
Note

Mother's Brother Upside Down: An Analysis of Idioms of Witchcraft among the Endenese (Flores)

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I Introduction

The history of the anthropological studies of witchcraft began, as everyone would acknowledge, with the memorable work by Evans-Pritchard in 1937. It reached an apex in the 1950s and 1960s, with works typified by the book edited by Middleton and Winter [1963], and ended in the early 1970s with several good works such as those by Harwood [1970] and Douglas [1970]. The study of witchcraft was once a fashionable field, to which there were abundant references in the anthropological literature; but now there is scarcely any argument about this topic; hence it seems as if everything has been said.

The book, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande* [Evans-Pritchard 1933] had, as theories of "witchcraft", two embryos: (1) witchcraft as an explanation of misfortune and (2) witchcraft as a device for social control, only one of which has been developed since then. Taking these two in a broader sense, I shall call them, following La Fontaine [1963], the ideological and sociological aspects to witchcraft. Every author acknowledges these two aspects of "witchcraft"; almost all

arguments begin with a description of the notion or ideology concerning "witch" or "witchcraft", yet sooner or later the author converts his or her argument into an application of the notion to the actual social world — how the "witchcraft accusation" (and/or occasionally "confession") functions to retain the "homeostasis" [Douglas 1970: xix] of the society concerned.

It is in this latter sphere of "witchcraft", the sociological aspect that much has been said; the other aspect has been left unexplored and undeveloped.

In this short paper, I shall concentrate only upon the "ideology" of witchcraft and analyze it without any reference to its sociological aspect, using as an example an ideology of "witch" taken from the Endenese, a people in central Flores, eastern Indonesia.

II 'Ata Porho

Under the title of Hexenglaube (or "witch belief"), Bader named four terms which could be translated as "witch" (or "Hexe") from the peoples of Flores. One of them was *'ata polo* (*'ata* means "people" or "person") in central Flores [Bader 1968].

More precisely, among the three dialects

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in the region, the Nga'o dialect has it as 'ata podo, the Ja'o as 'ata porho, and the Aku as 'ata polo. In this paper I shall use the Ja'o-nese version, which I know best.

The word(s) may be cognate with the Malay *polong* [Arndt 1956: 438] which means "ghost, or evil spirit" [Echols and Shadily 1961]. Further, in his Lionese-German dictionary, Arndt defines 'ata polo as "ein von einem bosen Geiste besessener Mensch, Hexe, Blutsauger und Leichenfresser" [1933: 384], that is "a man possessed by an evil spirit, witch, vampire, and necrophage".

The first definition is totally beside the point; there is no notion of "possession" associated with 'ata polo. The second and the third definitions ("witch" and "vampire") are too European oriented, although I shall use the term "witch" conventionally and historically (in terms of the history of anthropology). The last definition ("necrophage") tells us but one aspect of 'ata porho.

The application of the word *porho* is not confined to human beings. Such regalia as wooden statues ('ana déo) or swords which are believed to be very old in origin are sometimes said to be *porho*. Some of such objects are believed to have *wera* ("witch substance", which I shall discuss later) just like a witch, and are believed to begin to smell badly when one of the villagers is dying.

The word 'ata porho has several variations. It is sometimes uttered as 'ata ré'é, "ugly one". Sometimes it is coupled with the word 'ata o'o, "slave", to be *porho o'o* or *o'o porho*, meaning both "slaves" and "witches". Thus, the notion of "witches" can be intermingled with the notion of "slaves". Slavery is no longer observable in Ende except in certain

places such as Pulau Ende or the southern coastal region of Lio, which unfortunately I have only visited for a short time. However, the scarce information I have is still sufficient to enable me to postulate that to accuse someone of being the descendant of a slave has the same effect as to accuse someone of witchcraft.

In ritual language, there is, so far as I know, only one line which contains the word *porho* (or more exactly speaking, *podo*, because the text is in Nga'o-nese). The text, usually referred to as 'aé ngasi ko'o koka, "koka-bird's speech", relates the origin of the order of the world. Before the *koka* spoke, everything was in disorder: the night would last for a year; the daytime would last for a year; the horses had split hooves, etc. Then *koka* said that everything should be in order. In that speech is found this line:

Daki doa//podo doa There be "lords of
the land" // there
be witches

Daki or *Mosa Daki* belongs to the semantic field of "social stratification". In that field, the word *daki* should be coupled with *lo'o* or "slaves". Thus, we again encounter a fusion of the notions of "witch" and "slave".

III Discourses about 'Ata Porho

Disease (*roo* or *petu roo*) is one of the occasions which trigger discourse about "witchcraft". A scenario employed is roughly as follows: first, people suspect the possibility of someone causing ('ata tau)¹⁾

1) The word *tau* has wide semantic field: first of all, it means "to make", such as *tau moké*, "make palmwine", etc.; it also means "to

the illness. A magical curer (*'ata marhi*) is sent for. He uses certain procedures, such as rolling an egg all over the patient's body, to see whether the illness is due to some person (*'ata tau*) or to "natural causes" (*dunia tau*).

Causes of illnesses are sometimes ascribed to other agents, such as *nitu pongga*, "a spirit hits (him/her)", or *nggena 'angin*, "(he/she) suffers from a wind", etc. In cases of pregnant women, the illness is often ascribed to a *rhonggo mbombo*, a woman monster believed to have a hole in her back, an Endenese version of pontianak. Ancestors (*'embu kajo*) or God (*ngga'é*) is seldom thought to be the cause of the illness. The Endenese never say explicitly, but as far as collected chants and idioms are concerned, ancestors are thought to be only beneficent, and God has nothing to do with human affairs. *Tana//watu* or "the earth and the stone" can be considered to be the cause of illness, especially when there has supposedly been a breach of ritual observances (see below); the idiom employed at such occasions is *tana kaa//watu pesa*, "the earth has eaten (him)//the stone has had (him)".

Except in a few cases where some special

do", such as *'orho tau*, "work, occupation"; or "to go", such as *tau rahré*, "go to the west", etc. But in the discourse of witchcraft, it always means "to cause illness", "to bring misfortune" or "to interfere". In this usage with negative connotation, the subject is, in most cases, *'ata porho*, "a witch" or *'ata*, "a man", implying *'ata porho*. Occasionally some other evil agents such as *nitu pa'i*, "evil, natural spirits" or *rhonggo mbombo*, an Endenese version of pontianak, who has a beautiful female figure, long hair, a hole at the back, are used as the subject of the verb *tau*.

divination is employed to identify the person concerned, the *'ata marhi* does not go so far as to say who is responsible (or who is the witch); he only says "someone is doing it (*'ata tau*)". Examples of typical descriptions an *'ata marhi* gives of the witch are ambiguous: he (or she)²⁾ is tall, but not so tall; is short, but not so short; his (or her) complexion is dark, but not so dark; is fair, but not so fair; or he (or she) is a relative. Even before the divination is made, a kind of unanimous agreement, albeit never expressed publicly, is formed as to who is responsible for the illness; the divination is always thought to conform to that presumption. Then discourses begin about a specific potential witch.

Or la sorcellerie, c'est de la parole, mais une parole qui est pouvoir et non savoir ou information.

Parler, en sorcellerie, ce n'est jamais pour informer. Ou si l'on informe, c'est pour que celui qui doit tuer (le desenvouteur) sache où faire porter ses coup [Favret-Saada 1977: 21].

But unlike Bocage in France described by Favret-Saada, where to speak about witchcraft is, in itself, "illegitimate", there is in Ende another sort of discourse which does not necessarily become "deadly words". In Ende, to speak about witches or witchcraft is considered to be normal behaviour; it does not necessarily entail the speaker's involvement in the relation between the accuser and the accused. I shall call this type of more institutionalized *parole* "lore". The lore which is dealt with in this paper is not tem-

2) Endenese has no distinction between "he" and "she" (both are *kai*), which makes the statement the more ambiguous.

porarily nor spatially defined, nor does it have names, unlike *recit*, analyzed by Favret-Saada. In this regard, it is more like myth.

It is beyond my aim in this paper to compare the lore and discourse about the witchcraft, yet it would still be better for me to make a short remark on why the Endenese are so free in talking about witchcraft: in most societies, to talk about witchcraft, that is, to show knowledge of witchcraft, means that the speaker himself is a witch.

The key to the question lies in the concept of *teké ruku*. As is clear from the above discussion, the *'ata porho* has a counterpart in the notion of *'ata marhi*, "magical curer". Indeed they have things in common, such as idioms employed for their power; nonetheless they are opposed to each other. These are discrete notions. One is the causer of illness and thus an anti-social being; the other is the curer of illness, thus definitely a social being. *Teké ruku* is a notion standing in-between, a Gandoulf-like figure.

Everyone knows who is an *'ata marhi*; no one knows who is an *'ata porho*. Nor does anyone know who is a *teké ruku*. A *teké ruku* can attend the meeting of *'ata porho* in the disguise of a witch. A *teké ruku* can cause illness or death. In these respects, a *teké ruku* is very similar to an *'ata porho*. He never performs necrophagy, however, nor has any of the physical features characteristic of *'ata porho*. Most importantly, a *teké ruku* is not so full of the whim to cause illness as an *'ata porho* is. He is not an anti-social being, which an *'ata porho* obviously is. A *teké ruku* derives his power from his knowledge. To have such esoteric knowledge as where lie the head and the tail

of the world provides enough power to render a person a *teké ruku*.

Thus, to talk about witchcraft, that is, to show that the speaker has knowledge of witchcraft can mean that the speaker is a *teké ruku*, although hearers can possibly take it as a proof that the speaker is a witch.

IV Lore Concerning Witches

IV. 1. General Image of a Witch

On cloudy (*kubhu*) days, witches are said to be seen dancing (*toja*) at the foot of a big, tall tree by one who has cold eyes (*mata keta*) or by children. Witches have big, red eyes, whereas magical curers are said to have yellow eyes (those of ordinary persons are said to be "white", *bhara*).

Witches are afraid of *wurhu* (a kind of bamboo, *buluh* in Indonesian), *sangga* (a shrine, made of *wurhu*), salt (*si'é*), etc. If one loses one's way, which may be due to a witch's disturbances (*worhé*), one is advised to turn his sarong inside out; then one can find the way again. This *worhé* is, according to another informant, due to *nitu* (evil natural spirits).

When a witch sleeps, seven *'ana wera* (witch substances) go out of his body, through a pillar, descend under the floor, and then enter the body of a cat or dog, or change their forms into such animals, in order to proceed to a victim's house to make (*tau*) him ill. These *wera* are, according to the Endenese, the equivalents of *méa*, the soul of an ordinary person. The description of the journey of *wera* descending through a pillar onto the underfloor explicitly refers to the anti-socialness or illegitimacy of the *'ata porho*,

as opposed to a normal person who goes out through a door, *péré*. Reference to the pillar under the floor is also a favourite idiom often employed to describe a thief's entering into the house.

Witches are very jealous, stingy and very easily provoked into causing someone illness or death.

IV. 2. *Necrophage*

There is very interesting lore about the gathering (*mbabho*) of 'ata porho at the time of death.

On the third night³⁾ after the death, witches gather together at the new tomb (*raté*). They stamp (*sedhu*) on the ground of the tomb three times, saying "Kamba tana, dhoi se-papa, to'o-si!" (The one-horned water buffalo of the earth, wake up!). Upon the third call, a water buffalo with only one horn, which is the reincarnation of the newly dead, emerges from the ground. Then they chase the water buffalo round the village yard (*wewa*) three times and then they slaughter it at the very place of the tomb. Then they begin a feast, eating the flesh of the waterbuffalo and dancing a traditional dance (*gawi naro* or *toja*). They dance naked and head over heels; they eat the flesh with the dishes turned upside down.

Along with the eating of the water buffalo and the dancing, they hold a meeting (*mbabho*) to decide who will have the head (*'urhu*).

Whoever receives the head is then responsible for providing a corpse for the following meeting.

The 'ata porho who receives the head tries to "sell" (*téka*) it. This selling takes various forms. Sometimes a person dreams a dream in which someone is trying to sell him a coconut (*nio*). This indicates some 'ata porho is trying to sell the head. Or, if there is a sound like something heavy being put down on one's verandah, it is an 'ata porho putting a head there to sell it. In that case, if someone in the house asks, "Sai (who)?", it means he has bought the head. The buyer of the head is to be the next victim. If, despite these efforts, the 'ata porho fails to sell it, he must kill one of his own family (*'ari ka'é*).

IV. 3. *How One Becomes an 'Ata Porho*

There are several ways to become an 'ata porho.

One can sometimes feel like a witch on various accounts. In order to become a witch, one may request it of God (*ngga'é*), or make an offering (*dhéra*) to the new moon (*wurha raa*). One may also go up to an isolated place (*rhowo rhema*||*kérhi keta*, or "a deep river//a cool mountain"). One can ask the *nitu pa'i* (evil, natural spirits who are believed to live in mountains or forests). One can become a witch also simply by a strange deed such as swearing (*mbatu*) at a fish. In this last case, usually described as done unconsciously, the swearer has a choice: he can become an 'ata marhi; if he does not want that, he can become an 'ata porho; if he does not want that, he can become an 'ata bingu, "a mad man". However, if he does not want to become an 'ata bingu, then he

3) On the fourth night after a death, the close agnates perform a ritual to lift the taboos imposed upon them since the death; and at the same time, it is believed, the dead is received by Konde Ratu, a watchman on Mt. Ia, into the land of the dead.

must die (*mata*). It is for him to decide.

Sometimes one becomes a witch unconsciously. If a witch wants to make someone else a witch, he tries to make the victim laugh, then sends forth to the victim's open mouth a substance called *wera* or '*ana wera*, which is usually described as stuff like a firefly kept in the body of a witch. Then the victim becomes a witch. When someone complains of a shortage of food, that provides a good occasion for a witch who is eager to make someone else a witch. The witch, then, appears to the complaining person in the form of food such as mushrooms. If the victim partakes of the food, he becomes a witch. This way of making a witch is called *kesu*.

Aside from these two ways of becoming a witch, there is another way: to become a witch through punishment for the breach of ritual observances, especially of agricultural rituals or *nggua tana watu*, "rituals of the earth and the stone". No such prescriptions are applied in the case of rites of passage. A man can become a witch, for example, if he eats maize or paddy before the appropriate rituals are held, or if he breaks wind during a ritual when it is strictly forbidden. Yet, the transgressor does not automatically become a witch. According to the Endenese, the transgressor will undergo one of the following five categories: (1) '*ata porho*, become "a witch"; (2) *neka raa*, receive "wound-blood" that is, an "incurable wound"; (3) *mata rimbo*, "die young"; (4) *pérha pani*, commit "adultery"; and (5) '*ata naka*, become "a thief".

I will touch only upon the notion of "a thief" '*ata naka* in passing. "Theft" is, unlike our societies, full of symbolic signifi-

cance in Ende. Theft is believed to occur most frequently in the period between the two agricultural years. That period is also associated with many attributes of liminality: at that time, it is almost always cloudy (*kubhu*); it is the time when people are most vulnerable to disease; *nitu* can be met with in abandoned dry fields; head hunting is performed by foreigners, sometimes said to be headed by European priests, to obtain the Endenese heads, especially those of children. Thieves are believed to have magical power: they can make the stolen objects disappear; they can easily open locks except for wooden ones. The magical power believed to be exercised by thieves is very similar to that of *teké ruku*.

There seems to be hardly any notion of "inheritance" of '*ata-porho*-ship through either male or female line. Indeed, I have heard several times that so-and-so must be a witch because his father or mother was known to be a witch, yet when asked about inheritance, the Endenese usually answer in the negative. It is not inheritance but the high possibility of *kesu* through daily contacts (with the witch) that accounts for the suspected *porho*-ship.

V The Witch as a Reversed Being

These ethnographic facts concerning witchcraft are but a small portion of the data I gathered on my first fieldwork, but they are sufficient to make some remarks about the notion of the witch in Ende. In this lore, witches are described as physically and morally abnormal human figures: they have big red eyes, have multiple *wera* instead of one *méa*

(soul), and are ugly; they are jealous and stingy; they do not observe ritual prescriptions. The association of the notion of "witches" with those of "slaves" and "thieves" implies the anti-social-ness or out-of-society-nature of witches.

Also, witches are described as liminal creatures: they appear on the cloudy (*kubhu*) days, which are usually conceived of as dangerous; to become a witch, one should make an offering to the new moon. But their most conspicuous and the most important characteristic is their image as inverted beings: witches dance on their heads, they receive food with the dishes turned upside down, etc.

In ethnographies of witchcraft, the image of witch as an inverted being is occasionally found in places geographically as distant as Ukaguru in eastern Africa. Put in the context of ethnographies in Indonesia, these attributes would not look strange except that they are assigned, not to witches, but sometimes to "spirits of outside" in Roti [Fox 1973] and sometimes to "the dead" in Toraja [Kruyt 1973]. Broadly speaking, the image of inverted being could be universal, as might be the case with unilateral figures [Needham 1978]. In Lugbara, those figures standing at a distance in time or in space, such as mythical personages, Europeans or members of other hostile tribes, etc., are inverted: "they walk on their heads" [Middleton 1960: 234].

We could construct a table consisting of two columns such as is used by, among others, Needham. But on one point, one important point, those classifications (witches vs. ordinary people in Ende or in Ukaguru, spirits of outside vs. spirits of inside in Roti, the dead vs.

the alive in Toraja, or "prehistoric" people vs. people of today in Lugbara) are different from the other symbolic classifications consisting of binary oppositions. To dance with the feet down and head up in Ende, to be black without ash in Ukaguru, to walk with one's feet on the ground in Roti, or to hold a spear in such a manner as to be used properly in Toraja, would have no symbolic significance at all, were it not for the imagined world set in opposition to it, the world of witches, the dead, the "prehistoric" people, or the outside. In other words, those worlds put alongside "this world" makes the latter a "cosmos", as opposed to the chaotic, abnormal, or reversed world of witches, the dead, the outside or prehistory. Then, to dance with feet on the ground, or any other kind of "ordinary" activity, comes to mean "living in this orderly world".

Those imagined chaotic or inverted worlds are an assurance of the orderliness of this world. But, "(a)ll symbolic inversions define a culture's lineaments", as Babcock says, "at the same time as they question the usefulness and the absoluteness of this ordering" [1978: 29].

VI Witches in Ethno-sociology

Anthropologists have argued that there is witchcraft (accusation) where there is tension. It would be much closer to the truth to put the sentence the other way round: there should be a tension where there is witchcraft (accusation). Or in Douglas's words, "the hypothesis that accusations would tend to cluster in niches where social relations were ill defined and competitive could not fail to

work, because competitiveness and ambiguity were identified by means of witchcraft" [1970: xviii].

What I am going to do in this section is not deal with this kind of sociology of witchcraft, but rather put the notion of witch in the context of the view of the society of those who live in it; the view which I call "ethno-sociology", just as we have called some fields of knowledge "ethno-zoology" and "ethno-botany".

Let me first give you a brief description seemingly irrelevant here, that is, of the ideology of kinship in Ende.

VI. 1. Kinship

Descent is reckoned patrilineally; alliance is made, ideologically, with one's (actual or classificatory) mother's brother's daughter. The relationship terminology confirms this ideology of asymmetric prescription. So, the social world of an Endenese comprises three categories of related people: (1) one's wife-givers (*ka'é 'embu*), (2) one's wife-takers (*weta 'ané*) and (3) one's own group (*'ari ka'é*).

Though there is no particular substance supposed to be inherited through one's father and/or mother, a person is said to "come from" (*mai*) one's mother's brother (*mamé*). There is supposed to be a flow of life from

one's mother's natal group (*ka'é embu pu'u*, "the stem wife-giver" or "the wife-giver of origin"). If an Endenese dies, his close agnates, such as his father, brother, or son, are obliged to pay the deceased person's mother's brother a prescribed number of valuables called *'urhu*, "head", consisting of elephant tusks, gold items and so on. This gift of "head" is arranged through a meeting (*mbabho*) held at the mortuary ceremony.

Shifting focus from the constituent units of the society to the relationships among the units, we can deduce, from the three categories of people, two sorts of relationship: (1) that between a wife-giver and a wife-taker and (2) that between members of the same group.

The former relationship is that of heterogeneity and hierarchy. The two groups are distinct and have nothing in common. Based upon this heterogeneity, the two groups can exchange goods, among which the most important are women. Hierarchy is expressed as a wife-giver's superiority over his wife-taker. The superiority is salient especially in the field of spiritual authority. A mother's brother can cause illness or sometimes death to his sister's child. The following chant of cursing (*somba oa*) gives one example of that superiority of a wife-giver:

Ndua ma'é jumbu ndetu

Whenever you climb down
(a mountain), may you never
reach flat land,

Nuka ma'é sadha worho

Whenever you climb up
(a mountain),
may you never get to the summit.

Koru kuku manu

(Just as) we remove the claw of a chicken,

Nggéra 'éko dhéké

(Just as) we pull out the tail of a rat
(so may you be destroyed).

Tibo ribo	You grow up only to be cut,
Ra'é mba'é	You shake yourself only to be beaten down. ⁴⁾
Mata miu wai sia	You shall be dead tomorrow,
wai sia	
Ré'é miu wengi rua	You shall be killed
wengi rua	the day after tomorrow.
'Urhu ndua rhau	(You shall be lying with your) head towards the sea,
Tuka rhéngga réta	Lying with your belly upwards. ⁵⁾

There should be good relations between the two groups, the ethic of which finds expression in the phrase *papa pawé*, "good to each other". Forth makes a remark upon the word *papa* in Sumbanese: "*papa* refers to one member of a pair. The two entities, which may be concrete or abstract, can be similar or opposed; and in the latter case their relation may be one of contradiction or complementarity.... *Papa* can thus mean both 'partner, counter-part' and 'competitor, enemy'" [Forth 1981: 59]. Thus, whether the two be "partners" or "enemies", the basic assumption is that the two entities are discrete. More interestingly, van Suchtelen defines the expression *papa pawé* as *vrede sluiten*, or "concluding peace (truce)" [1921: 228]. Thus, as these two are heterogeneous, it is considered normal that they should sometimes be split. There is a set of verbal frames and a scenario employed at the break-up of the relation. A break-up can be caused by such acts as mentioning a prohibited name of an affine. Thereafter the affines ignore each other (*ro'i*). Sometimes to make this hostile relation explicit, sorghum

(*weté*) is sprinkled, symbolizing the separation.⁶⁾ To re-establish the former relationship, they should hold an appropriate ceremony, inviting lots of people to publicize the reconciliation (*warhé*). At the same time, a ceremonial gift exchange should take place between them.

The relationship between members of the same group is totally different from the relation between a wife-giver and a wife-taker. The relation is that of homogeneity and equality. They are of one and the same group, and have everything in common. If something goes from a wife-giver to a wife-taker or *vice versa*, the transfer is called *pati*, that is, to "give", whereas if something goes from one member of a group to another member of the same group, it is called *bagi*, that is, to "divide" or "share". No exchange can be made between members of the same group. The ethic permeating the relationship is called *se 'até*, "of one heart" (literally, "liver"). In contrast to *papa*, which presupposes two discrete entities, *se* emphasizes unity. For example, *se nggua//se mbapu*, "one ritual// one ceremony" is the idiom employed to express the unity of a ritual domain; *sa'o se*

4) Here the two lines refer to cultivation of crops; the victim is likened to crops.

5) These two lines describe the position of the corpse at a funeral.

6) *Weté* is also sprinkled along boundaries of dry fields.

mboko//téndá se pata, “one house//one verandah” is for the unity of a descent group. There should be no break up of this relationship; in consequence, there is no set of verbal frames nor scenarios for such an occasion.

VI. 2. Witch and Kinship

Put in this context, the notion of witch in Ende shows itself as a more meaningful category than ever.

Conflict can occur between a wife-giver and a wife-taker, and as soon as it occurs, a verbal framework and scenario are cast over the conflict. They *ro'i*; sometimes the wife-giver curses the wife-taker; finally with an appropriate ritual they *warhé*; ceremonial gift exchange takes place. In contrast, there should be no conflict between members of the same group, at least in this “orderly world”, because they are “of one heart”. So, in a sense, conflict between agnates is an *impossibilium*. It is then thrown into that “abnormal, chaotic, and inverted” world of witches. There, conflict between agnates, or the relation between the witch and the victim, is a negative image of the relation between affines. A witch is, so to speak, a mother’s brother upside down.

First, how is the victim chosen? Witches choose as their next victim the person who has bought the head. The “selling” (*téka*) or “buying” (*mbeta*) implies that the relationship between the witch and the would-be victim is that of non-relatives, i.e. outside the social world; the transferral between them is expressed neither as *pati* (“giving”) nor as *bagi* (“sharing”). Then if the witch fails to sell it, he or she must kill one member of his or her group. A witch causes illness and death just

as a mother’s brother causes them; but in the former case, as can be inferred from the descriptions above, illness or death is brought to a non-relative or otherwise to his agnates, whereas a mother’s brother causes illness or death to his sister’s child.

At a funeral, witches perform a ceremony just as people do, but at night. They hold a *mbabho*, a formal meeting for negotiation as to who will receive the head (*'urhu*), just as people do. But whereas in this world a mother’s brother receives a set of valuables called “head” (*'urhu*), a witch receives an actual head.

VII Concluding Remarks

Now, let us return to our starting point. I said in the introductory part: “It seems as if everything has been said about witchcraft”. You might ask “what’s new here?” My conclusion might sound like those homeostasis-hypotheses: the relation between agnates is ill-defined, hence a friction, hence witchcraft accusation.

In this regard, note that I have never used the word “accusation” in this analysis. My emphasis has always been on the witch-victim relationship and not on the accused-accuser relationship. In other words, this paper is not a sociological study of Endenese witchcraft, but a study of the Endenese sociology of witchcraft.

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