins, uncles and aunts
Njafa: suppression, or persecution of a good thing
Njafa nwoo: person who destroys (literally to speak badly of others)
Njia na: talk (a case)
Njie ngaa ti hegbe: women's sickness, menstruation
Njii gba nhu: to trust
Njonjooma bee gbaea: to dance the reckless dance
Nma neeina: beg
Nyaai mbelaai: spoilers (those who destroy)
Nuu gbu aa kolo: the time period analogous to December
Nuu ngbuau mbaa: the time period analogous to January
Nwaagbalambo: too long
Nwoa mbelaa: theives
Nwoa nwoo: theif person
Nyande: beautiful
Nyande ngo: it is beautiful or handsome
Nyanha na: the wife
Nyanha haai njo njooma bee gbaea: women's medicine danced recklessly
Nyeima: nastiness
Nyie na: the breast
Nyie na: fish
Nyie tuu aa haga bee haai na: the fish net bundle
Nyie tuu haga na: the fish net swear
Nyou: bad, evil
Nyou: ugly

-O-

Oo pee pee ngaa: to enact (put) the swear
Ojuku: a strong man (politically)

-P-

Paa: kill
Paaho: rudeness, insolent behavior that is persistent even though one is urged not to
Pai: luck, or good luck
Pee: that which fights
Pee haai: medicine that fights
Pee haai moo: the swear agent
Pee haai njia: swear talk, swear case
Pele: house
Pele: road
Pele manhu: hypocrite, pretender
Pinja: to welcome someone

-S-

Sasa bee haai na: the Sasa swear
So: etiquette
Soesoe: time period analogous to July
Sokpolo: too much of a bad habit
Sonyou: bad habit

-T-

Taa mbila aa yeendaa too pu kpou mbu: harvest rice and store well
Taa na nhoa nge ndaa: to clean the villge of witches
Taanga bee haai ne: the cassava farm swear
Tayou: uncontrolled
Tee bee haai ne: the egg shell swear
Tei: notorious person
Tegenhu: disrespect
Tegenhu nwoo: a person fond of disrespect
Ti gbe ndogbo naa i bee wiki fee ngau ila fanwa: let the brush sit in the sun and dry
Ti ndogbo na gbee ina oo biti: is the ground stron enough to farm?
Ti ndogbo na haga: brufh the farm
Tige: taboo
Tiniga: cassava leaf
Too mba na hainga too puu nhea: scatter rice and turn soil
Too ngea nga koo na nwo nga: collect the brush and burn again
Toto gotu: special stones (devil) used by a diviner
Toto na loo ngaa: the witch net

-U-

Ufaange: an invisible object used to kill witches

-W-

Wali wali: the time period analogous to April
Wiki fee na aa lee too monga: burn everything
Wolo: the time period analogous to June
Wonjo na: beans

-Y-

Yaa yaai hegbe: crazy behavior, not quite normal
Yai yoo na: mother
Yeinjei: silence, quietness, lonesomeness
Yigi: respect
Yina: spirit
Ypkpou: shout of alarm or trouble

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APPENDIX
LOKKO HISTORY --
WE LANDOGO GROW HERE.

While I am not a historian, it is clear that Landogo history is embedded in a regional historical period that has yet to be unraveled.[1] African historians generally agree that population drifts started to occur in the upper Guinea coast as early as the 3rd century A.D. Mani groups, from what is now Mali begin dispersing (between 2000 B.C. and 700 AD) into the regions that are now Liberia and Sierra Leone. It is likely that two different migratory patterns were established -- one continuing south and the second moving north into what is now Sierra Leone. The social and political extent of this movement is unknown, but it seems likely that these early migrations were small. Nevertheless, these so-called Mani migrations had historical consequences for populations in what is now Sierra Leone and Liberia. Their contemporary descendants are almost surely the Southwestern Mande -- Kpelle/Guerze, Loma/Toma, Gbandi and Landogo/Logo (Lokko), and later still, Mende.

The historical relationship between Gbandi and Landogo is of crucial importance from a socio-cultural point of view. Landogo and Gbandi languages are said to be mutually intelligible. I have not had the chance to pursue this further. At best, the historical relationship remains underexplored. The actual size and process of these Mani movements (expansion or migration) in the context of Landogo history, as well as the reasons and methods for such movements, continue to be debated.[2]

Through my own reading of the existing historical literature and discussions with Landogo elders, it appears that what is now Landogo country was sparsely populated by various groups. These may have been West Atlantic speakers -- the so-called Sapes, most likely the Limba, and quite possibly groups of Mande speaking Gbandi who had migrated and intermingled with Limba. In general, these groups have been characterized as non-centralized and acephalous societies.

These existing West Atlantic groups may, or may not, have kept these Mani migrations from radically altering the structure of their societies.

However, by the late 15th century, Portuguese trading interests rose sharply. This made trade in the area more profitable to groups that had previously held only marginal interest in trade or the region. The growth and importance of trade seems to be a vital issue in reconstructions of the logic, force and affects of these Mani migrations. Rodney and Person, for example, both agree that Mani speakers had been actively involved in this area for centuries in pursuit of kola and salt. What seems plausible, to my anthropological mind, is that present day Landogo are later groups of Gbandi/Mande who followed well established trade routes and settled in the mid 15th century amongst the existing populations. This settlement first occurred in the far north -- bordering the Susu and Limba. This movement probably became what are now called Logo -- essentially the earliest Landogo, who now live in the far north in what is now Sanda Lokko chiefdom and whose dialect is slightly different than the more dominant Landogo to the south.[3]

Later, proto-Landogo intermingled with the so-called Sapes, Limba, and possibly early Temne.[4] Still later, historians argue, another Mande migration reinforced these existing groups. To this day, some Limba still call Landogo: Gbandin.[5] The nature of these later migrations is still being contested. Kup, for example, argues that the most recent Mande incursion resulted from the imposition of superior political, technical, economic and military skill on already existing West Atlantic and Mande peoples. In contrast to earlier migrations, this incursion occurred through war, trade, and hunting, as well as through superior blacksmith technology and products.[6]

The basic historical question, seems not whether such migrations occurred, but to what degree were war, technology,

trade, and the Portuguese factors? Rodney's historical reconstruction, from Jesuit sources, suggests that these Mande movements were more invasion like (circa 1545). This "social movement" divided already existing coastal polities into three geopolitical units: 1) Bullom/Sherbro to the north, Landogo (Lokko) in the hinterland, and Boure/Sherbro in the south.

A slightly different perspective is taken by Person who argues that it is unlikely that this geopolitcal division resulted from Mande migrations, and it is most unlikely that such polities were generated by indigenous peoples, specifically Susu and Limba who had for some time impeded Mane expansion. Person goes on to argue that another indigenous group -- Temne people had an influence on this political reconfiguration.

At some time later it was the Temne who came into conflict with Landogo over control of the existing kola trade. The Temne then drove Landogo into what are now their current boundaries, and continued to do so well into the twentieth century.[7] This assertion parallels various Landogo historical interpretations of their on-going relations with the Temne. There is no question that Landogo and Temne have had a long term historical relationship, but their history has been actively contested as a reflection of the now dominant political position of Temne peoples. Temne now believe that they, rather then Landogo, have always been historically dominant. This may, in fact, be true.

Temne domination, in fact, is historically recent in the larger scheme of things. Their actual cultural and military domination began circa 1790.[8] Prior to 1790, Temne and Landogo appear to have engaged in a number of military conflicts and skirmishes. In the eighteenth century Temne finally subdued Landogo and this initiated a period of transition and decline of what had once been a powerful yet loosely confederated group of Landogo chiefs and chiefdoms under a single "war chief."

Person points out that Temne and Landogo had not always been enemies. One of the so-called Temne leaders who was influential in the Landogo decline was Chief Bai Farma. But it is of interest that many local leaders, like Bai Farma, spoke the Mande dialect of Malinke, rather than Temne. It seems likely that Malinke was spoken in areas where "Mande newcomers" stayed in numbers, or controlled some aspect of coveted technology. And if various historians are correct, these Malinke speakers would also be along trade routes in the far north where Mani/Gbandi/Landogo settled (see Person 1972:685).

As control over kola and other trade became economically important, Bai Farma moved his residence to what is now Port Loko (circa 1606) and gave up Malinke for the local Temne language. His goal in moving was to monopolize the kola trade previously controlled by various Landogo chiefs on interior trade routes. Naturally, once unified Temne began to compete for the Kola trade with loosely amalgamated Landogo chiefdoms, these same chiefdoms came into conflict and fragmented. By the late 18th century Temne controlled much of what had been under Landogo control, except for small isolated areas in the north -- what is now the existing Landogo world (Person 1972:686).

Temne still dominate Landogo in many ways. When Temne individuals come to a Landogo village they will always speak Temne. But when Landogo come to a Temne village they will always speak Temne rather than a "low" language like Landogo. It is likely that Temne are responsible for the often used term "Lokko." While this term is used by all the peoples in Sierra Leone to refer to Landogo, Landogo themselves believe the word is Temne; meaning: "They who grow here." The various historical sources cited above suggest that Landogo were indeed long term residents of the north by the time Temne coalesced into a unified polity and undertook expansion (19th and 20th centuries).

What seems clear is that Temne expansion assimilated, and or, forced Landogo into the remote and isolated hill areas on the Limba frontier. Those Landogo who stayed on this frontier continued to speak their ethnic language (possibly Logo) while also assimilating some of the indigenous Limba traditions such as male initiation society Gbondokali (what Landogo call Manhangaai) and the most powerful esoteric knowledge associated with the men's Kpangbani society. While Landogo integrated many Limba traditions they continued to maintain their distinct culture as well as esoteric knowledge societies such as **Koofu** and **Kooma**. This fact is interesting in the larger historically picture because Landogo are not part of the various Poro traditions. The historical and cultural relationship between Landogo and Limba is one of intense historical interest. It is likely that many historical and cultural clues are yet to be found, but this relationship must be left for future research.

APPENDIX NOTES

1. See d' Azevedo 1962, Brooks 1972, Haight 1968, Hair 1962, 1967, Hirst 1958, Hirst and Kamara 1958, Kup 1975, Rodney 1962, 1971. In particular see Fyle 1976 and Sawyerr 1939 for the most indepth review of "Lokko"(Landogo/Logo) history.

2. Rodney 1970, Person 1968, Kup 1975, Fyle 1976, and Brooks 1982, among others for various historical reconstructions of this area as well as the larger Guinea Coast region.

3. See Rodney 1962, 1971 and Person 1968.

4. Some historians argue about who these Mande groups settled with; and some that the migration went as far north as present day Baga/Landuma -- see Kup 1975: 24-25, Person 1970: 676-677, and Brooks 1982: 16-17).

5. See Finnegan's works 1963b, 1965.

6. Kup 1975: 26-27 for a more detailed analysis.

7. See Person 1970: 683-685 for details.

8. C. Magbaily Fyle's work 1976.

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