

✓

# **The Psychodynamic Interpretation of Selected Gouro Tales Including their First Time Recording into Writing in the Gouro Language and Translation**

**By**

**Tra-bi Goh Theodore**

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy in the School of Languages and Literature.

**University of KwaZulu – Natal, Durban**

**2004**

Promoters: Professor Phyllis J. Zungu

Dr. Joan L. Conolly

## **Dedication**

This thesis is entirely dedicated to all the Gouro people of the Cote d'Ivoire whose language has no standard scribal written form. This work wishes to open a way to further research works on your culture, to find a way to a standardized written form of your language, and to document your rich tradition

## **Declaration**

I, Tra-bi Goh Theodore declares that, except for the quotations indicated in the text and such help as I have acknowledged, this thesis is my own original work and has not been submitted for a degree to any other university.

**Tra-bi Goh Theodore**

**10 March 2004**

## Acknowledgements

Bernard of Chartes once said: "we are dwarfs standing on the shoulders of giants, so that we can see more than they... not by virtue of any sharpness of sight on our part... but because we are carried high and raised up by their giant sizes."

The giant sizes of my promoter Professor Phyllis Zungu and my co-promoter Dr. Joan L. Conolly made me see the conclusion of this research work. The search, the writing and compilation of this work would not have been possible without their expert supervision. I am particularly grateful to both Professor Phyllis Zungu and Dr. Joan L. Conolly for their constant encouragement, and support of all kinds.

I am highly indebted to Professor Edgard Richard Sienaert, former Director of the Centre for Orality-Literacy Studies at the University of Natal, Durban, now at the University of Cape Town, for opening his office door to me in 1998. His giant size made me see since then a new horizon on the island of research. Professor Sienaert would never be thanked enough for the new vistas that his teachings opened to me.

My warmest thanks go to my family back in the Cote d'Ivoire for helping me with the collecting of the tales, for their encouragement and for their patience, which hallowed me to bring this thesis to conclusion. I thank most specially my brothers Tra-bi Irie Severin and Tra-bi Zoro Lucien , my sisters Tra -lou Naon Honorine and Tra-lou Gohi Olive, and the rest of my brothers and sisters.

I also thank JaneTarr for enthusiastically typing my first draft. How painstaking it is for a person to type a language s/he had never heard spoken her/his entire life? But how pleasant it was on your part to say after the typing that the Gouro language that you had never heard before sounded easy to you: "Very short

words, mostly amounting to two letters only. It must be one of the most beautiful languages on the face of our planet Earth”, you said. I thank you.

I am grateful to the UDW librarian Desmond Beharilal, the man who ended up becoming a dearer friend for his kindness and diligence. He was always there to lead me to the right book shelf, and to issue the books with an inspiring smile.

I owe a debt of gratitude to all the people whose names do not appear here, but who, at some moment got involved innocently in my research and contributed significantly to my work.

**Tra-bi Goh Theodore**

## Abstract

This study investigates into the psychodynamic interpretation of ten selected Gouro tales, that is the way in which the mind (psycho) and the action (dynamic body movement) of a Gouro storyteller translate into a performance. Because the tales are initially selected from the Gouro tale repertoire, the study focuses critically on the transcription of the tales into the Gouro language, which has no standardized written form yet, and translates the tales into English.

In this thesis three levels of translation are addressed: (1) An inter-lingual level of translation which is the translation of the Gouro tales into English, (2) An oral-literate level of translation, which undertakes the writing down of the Gouro language which currently has no standardised written form, (3) An inter-modal level of translation, which focuses on the translation of an oral performance mode into a written mode in terms of the particular issues addressing the 'putting of the tale performance on the page'.

The central theory accounting for the writing down of the Gouro tales in the Gouro language, the translation of the Gouro tales, and their psychodynamic interpretation is the theory of 'Human expression' as identified by the French anthropologist Marcel Jousse under the psycho-physiological laws of 'Mimism, Rhythmism, Bilateralism, and Formulism.' Jousse's theory of 'Human expression' underpins essentially what he calls the 'Oral-style expression', such as it is witnessed amongst the Gouro whose language is still essentially oral. The principles of the Oral style expression are thus applied to the orally performed Gouro tale texts to delineate the tales' dynamic mnemonic contents. In other words, the interpretation and analysis of the Gouro tales aim at identifying the very narrative elements that make possible the memorizing of a story, its recall, and its reliable transmission, such as it is the case in societies with the absence of writing.

The products of this study are a suggested work-in-progress for a standardised written form of the Gouro language, and the documentation of the Gouro tradition which is fast disappearing to make it relevant and available to researchers.

This study is articulated in five chapters:

Chapter one: The Gouro people of the Ivory Coast and their history

Chapter two: A theoretical framework for the Psychodynamic interpretation of the Gouro tales.

Chapter three: A methodological approach.

Chapter four: The telling of the tale by the Gouro people.

Chapter five: Writing down the tales in Gouro, their English translation and psychodynamic interpretation.

## **List of figures**

<b>1. The European advance into West Africa</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2. The ethnic groups of the Ivory Coast</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>3. Cultural space of the South Mande</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>4. Geographic origins of the Gouro settlement</b>	<b>21</b>

## Table of contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Dedication</b>	
<b>Declaration</b>	
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	
<b>Abstract</b>	
<b>List of figures</b>	
<b>Table of contents</b>	
<b>Introduction.</b>	
<b>1. Defining the terrain</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Aim of the thesis</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Contribution</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. Motivation for the study</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5. Scope of the thesis</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>6. Limitations of the thesis</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>7. Literature review</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>8. Structure of the thesis</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Chapter one</b>	
<b>1. The Ivory Coast</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>1.1.Geography</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>1.2.Historical overview of the Ivory Coast</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>1.2.1.Early history</b>	<b>14</b>

1.2.2. People and population	15
1.2.3. Who are the Gouro people?	16
2. Colonial history of the Ivory Coast	22
2.1. French Administration 1854-1945	23
2.2. The Ivory Coast today	26
2.3. Rebellion from the northern part of the country	28
3. The Gouro belief system and values	29
3.1. The Gouro dialects and their lifestyle	31
3.2. The Gouro onomastics and kinship	33
3.3. The Gouro social organisation	37
3.3.1. Gouro settlement	37
3.3.2. Farming activities	38
3.3.3. Power hierarchy and social order	39
3.3.4. Tribal affiliation and governance	40
a. Dances	42
b. Funerals	42
c. Marriage	
4. <i>Wi fi</i> and <i>wi bli</i> , the manducation of the sound	45

## Chapter two

1. Theoretical framework	50
1.1. Marcel Jousse and <i>The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm</i>	50
1.2. Jousse's concept of human expression	52
1.3. Jousse's modes of expression	53
1.3.1. What is the corporeal-manual mode of expression?	54
1.3.2. What is the laryngo-buccal mode of expression?	54
1.3.3. What is the mimigraphic mode of expression?	55
1.4. The Mnemonic Laws	55
1.4.1. The law of Mimism	56

1.4.2. The law of Rhythmism	58
1.4.3. The law of Bilateralism	60
1.4.4. The law of Formulism	61
1.5. The Mnemotechnical Devices	62
a. Analogy and symbol	64
b. Metaphor	65
2. Problems and issues which contextualise this study within Jousse's theoretical framework.	67
2.1. Conceptualisation, composition, and expression	67
2.1.1. Image and composition of the tales	67
2.1.2 Working with decontextualised text: 'There is no text without context', Bronislaw Malinowski	70
3. Translation prospect of the Gouro tales.	71
3.1. Oral-literate interface level of translation	71
3.2. Inter-modal level of translation	72
3.3. Inter-lingual level of translation	74
3.3.1. The Metourgeman-Sunergos	75
 <b>Chapter three</b>	
<b>Methodology</b>	<b>77</b>
1. The insider's perspective of interpretation and analysis of the tales	77
2. The collection of the tales under review	79
3. The selection of the tales under review	80
4. Writing down the Gouro tales for the first time in Gouro: A methodological approach of the oral-literate level of translation	81
5. Putting the Gouro tale performance on the page: A methodological approach of the inter-modal level of translation psychodynamics	84
5.1. The Rhythmography	90
5.2. The Rhythmo-stylistic analysis	96

<b>6. Translating Gouro into English: a methodological approach of the inter-lingual level of translation</b>	<b>98</b>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------

## **Chapter four**

<b>1. Tale telling among the Gouro</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>1.1. The audience and the teller</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>1.2. The telling process</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>2. The Gouro tale categories</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>3. The narrative themes</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>4. Functions of the Gouro tales</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>5. The Gouro tale structure</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>6. The internal structure</b>	<b>122</b>

## **Chapter five**

<b>Tale one: The gift of God</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>1. Interpretation</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>2. Rhythmo-stylistic Analysis</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>3. Gouro lore and lesson</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>Tale two: Lion's bloody feast</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>1. English reader-friendly version of tale two</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>2. Interpretation</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>3. Mimismic elements of the tale</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>4. Rhythmo-sylistic Analysis</b>	<b>161</b>
<b>Tale three: This is why Spider is found under the eaves</b>	<b>173</b>
<b>1. English reader-friendly version of tale three</b>	<b>188</b>
<b>2. Interpretation</b>	<b>191</b>
<b>3. Rhythmo-stylistic Analysis</b>	<b>194</b>

4. The narrative gestures	202
5. Partial conclusion	207
<b>Tale four: A bad husband</b>	<b>208</b>
1. Interpretation	218
2. Metaphoric elements of the tale	219
3. Gouro lore and lesson of the tale	223
<b>Tale five: The man who received a magic gourd</b>	<b>224</b>
1. Interpretation	238
2. Metaphoric elements of the tale	241
3. Gouro lore and lesson of the tale	245
<b>Tale six: Bua-bonji Kohou</b>	<b>246</b>
1. Interpretation	279
2. Metaphoric elements of the tale	283
3. Gouro lore and lesson of the tale	288
<b>Tale seven: Lesson of intolerance</b>	<b>290</b>
1. English reader-friendly version of tale seven	304
2. Interpretation	307
3. Psychodynamic elements of the tale	307
4. Gouro lore and lesson of the tale	311
<b>Tale eight: The lazy wife</b>	<b>313</b>
1. Interpretation	325
2. Psychodynamic elements of the tale	327
3. Gouro lore and lesson of the tale	329

<b>Tale nine: The man who could not keep secrets</b>	<b>331</b>
1. Interpretation	356
2. Psychodynamic metaphoric elements of the tale	358
2.1. Psychodynamics of secrecy	364
3. Gouro lore and lesson of the tale	367
<b>Tale ten: this is why there is Death</b>	<b>369</b>
1. Interpretation	374
2. Psychodynamic metaphoric elements of the tale	375
2.1. Repetitions	375
3. Gouro lore and lesson of the tale	377
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>380</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>388</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>401</b>

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Defining the terrain

Storytelling is a human age-long activity which translates the particular ways in which a given people look at their world, and their understanding of its manifestations. As such, in all places, in all times, all peoples have developed a tradition of telling stories. In the present thesis, the particular tales of the Gouro people of the Ivory Coast are what I endeavour to look at. The thesis sets out to interpret analytically the psychodynamics of selected Gouro tales. The discussion in the thesis is based on the first time writing down of the tales in the Gouro language, and their translation into English. At the outset of such an endeavour, it is necessary to define some postulated terms.

Firstly, by Psychodynamics of the Gouro narratives, it is meant the mind – ‘psycho’, and the movements – ‘dynamics’ of the Gouro storyteller. The ‘psychodynamics’ interpretation of the tales then aims at analysing the ways in which the Gouro performer’s mind (psycho) informs her/his dynamic enactments. The interpretation of the tales in that respect seeks to identify, to define, and to explain the nature of the performance arising out of the Gouro performer who is an indivisible psycho-physiological whole, i.e. mind and body. In other words, the ways in which the Gouro storyteller conceptualises a narrative, and the ways in which the narrative is expressed entail that a performance underpins some principles operating psycho-physiologically, i.e. mentally and physically.

Secondly, the first time writing of the tales in Gouro simply means the transcription of the narratives as they are told in Gouro, a language which has no standardised written form yet. In effect, the narratives under review in this thesis have never been recorded in the Gouro language since Gouro

has no scribal written form. Writing the tales in the initial Gouro language of performance for a formal study is a first undertaking of its kind.

Thirdly, the Gouro tales are translated into English for an English audience. Translating the Gouro narratives into English presents a particular challenge to be addressed in the light of the typical Gouro Oral-Style<sup>1</sup> idiosyncrasies. In fact, Gouro is a highly tonal and gestual language in that meaning making in that language is complicated by the correlation between tone and gesture in a performance. These Oral-Style characteristics further inform the possible ways of writing down Gouro, and of translating it into English.

What is sought in this thesis is the anthropology of storytelling; in other words, how 'Oral Style' form of expression can be understood in terms of the psycho-physiological laws as discussed by Marcel Jousse in his *The Anthropology of Geste and Rythm* (1997)

An important aspect of tale performance among the Gouro is yet to be addressed: the very definition of tale telling, which in the scholarly world conceives of tales as fiction. William Bascom defines tales, for instance, as

... prose narratives which are regarded as fiction. They are not regarded as dogma or history, they may or may not have happened, and they are not to be taken seriously. Nevertheless, it is often said that they are told only for amusement, they have other important functions, as a class of moral folktales should have suggested. Folktales may be set in any time and any place, and in this sense they are almost timeless and placeless. (Bascom 1965: 4)

Such a definition presents a problem to the Gouro mode of thought simply because the Gouro do not conceive of their narratives as fiction. In fact, the Gouro believe, as Harold Scheub mentioned when dealing with *The Xhosa Ntsomi* (1975), that there is no supernatural world to be found in tale

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Oral Style* is the full title of a work that the French anthropologist Marcel Jousse published in 1925. Jousse identified the 'Oral Style' as a mnemonic mode of anthropological expression characterised by the principles of 'Mimism, Rhythmism, Bilateralism, and Formulism'. The 'Oral Style' idiosyncrasies thus point to the mnemotechnical supportive mode such as gesture and tone, which are essentially meaning specific in Oral milieux and which contribute to the recording of information in those milieux.

tradition, no fictional world, no fabulous world, no world of miracle, incredible deeds, fantastic adventures; "There is only man, working out his relations with himself and his fellows, struggling with the elements in his character that would negate the good in him and in his society" (Scheub 1975: 82). In the Gouro mode of thought indeed, there is no clear-cut division between 'real' and 'surreal', between 'life' and 'death', between the 'spirit world' and the 'everyday world'. As a storyteller tells and performs the deeds of spirits characters, animals and other fantastic characters, they become real and almost visible to the audience. Among the Gouro, the oral narrative thus becomes a living body with real social functions: a performance is an intellectual and moral instruction where the attention of the listener is drawn on the observation of the natural milieu in which s/he lives; for instance to the habits and ways of the animals. In the words of Leopold Sedar Senghor then, "The whole universe, visible and invisible- from God to the smallest speck of sand... is composed of communicating vessels, of interdependent vital forces, which all emanate from God....There exists no frontier, not even between life and death. Only intuitive reason is capable of *comprehending* the totality of reality beyond appearance." (1961:16).

Storytelling among the Gouro may then be defined as a prose narrative form of personification of good and evil, heroes and villains, based on the observation of life and its manifestations and whose function is primarily to educate, and then to amuse. A tale may be set in any time and any place, and constitutes a storehouse of understanding the world and its manifestations. As an oral art form of personification of good and evil, heroes and villains, that fulfil the function of understanding their environment, tales remain more importantly a tool of the Gouro child learning and an occasion for meditation to adults. The Gouro tales adopt significant meanings, and are not merely for entertainment as the majority of outsiders view tale telling activity in general. As such, the context of the significance of the tales analysis in this thesis must be seen in terms of Gouro worldview

and customs and mores, values and belief systems. My 'insider' view in this research study thus wishes to provide the significance of ten stories selected from the Gouro tale repertoire in terms of how the Gouro perform their tales, the nature of the narrative elements that effect the recall and transmission of their stories over the generations, and why the Gouro stories constitute the body of knowledge which identifies them. This otherwise amounts to saying that the expressive components of the Gouro stories are delineated and analysed according to the dynamic function they play in the body of a performance.

## **2. Aim of the Thesis**

In writing down the Gouro tales for the first time in Gouro, and in translating the tales into English and analysing them, the aim of this thesis is to create an awareness of the complexity of meaning making in a language which has no scribal written form. Indeed, it is not given forthwith to understand the complexity of the system by which a highly tonal language such as Gouro operates. In this study then, I aim:

- a. To record ten Gouro tales in writing.
- b. To demonstrate a methodology for translating the Gouro tales into English
- c. To demonstrate a methodology for the analysing of the psychodynamics of the Gouro tale performances.
- d. To interpret and analyse the Gouro tales adopting an insider's perspective.

## **3. Contribution of the thesis**

This research study wishes to document part of the Gouro oral tradition so that it will be accessible and relevant to researchers. In effect, unlike in the former British colonies in Africa where the British encouraged the transcription of some local languages, the French made no such attempt in

their African colonies. The reason for this negligence can be found in the 'Assimilation'<sup>2</sup> Policy adopted by the French as a governing strategy. 'Assimilation' was a policy of integration of the colonies with the French Union. The advocates of the doctrine of assimilation based their theory on the long-established tradition of the unity and indivisibility of France and "the increasingly closer union between the colonies and the metropolis" (Grimal 1965: 59). The colonial people were absorbed within the French Cultural sphere and were led to adopt the language, the customs and the general attitudes of the metropolitan French. French was then adopted as *Lingua Franca* in the colonies, and little importance was given to the writing of indigenous languages. In the Ivory Coast particularly, French has always been the sole official language. No single language of the sixty local ethnic groups of the country has a standard written form. Attempts to write some of these languages down can be traced in the translation of the Bible undertaken by the *Société Biblique en Afrique Occidentale*, in the late 1970's, the *Société Internationale de Linguistique* for evangelical purposes, and the *Institut de Linguistique appliquee* of the University of Cocody (Cote d'Ivoire).

Documenting the worldview of an ancient tradition such as that of the Gouro is very urgent. Since the contact with the West, the Gouro traditional values are fast dying. The Gouro youngsters are adopting more and more the modern ways that they find more appealing to the detriment of their ancestral cultural values and practices.

Furthermore, through analyses of the Gouro cultural particulars, this study wishes to place the Gouro language against a wide frame of reference of the rich lore of Africa which is increasingly being used as source for the new African Literature. By explaining analytically the Gouro worldview then, this study invites to the understanding of the Gouro knowledge systems, and

---

<sup>2</sup> See H. Grimal. Decolonization: The British, French, Dutch and Belgium Empires 1919-1963. 1965.

places it into a broader comparative perspective with other languages and knowledges. This further puts the present study in the wider frame of debate on the African Renaissance by making known to the English-speaking world for the first time some of the essential values which underpin traditional Gouro society.

#### **4. Motivation for the study**

This research study has been undertaken for:

- Personal and social reasons: As a mother tongue Gouro speaker born in the Ivory Coast, I was socialised and developed by these stories all my life. These stories constitute my identity as an individual, as a member of social cultural group, and as a member of the human race. I therefore undertake to document these tales for the contribution that they make on all three levels of socialisation.
- For academic reasons: This research study identifies the gap in the scholarly discourse about 1) the written record of the tales from the Gouro oral tradition, 2) the use of a language which has no standard written form, 3) the translation of Gouro oral narratives into English and analysis of their psychodynamics.

#### **5. The scope of this thesis**

The scope of this thesis is ninefold:

- To contextualise the study briefly historically, geographically, and demographically.
- To discuss the significance of the Gouro people's lifestyle, their mores, and their social values.
- To contextualise the study theoretically using the anthropological laws, the psycho-physiological laws of human expression as identified by the French anthropologist Marcel Jousse under the characteristics of: Mimism

(mime or imitation by a performer), Rhythmism (rhythmic pattern of a performance), Bilateralism (the balanced nature of a proposition), and Formulism (the formulaic nature of propositions). These laws, indeed, account for the dynamics and social mnemonic functions of the tales. They are laws that effect the composition, the recalling, and the transmission of an oral narrative.

- To write down a language which has no standard scribal written form.
- To demonstrate the translation of Gouro tales into English. The thesis adopts an analytical approach to how the Gouro language characteristics can possibly be presented to the English readership. Subject to this, the thesis identifies the possible problems that may arise from the passage from Gouro to English. Translation always presents with a problem of distortion of the initial message. As Jousse notes, "any ethnic standpoint transported into another ethnic standpoint is in danger of being distorted." (Jousse 2000: 597). This is the reason why this study provides an analytical frame of translation and interpretation founded in the Gouro cultural belief system. The interpretations and analysis of the Gouro worldview could have been also highlighted in the other oral genres such as riddles, proverbs, praises, songs. But if storytelling constitutes a matter of interest in this thesis, it is simply because of the flexible nature of its performance which makes it a form of expression that is accessible to all ages, to all genders, in all times, in all places. Therefore, it better translates the Gouro people's worldview and their rhetoric without any restrictions to age or gender.
- To demonstrate the recording of selected tales to reveal: 1) Structural dynamics and the way in which the Gouro tale performance embeds in memory, since memory is an important tool of recording events in the Gouro daily life. 2) Interpret and analyse the tales to reveal the mnemonic functions founded in imitation, repetition, analogy, metaphor, symbolism, and patterning.

- To contextualise each tale in an interpretative note on the Gouro concepts and beliefs. In so doing, I intend to account for the Gouro ways of looking at realities around them as it is presented in the tale under review.
- To provide an interpretative glossary at the end of the tale analysis to account for the tonal faces some Gouro words that appear in the tales presented in the thesis may adopt in a variety of contexts.

## **6. Limitations of the thesis**

This thesis does not intend to achieve the following:

- To deal with all the Gouro tales. Only a selection of ten tales has been studied out of thousands of the Gouro tale repertoire.
- To deal with the exhaustive development of standardised written form for performed Gouro. The topic has merely been introduced here and exemplified. The development of a standard written form of Gouro would have had to deal with issues other than the Gouro tales, their translation into English and their interpretations.
- To venture into the interpretations of what the Gouro folktales may reflect about the unconscious or the sub-conscious messages. The psycho-dynamics as it is discussed in this thesis is not drawn on the therapeutic clinical psychology or the psychoanalysis of the tales such as approached by Sigmund Freud and D.E. Oppenheimer in their essay *Dreams in Folklore* (1958).
- To establish the pure psychology of the Gouro tales telling, such as the reasons why the Gouro tales may be 'recommendable' to their readers or not.
- To determine the dialectal nuances in the Gouro tale telling and their possible transcription. In this study, I have transcribed the Gouro sounds with a Kwanen dialect influence. But in either case, the dialectical

distinction remains minimal if the concept is meaningfully articulated in writing.

## **6. Literature review**

It is usual for students to have to write a literature review as part of their thesis. This is normally a chapter appearing early in the thesis, but in some style of thesis, may appear throughout the work. (Bruce in Conolly2000: 7)

Instead of writing a full chapter on a literature review, I considered it necessary to adopt the style of literature review identified by Bruce, and to intersperse throughout the thesis insights of researchers that are relevant to the study. Considering the nature of the present thesis which has to deal with many different aspects of issues, I found it more appropriate to refer the literature to those many different aspects by placing it where it provides a context and reference. Each of the sections needs to be dealt with individually for the sake of close reference. In other words, there will be a review of the relevant literature as I approach each new section.

I considered this necessary for the simple reason that in so doing, any insight relating to the Gouro mode of tale telling will have to be confronted head-on with Jousse's Oral-style mode of expression which is applied to this study. A direct application of relevant insights to Jousse's anthropological holistic Laws of expression, I believe, provides a better understanding of the context of interpretation of the Gouro tales. It also stands to reason that the nature of this study, which is not consubstantially supported by any published sources on the Gouro oral tradition (because there are hardly any), renders it difficult to provide with a literature survey in a full chapter. Indeed, such a literature review will prove too broad and superfluous to the specific issues grounded in Jousse's theories and insights that contextualise this study.

In order to achieve the aforementioned scope, reference will be made to:

~ Pierre Kipre (1992), Fage J. (1992), Grimal (1965), A. Carpenter and H. James (1977), and A. Rosellini (1976) on the history of the Ivory Coast and the History of the Gouro people.

~ Marcel Jousse (1990, 1997, 2000, 2001), and Joan Conolly (2000), by way of interpretation of the mnemonic construct of the Gouro tales.

~ The Gouro version of the Bible (1979), for the creating of a form of writing for Gouro.

~ Laban (1966), Amos Tutuola (1961), E. Fine (1984), E. Chamberlin (1998), on matters pertaining to putting an oral performance on the page.

~ Novario N. Canonici (1986, 1989, 1992), Harold Scheub (1975), on issues pertaining to the Zulu narratives and composition of tales.

Theories and insights of other researchers in the relevant areas will also be referred to insofar as they are congruent with the psychodynamic aspects of tale telling.

## **7. Structure of the thesis**

The whole thesis is articulated as follows:

Chapter one: The history of the Ivory Coast, and history of the Gouro and their settlement in the Ivory Coast, their social organisation, and some of their cultural and linguistic features.

Chapter two: A theoretical framework and problems and issues which contextualise this study within Jousse's anthropological theory of human expression.

Chapter three: Methodology.

Chapter four: Storytelling among the Gouro: The Gouro tale types, and their structure.

Chapter five: Putting the Gouro tale performances on the page, with their English translation and interpretation, their psychodynamic analyses, and some notes on the some Gouro narrative elements.

Chapter one: The history of the Ivory Coast, and history of the Gouro and their settlement in the Ivory Coast, their social organisation, and some of their cultural and linguistic features.

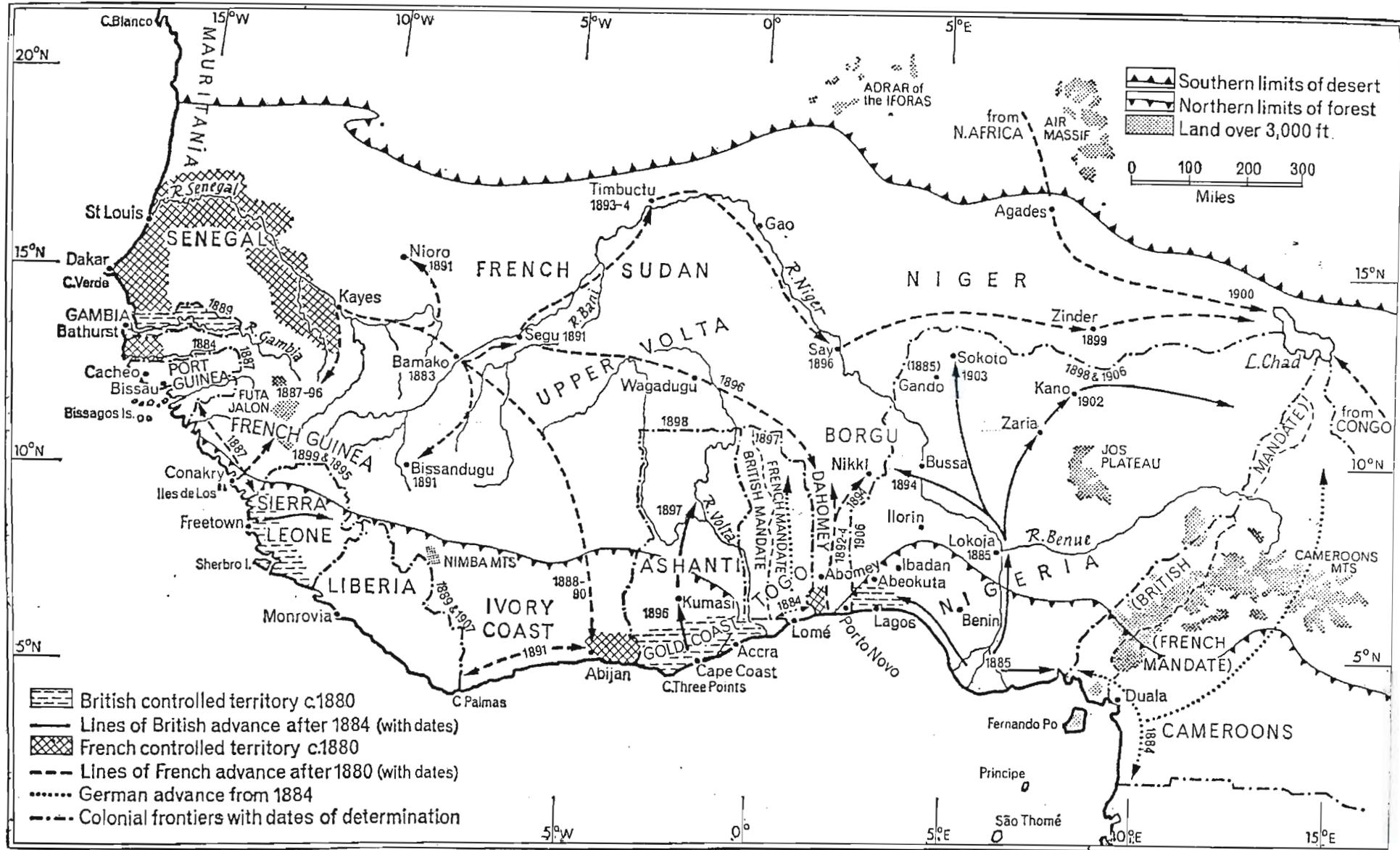
Chapter two: A theoretical framework and problems and issues which contextualise this study within Jousse's anthropological theory of human expression.

Chapter three: Methodology.

Chapter four: Storytelling among the Gouro: The Gouro tale types, and their structure.

Chapter five: Putting the Gouro tale performances on the page, with their English translation and interpretation, their psychodynamic analyses, and some notes on the some Gouro narrative elements.

Before any further discussion, it is of prime importance to know from the opening chapter who the Gouro are, and where they come from.



The European advance into West Africa

# 1. THE IVORY COAST

## 1.1. Geography

With a coastline more than 300 miles long, the Ivory Coast forms an almost square block of territory with an area of 124, 470 square miles (322, 460 sq.km), and a population of almost fifteen million people. It is bordered to the southwest by Liberia, to the northwest by Guinea, to the north by Mali and Burkina Faso, to the east by Ghana, and to the south by the Gulf of Guinea. The economic capital is Abidjan, and the political capital is Yamoussoukro.

Lying close to the equator, the Ivory Coast is tropical both in surface features and climate. The Ivory Coast has four natural regions that are: The coastal fringe, the equatorial forest zone, the cultivated zone, and the northern savannah. In the south of the Ivory Coast is a 320 miles (515 km) wide strip of coastal land on the Gulf of Guinea.<sup>3</sup>

The coastal fringe consists of a strip of land, no more than forty miles wide, studded with lagoons on its eastern half. Behind the coastal fringe, lies the Equatorial forest zone that, until a century ago, formed a continuous area more than 125 miles wide. It has now been reduced to an area roughly triangular in shape, with the apex lying a little to the north of Abidjan, and with its base lying along the Liberian border. The cultivated forest zone, which lies to the East of this triangle, consists of land that has been largely cleared for plantations, especially along the Ghana border and in the central part of the country. The fourth region, the Northern Savannah, consists of a sparsely populated plateau, offering open ground for stockbreeding.

---

<sup>3</sup> See Patricia Sheeban (2000): Cultures of the World: Cote d'Ivoire

## 1.2. Historical overview of the Ivory Coast.

### 1.2.1. Early history

If one is only to consider the archaeological fossils found in the region as suggests the book of Allan Carpenter and James Hughes, *Enchantment of Africa: Ivory coast* (1977), it may be said that the early history of the Ivory Coast goes as far back as the Neolithic era. Notwithstanding that there is a possibility that the history of the peoples of the the Ivory Coast goes long before the Neolithic period. It is simply that the era in which they first peopled this region is too far back to grant its true reference to the modern historians. As Carpenter argued,

The exact origin of mankind in the Ivory Coast is not known at this time. However, discoveries of polished stone implements in regions of this country indicate that a Neolithic people once lived here several thousands years ago. It is believed that these people were able to domesticate animals and cultivate grains and fruit trees. They created pottery pieces and learned how to weave linen cloth for clothing and household needs

From a Neolithic period, it is thought that early man then moved into the Iron Age. Since the knowledge of working iron seemed to occur within West Africa around the third century B.C., the people of the Ivory Coast probably also began to acquire these skills about the same time. An elaborate Iron Culture did develop in the region of the Ivory Coast. (1977: 25)

It is indeed believed that various isolated populations of people developed with a variety of social and cultural ways of life in the Ivorian space. In general, these populations improved their methods of farming, and perfected their techniques for locating and mining minerals. Much later, several great empires had developed and succeeded each other in the upper northern areas of the Ivory Coast between the fifth century and the fifteenth century C.E., such as the Sonrai, the Sosso, the Ghana, and the Mali empires. The initial populations of the Ivory Coast will then undergo their first influence

from the contact with these great empires. Indeed, as great trading centres flourished during the development of these empires, many traders moved farther south in the quest for new products and new markets for trade. These traders called Dioula were of the Islamic faith due to their early contact with the Arabic people who initiated the slave trade in the Sahel zone around the eighth century C.E. The Dioula tried to introduce their religious ideas to the villages they visited during their trading activities. The lifestyle and the Islamic religious influence of the Dioula remain total up today amongst the northern populations of the Ivory Coast since that part in direct contact with the initial upper northern trading lands. As far as the coastal populations of the south of the country are concerned, they have adopted significantly the Christian faith due to the strong presence of European visitors during the colonial period. This religious divide is contributing to some extent to the Ivorian social-political crisis today.

### **1.2.2. People and populations.**

There are more than sixty ethnic groups, traditionally independent from each other, though larger groups among them may be recognised on the basis of cultural unity.

Each one of these groups has tribal affiliations with larger groups living outside the borders of the Republic. Thus, the Akan group settled in the south and central eastern part of the country are affiliated with the Akan group of Ghana. They comprise the Abidji, Aboursé, Abe, Abron, Adioukrou, Ahizi, Akié, Avikam, Alladian, Bété, Diabé, Essouma, Ega, Ebrié, Baoulé, Nzima.

The Krou group in the southwest are a migratory unit from the Krou boatmen of Liberia. In the interior, the Krou group is subdivided into tribes

tiny in number but scattered over large areas of the forest and united by secret societies. Among them, the Bete, Dida, Godié, Bakwe, Krou, We (Guéré and Wobe), Niaboua, Niedéboua, Kouya, Wane, Neyo, Kotrohou, Kodia.

The Voltaic group comprises the Sénoufo as well as the Lobi and Bobo subgroups. They live widely scattered over the North Eastern region and are affiliated with the Voltaic of the Burkina-Faso.

The Mandé group, which is particularly strong in Mali, is subdivided into two units: the Northern Mandé or Malinké in the Northwest of the country, and the Southern Mandé, in the west and mid-west. The Gouro fall under the southern Mandé with the Dan sub-group or Yocouba and Toura, and the Gban or Gagou.

### **1.2.3. Who are the Gouro people?**

Historically alluded to as the *Kweni*, the Gouro are believed to be a unit of the three subgroups that form the southern Mandé and are affiliated with the larger group of the north-western part of the sub-Sahara. The Gouro settlement in the mid-western region of the Ivory Coast is the result of migrations over long distances. Attempts by Professor Pierre Kipre to trace the origins of the Gouro in their memory has led to the conjecture that their settlement in this region is the result of political and military causes related to the foundation and the expansion of great empires of the Middle Age, such as the Ghana and the Mali empires in upper Senegal – Niger. Indeed Professor Pierre Kipre, in dealing with the migratory movements to the Ivory Coast<sup>4</sup>, distinguishes three major phases. The first migratory phase is that of the Mandé Group. It took place before the eleventh century A.D.,

---

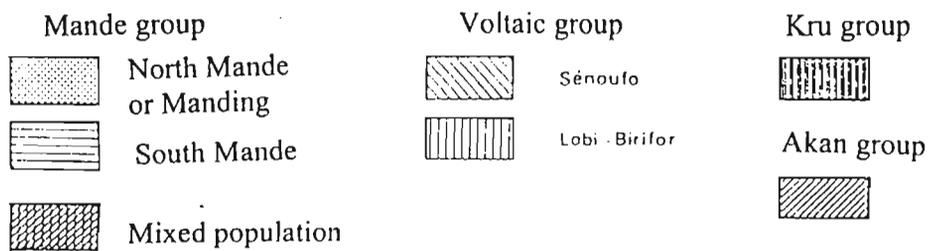
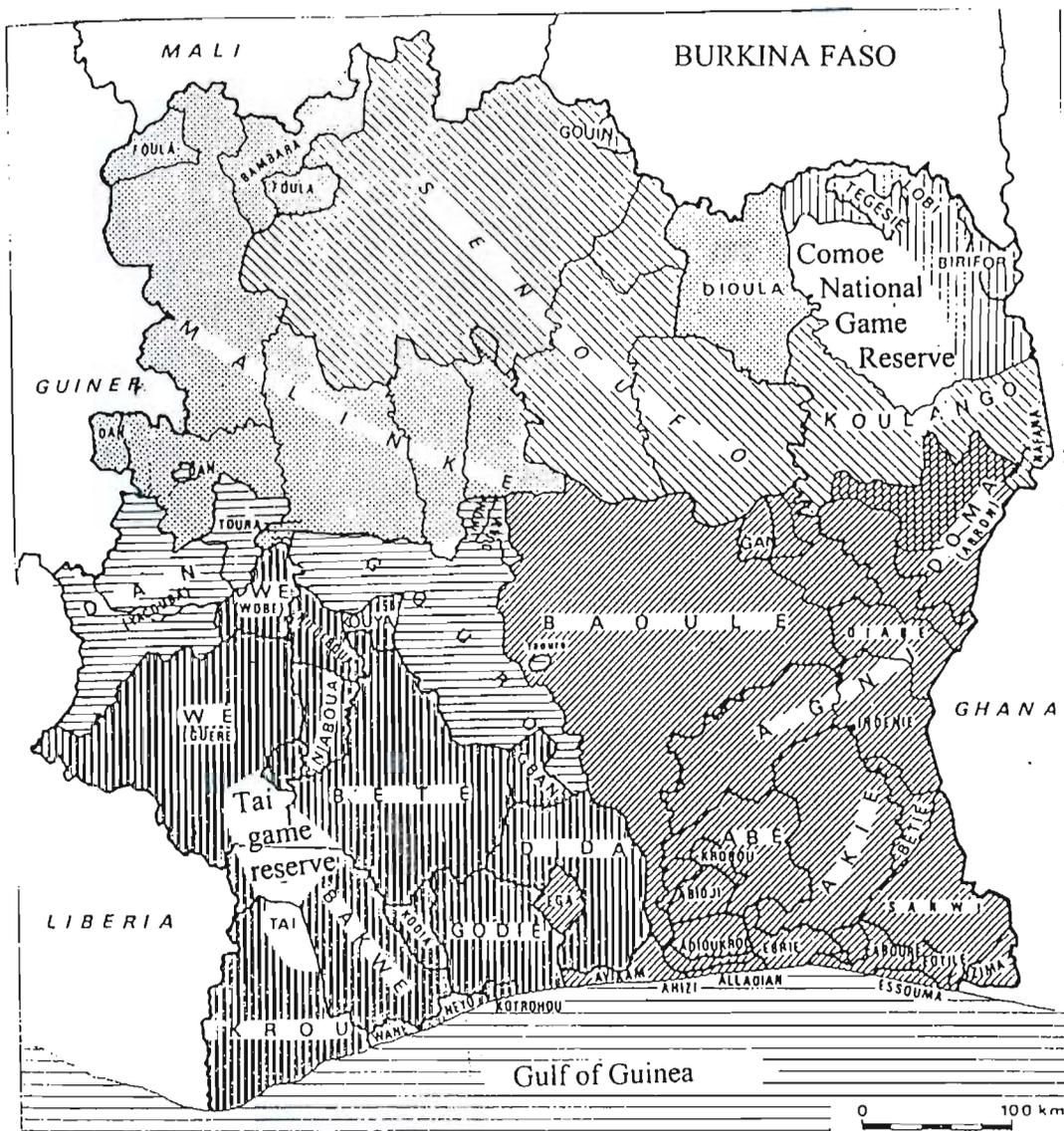
<sup>4</sup> Kipre P. *Histoire de la cote d'ivoire*. 1992. P.

following various social and political movements in the Sahel Zone. He maintains that the migration speeded up during the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries as the Ghana empire, and especially the Mali empire were formed. A considerable number of the Mandé thus broke away gradually towards the mountain and the forest regions southwards. These formed the Forest Mandé or the Southern Mandé, hence the Kweni or Gouro, the Dan or Yacouba, the Gban or Gagou. The First, the Gouro, crossed in successive waves eastwards of the initial forest settlement to form a much larger group scattered across the edge of the forest, in the mid-west of the Ivory Coast. The second and third phases of migrations took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries C.E., and are those of the Krou group in the South West, the Akan in the East, and the Voltaic group in the North.

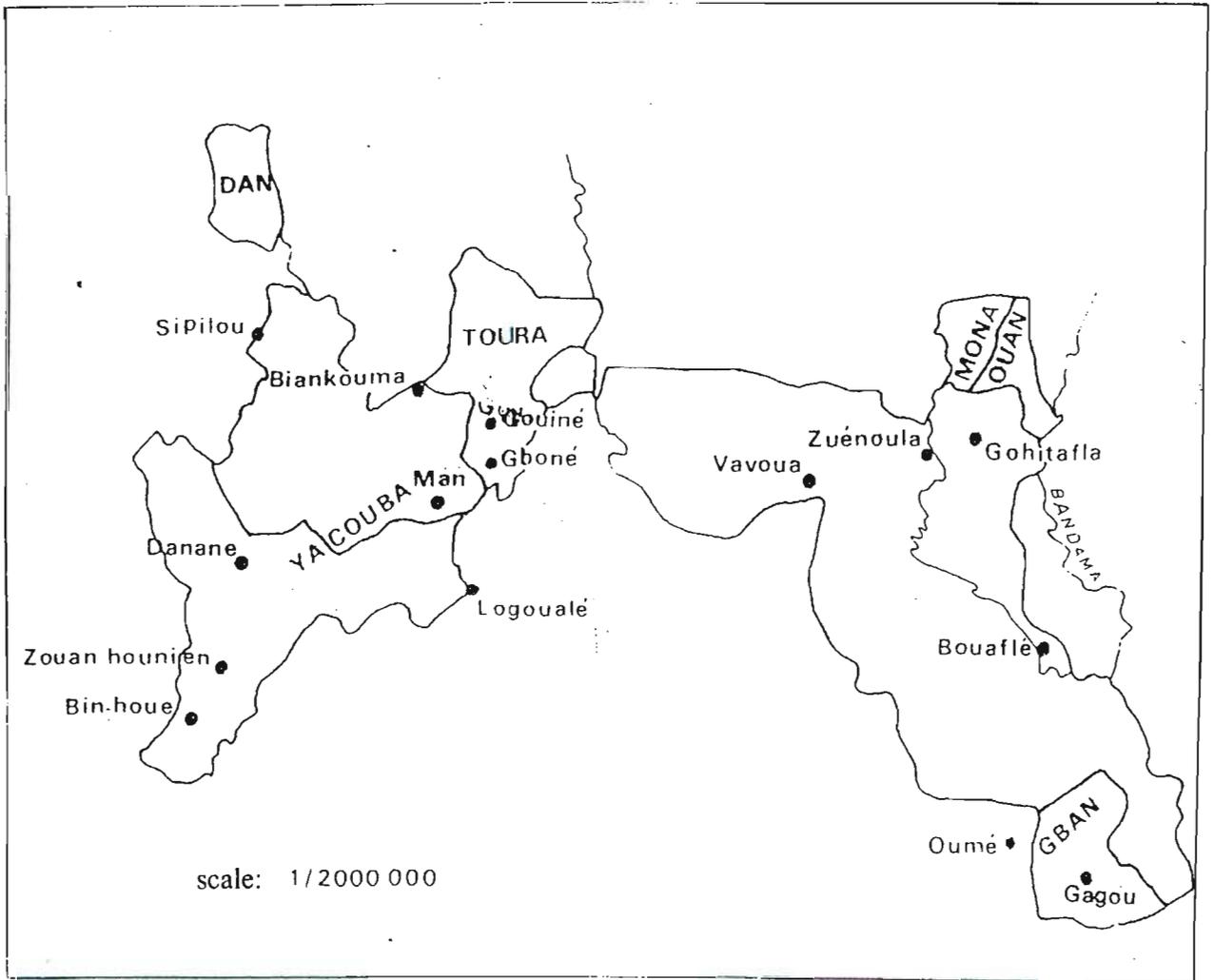
Pierre Kipre's allegations that the Ivory Coast was peopled only a few centuries back may appear as pure historical conjectures if one is to consider Allan Carpenter et al's statement that evidence of mankind on the Ivorian soil develops from the Neolithic period. This statement may then contradict the idea that the first migration to the Ivorian soil (by the so-called Mande unit) took place on account of the social and political upheavals in the Mali Empire, which was only formed in the years 1000 C.E. If then the subunit of the Mande comprising the Gouro, Dan, and Gban are believed to be the first peoples to arrive in this region, then the idea of identifying them with the Neolithic culture of the region remains total.

Because of the more or less central position of the Gouro in the Ivorian space, they are bordered on either sides by the last migratory groups. The contact with these groups often brought about mutual borrowing of cultural artefacts, customs and habits.

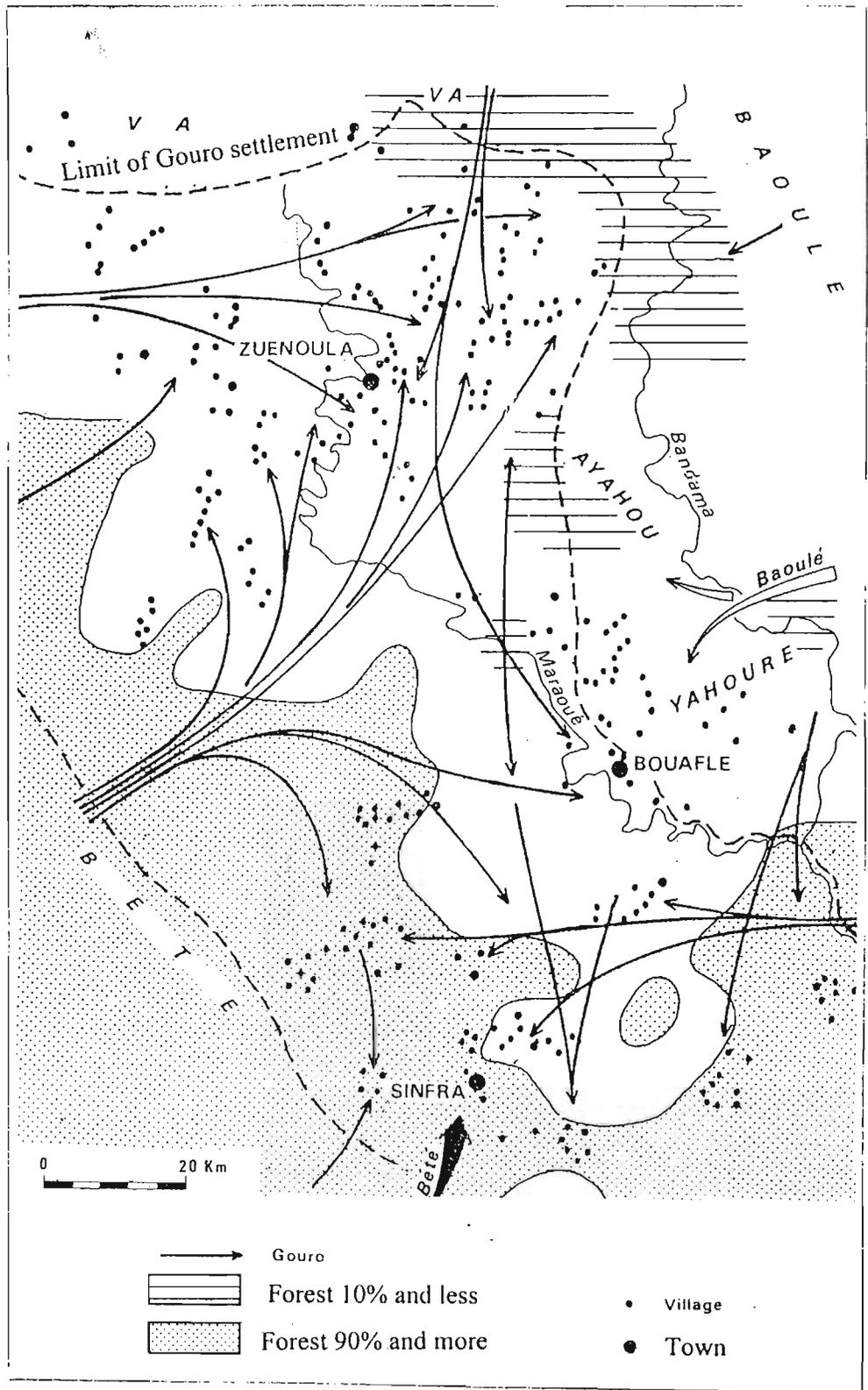
Thus, in the east of the Gouro settlement, the Yaouré originating from the Akan, have significantly adopted the Gouro language and customs. On the Western Side can be found the Kouya from the Krou group who also use a significant number of Gouro words. In the north, the Kouyaka, the Monan and the Ouan descending from the Malinké, have a considerable Gouro language structure in their speech. Close cultural commonalities are claimed with the latter since, according to Professor Kipré, the Malinké constitute the second migratory unit of the Mandé group settled in the north. The people on the edge of the Gouro areas are often bilingual, or at least able to understand a considerable amount of the neighbouring language or languages.



The ethnic groups of the Ivory Coast



Cultural space of south Mande



Geographic origins of Gouro settlement

## **2. The colonial history of the Ivory Coast**

In the fifteenth century, Portuguese explorers, officials, missionaries, and traders, arrived on the West African shores. They built fortresses and stations and initiated trade in slaves, gold, ivory, and hides. From 1530, the Portuguese commercial monopoly was challenged by the successive attempts of rivals traders, mainly the French and English, and the era of exclusive Portuguese trade on the Guinea Coast ended in 1553. Fortified trading posts were built along the Guinea Coast by the French and English. During the years that followed, French influence was extended on the coastline between Liberia and Gold Coast, an area where the ivory trade flourished and which was to become 'the Ivory Coast'. French traders rapidly gained ground on the Ivory Coast and reached the interior. Between 1838 and 1842 a French naval officer, Bouët-Willaumez, secured treaties with African rulers near Cape Palmas, at Grand Bassam and Assinie on the Ivory Coast.

In 1884, a conference was called in Berlin of all the European powers concerned with Africa to consider their mutual interest in the continent. In 1885, the representatives of the powers at the Berlin Conference signed an agreement declaring the freedom of access to the interior of Africa. Few practical steps were ever taken by the signatories of this agreement to make this freedom of access to the interior of Africa a genuine fact in their colonies. In practice, most of them limited it to their own subjects. In 1886, France decided to defend its trading posts of the Ivory Coast. In 1890, another international African conference, meeting at Brussels, decided that the effective occupation rule should apply to the interior of Africa as well as to its coasts. French explorers were then sent into the interior of the region in order to extend the territorial possessions beyond the narrow coast strip. An explorer named Treich-Lapleigne travelled north from the Ivory Coast to

meet Louis Gustave Binger. Binger had spent several years in the north near the Niger River, establishing treaties with the leaders of the interior kingdoms. With the meeting of Binger and Treich-Lapleine, France claimed territories extending from the Gulf of Guinea northwards to the interior of the Sudan (Mali). Soldiers were sent inland to occupy these lands and bring them under French control. France thus maintained her control over the whole coast between Liberia and the Gold Coast (actual Ghana), a territory where the ivory trade has flourished since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and which was to become the coast line of the République de Côte d' Ivoire (The Republic of the Ivory Coast). France officially declared the Ivory Coast a colony in 1893, and part of French West Africa in 1904. The explorer Louis Gustave Binger was appointed the first official Governor of the Colony in 1893.

Some African resistance to colonisation was inevitable. At times, the French used military force to subdue the local populations. But the French military never anticipated the well-trained armies of the Malinké sovereign, Samory Touré. In the years 1890-1898, Samory and his armies fought hard campaigns against the French penetration into the interior. At a point, Samory established his kingdom in the Northern Ivory Coast between Odiene and Bouna. He tried to unite all of the Mandé-speaking peoples of the interior into one nation. Besieged with problems of food shortage and lack of military support, the resistance movement of Samory Touré eventually lost its power. In 1898, the French captured Samory, and his freedom-fighting movement was ended.<sup>5</sup>

## **2.1. French administration 1854 - 1945**

The French expansion occurred so rapidly over so vast an area of territory in West Africa, that at first they were unable to find enough administrative

---

<sup>5</sup> See Allan Carpenter and James Huges (1977). *Enchantment of Africa: Ivory Coast*.

officials to rule the newly conquered peoples. For a time they were forced to use the native governments as their agents, confirming the authority of chiefs who had submitted to them, and creating new chiefs to replace those they had deposed. As soon as they were able to rule themselves, the French established administrations of French officials for their colonies of French Guinea, the Ivory Coast, the Sudan and Dahomey.

The system of government evolved for the French territories in West Africa in general, and in the Ivory Coast in particular, can be likened to a pyramid. At the top was the Minister for the Colonies, a member of the French government of the day, like his colleagues, responsible to the National Assembly in Paris. Under the Minister for the Colonies, came the Governor-General of French West Africa at Dakar (Senegal), and under him were the governors of the various colonies and their subordinates, the provincial and district officers. Under the latter came the African village headmen called 'les chefs de tribus'. The Ivory Coast particularly was split into divisions, sub-divisions, and tribes which were smaller units, grouping together a limited number of villages. The headmen of the 'tribus' would report to the district officer, who fell under the provincial officers, who accounted for their duties to the Governors, who in their turn fell under a Governor-General at Dakar, who reported to the Minister for Colonies in Paris. French Ivory Coast was governed, then, by an authoritarian hierarchy of officials subordinates to the French government in Paris. This ruling system was thus called the 'direct rule' as opposed to the British system of 'indirect rule'. Laws for the French administration were generally made by decrees in Paris, and it was possible for the French to accept the inhabitants of their colonies as French citizens, since they were subject to the ordinary law in the National Assembly at Paris, that was the '*Assimilation*'.

The overall policy of the French Colonial Administration was founded on the doctrine of '*assimilation*'. The French colonial policy thus sought to convert

Africans into Frenchmen and to govern French West Africa in general as though it were part of France.

The Ivory Coast (Republique de Côte d'Ivoire) has been a republic since 7 August 1960. The implications of the French colonial policy had a negative impact on the local cultures in the Ivory Coast in particular. In effect, the colonial Ivory Coast was to be absorbed into the French cultural sphere and be led to adopt the language, the customs and the general attitudes of the metropolitan French. The Frenchman, A. Girault, put it this way in his *Principes de Colonisation et de Legislation Coloniales*, (1903): "The man whom we prevent from being first in his own country on account of its colonial status, must be offered in exchange the possibility of becoming first in ours. We must instil in those to whom we deny any local patriotism, the love of a common mother country, a cult of the Empire." (Quoted in Grimal 1965: 59).

The Ivorian natives, therefore, were subjected to the French language, culture and customs, so much so that no attempt was made to promote theirs, or at least to have a written form of their own languages. They "were lost by Africa for the benefit of France". (H. Deschamps in Grimal 1965: 61). Because it would require much effort on the part of France to preserve a written literature for each of the sixty local languages that the Ivory Coast offers, a colonial language was imposed on everyone.

The modern Ivorians are greatly influenced by European culture, sometimes to the extent of rejecting their traditional ones. Fortunately, with the rise in African Nationalism in general, a cultural revival is occurring in the Ivory Coast today. The present Ivorian government encourages debates on the feasibility of a national African language with a written form. It also provides

support to dance troupes, music groups, artists, writers, and museums for the promotion of the traditional heritage of the indigenous people.

## **2.2. The Ivory Coast today.**

Following its independence in August, 7 1960 which elected Felix Houphouet-Boigny as the first president of the Ivory Coast, the country operated with a one-party system of politics with the PDCI (Democratic Party of the Ivory Coast) as official party. Houphouet-Boigny installed himself in a virtual permanent power until 1993. Under his one-party regime that ruled the Ivory Coast during 33 years opposition parties were outlawed, and freedom of expression, whether oral or written did not exist. As long as economy prospered, Ivorians did not complain loudly about the lack of liberty. Indeed, in its twenty years of independence, the Ivory Coast had been one of the most successful economic development among African nations. Its key success was its agricultural development as well as its ability to attract heavy private investment in its industrial development. But due to mismanagement of public funds by Houphouet-Boigny's government officials, an economic crisis started to be felt in the early 1980's. In the late 80's the economic situation worsened. Coffee and cocoa prices, the two major cash crops of the country dropped, and a world recession followed. People voiced loud their interest in a multiparty parliamentary democracy. The social crisis reached its peak in 1990 when thousands of students went on strike and that civil servants joined in violent street protests. After months of instability, Houphouet-Boigny was forced to legitimize other political parties and allow independent newspapers to begin publishing. Elections were opened to other political parties for the first time. But in the presidential election of that year (1990) Houphouet-Boigny won his seventh mandate against Laurent Gbagbo, the president of the major opposition

party of the country. More democratic demands by the people will follow after the death of Houphouet-Boigny in office in 1993.

## **2.2. More democratic demands**

After Houphouet-Boigny's death in office in 1993, his hand-picked-successor Henri Konan Bedie, the former speaker of the National Assembly of the country, was to act as president till 1995. Houphouet's succession indeed brought about more complications in the political scene of the country. The coming into office of Henri Konan Bedie did not happen without frustration of Houphouet's prime minister Allassane Dramane Ouattara, an economist who was unknown to the Ivorians and whom Houphouet brought into picture in the political arena of the Ivory Coast only in 1991 from the International Monetary Funds. Allassane Ouattara was believed to be a citizen of the neighboring country, Burkina-faso, as he was serving at the IMF as a citizen of that country. The contention over the power between Bedie and Allassane brought bedie to initiate the concept of 'Ivoirite' ('Ivoriness'), which promotes the interest of the Ivorians citizens. Bedie government used an electoral code of 1994 to place a formidable obstacle in the path of his political rivals. But in 1995 election which was to maintain Bedie in office, the major opposition parties such the FPI (the Ivorian Popular Front) and the RDR (the Rally of Republicans) called for an active boycott the presidential election, citing irregularities in the electoral code, and voter registration. Eventually, negotiations between the government and the opposition parties led to an agreement on the revision of the electoral code and the revision of the voter registration. The boycott was lifted and nine opposition parties challenged the old party, the PDCI.

Bedie was known for his human rights abuses and his hostility toward the independent press. In June 1998, he introduced some constitutional reforms in which he extends the presidential mandate from five to seven years. He

also bestowed on himself the power to withhold the elections results in case there is unrest in the country. In addition to that, he gave himself the power to nominate one-third of the newly created senate. These constitutional reforms which clearly showed that Bedie was nurturing the secret desire to install himself in a permanent power like his predecessor Houphouet-Boigny brought about more social unrests in the country already tormented by a serious economic recession and political instability. Bedie will predictably not end his mandate and will be overthrown in a bloodless coup in December 1999 by an army General, Robert Guei. The following year, new democratic elections were held and Robert Guei lost the election. General Robert Guei also refused to leave office; a thundering angry mob of thousands of demonstrators poured over the presidential palace to dislodge him. Laurent Gbagbo, the candidate of the FPI who normally had won the election had now to take office.

### **2.3. Rebellion from the Northern part of the country**

In such a hostile atmosphere of deep social mutations in the Ivory Coast, one was indeed to expect the worse anytime any moment. The Ivorian crisis inevitably led to a bloody protest from the northern populations. Indeed, the north which is strongly of the Islamic faith had always believed that they were not treated equally as the mostly Christian south in the economic policies of the country. The great concentration of the infrastructures in the south was to the frustration of the northern populations. In addition, they saw in the policy of the 'Ivoriness' initiated by Konan Bedie in the early 1990's a policy that identifies them more with the upper northern Ivory Coast where they originated from. Using also the argument of the controversial citizenship of Allassane Ouattara the president of the RDR, a rebellion burst out by the northern populations backed in their attempt to overthrow Laurent Gbagbo's government by the neighboring country, Burkina-faso, the country

of origin of Allassane. In September, 19 2002 a series of assassinations perpetrated by rebels forces who came from the north of the country. A number of targeted government officials were killed during their attack, including the former president Robert Guei, and the Minister of Home Affairs, professor Boga Doudou. The rebel forces have occupied the north, and invested Bouake, the second largest city of the country and demand presidential power. After a series of talks between the Ivorian Government, the rebel forces, the neighboring countries such as Ghana, Mali, Senegal, and the intervention of France, peace was likely to return in the hitherto most peaceful and most powerful country of the West African region. In the interest of peace in the country, President Laurent Gbabo consented to form a government of national reconciliation and admitted some rebels in his government. As further talks were carried out by all the forces involved in the Ivorian crisis, a 'Commission Nationale de Desarmement, Demobilisation et Reinsertion' (CNDDR) , which is, a National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Rehabilitation was set up to start up the operation of disarmament of the rebel forces from the date of 8 March 2004.

### **3. The Gouro belief system and values**

When the first European missionary landed amongst the Gouro with the Judeo-Christian religion and questioned them about their origins, the answer from the elders was that **Bali** had sent them down to earth, i.e. that God had sent them down to earth. This answer was erroneously rendered by the translator as 'cord' had sent them down to earth. The reason for this error lies in the fact that **Bali** carries the dual meaning of 'God' and 'cord'. The ambiguity in this dual meaning rests on the Gouro belief that God is a linking cord that connects all beings of the universe. The Gouro conceive God as a supreme cosmic architect who created the universe and all its components, and put an interactional order between them. In such a universe, trees talk,

animals talk, rivers and rocks talk, and all listen to each other. Whether animate or inanimate, all of God's creations have a role to play in the harmony of life on earth. To the Gouro then, individuality is only relative in the view of God as the linking whole. The Gouro therefore, have an almost sacred regard for nature and its manifestations. The Gouro **Bali**, as a link between the constituents of nature, legitimates the actions performed by all beings and objects in the Gouro individual's learning process. And rightly, texts such as riddles, tales, proverbs, praises, songs in which the visible and invisible beings are animated are one of the token forms of the Gouro child's learning process. Through the characters in the tales, s/he would identify the actions of the social characters. S/he would learn to judge people according to their actions which he associates with the characters depicted in the tales. A social character can thus be said to be a '**Ji Clin kwanen**' - 'a clever fox' or else a '**bobo je Zro**', a silly gazelle'.

Traditional animist cults still continue to predominate, especially in villages. The Gouro animist belief system is expressed through worshipping of ancestors. Some families can establish a shrine at a tree, rock, water point, the foot of a hill or of a mountain, or else near other items of their environment as a sacred place for reaching their personal gods and forebears. The family shrine is an honoured place of meeting and expressing wishes; it is sacred. A family man would for example visit a soothsayer or an oracle on a regular basis to enquire about the will of his ancestors to be done, or else of other forces of nature he believes he is in an interactional relationship with. He would then perform offertory or *yoh ban*, which is 'feeding the hidden forces'. The Dead thus form an integral part of the living community. A person may be dead physically but s/he is spiritually present and influential. The Gouro believe in death as a passage from life to a spiritual world of the ancestors. The Dead are buried in the earth and remain related to the practices of the world. They are simply

categorised as belonging to the worlds of the beyond, out of a living person's eyes. \_

A caste of the Shamans and the Oracles who possess a special vision, can travel between both worlds during special dance ceremonies called **Daman** or **Be** and bring back messages from the ancestral world to the living world. Libation pouring is performed during such occasions as **Yoh Ban** to ask for the ancestors' assistance and blessing. In honour of the dead community and on behalf of its material representation, the Gouro people have the device of the **je**, a highly sacred dance which is only performed by the male initiates in secrecy. The **Je** mask is characteristically referred to as **An Tra**, meaning 'my ancestor' or else **yoh**, 'the hidden force'. Their coming out the sacred wood coincides with a cult of exorcism to keep the community away from evil deeds.

Besides their traditional animist cults to which the majority of the Gouro still strongly adhere, new religious sects introduced by the Christian saga during the contact with the West, and Islam are also present in the Gouro settlement. Christianity and Islam claim the adherence of a few people. Statistics covering Christian progress are confused by the rapid rise in popularity of several evangelical sects. The Roman Catholic Church was introduced as early as the first visitors in the area. They opened missionary schools in the colonial subdivisions and urban centres, such as Bouafle, Vavoua, Zuenoula, and have progressively carried out the Christian evangelism into very remote areas of the Gouro settlement. Today, churches can be found in small villages, attracting more and more adherents to the detriment of ancestral practices.

### 3.1. The Gouro dialects and their lifestyle

There are three distinct regional Gouro dialects. Though they can each be identified by some inflexional differences and by some characteristic

linguistic terms from one another, the dialects are mutually intelligible. Thus, the northern regional Gouro are alluded to as the **Loruben** or 'the stranger from the upper region'. The lower regional Gouro are referred to as the **Plohben** or 'the stranger of the forest region'. The mid regional Gouro constitute the **kwanen**, literally, 'the older', probably the initial Gouro settlement from which the two other groups split northwards and southwards. Although Gouro appears as an umbrella language to an outsider, the language thus has slightly different tonal inflections to its various speakers. This can result, at times, in a complete divorce in identifying certain realities in the respective dialects. For example, *blen* means 'lady' among the *kwanen*, while 'lady' is *nanen* among the *Plohben*. The *Loruben* say 'minini' to mean 'a lot' or 'much'; the *kwanen* say *e baba* and the *Plohben*, *kyele*. The one group says *lohu* and others *loru* for 'above'. The *Kwanen* and the *Loruben* identify themselves with a glide effect in the pronunciation where the *Plohben* use generally 'r'; mostly occurring between the sounds 'e' and 'i' (read 'ay' and 'ee'), this includes such words as 'night' which is *Behi* for the first two and *Beri* for the *Plohben*: 'to break' or *yehi/yeri*, 'buttocks' or *pehi/peri*, 'net' or *sehi/seri*, 'saliva' or *lehi/leri*, etc. Between the sounds 'o' and 'i', the *Plohben* use 'l' eg: 'goat' is *bohi* by the *kwanen* and *Loruben*, and *boli* by the *Plohben*. 'Cola nut' is *Gohi/Goli*, 'smoke' is *kyegohi/kyegoli*. Nevertheless, a great deal of dialectal differences in pronunciation is simply tonal. These differences are regarded by the Gouro themselves as a linguistic variety which is pleasant (if one group does not at times laugh at the others' ways). Each thinking that *Wo lele a nenen*, that 'the others' voice is sweet' to the ear. Since Gouro does not have a standard written form, one has to operate a provisional choice for the transcript; either to adopt one of the three dialects for a purpose of harmony, or to write a Gouro story with respect to the dialect in which it was initially told.

As identified, the **Loruben**, live partly in the savannah area with a dry vegetation, a climate which is propitious to crops such as yams, corn, cassava, vegetables, and peanuts for subsistence, and cotton for a cash crop.

The **Plohben** live in a humid, equatorial forest, southwards. The forest floor provides a rich soil for cultivation of commercial tree crops such as cocoa and coffee, the two major cash crops of the country, while rice, bananas, corn and vegetables are grown for subsistence.

The **kwanen** live in a transitional area, where there is a mixture of both vegetations: therefore, they cultivate the characteristic crops of the savannah and the forest. Agriculture provides a livelihood for the families, and locally grown subsistence crops meet a large part of their needs. The Gouro mostly live in traditional small villages. In general, a Gouro village has a weekly market which draws people from the most remote areas mingled with some urban traders. In such markets, livestock of various kinds as well as other merchandise that is inaccessible to the local community is also sold.

### 3.2. The Gouro onomastics and kinship

The way in which Gouro people name their children reflects their customs and values. The patrilineal system of the Gouro names the child after the father. When the offspring is a son, he is called his 'father's helping hand' or **be-ji**. **Irie-bi** means **Irie-be-ji**, or 'the helping hand of father **Irie**'. When it is a female child, she will be called **Lou**, meaning 'loss' or 'slave'. As such, **Irie-Lou** means 'the loss of father **Irie**'. The perception of loss anticipates the actual loss of a member of the family to another family through marriage.

The Gouro people also attached the dual meaning of 'slave' to **lou** because they believe that when a girl gets married her husband's family will exploit her as a 'slave'. She will spend the rest of lifetime working for her in-laws. Thus, **Zah-Bi** is 'in the hand of Zah, the father' or else 'the helping hand of father Zah'. **Zah-Lou** is 'the loss of father Zah' or else 'a slave from father Zah'.

The Gouro also say of a male character *Gon nen*, or 'young plant'. A male child comes as a *Gon nen* (*gonen in one word*), a 'young plant' that has germinated from his father's seed and that will grow up and substitute his father and ensure the lineage. *Gonen* perpetuates the fatherhood of a lineage. A female, a loss or *lou*, goes away one day from a patriarchal lineage when she gets married to other *Gon nen*. As such the Gouro male character who must show that he is strong enough to provide for his family. When a male person is a hard worker for example, the Gouro say *e ya e gonen yan*, meaning 'he is a man', that is, a strong man. . The Gouro say for that *Ti cle fe cle zan*, 'like father, like son'. He who does like his father is more like a father, and thereby he is a father. Thus the Gouro system of naming underpins a special interest of the Gouro concept of kinship groups and of their socio-economic values.

The Gouro people are passionate about the origin of social members and their family history. The naming pattern characteristically includes the genealogy of an individual. Everyone in the community has two or three credential names which can be distinguished as **Toh-wle<sub>1</sub>** or 'core name', **Toh-clan-Toh<sub>1</sub>** or 'praise name', and **Toh-man-je-toh<sub>1</sub>** or 'nickname'.

**Toh-wle** – the core name or the tangible name – is generally the name by which an individual is officially identified in the community. For instance, in **Zah-bi Boti**, or '**Boti**, son of **Zah**, **Boti** constitutes the **Toh-wle**. It is received at birth by homonymy from a member of the living or dead

community. Parents can also decide to name the offspring before a person of their choice, be it a living or dead relative or friend, or before some celebrity of the community, or else before an element of nature. The **Toh-Wle** is at times pronounced in association with generic names of the forebears, such as **Sery Zoro Tra-bi-Dou**, which means 'Sery who is father of Zoro who is the father of Tra who is the father of Dou'. In this case, the **Bi** is overshadowed in the preceding generations and is only featured in the last, witnessing, so to speak, the actual son's obligations towards his father in whose hand he falls. Such lengthy name-telling is used mostly in situations of introduction of an unknown person to others so that they can make the kinship connection if necessary, or else it is used in praises which, in feeding back ancestral names, reminds their glorious deeds and thus confer pride on their descendants. \_

The **Toh-Clan-Toh** is, on its own, a praise name which relates more to the origins of the clan membership of an individual. This is mostly a current utterance among the **Loruben** and the **kwanen** who, in response to a person's greetings or good actions, or sneezing, praise with his **Toh-Clan-Toh**. A person will for instance be praised as *Goli-bi* or son of the **Goli** (lion), *Guie-lou* or daughter of the **Guie**, etc. **Toh-Clan-Toh** is labelled as 'son of'/'daughter of' in short and does not mention the name of the person being praise, or not even the name of the immediate father but that of the 'clan' instead. Though the **Toh-Clan-Toh** can often coincide with the **Toh-Wle**, they remain the domain of the mystery of hidden kinship. This implies that until one belongs to the class of adults, one must keep silent her/his knowledge of the **Toh-Clan-Toh**, even though s/he knows it. Only adults can claim responsibility for such an address as they are believed to be wise enough to know the stories related to such naming patterns. People of the same **Toh-Clan-Toh** should not marry each other because they are believed to be the descendants of the same ancestors.\_

**Toh-Man-je-Toh** is a nickname. It is the most familiar and user-friendly of the names. Since **Toh-Wle** and the **Toh-man-je-Toh** deserve close consideration as they pertain to an individual's entity; nicknames are devised for common use. They often meet people's fancy or imagination. A person can adopt a name of an object with whose qualities he believes he best identifies. One can, for example, take on the name of **Mianen** (bird) because he proves swifter than the others at work: 'He flies at work', or **Cle cole** (pepper peel), when he thinks he is as hot and valiant as pepper. Nicknames are left to people's imaginations in general but nowadays the Gouro youngsters are adopting western names to the detriment of such nicknames which they find unappealing. Female nicknames still seem to prevail through a wide range of adoption. **Bwitah** (savannah), **Bova** (marriage), **Sowoli** (horse tail), **Sonoman** (Challenger), **Zinzi** (Beauty), **Gohi** (Silver), **Tchansen** (Golden blade) are examples of female nicknames.

Here are two examples of the three patterns involved in naming for male and female:

	<b>Ti toh</b>	<b>Toh-wle</b>	<b>Toh-clan-toh</b>
<b>Gender</b>	(Genitor's name)	(core name)	(praise name)
<b>Male</b>	<b>Gohi-Bi</b>	<b>Zah</b>	<b>Gie-Bi</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>Zan-Lou</b>	<b>Djian</b>	<b>Goli-Lou</b>

The names themselves are a reflection and expression of the universal interaction in which the Gouro are involved. It is not uncommon to hear individuals being called by the names of objects – animate or inanimate – of their immediate surroundings. This indeed is a belief system which is not exclusive to the Gouro, but which embraces all humankind. Like the Gouro

who name their members from objects of nature such as trees, animals, and other items for example: **Gowle** (Iroko tree), **Gweh** (Kapot tree), **Vih** (Elephant), **Dou** (Buffalo), **Bla** (Sheep), **Gole** (Rock), **Zoro** (Bee), etc., it is not unfamiliar to read of in French, *Mouton* (sheep), *Montaigne* (mountain), *le Rocher* (the Rock), in English, *Wren* (bird), in zulu, *Ndlovukulu* (big elephant), in Mohawk (a Canadian Indian tribe) *Gajjawaks* (the petals are falling from the heaven).

If human naming carries the mark of animate and inanimate objects of their respective environments, it is because humans are involved in an interactional whole which informs and forms them. The name that identifies a man or a woman is embedded in his or her environment to which s/he is strongly related.

### 3.3. The Gouro social organisation.

#### 3.3.1. Gouro settlement.

Apart from the few urban centres in the Gouro region, such as **Bouafle**, **Daloo**, **Oumé**, **Sinfra**, **Vavoua**, and **Zuenoula**, there are two main patterns of settlement in the Gouro regions, which are the village and the farm-side camp.

The traditional Gouro village is a relatively large agglomeration, divided into a number of separate residential units called **Guniwuo** which tend to coincide with kinship groups. Each unit lives on land which they cultivate. Land is thus a central factor in the economic and social organisation of the Gouro people. Most of the lands and rivers are registered in the names of individual freeholders. Thus, it is commonplace to find the lands, savannah, and even rivers, considered as a specific kinship property associated with the forebears of a **Guniwuo**. Such can be referred to, for example, as **Bah**

*le Bwii*, meaning the 'Savannah of Bah' or else *Sehizraploh*, meaning 'forest heritage of Sehi'. Similarly, a river can be named, as *Bah le yi*, meaning 'the water property of *Bah*'. A particular piece of land can also carry the name of an event or an action that it has witnessed in time, which is a way of perpetuating the memory of the event throughout time: *Golijeploh* would, for example, convey the meaning of a successful hunting of a lion, '*Goli*', in that particular area, or else *Golebwita* translates as 'the savannah of the hills'. In certain respects, ownership of land has enhanced the agricultural development in a Gouro settlement. \_

The other pattern, the farm-side camp, is a temporary camp settlement that is set up by individual families on their farms to save daily labour of land cultivation. *Yii fei* or 'to sleep on farms' occasions a break away from the village residence to live on the farms. This does not imply a rejection by the original community and the people who live on farms still stay related to their ancestral roots, the village community.

### 3.3.2. Farming activities

The Gouro people are essentially farmers. More often, they build temporary structures to live in during periods of intense farming activity, such as those of the *Sa Voh blei*, 'rice-sowing time', or the *Yah je blei*, 'yam-sowing time'. They thus mobilise family members on their land until these crops are harvested. Other activities, such as reaping the coffee and cocoa crops, are also very demanding and can cause farmers to move away from the village community temporarily. They can only be seen in the village on market days or during communal gatherings such as during the performance of *je*, 'the sacred dance', or funerals, palavers and other events of community life which demand the participation of each individual.

Success in cocoa and coffee crops is very much desired among the Gouro. A farmer usually cultivates and harvests his crops himself, assisted by his family. If he is unable to do so, he hires wage-labourers or occasional harvesters under the '**Pour-cent**' system (a percentage system). The ***pour-cent*** system is a reward-based system. In this system, a commission is earned by an employee over an agreed percentage of the product of her/his harvest. The employee is paid a token amount of the product of her/his harvest by the farmer who hires her/him.

The demands of farm work usually compel a farmer to marry more than one wife and breed many children whom he considers as potential helping hands. The Gouro man is essentially a polygamist to whom a considerable number of housewives and children constitute an invaluable labour force in land cultivation and thus contribute positively to his social standing.

### **3.3.3. Power hierarchy and social order**

The broad-based form of power hierarchy among the Gouro is the Chiefdom. In this system, the power of disciplinary authority is conferred on a consensually chosen individual whose duties, limited to the confines of his village community, are to preside over the palavers, to organise and coordinate the social and political activities, and to successfully run ceremonies and the practices of ancestral cults. He holds the judiciary power and he regulates the actions of the community: He is the head of the village. All important social issues, such as conflict resolutions, land affairs, marriage-related problems are brought to the head's attention.

The Gouro choose a chief with care. The criteria for the selection of a Gouro chief are largely based on individual merit and achievements, not by inheritance as witnessed in the monarchy. A chief is mostly a dignitary of the community who is consensually chosen by the elders, depending on his

maturity, experience in life, wisdom and his good parlance. He is listened to and respected by the others. He is assisted by a committee of elders, who are representatives of various kinship units of the community. Though the chief may hold the political and judiciary powers, however, he does not decide on all matters. Decisions are always the outcome of consultations with the council of elders and with the representatives of kinships. All is acted upon by consensus.

#### **3.3.4. Tribal affiliation and governance**

A village community more often falls under a much larger unit, a tribe, whose definition can be categorised according to three aspects of affiliation. The first coincides with a group of people who claim descent from common ancestors. Thus generations of settled occupations can result in ownership of a given geographical distribution.

The second aspect of tribal affiliation can be defined in terms of the various migratory processes of people of different kinship backgrounds. These people – called tribesmen – may have come to an agreement of joining forces with the closest neighbours to defend the same geographical distribution and their members against the invaders. They thus settle on a traditional homeland which they have defended by wars with other neighbours.

These first two aspects of tribal affiliation were traditionally marked with political and social co-operation regarding wars against others in order to preserve the common interest. Some example of tribes are: ***Gola, Tohon, Yamanou, Bonon, Gonan, Kouhon, Luenon, Mangoro.***

The third and last aspect is the one inherited from the Colonial Administration Policy, which, for the sake of political and economic control,

gathered a number of disparate settlements under the tribe. This had, at times, been done by the Colonial Administrators without familiarising themselves sufficiently with the reality of kinship, in such a way that the same descendants were split and henceforth, fell under different 'colonial tribes'. In this colonial structure, a headman or 'chef de tribu' was nominated by the colonial administration to co-ordinate the political and social economic activities at the tribal level. He would then have some ministers in each of the villages that the tribe counts.

Many so-called tribes are now assigned to different modern divisions, subdivisions, and districts, under the control of a junior administrator or a Sous-Prefet. Since the independence of the Ivory Coast in 1960, the old colonial subdivisions of the country made way to regions, *departements* and *Sous-Prefectures* (subprefectures) as in France. The country is administered through 58 departments disseminated through 19 regions. Each department is headed by a Prefet who has extensive departmental powers and the help of his Sub-Prefets. The postcolonial administration has established in the Gouro area up today six departments (with a Sub-Prefecture each) which are: Bouafle, Daloa, Oume, Sinfra, Vavoua, and Zuenoula, and 10 Sub-Prefectures which are: Bazre, Bonon, Bediala, Dania, Diegonefla, Gohitafla, Konefla, Kouetinfla, Seitifla, Zagoreta.

Although there is still a strong consciousness among each Gouro community of their tribal affiliations or of their history, segmented villages today cooperate more at an internal level. Tribes may draw great pride from their glorious ancestral accomplishments, such as wars in living songs, praises and narratives, but activities nowadays are more village-centric. It is not common to note a serious competition within the confines of a tribal unit, each village trying to promote its more modern structures. Cooperation between members of a village, however, still prevails, though certain customs are fast fading away. Members of a lineage, for example, co-

operate at a variety of levels: they help each other in agricultural activities and in livestock support. Even the evening meal is still widely shared among members of a family who eat by affinity: **Gonenmou fe** or 'men's meal' gathered in the courtyard of the eldest person of a family, various relatives bring the meal from their homesteads and share it. Unmarried women would also gather at their eldest sister's or aunt's place to eat, as would the children. This can be viewed as a kind of family communion which strengthens the family bonds. In the case of disputes, members of a lineage attempt a private solution in order to prevent conflicts becoming public knowledge. Disputes with other members of the community are brought to resolution by the head of the village. The elders seek above all to mediate in all disputes so that the earth may never be filled by blood spilling.

### **3.4. Dances**

The Gouro dance repertoire from the sacred to the secular is astoundingly rich. It ranges from the *Lo, jin, je*, the sacred ones, to the *Zaouli, Flali, Gumo sery, Filu, Gahou*, for entertainment. The sacred dances are performed to exorcise the community and keep the village clean from evil. The sacred performances are an exclusive domain of male initiates. When the masks that portray the ancestral spirits are to come out of the sacred wood, women withdraw from the village. It is believed that the ancestral spirits are too strong to be seen by females who are weak. But women are admitted to the performance of the other dances of entertainment.

### **3.5. Funerals**

Death is very shocking for the Gouro and they have a way of their own of overcoming the shock of the news. They mourn a lot for their dead, sometimes in very painful ways. When a relative dies for example, they do not first mourn in a standing position. They throw themselves against the

ground, sometimes harshly against a wall, to relieve themselves from the shock of the event. The harsher a bereaved person throws her/his body against the earth, the better s/he demonstrates her/his love for the deceased. The deceased will be missed as s/he is leaving the living community for ever. Some people, mostly females, go to the extremes by burning parts of their bodies with fire to relieve their senses.

Nevertheless, funerals are simultaneously dearly celebrated amongst the Gouro. Funeral celebrations keep with the Gouro belief that life does not stop in this world, but carries on in the other realm, the beyond. To the Gouro, a person who dies is joining the ancestral world. As such, a deceased's departure to the ancestral world must be celebrated, almost like a farewell party to wish her/him a good bye. At first, the deceased is buried with some money to allow her/him to buy water during her/his journey to the beyond. The Gouro say **e yi loh a yan zia**, or 'to buy some water on her/his way'. Then, during her/his funeral celebration, the type of entertainments s/he used to like are performed in memorium. Dances, wrestling, storytelling, etc. may be performed. Funerals not only involve the above mentioned dances, but also other dance items such as *Tenglen*, *wuli*, *Zoa*, which are the lament dances. The funerals are a major occasion of communal gathering for the Gouro. Members of remote areas and villages get together to pay their last respects to the deceased. During funerals wealth is demonstrated. The people attending the funerals socialise, and are kept entertained. A successful funeral is the one that sees a large gathering, where food and drinks are offered, and dances performed to people's satisfaction

### **3.6. Marriage**

Marriage among the Gouro constitutes an occasion of wealth demonstration. The Gouro have the system of dowry, which is a demonstration of one's

manhood, capacity, prestige, and responsibility. In the Gouro tradition, a man who aspires to marry a girl must always demonstrate his sense of responsibility and his strength by cultivating his father-in-law's farm to show them that he is strong enough to feed a family of his own, and that their daughter is not falling into lazy hands. A father always makes sure that his daughter is not going in another family to suffer. When a conclusive arrangement is made through talks and negotiations between the elderly people of the two families-in-law a token amount of goods is paid the father of the groom. A rate may be fixed by the father of the bride to be paid. The payment of a requested amount is a means to sooth the pains that the departure of a daughter provokes. Nowadays money has replaced the traditional colanuts that is symbolically used in marriages. Marriage among the Gouro is so selective that a family man can refuse to marry his son or his daughter to a member of another family if it is going to reflect negatively on his family's prestige. Marriage is a quest for prestige and therefore family background plays an important role in the choice of a marriage partner. Too often, the family genealogy comprehensively calls off a union between partners if the partners are related by blood. Kinship among the Gouro is very important for the preservation of social harmony. Therefore, elders always pay special attention to incestuous relationships by establishing the genealogies of both partners, and thus making sure that a union does not occur within the same kinship. The Gouro do not recommend incestuous unions. According to them, such unions soil the blood and are liable to have disastrous consequences on the persons involved. Very often too, though the youngsters may not love each other enough to be committed to one another, their marital lot is largely influenced by the intervention of family elders. The family influence thus brings about forced marriages in some cases. When there is a mutual love between two partners who do not have the support of the girl's family, the girl can consent to be abducted from her family and be taken in the custody of some relatives of her lover, which is a

way of forcing the hand of the girl's family. This brings the respective families of the lovers to settle the matter and eventually arrange their union. But forced marriages are fast disappearing, and marriages are more and more the outcome of love and mutual decision by wooers. Marriages today are more and more celebrated according to the Western values, in churches and through legal procedures to the detriment of the traditional methods.

#### **4. *Wi Fi* and *Wi Bli*, or the manducation of the word.**

Social issues amongst the Gouro, such as marriage, conflict resolution, land affairs, etc. are mostly discussed in palavers. Such occasions see a general gathering in the Chief's courtyard. It is a forum for the demonstration of wisdom and of one's understanding of the world.

Any matter affecting the community is announced by the village griot (crier), who invites everyone to take part in the resolution. Such an announcement is done on the evening prior to the event, when everyone is resting after the daily labour on the farms. Youngsters are free to participate and to observe the judgement process. Palavers are highly meditative occasions for learning by everyone as proverbs, riddles, praises and public speaking are engaged in. Such gatherings are characteristically referred to as ***Wi fi*** and ***Wi bli***, meaning 'vomiting' and 'eating' the sound (if not the word). It is eating (***bli***) through hearing the sounds/words (***wi***) that are uttered (or that are 'vomited', ***fe***) from the participants' mouths. In his *Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm* (1997, 2000), the French anthropologist Marcel Jousse calls this way of learning through speaking 'the manducation of the lesson' from master speakers, the wise people. This is a way which is so characteristic to oral cultures in general. Amongst the Gouro in particular, a palaver involves an open debate whereby any substantial comment is appreciated, the outcome of which is adopted by consensus, as all participants have fully contributed to the establishment of the common truth. This form of

traditional democracy formulaically lives in a popular saying as ***Wuo do ca wi doa lo***, meaning that 'Two heads are better than one', or else ***fon le wa ble mi ji. Wo ca wi ble mi ji lo***, meaning that 'food may be eaten without inviting a peer to join in eating, not the sound (word)'. This simply translates that speaking and sharing ideas are important social values in the Gouro people's life. This also shows that dictatorship and monarchy were not part of the traditional Gouro worldview. Palavers are mostly conducted by elderly people who are believed to be wise enough to defend the interests of the community, and they are presided over by the chief.

Wisdom amongst the Gouro stands from one's capacity of understanding the world and its components. Nature is used rhetorically and symbolically to understand man's role in life. As the Gouro person's own life intersects vitally with the order established by *Bali*, his major mediums of learning which are proverbs, riddles, fables, parables, songs, praises, are conceived in the names of the elements other than himself, and that form the subject matter of his understanding. The better he interprets his relationship with them, the wiser he becomes, and the more beneficial becomes his life in terms of his mission on earth.

Wisdom according to the Gouro is thus characterised by indirect and proverbial forms of speech: metaphors are used, animals are alluded to, parables and often short tales are told to stir a guilty conscience. A person is not addressed directly but indirectly through allegorical characters. This form of speaking art has a dual function: the first being to make an author of an act distance himself from her/his own action in order to judge himself. The use of metaphoric characters thus invites her/him to view her/his own actions through the mirror of other beings with impartial eyes. He is made a judge of his own action. The second reason being that through discussion in the world of metaphor, a flame on a deadly issue is eased and cooled off with sensible words. More often, a word to reach an addressee follows a process whereby it is chewed upon from mouth to mouth, thus freed of all

impurities and ready to be accepted. That is why to hold a palaver, a talk or any discussion, the Gouro say **Wi bli** or **Wi fi**, where a sound or word is vomited and chewed upon by various speakers. When a word is **Fi** or 'vomited' or else said, it is passed around and **bli** or 'chewed' by all. In such a form of formal discourse, adults are favoured. They are considered to be the chief guardians of traditional stories, repositories of the social norms and therefore experienced and wise. In this respect, the Gouro has almost a sacred regard for age. People older than others are said **Zile zan**, meaning 'He-who-is-ahead-of-the-road'. Younger people are said to be **Zizio zan** or 'he-who-is-in-the-rear-of-the-road'. Obviously, this translates into the amount of experience that the one ahead of the road has gone through and therefore is believed to have learnt a lot in life. Elders deserve respect and have the right to guide the back runners. The Gouro present life as a long journey during which one is expected to gain experiences and to impart them to the younger generations who must be guided on the way of the good word or **Wi zinzi zia**.

The Gouro view speech as one of the key factors of wisdom and of understanding the world. It is impossible to give a picture of the notions of wisdom, knowledge and understanding, without reference to the term **Wi**. A quick look at some of the Gouro words built upon this root will help to give some idea of the range of applications of this basic term.

**Wi doh** means 'knowing the word'. Someone is believed to be knowledgeable and wise when 'he knows the word', **e Wi doh**, and also when 'he can vomit the word', **e Wi Fe**, the idea being that a word that is said is 'ex-pressed' through the mouth and therefore is presented as 'vomiting the sounds'. **Wi bli** means 'to eat the sound/word: that is, when the word is said (**Fi**) and chewed upon (**bli**) by participants in comments. **Wi doh ki** or 'being knowledgeable and wise' becomes thus a desired attribute

of anyone with authority over others. Formal speaking covers not only speaking between children, households, wives, and subjects but also involves the whole host of speaking the history of the community, the praises, interchanges of formal occasions such as funerals, land issues, conflicts, marriage, etc. Speaking and good reasoning are thus the finest hallmarks of the establishment of the truth which is a shared reality. As such, anyone able to reason logically is welcome to contribute constructively to a formal talk gathering, aiming at establishing the general truth. The Gouro sense of the social order is thus founded in consensus.

The Gouro are self-conscious about their language. Comments on linguistic matters as a whole, and especially comparisons between varying dialectal terms are a constant topic of interesting conversations; each dialect believing they have the right expression. How, for example, to mean 'I say', the *Loruben* say *maan* or *mahn ble maan*, the *kwanen* say *an ble naan'*, and the *Plohben, m'lan*. Very often, a dialect speaker is jokingly identified by the others with expressions that are typical to their way of speaking. The *Loruben* are often referred to as *Boh chani nu*, that is, 'The people who say *boh chani'* instead of *boh yisi* to mean 'Thanks for what you did yesterday'. Sometimes the same word exists in the respective dialects but has different meanings in an utterance. Such is the example of '*e ya nen?*' which means, among the *Plohben*, 'where is he/she/it?', but 'He/she/it is ugly' among the *kwanen* and the *Loruben*. There are so many other interchangeable meanings that it would be tedious to list them all. In any event, it proves less important here to mention such differences as crucial distinction between these dialects since they all remain mutually intelligible. A different dialect speaker may sometimes joke about the other dialects by imitating or parodying their speakers' inflexions. Different dialects speakers take great delight in words or phrases they consider particularly funny, with the idea that the others speak *e banenman* or 'upside down'. In general,

speakers of different dialects find the way others speak pleasing. They find that the other dialects are sweet to their ears. As such, there is a total acceptance and love for other dialects. But for a practical study of the Gouro language *per se* in writing by an outsider, the different Gouro dialectal inflexions make it difficult to accommodate a transcription. That is why in this study it will be necessary to subdue its transcription to a certain device whereby the language effects can be distinctly pronounced. It is important to say once again that the Gouro language is highly tonal, therefore the Gouro do not think of words as primarily fixed in written forms, but are free to concentrate on the significance of sounds in speech contexts.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 1. Theoretical framework.

This chapter provides an interpretative frame of reference based on the Mnemonic Laws, the Mnemo-technical Devices and the Mnemonic Oral-Style as argued by the French anthropologist Marcel Jousse in *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm* (1997, 2000). These principles of human expression, which are significantly observed operating in Oral Style traditions demonstrate the extent to which, without writing, a story can be recorded in human memory, recalled, and passed down over generations reliably and accurately.

#### 1.1. Marcel Jousse and *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm*

The French anthropologist, psychologist, ethnologist, and educationist Marcel Jousse (1886 –1971) was born in an oral milieu in Beaumont-sur-Sarthe (France). He dedicated his life to the understanding of the oral-literate interface, and is responsible for many valuable insights pertaining to human expression in a variety of ways and for a variety of functions. In his early publication, *The Oral Style* in 1925, Jousse maintains that in Oral Traditions there are mnemotechnically supportive modes of expression for the recording of the 'socio-cultural archive'. Jousse sees that the privileged mode of recording and transmitting information in oral milieux is intrinsically gestual-visual and oral-aural, and posits that the process of learning and learning language are indivisible: it is psycho-physiological, an idea which lays down the foundation to his *The Anthropology of geste and Rhythm* (1997,2000).

In *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm*, Jousse demonstrates that the psycho-physiology of human expression is a tri-phasic proposition of 'An Acting One - Acting on – an Acted upon' (Jousse 1997: 116). He explained that, "the essential element of the cosmos is an *Action* which acts on another *Action*." (Ibid). In other words, Jousse sees the cosmos as a set of interactions between the elements that compose the cosmos. The elements that compose the cosmos are so involved in constant and dynamic actions of the ones over the others that, one element's action comes as the result of the other's. Since the interplay of actions is indefinite, the cosmos becomes an '*Imbrication*' of interactions which man '*intussuscepts*' or interiorises. In other words, the cosmos becomes a complexus of interactions between *Acting one* which is a cluster of energy, and an *Acted upon* which too is another cluster of energy which 'vitalises' man. As such, Jousse sees that the tri-phasicism creates an interaction pattern which takes place through 'physical play or sonorous play', thus viewed as a cyclical process, constant, dynamic and energetic in space and time. Jousse presented this mechanism in an undulating nature, or *rhythmic* phases as follows:

An Acting One	acting on	an Acted upon
(Jousse 1997: 116)		

Jousse maintains that "the essence of the whole, viewed objectively from the exterior is energy. This energy is neither diffused nor static, but primordially and dynamically crystallised into universal and cosmological interactions." (Jousse: 116). According to Jousse then, what is essentially at the origin of any action is dynamic 'energy'. Thus, he called *Geste* that living energy which vitalises the global whole, and sees 'Tri-phasicism' as the first essential law of cosmological energy which operates at all levels.

## 1.2. Jousse's concept of human expression

With regard to the mechanism of human expression Jousse then says that man, the anthropos, is placed at the heart of all the interactions of the universe which act or play upon him by the Tri-phasic law. As such, man 'receives' or 'registers' all the actions within his entire body: he 'intussuscepts' them. Jousse maintains that consequently, "the anthropos is nothing more, essentially, than a complexus of gestes" (1997: 14). Man is thus the reverberation or the mirror of what he calls the 'objective reality' of his universe. What mirrors in man is the 'objectively real' interactions of man's universe. Jousse says in substance that "the Anthropos *objectively assured* of this essential and interactional order"(1997: 117) from the universe, and he knows them by intussuscepting them. Man's, the subject of expression is therefore objective and real so much so that Jousse perceives that all 'subjectivity is objectivity'.

According to Jousse, because "Tri-phasicism is fundamentally the unconscious play of cosmological interactions" (1997:115), the memory of man who is the echo of the cosmos will be formed by the accumulation of conscious and unconscious 'intussusceptions' of microscopic and macroscopic actions of his universe. The anthropos is thus 'i(n)m-pressed by the cosmological order, which is '*... an order ignorant of, and in spite of, itself.*'" (1997: 118). Jousse demonstrates that the 'ex-pression' in the form of language also takes on the tri-phasic modes of 1) corporeal-manual expression (which involves dance, gesture, movement), 2) the laryngo-buccal expression (sound, speech, song), and 3) mimographic expression (drawing, sculpting, writing).

Jousse perceives that expression corresponds with the Laws of Celestial and Human Mechanics: 'as in Heaven so on Earth', the one being a mirror reflection of the other. Indeed, in the light of the mechanism of 'i(n)m-

pression' and 'ex-pression' of the actions of the universe by man who becomes the echo and mirror of the interactional realities of his environment, Jousse maintains that miming is the first expression, the first language of human being. What man is miming or 'ex-pressing' is what his universe 'impresses' upon him. Man's action being thus the result of the reverberation of the universe on man is said by Jousse to be 'mimismological', or else imitative of what the universe essentially played upon man.

Jousse's *Anthropology of Geste* is then a dynamic anthropology as opposed to what he terms 'static anthropology', which concentrates too exclusively on human fossils to explain man's actions in time and space. According to Jousse, "in essence, the anthropos is not a completed skeleton but an infinite complexus of gestes." (1997: 119). Geste being the living action which makes man, Anthropology would gain more by focusing significantly on man's actions rather than on his skeleton which intrinsically tells nothing about his action. Jousse indeed believes that "Fifty meters of film, recording the very first human gestes in distant millennia, would teach us more about the origins of man than the most meticulous analysis of skull and femurs." (Jousse 1997:119). Jousse calls his study "the Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm insofar as man intussuscepts the cosmological interactions and reverberates them in anthropological interactions." (Jousse 1997: 118).

### **1.3. Jousse's mode expression**

Marcel Jousse identified two major categories of human expression: the 'immediate' category which operates through the use of body and hands, and the 'mediated' category which operates through the use of 'extra-biological tools' such as pen and paper in writing or else wood and chisels for sculpting. Thus, Jousse sees three modes of human expression pertaining to these two categories: the corporeal-manual, and the laryngo-

buccal, which are the immediate modes, and the mimographic or the algebrised, which is the mediated mode.

**i. What is the corporeal-manual mode of expression?**

The corporeal-manual mode of expression is the expression of man's emotion through the movement of the body and hands. According to Jousse, the corporeal-manual form of expression is the 'primordial' mode of all the modes of human expression. It precedes all other modes and lies beyond the ethnic confines of language *per se*; it is anthropological. Jousse maintains that this mode is immediate and spontaneous since it engages the physical expression of man's inner realities. Jousse also calls this mode 'mimage' because it conceptualises man's environment through its imitation. The 'corporeal-manualage' reflects the actions of man's universe that have registered their 'propositional gestes' in man, the 'propositional geste' being a universal action which constitutes a unit of meaning. Jousse maintains that the corporeal-manual mode is gestual and visual, meaning that to be understood it needs to be seen in physical performance. Because of that, it is a mode which has its limitations. For example, a person carrying something in her/his hands would not be able to put across effectively a message manually unless he frees his hands to do so; or else a person expressing her/himself corporeal-manually could not be seen in the darkness or behind a physical barrier.

**1.3.2. What is the laryngo-buccal mode of expression?**

Jousse identified the laryngo-buccal mode as the second immediate mode of human expression. He understands that this mode is the sonorous counterpart of the corporeal-manual mode. According to Jousse, because of the limitations of the corporeal-manualage (occupied hands or darkness or

else physical barrier that could prevent from seeing the conveyor of a message), the *geste* gets localised onto the larynx and its muscles. Jousse maintains that 'corporeage' and language are two mediums of expression which can never be completely independent from one another. The laryngo buccal mode is aural and oral since it implies speaking (by the conveyor of a message) and hearing (by the one the message is conveyed to). This mode forms the basis of language, which limits the anthropological 'corporeage' to the confines of ethnic realities. As such, Jousse remarks, "The all-powerful corporeal *geste* becomes simply an aid to the oral *geste*. And this aid, now useful although not indispensable, is progressively neglected and tends to disappear almost completely." (2000: 89)

### **1.3.3. What is the mimographic mode of expression?**

Jousse perceives writing as a mediated form of human expression as opposed to the immediate forms such as the corporeal-manual and the laryngo-buccal. According to Jousse, all fixed modes of expression (writing, drawing, painting, sculpting, etc.) reduce the natural human expression. In Joan Conolly's words, " Jousse perceived that the process of mediation – in whatever mode- reduced the total expression to a shadow of its 'immediate' capacity, and therefore termed such expression '**algebrised**', from the Arabic term /aljabr/= "that which summarises", which implies reduction. (Conolly 2000: 10). Writing the Gouro tales down thus means 'algebrising' them. This means reducing the dynamic and live Gouro performance to inert and dead texts.

## **1.4. The Mnemonic Laws**

Jousse demonstrates that if man's actions are the 'mimismological' re-play of the interactions of the universe, then man's memory is the direct consequence of impression and the source of expression.

Jousse then identified the nature of memory support under four major characteristic laws or principles which forms the psycho-physiological Laws of human expression: they are Mimism, Rhythmism, Bilateralism, and Formulism. He maintains that these laws are Psycho-physiological in that any psychological (intellectual, emotion or spiritual) experience will have a physical (physiological) response, and vice versa.

#### **1.4.1. The Law of Mimism**

The cosmos thus presents itself to the rhythmo-miming Anthropos as an immensely intricate interlacing of unconscious and rhythmically tri-phasal interactional gestes which he, the Anthropos, will be able to receive, to re-play, and to *sequence* consciously. (Jousse 1997:118)

The law of Mimism, as Jousse maintains, is the first Law of human expression. It is expressed in both immediate and mediated forms, whether corporeal-manual, laryngo-buccal, or mimographic modes of expression. Jousse perceives that this law of human's expression is established in keeping with man's ability of re-playing things that surround him. As part of the interactional whole of the universe, man is caught up in the cyclical tri-phasic order. He is acted upon by the actions of the universe, which actions he re-plays by acting on other actions. Jousse sees that

to spontaneous man who is the echo and mirror of the reality that surround him, each being is seen and mimed as an action, as a geste which belongs to that reality, which is in essence the reality itself. This essential, characteristic geste becomes, as it were, the Name of the being, regardless of whether the being is living or inanimate. (1997: 121).

The law of Mimism translates the perception that the individual processes what goes in and makes sense of it. This means that each person will make

a different sense of what is available in the universe depending on what he has experienced before. When man is *in-pressed* or acted upon by the actions around him, his *ex-expression* or acting becomes nothing more than the re-play of the *in-pressed* actions. The Law of mimism can be significantly observed in the child. Within the first months of a child's life, a large variety of animate and inanimate beings impress their characteristic *geste* or action in him. And s/he will quickly identify the being by the gesture or by the sound that it emits. For example, before the child conforms to the socialised terms of language, s/he will identify the dog as /oua-oua/ or /bow-bow/, the cow as /moo/, the rooster as /coco/, and so on. The characteristic sound that identifies an object is what Jousse terms phono-mimism. In other words, phono-mimism is the sonorous imitation of things, as a parallel to the corporeal-manualage, which is the physical imitation of things by man. Onomatopoeic expressions, which are very present as a natural language characteristics in most ethnic milieux, are very good examples of phono-mimism. The Gouro people's concept of **wi fe** (to vomit the sound) for instance, does not exclude the phono-mimistic nature of the spoken sound that is its own referent and its own ultimate 'real-lisation'. While phonomimism is the sonorous imitation of an object, Jousse calls the imitation of the movement 'Cinemimism'. In other words, "in Mimism, the cinemimical *geste* can, so to speak 'be detached' from the object itself and 'be re-played all-by-itself' (1997: 78). Jousse exemplified the tri-phasic play in the child's spontaneous and continuous re-playing. He says in substance that

....The young anthropos becomes , as it were, all things, and he does this prior to socially mediated language. He **is** the cat catching the mouse. He **is** the rider whipping his horse. He **is** the engine pulling the wagons. He **is** the aeroplane crossing the skies. He is always: an Acting One – acting on – an Acted upon. He will play his universe with everything he has within him. He will play his universe with external agents. Most remarkably of all, he will play at everything- creating, as it were, out of nothing. What does it matter to him! He has

everything he needs within him, since he has within him the mememes of everything. (jousse 1997: 122)

Mimism can further be exemplified in human expression as evidence of metaphor, analogy, symbol, or onomatopoeia. These language features (which are explained further down) are essentially expressive mirrors of the realities of man's environment that man represents in speech: they are the expressed imitations of these realities. The law of Mimism interacts with other mnemonic principles and therefore expresses itself in balanced rhythmic formulas.

#### **1.4.2. The Law of Rhythmism**

Jousse understands that rhythm is the drive of the 'energy' that translates into 'Action' in the cosmos, and which gives life. Jousse perceives rhythm in everything. He says in substance that, "No activity of matter can escape rhythm" (Jousse 1990: 14 in conolly 2000: 306). Driving the vital energy that generates life forms, rhythm according to Jousse, is biological to life. Jousse also understands that rhythm operates sensibly and logically because the cosmos itself is not a chaos, but is set to establish an order. As Conolly argues, "For Jousse, the logic of rhythm is the logic of meaning/sense – intellectual, emotional and spiritual – and of its physical expression. Without rhythm, there is no order/logic, and without order/logic there can be no meaning/sense, and therefore the expression thereof would be 'non-sense' ". (conolly 2000: 304). As such, the undulating pattern established in the tri-phasic interactions translates the rhythmic vibration with which order and logic is meaningfully expressed in the action of 'an Acting one acting on an Acted upon'. Jousse then demonstrates that because the tri-phasic mechanics which plays man operates through rhythmic vibrations and energises man, whether consciously or unconsciously, the anthropos who registers the rhythmic actions will 're-play' the registered actions rhythmically. Jousse explains by this the reason why

rhythm is a biological characteristic of man whose heartbeat, breathing, balancing of hands, footsteps, and actions observe rhythmic patterns. As a result, the rhythm of man's expression becomes viscerally embedded with the rhythms of his body functions, and then the whole body remembers. The miming action of man is then propelled rhythmically, dynamically, logically and sequentially since rhythm creates logic and order and contributes to the making of meaning and sense.

In the process of human expression, Jousse identifies two different rhythmic functions: "Rhythmo-explosism" (1997: 197), and "Rhythmo-vocalism" (1997: 206). According to Jousse, both functions are evidenced in four rhythmic categories which are the rhythms of Duration, of Intensity, of Pitch, and of Timbre.

~ **Rhythmo-explosism:** Jousse sees that "the anthropos is a 'condenser of energy', of living and intelligent energy" (1997: 197). During man's expression then, there will be an energetic explosion of the re-play of the actions that man receives from his universe. This first function of 'Rhythmo-explosism' in human expression provides the rhythm of Intensity and the rhythm of Duration. Jousse maintains the rhythm of Intensity is an essential rhythm which is imposed on man. "Global mimism cannot escape this essential and inevitable rhythm, this 'rhythm of intensity'" (Jousse 1997: 198) which develops over time, creating a second rhythm, that of Duration which is temporal. Jousse maintains that "Globally, rhythm is primarily expressed in intensity, and secondarily in duration: the greater the explosion, the longer its duration, except when there is a quick jolt"(Ibid).

~ **Rhythmo-vocalism:** Jousse sees that the rhythm-vocalism is associated with the laryngo-buccal mode of expression. He says that, "This laryngo-buccal geste, unlike the corporeal-manual geste, is not a silent mechanism. It utters sounds, or better still, sonorous mimemes at indefinitely varying pitches." (Jousse 1997: 206). He argued that these sonorous mimemes

there add new characteristics to the laryngo-buccal mechanism: *timbre* and *pitch*, in other words, 'Rhythmo-vocalism' provides the rhythm of 'Pitch' which determines the rhythm modulation of inflection, and the rhythm of 'Timbre' which determines the variation in vocal colour. As Joan Conolly argued,

All the rhythms are interpenetrating and work simultaneously having different effects on the proposition spoken, which creates a seamless whole which constitutes the full meaning of the expression. It is these subtly nuanced holistic effects which are so very difficult to represent with any degree of accuracy and validity in two dimensions in writing on the page. (Conolly 2000: 163)

### **1.4.3. The Law of Bilateralism**

Based on the observation he made of the human bilateral construct, Jousse identified the balanced pattern of the process of human expression. Indeed, Jousse noticed that the prepositional geste of man's expression- which is a unit of composition and performance- follow his asymmetrical structure. Jousse understood that "physiologically speaking, there is a 'right man' and a 'left man'..... I should also add that, in the Anthropology of Geste, there is a 'front man' and a 'back man'." (1997: 243). He thus focused on the bilateral construct of the human whole and perceived that, because the anthropos lives in a universe which is the laboratory of all his interactional experiences and which is not a chaos but a dynamic organised set, his chief concern remains the 'balancing' of the experiences he has accumulated in him. The organisational pattern of which experiences takes place according to the 'bilateral' nature of his body. In a physical performance of his prepositional gestes then, man's actions observe his 'left and right', the 'top and down', 'his back and his front'. In writing Jousse also provides evidence of the bilateralised nature of human expression in parallel propositions in rhythmic schema.

Jousse's observation of the 'oral style tradition' of the Palestinian ethnic milieu, for example, features the double bilateralism between the geste of balancing the *yoke* and the geste of carrying the *burden*. Jousse provides many instances of balanced propositions and argues that "the general wording of the law of universal gravitation, or better, of the law of universal theo-mimismological gesticulation, assumes the bilateralism of this comparative structure: (1997: 257)

As in the heaven

Thus on the earth

In other words, the law of Bilateralism governs the binary complementarity in terms of which human's expression translates harmony. This can further be extended to many other aspects of life, of the cosmos, of society in terms of male/female, day/night, birth/death, for example. To oral narrative elements in particular, this law applies in the forms of complementary pair, characters, ideas, or even concepts that balance narrative propositions. This is what is termed 'contrast' in Olrik's 'epic laws' (1992), and which is called 'binary opposition' by Levi Strauss (1962). In fact, the elements that compose a binary pair and which are perceived in terms of 'contrast' or 'opposition' by Olrik and Levi Strauss do not essentially exclude each other but compliment each other, since the one cannot exist without the other. This explains Jousse's terms of 'binary complementarity'.

#### **1.4.4. The Law of Formulism**

Jousse argues that by repetition, a balanced and rhythmic proposition creates a formulaic pattern which embeds in memory. In effect, as he maintains, the balanced imitations become conventionally structured through constant and repeated use. It thus creates a formulas which will always be used in man's expression. The Law of Formulism plays an important role the

process of memorisation, and in the process of recalling facts. As Joan Conolly argues,

The mnemonic Oral-Style performer strings the formulas together in a uniquely different pattern every time s/he performs. The artistry of the mnemonic Oral-Style performer is measured to a large extent in terms of the creative arrangement of the formulaic phrases. These formulaic phrases or clichés become traditionally prescribed and mnemonic Oral-Style performers are able to recite hundreds if not thousands of these formulas, which remain unique to their culture while still retaining their anthropological essence. (Conolly 2000: 219).

The mnemonic laws of Mimism, Rhythmism, Bilateralism, and Formulism apply to the oral-style performance and effect the composition. As the psycho-physiological laws of human expression, they inform memory which in Jousse's terms 'is the whole man'. If then memory is the whole man as Jousse says, and that man only knows and expresses what he intussuscepts, then knowledge and its expression becomes a holistic process. Man, the spontaneous rhythmically bilateraised miming being who expresses himself in memorable ways must necessary have means of expression that are viscerally attached to his whole being and that aid him remember; which Jousse calls the 'Mnemotechnical Devices'.

### 1.5. The Mnemotechnical Devices

The Mnemotechnical Devices are perceived by Jousse as anthropological elements of expression. As Conolly argues, "Jousse coined specific terms for **Mnemotechnical Devices**, to emphasise their intrinsic and original oral-aural Oral-style nature, and distance them from an association with literary and poetic devices which tainted and distorted their operation and application." (Conolly 2000: 220). Jousse maintains that the Mnemotechnical Devices are constantly in motion in the visceral memory of

man, and therefore available for use in improvisation. In tale telling for example, they inform improvisation insofar as they are already present in the performer. They can be used dynamically and spontaneously in a unique sense in the recreation of a narrative by a performer.

According to Jousse, these Devices operate principally as repetitions:

- . as in rhythmic, balanced, and formulaic miming of the actions previously existing in the universe of man. In other words, repetition of what man has registered from his interaction with his environment and which he can replay in a performance by miming. Repetition can also be seen in other Oral-Style expression such as epic, ballads, myths, legend, proverbs, genealogies, histories, parables, songs, praises, hymns, elegies, odes, and tales. In Conolly's words,

Regardless of ethnic origin, the repetition of structure acts as a mnemonic device operating on the anthropological principles of mimism, bilateralism, and formulism. Such construction can also include:

- . repetition of an impressed geste from the universe, such as that which manifests in onomatopoeias where the essence of geste is mirrored in the expression of the geste;
  - . the coining of new catchy gestes which effectively mirror dynamic events and incidents. (Conolly 2000: 220-221)
- . of part of a narrative. In a narrative for example, propositions are balanced in a repetitive way, and episodes are also sequenced in a way that recalls the logical order in which all the narrative elements are involved:
    - . as in parallelisms and balancings manifest in Rhythmic Schemas which appear as
      - . pivots (regular repetitions of single pitgamas)
      - . binaries (pairs of balance pitgamas)
      - . ternaries (trios of balanced pitgamas)
    - . calling and clamping mechanisms evidenced in

- . frames where the rhyming pitgama (proposition or word-like entity) is repeated at the end of the first and last lines only;
- . annomination where the pitgama is repeated in regular or random rhyme throughout [the narrative] recitative....
- . Key words which are frequently repeated or woven into other mnemonical devices.
- . calling and clamping pitgamas which are very like key words but which are used deliberately ambiguously to enrich the meaning of the performance.
- . countdowns where the numerical sequence establishes the order of the narration;
- . repetition of part of a pitgama
  - . as in the repetition of vowel sounds to create 'avocalisation', 'clamp-rhymes' or 'call-rhymes/words' throughout the [narrative] recitative (and also referred to as assonance incidentally);
  - . as in the repetition of consonant sounds to create 'aconsonantisation' or 'clamp-sounds' throughout the [narrative] recitative (and also referred to as alliteration incidentally) (Conolly 2000: 221)

Jousse defines the 'clamp device' as the connecting elements of a narrative such as this can be observed in the recurrence of certain words, which he thus identified as:

- ~ 'aconsonantisation' or repetition of consonant sounds, conventionally known as 'alliteration';
- ~ 'annomination' or repetition of a word within a narrative;
- ~ 'avocalisation' or repetition of vowel sounds, conventionally known as 'assonance'.

#### a. Analogy and Symbol

According to Jousse, the anthropos can only comprehend and express the objective reality or the 'Real' by a manner which approximates the nature of the 'Real'. Jousse thus sees analogy as the way by which man's comprehension and his expression of the 'Real' operate. The mimismological replica of the 'Real' in human expression thus becomes the

leit motiv of analogy. Jousse believes that because human expression can operate through various means, whether laryngo-buccal, corporeal-manual, or algebrosed, analogy in human expression likewise operates through the same means in the reconstruction of the 'Real' by human. Joean Conolly puts it

"In other words, analogy simplifies so that we can understand. Jousse identifies analogy operating at a number of different levels and to varying degrees of simplification to approximate the 'Real', which is expressible in all the three modes of expression identified by Jousse: the corporeal-manual, the laryngo-buccal, and the algebised. (Conolly 2000; 15)

As far as **Symbol** is concerned, it is (like analogy) in Joussean terms a mode of expression. Symbol is seen by Jousse as a physical representation by man of what lies beyond man's reach. Like analogy which provides approximation of the 'Real', symbol also "... provides the means whereby the invisible and inaudible 'Real' is given substance and form" (Conolly 2000: 18). In Jousse's own words, "through symbol and by analogy corporeal-manual style man makes a breathtaking leap into the Infinite arena of knowing and understanding." (1997: 75). As various people have various ways of understanding cosmological manifestations, symbol may be culture-specific and remain arbitrarily associated with phenomena. As such, what appears to be the Gouro people's symbol of life or death may not appear so to the English for example.

### **b. Metaphor**

Jousse's perception of metaphor can be seen as the very means by which man expresses himself. In Conolly's words,

Metaphor constitutes one of the many forms of expression used by the anthropos in making his inner reality accessible in an outer or performed form. Metaphor operates on the principle of comparison where there is unequal knowledge and

understanding between co-communicators. In such instances, that which is known to both is used as the vehicle to communicate that which is not known to one but is known to the other. (Conolly 2000: 17)

Metaphor in other words, is the abstract means by which the 'Real' may be presented otherwise in a context of communication by an interlocutor. In fact, as language and writing proceeded from the 'Real', language and writing represent abstract forms of what Jousse calls the 'objective reality'. Since they are mimismological expressions of the 'Real' but not the 'Real' itself, they constitutes metaphoric expression of the real'. This amounts to saying that the means used in reconstituting the 'Real' by man, whether corporeal-manual, laryngo-buccal, or algebrosed, constitute metaphoric means that allow man to understand the 'Real'. Jousse put this as "our abstract ideas are no more than metaphors or comparisons. They are mimemes which are drawn from an observed object, re-played macroscopically or microscopically, and then transposed by us onto some other unknown objects." (1997:171). What Jousse calls 'mimeme' is a unit of expression which translates the essential imitation of an object. By metaphor or comparison, such units of expression are 'transposed onto some other objects' to allow understanding of a reality from a different perspective.

Conolly argues, the distinction between analogy and metaphor resides in the fact that

Where the former is the expression of the mimismologically concrete and intellectually abstract geste; the metaphor is the expression of an intellectually abstraction that has no immediate mimismologically concrete referent. In other words, the metaphor is a means of explaining an understanding that lies outside of immediate experience, where the analogy expresses a microscopic experience of the understanding of the 'Real' in macroscopic form. The human geste is analogical, but not metaphorical. The human geste is an analogy, not a metaphor but expressed in metaphor. (Conolly 2000: 17)

**2000 Problems and issues which contextualise this study within Jousse's theoretical framework.**

**2.1. Conceptualisation, composition, and expression.**

In the specific instance of tale performance, one of the dynamic features of the performance can be set in the light of its composition by a teller. How does a teller compose a story for example?

**2.1.1. Image and Composition of the tales**

In analysing his collection of tales done in KwaZulu and in Transkei in 1967-68, Harold Scheub tackled comprehensively the issue of composition in his doctoral dissertation in 1969, later published as *The Xhosa Ntsomi*, in 1975. "The focus of his research is on performance within a theory of tale composition." (Canonici 1993: 119). Scheub's findings are applicable to the data under analysis in this chapter and need to be addressed, although the focus of the present dissertation is on the elements in a tale that affect the recalling of what has already been constructed (an existing narrative).

According to Scheub, a Zulu or Xhosa performer composes a tale by improvisation by 'cueing and scanning' existing material: "The artist draws from sources which are already complete in certain respects, and she is guided in the development of her work by a theme which governs the entire *Ntsomi* tradition to a great extent," (Scheub 1975: 45). What is meant by Scheub's statement is that in the composition process, a storyteller recalls bits of stories from his repertoire of traditional narratives and adapts them selectively to the theme being developed. Scheub calls those bits of stories

'core-images'. He thus maintains that the tradition provides a number of 'core images' that a teller has already memorised from past performances, and that can be used adaptively to a theme. He or "she witnessed many *Ntsomi* (*Nganekwane*) productions, and her memory has distilled from those experiences certain songs, chants, actions, characters, sayings, and other measurable incidents and details which form a loosely structured image in her memory and can later be recalled when she desires to construct a *Ntsomi* ." (1993: 46). To substantiate such an 'expansible image', Scheub presented a paper in 1970, "The Technique of the Expansible Image", in which he presented four versions of the 'maas bird' or *Udename noDemazane*. Scheub thus maintains that in a tale composition, more 'core-images' can be incorporated to expand a story, depending on the particular theme being developed. But the concept of 'core image' in Scheub's terms is indeed critical in storytelling when one knows that not everybody who tells stories has a visual memory, and therefore does not conceive of a narration in terms of 'images'. In effect, Scheub's notion of 'core-image' implies that before a performer tells a story, s/he first visualises sequences of events from a wider repertoire, then selects the bits of events and sequences them according to a particular theme s/he intends to develop. Jousse rejects such a notion of 'image' as he believes that it reduces understanding of the process of 'Imagination' to the product of visual images.

Indeed, according to Jousse, man who interiorises the physiological *gestes* intellectualises them into propositions during the process of expression. Because the interiorised *gestes* have their source external to man (in the real physiological world), Jousse sees that "what we call '**Imagination**' is the combination of such 're-playings' in a mirrored internal configuration which logically matches the external source" (2000: 579). In other words, the notion of 'image' only refers to the purely visual product of a re-played action by man, and disregards the other senses of the action replayed. Jousse

then maintains that what is called '**Imagination**' is nothing else but the '**Rememoration**' of impressed actions from the universe

The nature of composition of any text is psycho-physiological. Considering the biological nature of memory, one is forced to believe that a teller's capacity to (re)compose or to improvise (composition in performance) is the product of her/his memory of the previous experiences of impression and expression of the geste. Thus, "The creative capacity of the **Oral Style composer** will further depend on the individual's spontaneous capacity to '**de-compose**' and '**re-compose**' the formulas stored in visceral memory and bring together those formulas not previously connected to create a novel **composition**." (Conolly 2000: 77). In other words, biological memory which is the storehouse of the microscopic *gestes* is composed of impression of those *gestes*. Adaptive to a context of expression, an individual teller de-composes the visceral experiences to re-compose them in a story. The conceptualisation of a story thus keeps with the fundamental mnemonic laws which inform expression. This is witnessed in the Gouro performer's actions which are informed by the laws of imitation, rhythm, balance, and formula. In a sense, once conceptualised according to a particular narrative theme, the Gouro performer recomposes a story bit by bit using the viscerally stored formulas. The conceptualisation and composition of the narrative thus tend to establish meaning in terms of the capacity of the mode of expression. Indeed, Jousse understands that the nature of composition is microscopic before it is macroscopic as the result of the indivisible psycho-physiological expression. Depending on the nature of a storyteller's visceral memory and experiences, s/he may create a new story by composing, de-composing, and re-composing; in other words by adding, subtracting, and moving existing sequences around. In Joan Conolly's words,

It follows then that the individual's capacity to '**compose-in-performance**' – to '**improvise**' will be the product of that individual's memory of all previous experiences of impression

and expression of the **Oral-style** geste. The creative capacity of the **Oral-style composer** will depend further on the individual's spontaneous capacity to '**de-compose**' and '**re-compose**' the formulas stored in visceral memory and bring together those formulas not previously connected to create a novel composition. (Conolly 2000: 77)

It thus becomes obvious that a teller can make use of existing traditional motifs and character types, to give life to a new production. Marivate noted in this regard in his analysis of the *Form, Content and Delivery of Tsonga Folk Tales*, when quoting Junod that the composition of a narrative is "... a plastic matter unconsciously undergoing constant and extensive modifications in the hands of storytellers." (1973: 93).

### **2.1.2. Working with decontextualised texts: 'There is no text without context'**

**Bronislaw Malinowski.**

#### **~ What is a text, in context?**

The term 'text' "derived from textus =tissue (CEOD) and textere =weave (COED), the term 'text' reflects a reality informing metaphor, which implies tissue of meaning woven into cohesive structures developed over time and with use." Conolly (2000:358).

Indeed, once written down, a narrative recorded in a graphic form represents a text by virtue of the form that it takes on a page. An Oral-Style text further shows the omnipresence of mnemonic components which demonstrate its texture by the woven structure of the narrative elements (a Rhythmo-stylistic analysis of three Gouro tales are provided in chapter 6 that account for this). While a text is essentially a version of a single telling it does not exist in isolation from a 'context'.

In Malinowski's terms, 'There is no text without context.' A written text means as much as one can make of it, and what one makes of it depends on

one's previous knowledge within a particular context of interpretation. As such, there are two levels of context of a text: 1) the primary context of a text which is the inner being already existing. That is the interpretation of a message in a context of what the interpreter already knows and understands. 2) The secondary level of context being the physical frame of reference of a performance. That is, the circumstances and parameters that condition the production of a performance. In other words, the specific social situation in which a particular performance takes place.

The meaning and function of a particular performance, for example, are not inherent to an isolated text on a page, but are established as part of an emerging structure of a physical performance as a whole, and of what the one who interprets the performance knows of a performance. In the case of the Gouro tales texts under review, they have been removed from such an initial context of performance to be presented in writing on the page to a reading audience that is foreign to the Gouro tradition. This presents a challenge to a full understanding of the narratives which have the tradition to be performed in a village homestead, after the evening meals, sitting in a circle comprising members of a family and neighbours (for an informal performance), or else to be performed to a much bigger gathering of the villagers somewhere in someone's homestead.

## **2001 Translation prospect of the Gouro tales**

Considering Jousse's theoretical frame of reference which highlights the psycho-physiological nature of an oral style performance, it stands to the logic of writing down the Gouro tales for the first time and translating them into English will account for three prospects of translation, which are: Inter-facial translation, inter-modal translation, and inter-lingal teanslation.

### **a. An oral-literate interface**

The interfacial translation is the putting down on a page of a language which currently has no standardised scribal written form, and therefore addresses issues pertaining to the oral-literate interface. The Gouro language in which the tales under review in this study have initially been composed and told in oral style mode in Gouro which has no standardised written form. Presenting the tales in a written form brings about serious problems as to how to accommodate the particular Gouro language characteristics to scribal writing.

### **3.2. An inter-modal level of translation**

Inter-modal translation is a translation from one mode of expression (Oral style mode) to another mode of expression (scribal writing mode), which is putting-into-writing tales that have only the tradition to be performed in the gestual-visual/oral-aural mode. The Gouro tales are performed physically (through gestures), which can be seen and interpreted (visual), and through listening (aural) to the voice (oral) of the performer. Indeed, the Gouro tale telling tradition developed over immemorial times is an event which involves a teller who performs dynamically in front of a live audience. The audience is an aural-visual one, i.e. the members listen and see the teller, and participate in the telling process. The Gouro tale telling event is thus a different mode of expression from the written mode which is aimed at the reception of an audience who reads a story silently on the page. This translates differences between an original mode of receiving by listening and looking, and another mode of receiving by silent reading. It then becomes obvious that writing down the Gouro tales that are initially composed in a gestual-visual/ oral-aural mode cannot accommodate the logic of their physical performance. The crux of this issue becomes all the more complicated when one knows that one Gouro sound/word can adopt many gestual and tonal faces, allowing thus many different interpretations. In fact,

the sounding effect of the Gouro language is a continuum and can adopt differing meaning in a situation of speech.

A sound can be given continuous nuances in many dimensions, which complex dynamism the alphabet renders incapable of solving. For example, a single sound, **gulu**, which literally means 'hole' endorses manifold classes of meanings that connect directly the tone to the signification. In an utterance, **e go gulu ta**, the various tonal forms of **gulu** acquires the connotation of 'hole', 'grave', 'the beyond', and the 'centre'. **E go gulu ta** can thus read either: he went to the hole/to the grave/beyond/ or to the centre (of something someplace). Although a 'grave' is distinct from a 'hole' in English (since grave is a hole, but not all holes are graves), a Gouro utterance does not distinguish between the two. **Wo tonen pa gulu ji** is literally, 'they put spider in a hole'. Such an utterance has to be decoded according to context in which it is spoken. In case of death, the sentence makes perfect sense, but when a live spider is put into a hole, it might mean cruelty. Besides the complex semantism of such utterances that connect tone to concept, abundant non-verbal cues are in evidence in the Gouro language. Expressions of the body and of the face help constantly to establish a referential framework not available to a reader of a written performance.

In addition, Gouro lends itself to a rich rhythmic word play, like inner rhyming vowels (*viti a ble vete le, vete a ble viti le*, i.e. like palm oil, like blood/ like blood, like palm oil), repetitions of consonant sounds (*bululu*, i.e. spread all over), clamp words, onomatopoeias, etc. These characteristics further increase the several different ways of translations and interpretations of a given statement.

Besides the tonal quality of certain words, gesture making can also become meaning-specific in a statement. For example, the Gouro *l da co*, meaning, 'come here' is always accompanied with either a hand movement of bringing something closer, or a slight head movement downward implying the 'right in

front of me here'. Likewise, *I go mi*, or go there (away) echoes with the opposite performance of the aforementioned gestures. In the second statement in particular, gesture is simultaneously as important as voicing *mi* because one might confuse that word with its other meaning which is 'human'. So, instead of 'go human', the gesture of pointing a direction specifies the meaning: 'there'.

### 3.3. An inter-lingual level

An inter-language translation is the form of translation commonly known as the transfer of meaning and concept from one language to another language. In the present case, Gouro is the initial language from which the tales will be translated to English, the target language.

One may know the grammar of the language and be able to make a correct word-for-word translation from it, but this will not enable one to grasp the spirit of the language (to get from it the actual mental dispositions expressed through its prepositional gestures) or to assimilate the thought of those who speak and write it. One could even go further and say that the more scrupulously literal translation, the more it actually runs the risk of being inexact and untrue to the intention of the original. (Jousse 1990:91)

The inter-lingual translation presents with particular challenge in that it is in itself a betrayal of some kind. In the particular case of translating the idiosyncrasies of the Gouro language and encoding them in the English language, the significant case of **traduttore, traditore = translator, traitor** can be raised. As Jousse notes it, " An ethnic standpoint transported into another ethnic standpoint is in danger of being distorted. This is the origin of the deviation of meaning when one focuses the translation on the words of another language without going back to the original underlying geste. (2000: 597). This is particularly true for the Gouro language which reflects linguistic data, language symbolism, idiosyncratic aspects of its philosophy

and aesthetics that a translated counterpart cannot always pragmatically exhibit. Although, at times, some of these features may appear to be of minor importance, still they constitute details of a world which has its own perceptions and idiosyncrasies: Onomatopoeic traits, metaphors, symbols, tonal manifestations, which in translation may not fit into the set of priorities of their original occurrence. This is the reason why the Gouro sounds that translate particular feelings, privileged emotions, specific values grounded in the character of the culture will need to be significantly addressed.

### **3.3.1. The Metourgeman-sunergos.**

The role I play in the present research work is comparable to that of the 'Metourgeman-sunergos'. The term Metourgeman-Sunergos is an Aramaic-Greek combination which is semantically equivalent to the meaning of 'interpreter-translator'. The Metourgeman-sunergos are a cast of interpreter-translators in the rhythmico-catechistic formulas from the Aramaic into the languages of the intra-ethnic and extra-ethnic diaspora. As Jousse traces the tradition of their role, he maintains that:

The envoy murmured the oral-style recitative in the original language-Aramaic- often in a barely audible voice, while the Metourgeman-sunergos proclaimed the translation- in Greek and other languages of the intra-ethnic and extra-ethnic diaspora - in a loud voice that was heard and understood by the listeners. This practice has its origins in much earlier times where the Hebrew of the Torah was translated into Aramaic for the listening populace by the paraqlita. The Abba offered the lesson in the synagogue in a low key. The paraqlita was the speaker who stood close by the Abba-repeater and proclaimed the lesson aloud. (Jousse 2000: 414)

The term *Metourgeman-sunergos* is thus used by Jousse to identify "...the 'intercessor or advocate or even ambassador' who brings together the assembly or meeting and who translates in speech." (Conlly 2000:190). The term *Metourgeman-sunergos* can then be extrapolated to refer to all who practice encoding interpretation from a tripartite perspective of interlingual, intermodal, and interfacial, such as is the case in the present study.

As a *Gouro* meaning is often complicated by the correlation of tone, gesture, and facial expression, and that writing down *Gouro* reduces the scope of its expressiveness, the following chapter suggests a methodology for solving these issues.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Methodology

In consideration of the problems that arise in writing the Gouro tales down and in translating them into English, this chapter discusses some methods the kind of transfer may adopt at all three levels of translation, i.e. inter-facial, inter-modal, and inter-lingual. The qualitative research approach from which the thesis develops thus considers in this particular chapter, consubstantially with the research topic, the aspects of the tale collection and the tale selection, how I wrote the tales down in the initial Gouro language which has no standard scribal written form, how I have translated the Gouro tales into English and analysed them adopting an insider's perspective, and how I put them in a frame of comparison to the Zulu narratives.

#### **1. The insider's perspective of interpretation and analysis of the tales**

As a native Gouro speaker myself, I have adopted an insider's perspective in the discussion pertaining to the Gouro lifestyle and their cultural significances, and to the interpretation and analysis of the Gouro tales presented in this thesis. An insider research perspective can be defined as a perspective by which a researcher operates through her/his cultural knowledge and experiences. The insider's perspective can be significantly beneficial for the outcomes of a study as it gauges an authentic explanation of the cultural material being investigated. The insider's research perspective is much needed today in the interpretation of the rich African Oral Traditions in general as these have mostly been too often misinterpreted by 'outsiders', i.e. researchers who are foreign to the very culture they investigate. Indeed, as Jousse argues,

The true laboratory is an observation laboratory of the self, so-called because it is difficult to see oneself. That is why it is necessary to create what would best be called a 'laboratory of awareness.' While we will be able to step outside ourselves, yet, thanks to mimism, everything that is re-played through us, is within us. All science is awareness. All objectivity is subjectivity. (Jousse1997: 16)

Born and brought up in a Gouro rural community, I have developed over years the mental dispositions, "...the ways of feeling and evaluating the innumerable types of affective behaviour which are in the strictest sense of the word proper to each of the two milieux (oral and literate), and which have no real equivalent in the other." (Jousse 1997: 76). Since an early age I was part on many occasions of Storytelling performances: When youngsters gather in the homeyard in the evenings to tell each others stories of the vast Gouro repertoire, or when we happen to belong to a more experienced circle including elders, mothers, grand-mothers, and other attendants from the neighbourhood, or else when we happen to be part of the audience of a skilled taleteller. Thus my insights relevant to the Gouro tale telling tradition, and my relevant linguistic capacity present this study as the product of an insider. In respect of the inter-lingual insights, I am educated in the Western tradition in both French and English. I give an intellectual understanding of both the Gouro oral tradition and worldview, and the literate perspective. One may still ask, in which way an 'insider's' perspective can be resourceful.

Fundamentally, the study of oral traditions requires direct human interactions. Value

judgements and personal reactions may be part of the analyses and interpretations of oral materials from both the insider and the outsider's perspectives. But an 'insider's' view is imperative for the authenticity of the materials and their interpretations as opposed to an outsider who, to gain insight into a strange research material, will still have to base her/his value judgement and personal reactions on the intervention of informants who are

insiders to the material being investigated. In other words, interpretations are of a distance when it is an outsider who is researching a strange culture of which s/he is not personally experienced. With regard to tale telling in particular, some researchers focus their interpretations on a specific setting among a particular traditional community by observing closely the features of the telling process including the gestures and movements. Their method very often includes detailed evaluation of the audience type, i.e. its age group, its composition, the number of participants, how they are dressed, and the scope of their interaction in that particular performance. Such a method mostly adopted by outsiders, such as Ruth Finnegan amongst the Limba of Sierra-Leone, has a shortcoming. In fact, this method is based on a random choice of an oral tradition where the researcher knows little of the intricacies of the language and culture. Further, the researcher takes note of the reactions of the audience without reacting her/himself, or else would observe the 'expressiveness of tone' without knowing its meanings. And because the focus of an outsider is mostly confined to the materials provided within the limits of his/her topic, his/her interpretations and analyses of the data may be limited. An insider is at home as to how to establish correlative significances of data with other features of his/her own culture. In tale telling for example, it can be given to any researcher to study the form, the structure, the characters, the compositional techniques, and style, but questions of functions, meanings, cultural significances can be very speculative and liable to misinterpretations by an outsider. Utilising the frame of personal ethnic experiences, an insider is an authority as to how a meaning can be specified from social, cultural, and linguistic contexts. In this sense, interpretations need not focus only on the specific collected data from a strange culture, but embrace the social dynamics tied up with the researcher's visceral or biological memory.

## **2. The collection of the tales under review**

In the year 2001, I requested my family living in the Ivory Coast to collect some Gouro tales for the purpose of the present study, as I had no financial support to travel to the country for a field trip to do the collection myself. My family has thus collected X tales by initially recording the performances on audio-tapes from live informal performances in various family settings, and also during formal tale telling performances by the renown Gouro storyteller *Towli bi Zoro* of the *tonhon (bediala)* district. The tapes were then sent to me in South Africa to work with. As such, I was not directly involved in the tale collection *per se*. I thought of this alternative of collecting the material of the study to initiate a study of my culture. I strongly felt the urgent need to contribute to the documentation of Gouro oral tradition for the reason that a lot is fast dying of the Gouro cultural values today because the language has not yet been committed to a standard written form.

### **3. The selection of the ten tales under review**

Once in possession of the tapes, I have listened to them many times, then I selected ten from the record for the purpose of the present study. The tales were all initially composed and told in Gouro and were very familiar. I limited the selection to ten tales for the purpose of this research study because the study adopts a descriptive, an interpretative and analytical, and a comparative approach of the Gouro tale telling. It would have been too prolific to extend the number beyond ten considering all these aspects of the study.

There are indeed thousands of tales in Gouro. If I retained these ten, it is not because they are the best Gouro tales. Their selection was inspired by the various themes that they develop and that account for the daily lifestyle of the Gouro people. They address social issues ranging from the secular to the sacred, and are all as important as each other. The themes they develop address for example jealousy, selfishness, disloyalty, greed, power

abuse, etc. They all teach the members values the Gouro consider to be vital to a harmonious social life. In addition to the thematic reason, the selection was also motivated by the Gouro tale types as discussed in chapter four. It is important to note that the ten tales under review may adopt various character types in the different Gouro regions. Nevertheless, the many versions of one tale do not corrupt the initial lessons underpinning their characters' actions consistent with the Gouro cultural belief in general. Whether adopting Fox, Hare, Spider as trickster to develop a similar theme, the profile of the trickster in Gouro is primarily to promote clever deeds and the class of moral the deeds underlie.

#### **4. Writing down the Gouro tales for the first time in Gouro: A methodological approach of an oral-literate level of translation**

The Gouro language not having a standardised written form, how have I put the language into writing? With regard to this question, I may start by answering that the tale texts presented in this thesis are verbatim transcriptions of the tales as they were told by various tellers of the records sent to me by my family. I must admit that I was transcribing for the first time of my life my language for analysis purpose, and this was truly challenging because it is an unusual occurrence to write or read Gouro. The Gouro language has no standardised scribal written form. To write the language down, I referred to the spelling system of the language sounds pattern used in the Gouro version of the Bible, which is the only published source on the Gouro language. But the Gouro Bible was translated into Gouro for evangelical purpose alone, and I doubt it is based on a scientific study of the linguistic characteristics of the overall Gouro language because the scripture read too exclusively in the northern Gouro dialect, the Loruben. This made the biblical Gouro text sound somewhat unfamiliar because I am the Kwanen dialect speaker. Although the Gouro dialects are mutually intelligible, the

dialectal difference was a serious challenge, especially in writing, which is not common occurrence with the Gouro language per se. To do this I first had to read thoroughly the Gouro version of the holy book critically. I discovered that unless I pronounced certain sounds aloud, they defied aural reason in print. I have at times resorted to the English version of the same biblical text to identify the Gouro written word as such, or for a spelling to make sense to me.

Another serious challenge in conceptualising the Gouro language in writing was that the biblical source was written in French. I then had to identify the possible way of spelling a sound with the alphabet according to the French spelling system, then translate the sound into the English spelling system. This exercise confronted me to the dual challenge of identifying the French spelling system of the Gouro sound effect, then of approximating the sound to a more practical way in which one would receive it in the English spelling system. All this brings me to say that the written Gouro tales texts that are presented in this research study may defy the aural reason of any native Gouro speaker too, since there is no agreed spelling system for the three dialects' inflexions and also for the various tonal manifestations of the language. Should there be one recommendation for the Gouro version readership, it would be to speak it out loud. Better sense is made of the text that way, simply because Gouro has always been spoken out to a listener, not read silently. As a non-scribal written language, the rhythm on the page may also have one defect: appear awkward on the reader's lips. A native Gouro reader of the present tale texts may easily notice that the texts have been transcribed with a strong Kwanen dialect influence because Kwanen is the dialect that I speak. But basing my spelling system of the Gouro language on the Gouro Bible, this is how I have attempted to deal with tonal variations.

- ['] at beginning of a sound indicates the tonal variation towards the 'pitch'. For example the sound /**san**/ has three tonal inflexions, each meaning: a

light (ray, beam), a trap, to loose. To mean respectively a light, a trap, or to loose, one must pronounce this single sound from the low tonality, and rising the tonality to pitch. In order to differentiate the tonal variation, the normal low tone of the first would thus be transcribed with no upper stress /**san**/, the second would be transcribed with one upper stress to indicate the rise in tone (pitch) /'san/, and the third would be with two upper stresses to indicate the more pitch tonal inflexion /''san/. Another example is Yanan (ape), 'Yanan (anger), "Yanan (to sit down), ""Yanan (work or else pubic area). This device is also used in the writing of the Gouro version of the Bible. But the shortcoming of their device is that they use only one stress to indicate the tonal variation, i.e. between the low and the pitch. Yet a single gouro sound may have at times more than four tonal faces, such as in /yanan/ (aforementioned). In order to compliment the device used in the gouro Bible, I have suggested that a stress be further added to indicate the further rising of the tone of a given sound. My suggestion is as challenging as one is bound to know all the possible tonal variations of a Gouro sound to be able to read it with the correct tonal inflexion. But its strength lies in the awareness it creates of the many tonal manifestations a Gouro sound may have, and therefore the impossibility of replicating them on the page as such. As I mentioned in the introduction, the present research study is intended to be primarily inspirational for further investigations into the Gouro oral tradition, and suggestive of the possible ways in which the Gouro language may have a standard written form. As such the study topic of the study is only introduced and exemplified.

- A double vowel indicates that the sound is lengthened. eg: **fu** (wind) reads as in /**pool**/, **fEE** (to blow) as in /**bird**/, **laa** (call) as in /**car**/, **bii** (you) as in /**bee**/

[An] nasalized. reads as in English /under/. Eg: **dan** (to sell), **nan** (housewife)

[En] nasalized. Pronounced as in English /send/. eg: **nen** (little).

[In] nasalized. reads as in English /thing/. Eg: **blin** (chair), **fiin** (story, tale)

[e] small /e/ reads as in /play/. Eg: **fe** (to say), **lee** (mouth)

[E] capital /e/ reads as in /confer/. Eg: **dEdE** (new), **IEE** (year)

[U] reads as in /book/. Eg: **bu** (mother, **buu** (cassava), 'buu (to miss a target)

- The Gouro have a strongly voiced pronunciation, **Gb**, which is the combination of the guttural 'G' and the bi-labial 'B'. the two create a point of articulation which is neither guttural nor bi-labial but involves both. It provokes an energetic character of an explosive back sound and assigns a strength to the meaning of something by creating an acoustic impression that is harsher than that of 'B': eg. **y a yeri Gbao** meaning 'he broke it **Gbao**' (harshly). The same applies to the association of 'K' and 'P' which is harsher than 'P' but which is a voiceless character of **GB** Eg: '**E voh yoh yiri wounhi te e si voa kpoh, kpoh!** (T6) (p.53). Another instance is that of the Gouro nasals that are not obvious in the English pronunciation. For example, '**ban** (debt, bat, or hut, depending on the inflection for the third one) is not /'Ban/ as the English would read but /'b n/. The major sound effect here is that the nasals will sound foreign on the lips of English readership, just as German /j/ would sound /y/ in French and English, and /r/ in Spanish.

##### **5.Putting the Gouro tale performance on the page: a methodological approach of an inter-modal level of translation**

Because this study aims at interpreting the psychodynamics of the Gouro tales texts, i.e. the ways in which the Gouro performer's mind informs her/his

dynamic performance of the tales, how then the tale text should be performed in writing to account to an extent for its psychodynamics? How have I transferred the dynamic physical performance mode to a written mode, In other words, how have I processed the tale text to account for a more practical way of the physical performance of the tale?

The recording of the performance of tales in writing is restricted to the recording of the words of the tales. Excluded from such recording are the nuances of paralinguistic elements, the movements of the teller, the rhythm and cadence of his speech, that transform the very performance into a memorable experience. Unfortunately, these elements do not appear in a scribally recorded text, and yet they deliver complementary information and give variable interpretations to a performance. In Ruth Finnegan's words about the Limba storytelling of Sierra-leone, the "...expressiveness of tone, gesture, facial expression, dramatic use of pause and rhythm, the interplay of passion, dignity, or humour, receptivity to reaction of the audience..." (1970: 388) are aspects of oral performance that are difficult if not impossible to replicate in writing. Attempts to capture these performance traits on the page have been for sometime of great concern to performance oriented-scholars.

In his *Choreutics* (1966), for example, Rudolf Laban attempted to use various graphic signs to capture the structure and the chronological order of dance movements. The 'Labanotation', as these signs are called, shows significant steps towards recording movements although it is far from accounting for the dynamism of performance. But the 'Labanotation' means freezing movements in one particular form. This, in other words, means that any performer of such recordings has to restrict his/her performance to a preconceived set of movements.

Putting tale performance on the page was also of great concern to the Nigerian writer Amos Tutuola in his *Palm wine Drinkard and his Palm wine*

*Tapster in the Dead's Town* (1961). In that single long narrative, the author adopts a particular free-running textual device in order to capture in print the fluency of the storytelling tempo. The story is made up of sequences of adventurous events that a 'palm-wine drinkard' goes through on his way to the town of the deads where he hopes to bring back to life his 'palm-wine tapster'. In writing the story, Tutuola uses a repetitive device to capture rhythm, fluency, and suspense in print. The English that Tutuola uses sounds like his natural idiom, a spontaneous indigenous tongue of the Yoruba. Tutuola has retained the verve and fluidity of the teller, his/her repetitive and picturesque style; notwithstanding that Tutuola's device fails to address aspects such as silence, pauses, audience reactions.

Elizabeth Fine's *The Folklore Text* (1984) once focused exclusively on these questions of the representation of a performance in print. She puts in writing a performance of an Afro-American toast ('stagolee') to demonstrate what a performance record of a speech event should look like. She included aspects such as paralinguistic features as well as traditional textual characteristics. Fine's text of 'stagolee', which does not require translation from one language to another has one shortcoming. It includes notations of kinetic features, which require concentration on different aspects of the text at a time when reading. The reader is thus given to interpret multiple signs and symbols simultaneously. This renders the performance of her toasts very difficult. Since I aim to preserve the fluency in the Gouro performance on the page, it becomes obvious that Fine's method is to be discarded in my representation of the Gouro tale performance.

As far as the present study is concerned, putting the Gouro tale performance on the page is one significant step in the body of the tales interpretations that is addressed. In fact, specific norms are provided, and typographic values assumed by a text to find an intersecting path of an oral performance and a written counterpart. This methodology adopts the body of an effective

reading of a story. This means that this thesis complies with the idea that a written text is not just a product ex-nihilo, but more importantly, the representation of an orally performed event. If so the need for the written Gouro tale is to reflect its initial oral performance, it becomes necessary that some of the Oral- Style characteristics of the language be taken into account in its scribal reproduction. Sandor once state:

As a matter of fact, tale-telling is more than the mere reproduction of memorised text. In a particular way, the text becomes imbued with life and however fictitious the story is, it turns almost into reality through the vivid fantasy, the animated spirit and the genuine intimacy of the peasant tale-teller. More than once, the personality of the narrator makes a deeper impression than the story itself (1967: 306).

The personality of the teller makes a deeper impression because the teller becomes the embodiment of the story itself and s/he animates the story in a dynamic performance. This means that a story is given life through the animation of various characters in a performance by a teller who mimes them since the characters he embodies live in him in the form of microscopic gestures. It is a telling process that involves the creativity and improvisations of a teller. This also means that an audience may have heard a tale many times before, but still they cannot know how the same tale can be told by someone else. The dynamic nature of story-telling process makes that every moment of a story is always enjoyed. A story is not just a frozen text. It is a dynamic living performance within the body of a teller. As such, a story is never told at different times to different people in exactly the same way. Even the same performer can never tell the same story in the exact same way each time he performs it. Likewise, the same audience will never have the same reaction during the performance of the same story. A tale performance is unique and can never be recaptured. In a sense, writing down a story would never have witnessed enough of the dynamic features of its telling process. Storytelling is a creative process and there is little support for the idea of verbatim repetition in the process. Fundamental

changes take place at times in handing over the story. This often takes place through, either the adoption of different character types within the same plotting, or the malleability of the plotting to suit a teller's tempo.

In the same tradition, tales may be found that have the same plotting with the same moral but with different components or characters. Finnegan quoted for example two versions of the Sunjata Epic of East Africa and concluded: "the most striking point to emerge from a comparison of the two is their close similarity, in places, amounting to word-for-word repetitions (1977:76). Nevertheless, whatever changes occur in handing over a particular story, the skeleton is always there in the form of memory even though the flesh undergoes some mutations.

For my personal experience, for example, I have heard several times tales that have the same structure but with different character types. For instance, the tale in which God put to the test the intelligence of Fox with a grain of corn that must be turned into a beautiful woman (T2), adopts Hare as trickster in some performances. But with Hare, the story ends with a reward of long ears while a sense of good smell is the reward that Fox gets from God in the other one.

Tale telling is unlike the cinematography, which, of all the recording devices of all man's inventions, offers the most pragmatic reality of man's memory. A movie character's actions follow a fixed pattern in story line. It is the same motion everywhere it is projected on the screen. A movie is a performance with no participation of the audience. The hero of a particular film story will always kill an antagonist, for example, in the same manner at the same moment of the story. All other characters would also act the same way at all times. Should I be allowed to paraphrase Sandor, one would say that a written tale must be imbued with life and however metaphorical the story is, it must turn into reality through the vivid fantasy, the animated spirit and the

genuine intimacy of a literate tale-reader. (sandor 1967: 306). In fact, a psychodynamic reading suggests an intimate involvement of the reader in the tale meaning production. This is, to enliven the written tale with a vivid fantasy and animated spirit. Writing the Gouro tales down must then impose itself within a certain reading discipline and norms whereby the reader is not a passive consumer of meaning, but becomes a meaning maker himself. As such, it is necessary to point to the textual elements that may authenticate the more possible the written records and the translation of the Gouro tales. It is obvious that using the page as medium in such an attempt of recording, the gestual-visual/oral-aural nature of the performance is not accommodated as it would be on video and audio recordings for example. While the latter can capture the body movements and the voice of a performer (even though these features are only limited data of a context of the performance), on the page one is presented with particular challenges.

One respect in which the psychodynamic performance of a story is effected is that a story, when told is a report by a teller of the deeds of some characters. The teller tells the audience which character did what and what happens next. When writing down the story we do not only report the teller's report but we become ourselves a teller, reporter. We embody the teller in such a way that we do not say, 'we are told by the performer that spider said no! Rather we write 'Spider said no!' But essentially, our report in writing is a work that is separated from the initial flow of speech of the teller. Our context of telling thus becomes critical. The actual transposition of the performance on to a page becomes a second level of context within which meaning is in crisis. In fact, the praxis of performance is a dynamic one which relates forthwith performer and hearer who gives life to the story through participation. Many other immediate contextual cues, such as gestures, and intonations, contribute to meaningful production which are not in evidence in writing, a fact which brought E. Chamberlin (1998) to consider that "putting performance on the page" is an impossible task. This brought

Jousse to see writing as a form of 'algebrisation' of human expression. As Conolly argues, " Jousse identified **writing** as a mediated form of an immediate form of human expression, such as the corporeal-manual and the laryngo-buccal. The mediation of the form of expression renders and reduces it, thus he terms such mediated form of expression, '**algebrisation**' from the Arabic term /aljabr/." (Conolly 2000: 380). One may still ask if the original performer's voice and the visual effect that her/his body movements provoke can be represented symbolically in writing?

### 5.1. Rhythmography

Marcel Jousse provides Rhythmography or Rhythmotypography (2000: 591) as strategy for recording the mnemonic oral style in writing.

The Rhythmography, as Jousse defines it, is the presentation in the written record of an oral performance in such a way that the characteristics of the performance become evident in the written text. Such a way takes into account the significance of the Mnemonic Devices and the bilateralised rhythmic schemas, for example. The rhythmic schemas by definition are parallel propositions which constitutes units of composition and performance. They are complete propositions which follow a performer's bilateral construct. Consequently the representation of a performance must follow the bilateral arrangement on the page in a way that corresponds to the bilateral body structure of the performer and his/her possible body movements between his/her left and his/her right. Jousse understands that a rhythmic schema can be made up of two (binary) or three (ternary) propositions; he calls these 'Pitgamas'. In other words, a Pitgama represents a propositional *geste*. For example, a statement such as, ' My story. It is past. Once upon a time, there was a man. The man had two wives and two daughter....' Would be represented as follows:

My story.  
 It is past.  
 Once upon a time  
 there was a man.  
 The man had two wives  
 and two daughter....

This would give in the binary rhythmic schemas as follows:

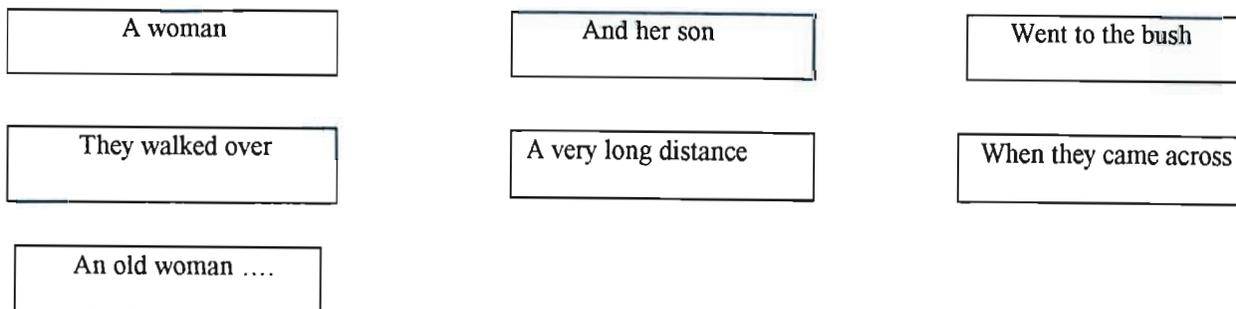


A ternary rhythmic schema would be for example: 'A woman and her son went to the bush.

They walked over a very long distance when they came across an old woman ....'

A woman  
 and her son  
 went to the bush.  
 They walked over a very long distance  
 when they came across  
 an old woman ....

This would give in a set of binary rhythmic schema as follows:



- To address the semantic values that a tale text may assume so that it can bear out the dynamism of a live performance, the tale texts are written down in Gouro and are centred on the spine of the page to capture the rhythmic and the balanced pattern of the mnemonic structure of the tales, following the typographic device suggested by Marcel Jousse in 'the Rhythmography' (Jousse 2000). The shape of the centred text evokes symbolically the 'spine' of the performer and introduces the idea of his bilateralised body structure. The centred text thus suggests the balanced pattern of a performer's body movements between his 'left' and his 'right' during a telling process. In such a performed text then, each line constitutes a 'proposition' or a unit of complete conceptualisation.
- Each Gouro proposition will be presented in italic bold typeface, and juxtaposes the English translation in a normal typeface to allow a direct translation access to both languages' versions.
- Titles indicate the themes of tale. Usually, in Gouro tale telling the theme is not stated, nor does a narrator give her/his story a formal title. But a theme may too often implicitly appear in the opening formulaic expression. A tale teller may say for example to start a narration, "why this is so and so, I will explain to you", as in T10, "what happened and there is death, do you know?"
- Each tale is followed by an interpretative note in which the Gouro key words and concepts, beliefs, mores and values are explained. This illustrates to an extent the Gouro ways of looking at realities around them. The explanations provide at times examples from linguistic data, customs, and stories other than the one under review.
- Each explanation is followed by a structural dynamic analysis from jousse's oral style performance prospect. The purpose for the structural dynamic analysis is to delineate the mnemonic components of the narrative

in keeping with Jousse's anthropological psych-physiological laws of human expression. I will provide an interpretative insight into the symbolism, the metaphoric, and other mnemonic features of the tale grounded in 'Repetition', 'clamping devices', 'Acconsonantisation', 'Avocalisation'. These oral performance features further allow a greater understanding as how the structural components of a Gouro story work towards a maximal memorisation of a story.

- Interspersed within the interpretative note and the structural dynamic analysis can be found, in some cases, instances of body expressions that can be performed concomitant with a spoken word in a live performance. This highlights the awareness in this thesis of the gestural enactments in Gouro storytelling. In addition to this, a dynamic synoptic chart is provided on tale 3 (one of the stories that I best know) that analyses a gestural type a Gouro teller may be liable to perform in a specific context of performance. This is done so to underline, not only the fact that body movement is important in the Gouro story performance, but more importantly to present a gestural enactment of a teller in accordance with his/her inspiration, an audience type, and a specific context of performance. In effect, it seems less objective to interpret body movements in isolation from a context of performance and a teller's acting ability. Body movements vary as well from one performer to another as from one setting to another. If then it is not dealt with in a specific way in this thesis, it is simply because the study does not include any visual material. The reason why this is so is that this thesis wishes to base its method on the fact that Gouro storytelling tradition is not a dead text or a frozen picture. It is rather an event that one experiences and embodies as one hears, sees, and participates.

- Considering that the Gouro storyteller imitates several characters involved in a story, the teller's voice cannot be taken as the single point of authority in the narrative. As such, it is necessary to delineate the vocal determination of the tale characters in a form of a prelude to the story. By doing this, the

reader is introduced to the world of the tale characters and their distinctive features. This is a preliminary step to set his/her mind in relation to their characteristic behaviours. A prelude that displays the characters familiarises the reader with character. The prelude would thus significantly function as the opening formulas which present the different characters involved in the story, and their vocal abilities: Lion with a thundering voice; gigantic Elephant with a trumpeting voice; Squirrel with a staccato, piercing voice, for example.

- It must be admitted that the different characters do not observe their vocal attributes as specified in a preliminary note in a monochord way throughout a story. Although Lion may have an authoritarian voice, for example, his vocal variations are situation-bound and tempered by his mood. His voice, in keeping with his mood, can be loud or soft, fast or slow. The specification of such vocal variations in writing is where inter-modal translation functions as a narrational mediation by presenting the vocal imitations of the characters in indirect speech. For example, the statements that account for the performer's imitation of the soft or loud, slow or fast voice of Lion can be reported as: "Lion said softly or loudly, slowly or quickly...". This, of course, bearing in mind his initial thundering voice.

In a cultural setting of a live performance, for example, the announcing formula such as 'once upon a time, Fox and Hyena were good friends' belongs to a stereotyped class of moralising tales around a clever character (Fox) who always does the 'tricking' and the wicked (Hyena) who is always 'tricked'. In a cultural setting, the audience is already familiar the characters' attributes. This knowledge is not given forthwith in a written version as a reader may be of a different cultural background. This is the reason why a reader needs to be given such clues as the vocal characteristics of the characters for the written text to further yield meaning. The text must offer

its reader creative means to elaborate his/her understanding of the plot by constantly finding support in these descriptions.

- Onomatopoeic expressions, as in any other language, abound in the Gouro language. They are established words or names that describe the characteristic nature of an object or action. Gouro language is very descriptive of actions. The Gouro would demonstrate through onomatopoeic expressions, the 'how' something happened. They would say, for instance, *ya tonen je ba* or 'he slapped him *ba*! *Ba* indicates the heaviness of the slapping. *E vlan sia jehin jehin*, or 'he ran away *jehin, jehin*' (like a giant), *E dia blahu*, or 'he fell *blahu*' (heavily). Because these are phrases that are always associated with a gestural enactment when saying them, they will be translated in keeping with the descriptive function that they are meant to produce. The sentence above would thus be rendered respectively: 'He slapped him heavily', 'He ran away like a giant', and 'He fell heavily on the ground'. This translation is much about inter-modal in that it operates from gestual-visual mode (Oral Style mode) to the Written mode. Another instance of onomatopoeic wording in the Gouro tale is the appellation of a character by his mannerism or his particular behaviour: eg. *Doh je tchetchenen* or '*tchetchenen* the scabious'. *tchetchenen* is the frail and awkward gait of a boy who is affected with scabies. He is identified by his frail and shaky way of walking *tchetchenen*. The mannerism coined to identify a character will be rendered as such.

- The full 'Rhythmo-stylistic analysis' of each of the ten narratives may extend the thesis beyond thousand pages. In order to avoid such a prolific production, I decided to apply the analysis to the first three tales only. The particular reason why I chose to apply these three tales to the 'Rhythmo-stylistic analysis' is that I have personally witnessed their performances on many occasions when they were told by other people, and also told them

myself many times when we used to gather in the homestead to tell stories to each other as children. Although I am very familiar with all the tales presented in this selection, I know these three tales very well, and therefore, I live the manifest memories of their performances in such an analysis.

## **5.2. The Rhythmo-stylistic analysis**

While the Rhythmography is suggested by Jousse to replicate in writing the mnemonic oral style performance, the Rhythmo-stylistics, as he says, is a strategy for analysing the mnemonic oral style text on the page.

Ultimately indeed, the Rhythmography provides a mode of record for Rhythmo-stylistic analysis to identify the gestual-visual/oral-aural components of a performance thus represented in writing. In so doing it allows to identify the psychodynamic features that make the Gouro narrative memorable for example. Because the Rhythmo-stylistic analysis of the ten tales under review may prove prolific, the first three tales have been isolated for the purpose of a deep psychodynamic structural analysis. This will aim at demonstrating in the rhythmographic texts:

- The evidence of the rhythmic schemas.
- The evidence of bilateral features in terms of the 'binary complementarity' of the narrative elements termed 'parallel propositions' by Jousse. One must understand that although some elements of a narrative may sometimes appear contrasting in their functions in a story, they are not necessarily in a conflicting relation. More importantly, by contradicting one another, they contribute to the harmony and logic of a narrative plot.
- The evidence of the 'mimismic' (imitation) features in terms of the Gouro socio-cultural monitoring and regulating effects of metaphor, analogy, and symbolism.
- The evidence of formulas and patterns.

- The evidence of the Mnemo-technical Devices in terms of repetition, onomatopoeias, clamp-words and sounds.

Once identified, each specific pattern of repetition will be marked with the same font colour to single out the effect of its psychodynamism.

In effect, Jousse's Rhythmo-stylistics has to be adapted to the dynamic mnemonic construct of a particular language to which it is applied because each language has its Oral style idiosyncrasies. I have specifically observed five major steps in the particular Gouro tale performance for the demonstration of their psychodynamism which are:

- The balancing of the rhythmic schemas within which I have identified pitgamas which are regarded as propositions. The pitgamas are presented on either side of the spine of the page in boxes, representing the body movements of a performer as echoed in her/his speech.
- The proposition level of repetition: at this level I have identified with the same colour the repetitive pattern of the pitgamas, which are the whole of each box.
- A cluster of words level of repetition, marked with the same colour in each pitgama to show the incidence of repetition at that level.
- The clamp-words, marked with the same colour in each pitgama to show the incidence of repetition at that level.
- The 'Acconsonantisation and Avocalisation': in these instances I have identified the particular incidence of combination of a vocalic and a consonant sound, and the combination of consonant + vocalic + consonant sounds. In Jousse's initial Rhythmo-stylistic analysis, it is customary to separate the repetition of vowels and consonants. But the particular structure of the Gouro language makes this impossible, hence the way I have clustered the consonants and vowels in their natural patterns.

The recording of the Gouro tales in the rhythmographic writing thus constitutes a level of translation of the oral style mode to the written mode. This is so to speak an inter-modal level of translation operating in the tales, that have only the tradition of being performed in the gestual-visual and oral-aural mode, being translated into writing. This translation introduces a third level of translation, which is the passage from the Gouro language to the English language and which constitutes an inter-lingual translation. What methodology have I used in translating the Gouro language, which has its idiosyncratic, linguistic, social, and cultural factors into English?

## **6. Method for an inter-lingual translation: from Gouro to English**

The method of inter-language translation of the tales accounts for the linguistic aspects and the mnemonic oral style. Indeed, there are some expressive features that are intrinsic to the Gouro language, and which too often have no equivalence in English. They are embedded in the worldview and value systems of the Gouro language, in metaphors, symbolism, onomatopoeias, which points to the psycho-physiological origins of the Gouro oral performance. This is the reason why I found necessary to adopt two perspectives of inter-lingual translation:

~ The first being a mimismic metaphoric translation of the Gouro, that is, a literal translation of the Gouro worldview as it is expressed in their tales. In other words, the mimismic metaphoric translation is a translation of the way in which the Gouro express their world as they have interiorised it. I attempted to keep as original as possible the Gouro expressive features through their language construct, its metaphors, and symbolism. The mimismic metaphoric translation (which is coupled with the each Gouro line) is so done to for the purpose of analysis of the psychodynamics of the Gouro tales.

~ The second aspect of the inter-lingual translation is the English user-friendly translation. This is done so to allow the English audience to see in the English mode of tale telling the shift in the Gouro language dynamics. I have included examples of the English user-friendly translation in tales 2, 3, and 7. I have particularly considered necessary the English user-friendly translation of these three tales because the identity of the perpetrator is highly in crisis in their initial mimismic metaphoric versions. Indeed, such a crisis, which may be also noticed in the other mimismic metaphoric versions of the ten tales under review, is mainly due to the fact that the translation had to proceed from the specific oral-style performance of individual teller. This implies the intervention of gestures, intonations, and other dramatics which cannot be seen in written records.

- In an interpretative note that follow each tale, I also reflect upon the origins of a tonal word, a concept, or a belief in an explanatory note at the end of each mimismic metaphoric translation. In such reflections, I attempt to open up to the extent possible the significance that a word or a concept may adopt in an English translation. This also leaves a perspective for further interpretations of a word or a concept, depending upon their context of occurrence. As such, it is important to note that the interpretations given in this thesis are not to be considered as definite. There may be many other context-related meanings of a single Gouro word or concept. Nevertheless, materials that are considered central to a better understanding by an outsider, in some cases, are elaborated on in terms of their expressive features native to the Gouro.

- The identity of prepositional meaning and construction in the Gouro language is thus cross-examined. I quoted in translation examples of semantic import of the cultural concepts which I interpreted and analysed. For example the Gouro customarily say **ca vouungohi doh!** meaning, 'to raise the dust', which is a metaphor for dance. It is believed by the Gouro

that when dust is raised on a dance floor, then the dancer is a successful dancer. They believe that dance is a sacred form of expression: it is a form of communication with the ancestors who are buried under the ground. By raising the dust, a dancer is believed to be linked with the ancestors. The dust is therefore the cheering of the ancestors from the beyond. In fact, reading works of oral style performance on the page and in a translation, does not always convey the beauty and charm of the source language, simply because the area of semantic correspondence largely fails to coincide in any two languages. Because of that, the precise distinctive nature of the Gouro propositions and their meaning need not only a devised translation, but also a full analysis.

- In order to further supplement my explanations, I have added an interpretative glossary entry at the end of this thesis. The glossary lists some Gouro words and their tonal variants from the tale texts under review along with their English translation. With this tool, it is intended to allow any reader to see the various tonal faces some words that appear in the tales can take on in differing contexts of communication.

- Gouro culture-specific concepts are rendered in hyphenated words or several orthographic words where they are foreign concepts in English and where there is no one-to-one equivalence. Eg: **Gankuo** (T6) is a kind of cask (in clay or calabash-like). The top part through which a liquid is poured can be of a few inches long, therefore the association of that container with buck (**gan**). The Gouro praise buck for its long neck which, they believe, is a sign of beauty. To say for example that someone has a long and beautiful neck they say 's/he has a neck like a buck', **a bloh a ta ble gan le**. **Gankuo** is therefore rendered in English translation as 'long-necked-cask'.

The Gouro expression may translate a concept through a metaphor which is totally unknown in English. The concept may be abstract or concrete, and



T050221

mostly related to religious belief, social customs, or to the Gouro Cosmogony. The culture-specific concepts can be further delineated into two fields: complex Semantism and Expressive meaning whose components are grounded in the allegoric, metaphoric, poetics and mythic make-up of the Gouro language. For example, the Gouro have the tradition of enquiring about news in order to be informed about facts which they can spread by telling other people in their turn. Customarily, exchange of news between two or many people, during informal meetings or formal settings takes place. In a communal gathering, a spokesperson gathers individual or group messages from various attendants by asking about their news: **ca si nan mi?** or **ca Ganen Zizio?** i.e. 'may we hear about what is going on where you are coming from?' or else "what is going on behind your feet?' - abbreviated to **ca zizio?** i.e. 'behind you?' so asked, an individual or a spokesperson of a group would recount all the significant events liable to inform others about from 'where they come' (**Sinan**) or that occurred during their trip on the road (**Zi**) to the meeting point.

Like in any other language, physical or abstract meanings are also present in the Gouro language. In expressive meaning production, places, things, the invisible world, and the visible world are in constant interactions. For example, the Guro have very specific ways of expressing some facts pertaining to their environment, which rarely have the same propositional meaning in English. Places and objects have particular memories in time and space, for example. And their names are coined according to typical event that occurred at a particular moment of life in order to carry over the years the memory of such an event: **Goli je ploh** means 'lion killing forest', that is, the forest (place) where someone gloriously killed a lion. **Ghoh le Bwii ta**, or 'the savannah of the hills'. Names are associated with specific memories in time and space.

Because one outcome is to show how the Gouro people make sense of life, the major concern in translating their tales is to exhibit the extent to which their language intersects with their cultural perception. Such an English sentence as 'a glass of water please' would then be rendered with the full gestural Gouro recreation as 'He bowed politely to ask for water', for example. *ca Zizio* (asking for news) would be translated as 'the-news-one-is-bringing', etc.

Certain suffixes or prefixes which convey propositional and other types of meaning in Gouro often have no direct equivalence in English. There is no equivalence in English for some linguistic forms in Gouro. The Gouro people make frequent use of the suffix *nen* meaning normally 'little': eg. *nen clen* or 'little child', *lou nen*, a 'little daughter', etc. It is important in translation to understand the functions of such affixes in a sentence. Sometimes their contribution to the meaning is subtle and can be used as means of allegorical techniques. One can, for example, call a girl *an bu lounen*, 'the little daughter of my mother' and yet mean 'friend'. In this case, it is important to signify in translation the evaluative element by means of building the imagery of identification. For example, 'spider calls elephant *an bu lounen*, would be 'spider called elephant amicably 'sister'/or spider called him pathetically/laughably, etc. There is thus a paradigm of evaluative function of usage of such affixes.

Invaluable to the present research orientation is to find a feasible way towards a practical representation of the Gouro language dynamics in writing. The typography that the tale adopts here suggests the continuing extra-textual presence of a live performance. It is in simple terms, a form of mediation between eye and ear. What in actual fact is initially expected from the narratives that are presented here is an audience of listeners, even though the stories look forward to a reception at the hands of readers. Their

original performance being embedded in a living tradition, the reader must read the stories within the logic of the Gouro language dynamics as discussed in this thesis.

Because Gouro still has no standardised written form, one must not see in the suggested strategies fixed rules for a categorical translation of that language. Translation itself being a dynamic exercise, it would be prudent to say that the context and purpose of the message will determine the translation. More importantly, one has to bear in mind when reading the Gouro tales that are presented here that they have been translated from a threefold perspective: from a gestual-visual and oral-aural performance to fixed text on the page (intermodal translation), from a language which has no standard scribal written form (Oral-literate interface), and from one language to another (interlingual translation)

With that proviso in mind, we can now highlight some leading arguments of the Gouro context of tale telling, the nature of a Gouro tale performance, and the possible structures of the narratives.

## CHAPTER FOUR

The present chapter looks at the storytelling as it is performed among the Gouro. In this discussion, one approach is certainly to first consider the circumstances of the Gouro tale performance, when and where a tale is performed, and who performs it. This chapter further addresses the different categories of the Gouro tales and the possible themes that emerge from these categories, and the functions of tale telling in the Gouro society. I will also extend my view to the structural content of the Gouro narratives.

### 1. Tale telling among the Gouro.

Whether performed in family setting by members, or in a much bigger gathering by a professional performer, Gouro *fiin vohki* meaning telling tales, is an activity which occurs at night time. In a homestead members of a family regularly gather after a day's work on the farm to listen to stories by other family members or, at times, join other community members to view a regular skilled performer. After the farm work of the day, members, back at the family home in the village or on the camp-site of the farm, join to share the *yananli fe*, the evening meal. It is then when pounding pestles are silenced and everyone is comforted with a proper dish of plantain or yam dough, rice, etc., that someone in the yard invites others to *fiin voh*, or to tell stories. As it occurs most evenings, during the occasion everyone who knows a story can tell a story: youngsters and elderly, girls and boys, all participate and have the entertaining duty and right to sing, laugh, and comment on the behaviour of the characters of the tales. The evening performances can, at times, attract a few persons from the neighbourhood of the courtyards and can gather a much bigger circle of tale amateurs. It is an open and free learning process marked by a lively participation of the

members. Usually, the performance starts with riddle telling, **tohlale**, which is 'asking names or meanings of enigmas' as a warm-up, then the tale telling follows. Time is never a problem and stories can be performed till very late in the night. There is a saying that one must not perform tales during daytime. If a person does, s/he will marry an old man or an old woman. But it may be believed that the moral behind this is that daytime is the time for working on the farm. If a person indulges in tales at that time, an old woman or man would have to entertain always his or her laziness. The Gouro are farmers who believe that tale telling must not impede the farming activities.

On the other hand, the telling event where a skilled performer exclusively features remains the most appealing to the community members. The event gathers the community of the village and sometimes attracts a few people from the immediate neighbouring villages. Even though the formal storytelling event can occur on special invitations of a skilled storyteller during the farming period to entertain the community, such an occasion is mostly reserved for the time after harvest. That generally happens when there is little to do on the land; when yam is harvested, rice reaped, cocoa and coffee crops harvested, livestock bred to the satisfaction of the farmers and the villagers make plans for various sorts of entertainment: dance, masquerade, wrestling, etc.

Skilled tale tellers are very keen artists who are a storehouse of Gouro traditional and cultural knowledge. Their artful knowledge of animal characteristics makes them sages. They are very much loved for their entertaining abilities. Skilled storytellers are generally adults who have a considerable number of stories to keep an audience entertained overnight. On special invitations, a skilled teller can perform from dusk to dawn. Some renown names in the Gouro area include, for example Towli-bi Zoro from the Tonhon district, Sery-bi Tile and Dougone-bi Bla known as voeyibaklahou

from Bonon, Bahia-bi Youan from Mamlinji, and Gourizan-bi Irie known as 'Plus court' (in short) from Befla (Kouhon). A professional performance very often involves the use of instruments such as *conon*, which is a traditional harp or else a drum to support the teller's songs. Towli-bi Zoro makes use of a harp while 'Plus court' uses a drum. The latter usually rigs himself out in female outfit during his performances. According to him, his female outfit is in the memory of his grandmother who introduced him to professional storytelling. This is also the argument of Bahia-bi Youan of Mamlinji who similarly disguises himself as a woman during his performances. Although the Gouro women can at times be very resourceful in terms of stories, they are not often seen, if at all, in professional performances. A mother or a Grand mother may be a potential tale teller with a wide repertory of tales, but she is only well approved of in a household setting of performance. Professional tale telling thus seems to be the exclusive domain of men among the Gouro. They often travel over long distances on invitation to perform.

During a performance, the professional or the ordinary teller recounts deeds of human, of animal, or of fantastic characters. All the components of the universe are brought together in space and time. The teller's imagination takes a free flight in the quest for truth. All elements become animated, and all are allowed to contribute to the substance of the truth by all means. Transmutation is one of the chief means by which actions often know their most dramatic denouement. An animal can, for example, turn into a beautiful lady that seduces a hunter to know his secrets, a human can transmute into a fish to spy on the aquatic world, a fish can get wings to fly and discover the world, etc. If the Gouro integrate all elements in narratives (like many other peoples), it is due to their belief that no existence can be conceived besides an indispensable interdependence between all, and that harmony in nature implies the respect for the difference, the recognition and

understanding of one another as a vital component of the existing whole. What would, for example, humankind be without trees, animals, sun, moon, fish, etc.? He would simply not be. His own existence is indebted to the existence of all other elements which he must understand. If in tales all speak one language, it is because they all live in the same world and are defined by one law: the 'Law of Mimism' as Jousse calls it, which relates the ones to the others by imitation. Believing that all are interrelated or 'imbricated' as Jousse puts it, 'if anything happens it will affect all others', or else 'nothing happen without a reason' becomes an accepted fact to the Gouro.

The land of the Gouro tales so becomes a world where everyone talks and interacts with others: living and dead beings, animate and inanimate, tangible and intangible characters, humans, animals, objects, all communicate in the same language. The tale world thus creates one big family which does not leave aside the audience who also takes an active part in the whole interaction.

#### **a. The audience and the teller.**

The audience participation in performances in general has been discussed in various respects. In her *Oral Traditions and the Verbal Arts: A Guide to Research Practices* (1992) for example, Ruth Finnegan looks at the degree and form of participation of the audience. According to her, there are differing relations between performer and audience. She believes that, although an audience may take an active part to a performance and that there may be no clear barrier between performer and audience, there are distinctions on the level of both categories' physical enactments. Assessing the audience's role in a performance then, Finnegan sees their participation in terms of '*primary vs secondary*' forms, '*integral vs accidental*', '*homogeneous vs heterogeneous*', '*mass or impersonal vs personal*'. She

believes that at the *primary vs secondary* level, the performance is not directly aimed at the overt audience, but at others attending in a different capacity. As for example, "...a group's songs can be apparently performed for one audience but deliberately meant as protest or comment to bystanders." (1992: 98). The *integral* audience, as it is concerned, is an audience that 'has to' be at a performance. Quoting Schechner, Finnegan understands for example that "Integral audiences include the relatives of the bride and groom at a wedding, the tribe assembled for initiation rites, dignitaries on the podium for an inauguration." (Schechner in Finnegan 1992: 99), as opposed others attending the performance. About *Homogeneous* audiences, Finnegan says that although audience members may belong to a number of disparate groups, members with the same interests may be seen as *homogeneous* audiences as against members with different interests. Finnegan sees the last category of *Mass or impersonal audiences* as audiences for broadcast in a larger-scale society, for example, which she opposes to *personal audiences* of live performances by local performers to friends or relatives. Finnegan thus maintains that there are differing forms of participation of an audience depending on the audience type. Isidore Okpewho, considering the audience in a traditional setting of performance, does not see any separation between performer and audience. He says, "In the traditional setting, most public performances of songs and tales are done in such a way that there is no physical separation between performer and audience members. The artist is practically surrounded by them and in some cases moves through their midst in the course of the performance." (Okpewho 1992: 63).

In the case of tale telling among the Gouro in particular, the interaction between performer and audience is an important factor to the telling process and to the establishment of a common truth. In effect, the reaction of the audience can be seen as an assessment of the actions of the characters of the story, and as a correction of their deeds. The members of the audience

are linked with the narration in a deeply emotional way because of their knowledge and familiarity with the narrative elements. The performer's own creativity is governed by the audience's experiences. He is himself part of the audience in the sense that they all belong to the same world.

Indeed, the art of telling is confined to the knowledge system of the community to which the teller himself belongs. Harold Scheub in 'Oral Narrative Process and the use of Model' (Scheub 1978) notes that how a performer of an oral narrative elicits emotions from the members of his audience is achieved primarily through the metaphors and symbols he evokes. Objects and their names are taken from the world of the artist and his/her audience. The artist thus knows the history of his/her audience and the metaphors that s/he manipulates skilfully to a meaningful rendition. S/he has an intimate knowledge of his/her audience and their worldview. This explains that a typical audience becomes an integral part of the narration process and thus takes an active part in the rendition of the story. The narrative elements, to give rise to the audience's reaction, must be comprehensible and recognisable. The narrative elements are trapped from the real world, the world of the audience, and they address the sense of order that results from that world. What triggers emotions among the audience is that the members of an audience are linked to a specific knowledge system and their familiarity with it establishes the logical learning process through orderly use and combination of the system. This shows why the audience gives life to a performance when the teller evokes an element. It is simply that the teller manipulates concepts into metaphors and symbols and liberates the lessons from their connotations in such a way that the audience's emotion gets trapped into the artistry of meaning and logic. A good Gouro storyteller thus relies on his/her audience, understands their mood, their needs, goes with their comments which allow her/him to bring more details to specific statements. A Gouro storyteller can spontaneously improvise in situations to elicit emotion in the audience. Based on the

reaction of her/his audience, a teller can for example appraise, exaggerate, stigmatise, or else ridicule the action of a given character to make the audience further appreciate the deeds. A teller may express the various emotions of fear, anger, or despair to the accompaniment of the audience amusement or laughter. Indeed, the narrator imitates various characters. S/he gets metamorphosed into the characters that s/he mimes. By Jousse's law of mimism, a teller embodies the tale characters, gives them flesh and blood by making them live on stage. By imitating the manners and emotions of the tale characters, a Gouro storyteller becomes himself so absorbed in their nature that her/his posture, gesture, and vocal patterns are adjusted to characters s/he is (re) playing. In a way, s/he becomes the projection of the life of the characters: s/he is not the one who speaks, but the characters s/he portrays. S/he is not the one who is listened to, but the characters in the tale; simply, because s/he is not acting, but the tale characters are. The teller becomes polyphonic and presents the interaction of several voices. The audience also relates to the story and can even interfere by, at times, stopping the narrator and asking for further clarification.

There are various respects in which the audience participation can be assessed. Audience participation ensures that:

- The plot of a story is followed and the story understood.
- The children enter a learning system which consummates a concrete process in social interaction rather than transmission of information only.
- There is a greater chance of understanding, storing and retrieving what has been said.

In effect, as mentioned in the first chapter, an important message to be understood and interiorised is eaten. Whether in ordinary parlance or during palavers, during storytelling or other kinds of verbal art, participants *wi bli* (eat the sound); a message passes from mouth to mouth. It is almost

palpable, and "it provides the base and substance of thought. The spoken word is not assimilated passively, but chewed on, eaten, mouthed by the hearers themselves when they fully participate in listening and thinking that goes with the listening."(Ong, 1977:260). Participation is the foundation of the preservation of messages and their being passed over to generations.

## 1.2. The Gouro tale telling process.

A Gouro tale may be introduced by:

- **Chant:** The narrator spontaneously breaks into song without prior introduction. Because the cultural knowledge determines the production of a narrative, the audience who constitutes a potential choir of the performance immediately responds with the song. The chant by itself already symbolically exhibits, in a canonical form, the contents of the story that it supports. The song reveals the story-line. A story may be known to the audience and therefore the reaction is spontaneous when the performer starts singing. When the story is not known, the performer teaches the audience the part they have to play in the performance.

The chant with which the story opens, can be sung many times. New songs can also be added, depending on the nature of the message. Chants in effect are as important in the Gouro storytelling as they are an essential vehicle of the memory of a story. Chants are more easily remembered than the details of a story itself because they are formulaic and rhythmically balanced, and rhythm, balance and formula are mnemonic laws essentially govern memorisation.

- **A formulaic expression:** Gouro tales mostly start with the formulary expression of **Anle fiin**, and the audience responds **e jie**. By saying **anle fiin**, meaning 'my story', a teller makes a wish to tell a story. The response of the audience, **e jie**, meaning 'it is passed' is consistent with the Gouro

belief that the time in which the events took place is vague; it is a remote past, **e jie**. This beginning formulaic expression confers full authorship on a teller who is now free to enter into the past world where all elements interact. In other words, by saying **anle fiin**, a teller claims authorship of a story which s/he is going to recreate with his/her individual flavour. S/he may then start by saying: 'long, long ago' rendered by **e li e li...** Other formulaic expressions include **wi le cle ye (...)** **man ji fe ca le**, meaning 'what happened and (this is so and so) I will explain to you'.

- **Apostrophe:** The narrator may 'apostrophize' some members of the audience at random, by enquiring if they know the meaning of this or that. This is a device used by a performer to establish the extent of ignorance of the audience, regarding the story he wants to tell and to further get them to pay due attention to her/his wisdom.

- **The ending phrase:** The Gouro tales have a stereotype ending formula which is **de be le vie le be yrrrkpehi**, meaning 'if this a lie, let it be', or else **de be le vie le, be le mianen le go mibe**, meaning 'if that is a lie, there is its bird flying over there'. The flying bird here is believed to be the messenger of unreal facts.

## 2. The Gouro tale categories

Gouro tales can be subdivided into many types, some involving human characters, the others involving animal characters, trickster and cannibal characters, or others again a combination of all. The Gouro tale characters personify heroes and villains, good and evil. The performances address various aspects of life from which one may learn. As such, the tales gauge characteristic plots in which the Gouro's perceptions are given a certain meaning. It is the explanatory nature of tales that thus brings about

formulaic expressions of the kind: 'that is the reason why this is so', or 'do you know how that is so?' or else 'what made this or that be like this or like that?', etc. Fundamentally, the plot responds to the why, what, and how, of the culture-based perceptions. Categories with which the Gouro tales can be identified are as follows:

**a) Daily-Routine-dependence tales:** The performance of the routine-dependence tales creates a semantic field to justify daily life. These tales feature characters that perform actions which recall the daily behaviour; the dramatic effect of which actions address the social attitude of members. T8 for example tells about the duties of a housewife in a family. The ethos of the routine-dependence tales promotes social and cultural norms to be wisely observed by members. T8 for instance confirms that a housewife is expected to perform her domestic duties such as cooking, making provision of firewood, food, and water, sweeping the homeyard, and taking care of the family members. They translate social-cultural norms and mores, and thus have a social function of control. Such tales would generally be concluded with the formulas as 'This is why one must/must not do this or that', or 'One must not disregard such phenomena, if one does, one will be punished', etc.

**b) Concept-dependence tales:** Here, a narrator follows a certain logic to establish the rationale of a construct. This has a highly cultural and linguistic function since explanations are embedded in language factors. Mostly, this is the field where origins of words and the interrelation of sounds and concepts, are explained. Such tales generally start with formulas such as 'do you know the origin of this concept or the meaning of such word?' This category of tales, because of their complex semantic construct which is embedded in the initial language factors, were less sought after by the early European collectors. An instance is the account of why snail is called *trogo* which means that "mushroom (*tro*) is out of season (*go*), therefore

this bloodless ingredient is a substitute for the mushrooms”, as a mother told her children.

**c) Myth-dependent tales:** Are concerned with the supra-human domain of the Gods. They create society’s awareness of supernatural forces, which regulate the lives of ordinary beings. They teach humans how dependent their actions are on other forces that are beyond their reach, and are part of cosmological orders. Such tales, mostly about events in nature, involve the sun, the moon, phenomena such as the eclipse, rain, drought, death, etc., as these are events that are beyond common understanding. T10 for example, tells about the origin of death, and how death has come to be an affliction to humans.

**d) History-dependent tales:** Are about events that took place in the past, for instance the deeds and exploits of the ancestors. They form a frame of historical references to a specific community. History-dependent tales are mostly associated with extraordinary deeds that are presented in an exaggerated way, and possibly account for the early history of the Gouro people.

**e) Secrecy-dependent tales:** they relate to the secret societies whose dwelling places are symbolised by sacred woods, shrines, bush, mountains. These places are the domains of their gods. Ordinary persons pay due respect to the Gods through rites of initiation in order to be introduced to the world of the gods. The initiate learns the language of the gods (very archaic words), through stories. The secrecy is in line with the fact that the glory related to such stories remain paramount in their lives, and everyone claims pride from such empowering belief. Such is, for example, the secret knowledge of the *je, lo, jeen* among the Gouro. Stories that relate to these secret societies are reserved exclusively reserved to male initiates. In order

to keep the memory of such secrecy, it is passed from generation to generation in the form of tales, songs, praises.

### **3. The narrative themes.**

The Gouro narrative themes are of various orders. They address issues that the Gouro people perceive to be important in life. They include issues such as occurrences in daily life (T10), natural calamities such as famine caused by severe droughts (T4, 5), disruption of social unity by the erratic behaviour of some members such as intolerance, selfishness, greed, and power abuse, segregation, jealousy, and so on (T5, 7,8), breach of trust (T3), need for wisdom in human society (T1, 6), marital issues (T8), supernatural manifestations (T9), metaphysical manifestations such as witchcraft, magic powers (T9), and well other thematic concerns judged important to the preservation of their social harmony.

### **4. Functions of the Gouro tales.**

Storytelling performance among the Gouro performs various functions:

**\*Didactic:** It is no doubt that storytelling among the Gouro has always performed in the first place a didactic function. Entertainment may be the means, but instruction is the end. A Gouro story performance remains an anonymous court where social characters and their actions are assessed, and where individual conscience or group behaviours are judged. Of special interest is the use of animal characters and other elements to understand social behaviour. Children are introduced to that storehouse of knowledge of the past transmitted through the generations. They learn about general attitude and principles of harmonious social life. They learn to interpret the actions and apply or relate them to their everyday life. Gouro tales are meant to explain, and thus validate for the children a system which is

traditionally appreciated and treasured in Gouro society. If the tales are performed at night time, it is to allow a conscience to sleep on it. E. Foster once stated that “there is nothing that commends a story to memory more effectively than that chaste compactness which precludes psychological analysis. And the more natural the process by which the storyteller forgoes psychological shading, the greater becomes the story’s claim to a place in the memory of the listener, the more completely it is integrated into the memory of the listener, the greater will be his inclination to repeat it to someone else some day, sooner or later”. (2000: 49). Before being an event which simply brings together and amuses community members after their daily activities, storytelling, more importantly, sees to the institution of their ancestrally determined truth. It is therefore an important tool of education among the Gouro.

It is of importance to note that with the advent of formal schooling of the modern times, less attention is being paid to storytelling among the Gouro. In villages, schools have almost exclusively replaced that traditional form of child learning. Evenings have become quieter and quieter in homesteads since the introduction of the first schools in rural areas because the youngsters were henceforth too busy learning their class lessons away from their parents. It is no more common occurrence to see gatherings in homesteads for traditional storytelling. The situation becomes even worse in urban areas where during their spare times, families prefer to gather in front of a television set to watch western movies and soapies. At times in these new mediums of communication, attempts have been made (by the Ivorian government) to incorporate traditional storytelling. In schools for example, storytelling manuals such as *Le conte du grand pere voila pourquoi*, were introduced in the early 80s with the intention to combine both the traditional and the modern ways of learning. The outcome has been a failure because the learners, during school classes, only read in books in a foreign language (French) during broad daylight what had only the tradition of being

performed in at night time in their mother tongues. Notwithstanding that the introduction of the traditional storytelling in formal schooling was not to train storytellers in the modern sense. Television recorded performances could not impose themselves either, not even to tale lovers, because the performances would always happen on the other side of the screen with no audience interaction. So, among the Gouro today (among other peoples of the Ivory Coast too) less attention is being paid to the traditional stories and their meaning simply because western schools are now substituted to the primary function of education of traditional tale telling.

**\*Social control:** The gathering of members of a family or of the community to listen to stories enhances social harmony and cohesion in the community. During storytelling events that witness a bigger gathering, members socialise before the performance starts. They ask about each others' news, talk about current issues that affect the community, ask each others clarifications on social issues they have missed, share jokes, the ones haranguing those they have not seen for too long, etc.

Storytelling among the Gouro also contributes to the validation their customs. A performance is a form of an internalised check on behaviour. As William Bascom puts it, tales are "...used to express social approval of those who conform to accepted social conventions and criticism or ridicule of those who deviate.... Their intrinsic value lies in two qualities: they are an inheritance from their ancestors incorporating the experience of the tribe, and they serve as instruments both for self-control and for the control of others." (Bascom in Dundes 1965:294). Indeed, storytelling among the Gouro is an important instrument for maintaining the stability of their culture. In Dundes' words,

It is used to inculcate the customs and ethical standards in the young, and as an adult to reward him with praise when he conforms, to punish him with ridicule or criticism when he deviates, to provide him with rationalizations when the institutions and conventions are challenged, to suggest that he be content with things as they are, and to provide him with a

compensatory escape from the hardships, the inequalities, the injustices of everyday life.” (Dundes 1965: 298)

\* **Recreation:** Storytelling among the Gouro is also a popular form of recreation for people of different ages. If in the first place education and social control are the end, entertainment is the means for ensuring the effectiveness of these first two functions. The event brings together children and adults, and all are free to listen to each other, to share jokes, and to laugh. Storytelling is always an event during which creative imagination takes free flight with metaphoric characters and their funny actions. During a performance songs are sung and dance may be performed to the delight of the audience. The audience participation to a performance without any restriction of gender or age makes storytelling the most popular form of amusement among the Gouro.

##### **5. The Gouro tale structure.**

Gouro tales are structured according to a system of knowledge that translates their truth. The Gouro tales' orientation suggests a plot, which is an organising line involving acting characters. The characters of a Gouro tale are drawn from the animal world as well as from all other elements of the physical and metaphysical worlds. The Gouro narrative is usually in the form of allegory. It develops from an initial incident of a plot, 'the beginning', which is the impetus for all actions that follow and thus assures a forward moving temporality of the narrative. The action mounts until 'the climax', the turning point of the action, is reached. The action then falls and unfolds in a resolution, leading to 'the end' of the story.

This plotting schematised by Vladimir Propp (1968) in the three steps of a beginning, a Body, and an end applies to the Gouro narratives.

## **Climax**

### **BODY**

#### **Crisis**

#### **Rising Action**

#### **Complication**

#### **Falling action**

#### **(denouement)**

## **BEGINNING**

### **Exposition**

## **END**

### **Last suspense Dynamic Stability**

### **Conclusion**

- a.) Opening of a story: a Gouro story always starts with a 'dynamic stability', which is an initial order. The order is disturbed somehow by some event and the situation rises into complications.
- b.) Body: This is the body of complications stemming from various crises brought about by the disturbance of the initial order. The body thus develops into actions till it reaches a climax.
- c.) End: Once the climax is reached, the story then comes to a denouement in a falling action. In most cases, the denouement takes place through a last suspense, and the story ends.

The least to note, at this point, is that this structure is rooted in the theatrical moral regulation, raising the very question about man's existence: His birth (beginning of life), his growth (Active life), and his death (end of his life). This can be assimilated to the morals of the classical Greek Drama which originated in the festivals of the nature god, Dionysus, in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century B.C. The festival which was the celebration of Dionysus, the fertility god, developed into a social satire in the form of *tragoidia*, Tragedy. The dramatic structure of the Tragedy was then to the effect of the sojourn of man on earth, from his birth, to his growth, then to his death. The essential question that rules from both man's existence and such a narrative structure is the way in which the Gouro present in their narratives their concern of being forever torn between the seeming irreconcilables of good and evil. In fact, the Gouro seek the sense of order outside themselves, through other characters. In other words, they construct a moral statement in the characters of their tales in the good and evil designs of others. The Gouro tales thus explore the Gouro people's perception of life. As such, their understanding of life through the narrative characters includes a degree of psychological insight that is not immediately given at birth, but that is acquired during growth through learning and experience.

As the Gouro tales in their general structure involve the disruption of social harmony by some villainous being; the resolution usually brings the villain into confrontation with a heroic character who diminishes its destructive nature. This is for example, the case of:

- A trickster who always tricks an antagonist or a group. The tricksters that are most frequently present in the Gouro tales are *ji Clin kwanen* or "the clever Fox" and *Colo tonen*, or *Colo* "the Spider", who continually tricks large and dangerous animals such as the Elephant, Panther and other fierce creatures. But Fox and Spider are tricksters of opposing morality. The

tales where Fox features always see a happy ending. Fox overcomes his opponent (s) and therefore is highly praised for his useful tricks. On the other hand, the tales where Spider features mostly have a tragic ending. Sir Colo, the Spider, who is believed to have been a colossus in bygone days, more often ends up being a victim of his own tricks and therefore gets beaten up and flattened: hence its small body today.

\*In the first case, the protagonist increases his powers by some fortunate means or with the help of a 'donor' to overcome his antagonist(s): e.g. a hot-food-eating contest is won by Fox who took time to cool his dish by going around the whole animal community and calling each animal to witness when he eats the hot dish.

\*In the second case, the protagonist increases his powers with tricks, but gets punished and dies when the trick is discovered. Eg.: Sir Spider, having informed his maternal community that he owns an elephant as a slave-carrier, invites Elephant on a friendly visit to his maternal village. On their way, he persuades Elephant that according to Spiders' customs a distinguished guest should be mounted on and be protected against undesired flies. But soon, Elephant discovers the trick when the maternal village community praises Spider's magnificent look on top of his so-called 'slave-carrier'. He drops him off his back and crushes him.

The tricks of Spider and Fox teach various means by which a smaller or a weaker being can triumph over bigger or stronger beings. But, at the same time, the morals of their tricks advise that one must be careful when playing a trick, otherwise one will pay the price as Spider does in stories. In short, they teach how to behave in life.

- Other tales that address different aspects of Gouro social life. Human characters are often present in the tales. They journey through the permeable boundaries of the animal world and the world of the dead in their quest for truth, order, and wisdom. In Cope's words, "the human stories seem to express the concern of man's sense of insecurity, his anxieties, fear and doubts. They are serious and complex, employ symbolism and present polarities, and could be regarded as philosophical statements". (1978: 185). Gouro narratives usually feature protagonists who go through certain adventures where they face obstructive characters. The protagonists then learn to overpower their antagonists.

The characters that are actually involved in the story, 'the actants' (Greimas 1970, term corresponding to Propp's 'dramatis persona') operate at the narrative deep structure. They determine the actions and keep the story-line moving. They describe the adventurous interaction between good doers and wrong doers.

## **6. Internal structure of the Gouro tale.**

The plot of a tale involves a series of events performed by characters. It is a very confined world because all interactants speak one language: Gouro. If one character of the story happens to be identified as a stranger, he is likely to belong to the confines of the Gouro land. Because, the plot is about confrontations between various characters, the ones opposing the hero and the others helping the hero), the tales' internal structure is mostly presented through dialogue. The narrator can adopt:

- A non-chronological structure: That is, when the storyteller proceeds and discontinuity occurs through interruptions. A teller can, for example,

return to recount previous events – by flashbacks – or he can anticipate an action – flash forward.

- A repetitive structure: Repetition is an important element of the mnemonic Oral Style and plays an important role in the performance. In fact, the ethics of repetition in storytelling is threefold:

- \* To remind the audience of the reasons for an event.
- \* To give a chance to those in the audience who did not follow the story in the first place to get on line
- \* To reinforce the memory.

- An elliptic structure: In this form, for example, the insignificant events of some moments of the story are skipped over rather than narrated: eg. 'After twenty years, being without parents, the witch who adopted the child passed away.'

- An autodiegetic structure: Autodiegesis is when the narrator refers to himself in the story, especially to convey an important moral. The narrator can then devise a story in which he gets involved in the actions recounted and uses an 'I'. The narrative device features the narrator as a character-witness of all the events of the story. He is omnipresent in all the scenes and is willing to be the moral provider himself.

The internal structure of the Gouro tales adopts a specific denouement of the rationale that a story wishes to establish. As such it is tale-specific as it will be demonstrated in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FIVE

**Writing down the Gouro tale performances in the Gouro language, their English translation and interpretation, their psychodynamic analysis, and some notes on the Gouro narrative elements**

### TALE ONE

#### **The dramatis personae**

**Ca Zan Bali:** Ca Zan Bali (God Our Owner) set Fox on a divine mission of finding a beautiful woman

**Fox:** Trickster and the messenger of God. He is very witty and persuasive.

**Chicken:** He is tricked, eats corn and is killed

**Goats:** they gambol as it is part of their nature. They are tricked.

**Cows:** They gambol as it is part of their nature. They are tricked.

**Humans:** They are in a funeral and are tricked by Fox.

**A dead woman:** She was abandoned by Humans as Fox offered them a cow to slaughter at her funeral.

**A beautiful woman:** She was given to Fox by Humans in replacement of the so-called 'God's dead wife. Fox took her to God as a means of the initial divine mission on which God set him.

**A grain of corn:** It was given to Fox by God as a means of Fox's mission to be returned in the form of a beautiful woman.

**Title: The Gift of God**

*An le Fiin.*

My story.

**e jie.**

It is past.

**Ca Zan Bali go wIE do non Kwanen IE ble**

Ca Zan Bali gave one grain of corn to Fox

**ya 'cIE e li nonomi do yan**

So that he can turn it into a beautiful woman

**ye e da yan e IE.**

and bring her to him.

**e da yi go wIE yan**

Fox came with that grain of corn

**ye e ya dia Manen wuo.**

and he gave it to Chicken.

**Ye Manen a mlin.**

And Chicken swallowed it.

**Yile Bali ble**

Then God said

**yi e le go wIE le**

that his grain of corn

**Manen a mlin 'bE**

that Chicken swallowed

**wa IEjiman Manen non.**

must be compensated with a Chicken.

**Ye wa IEjiman Manen 'non,**

And they gave a Chicken in compensation,

**ye e da**

and Fox left the Chicken

**ye ya zoun Boli nu va.**

amongst the Goats.

**Ye Boli nu a clicli cIEnan**

As the Goats were gambling,

**ye wo dola yi Manen 'ta**

they walked over the Chicken

**ye wa "jE.**

and they killed it.

**Ye Ca Zan Bali ble**

And Ca Zan Bali said

**yi e le Manen le Boli nu a "jE 'bE**

that his Chicken that the Goats killed,

**wa IEjiman boli non.**

must be compensated with a Goat.

***Ye wa IEjiman Boli 'non***

And they gave a Goat in compensation.

***Ye ya zoun Dri nu va.***

And Fox left the Goat amongst the Cows.

***Yi le Dri nu a clicli cIEnan***

As the Cows were gamboling

***ye wa "jE.***

they killed the Goat.

***Ye Ca Zan Bali ble***

And Ca Zan Bali said

***yi e le Boli le Dri nu a "jE 'bE***

that his Goat that the Cows have killed,

***wa IEjiman Dri non.***

must be compensated with a Cow.

***ye wa IEjiman Dri 'non.***

And they gave a Cow in replacement.

***A yih yan***

That day

***te waa gonan li zan do pa IE.***

they were taking a woman to the grave.

***Ye Kwanen Dri 'non***

And Fox gave the Cow

***'wo go "jE 'jE ta.***

to slaughter at her funeral.

***Wo e go ki yan***

As they left

***Kwanen yi li zan 'sia***

Fox took the woman,

***ye ya man pa e nonomi***

made her up very beautiful,

***ye ya doh zia.***

and left her on the road.

***Ye e go***

And he went

***ye e ble***

and he said to the people:

***e da Ca Zan Bali nan yan***

"I came with God's wife,

***caa go wi a va.***

let us go and greet her.”

**ZilEzan vlin le ‘bE da vlan yan bE,**

The first one who came running,

**blehi an va ‘bE e bE ‘cIE lizan man**

the moment he tried to touch the woman,

**lizan dia.**

the woman fell.

**Ye kwanen ble**

And Fox said bewildered,

**yeh! e ya gonan Ca Zan Bali nan yan**

“gosh! I was escorting God’s wife

**ye wa “jEE!**

and they killed her,

**‘bE man wa lejiman li non.**

they must give a woman in compensation.”

**Ye wo li nonomi do ‘non a IE**

And they gave him a beautiful woman

**ye e go a yan.**

and he went with.

**Ye Bali ble**

And God said:

***Bah! A ze ji a e 'clin ki kyEle.***  
unbelievable! He is very clever!

***'BE man de yen le e soh a IE***  
For that, the nose that he likes

***ya si va.***  
he must choose it.

***Ye e ble***  
And he said that

***de yen le e ki mi yala,***  
the nose which (when one has it on his face)

***e wi zenzi jin sie 'bE***  
can smell a good sense of things,

***a va le e ki.***  
it is the one he would like.

***A yan le kwanen e wi zenzi jin sie***  
That is why Fox can sense good

***ye ya yanen e jin si.***  
and he can sense bad.

***De 'bE le vie le***

If it is lies,

***'bE yrrrr kpei.***

there it is going away.

## **1. Interpretation**

In this tale, Bali put Fox to the test. Fox is requested to put to good use what Bali gave him, a grain of corn. But on a higher order it is rather what Bali gave humans in his image that is at trial, i.e. Fox's capacity of thinking creatively like Bali. Fox demonstrated that he could think creatively and positively although the test entailed a temptation of some kind. Fox could have kept the grain of corn for himself. Fox could have kept the chicken, the goat or the cow too, but he continued to the end to meet the divine request.

The omnipresence of God in that tales explains his knowledge of all events that occur. God knows that his grain of corn, his chicken, his goat, and his cow were killed. In effect, every time an element is killed, God is brought into the picture to ask for a replacement. Fox received a grain of corn from God that he drops on purpose amongst the chickens; he receives a chicken that he leaves purposely amongst the goats; he receives a goat that he leaves purposely amongst the cows. He thus uses what God gives him to reach his goal to God's satisfaction, using God's own power. He ends up seducing 'our owner' who rewards him with a nose that made him a legend. With that nose he can breathe the breath of intelligence. He can sense good and he can sense evil and consequently, anticipates any trouble.

On the one hand, from a grain of corn to humans, a chain is symbolically created to explain the interdependence of all the elements of the universe. This is a linking 'rope' or **Bali** that makes God himself fall into a continuum by wanting a wife from that circle of interdependence. As such, the chain of narrative elements through which that tale develops creates a certain rhythm to which the voice of the teller unconsciously gets subdued. In fact, there are a number of components along the line. And every time Fox receives one component he would confront it with another component even more powerful until he reaches the human class, which is the closest element to God. The Listing can be exhaustive following the ecosystem where everyone needs the other and is needed in his turn by the other. Eventually, Fox completes the circle by meeting God's demand; by bringing him the beautiful woman and thus closing the circle where weaker elements are over-powered by stronger elements.

On the other hand, this tale creates an awareness of a higher order that regulates life: 'Our Owner', **Bali**. **Bali** always intervenes in terms of 'His'. He says 'his grain of corn', 'his chicken', 'his goat', 'his cow', 'his wife', and ultimately his chain of life. He owns every component of the chain and closes the chain himself. That is why he is **Bali** or Cord. The Gouro say **Ca Zan Bali**, which is 'Our Owner **Bali**'. They believe that **Bali** owns everything and that He can do anything with anything, therefore, he is pictured in a rank of supremacy: **Bali ya mih ta** or '**Bali** is above humans'. The principle feature of the Gouro understanding of **Bali** is the manifestation of the interconnectedness of all things in the creation. All is known to **Bali** at all times because of this interconnectedness. Nothing happens without **Bali** being aware of it all.

This tale, in any performance, can only be best presented in a non-dialogic form because the idea that underpins its function is that it translates a divine order that has to be executed without further questioning. It is the voice of

**Bali** whose will must be done. His voice is paramount. The voice of the teller in that case adopts a single point of control since it is **Bali** who is present and who is ordering any action from his subjects in order to do his will.

Furthermore, the grain of corn that is given to Fox by God symbolises fecundity, multiplicity, and infinity. One grain of corn can multiply into hundreds when sown. It therefore represents a chain of life. Its cyclic reproduction in a greater number evokes the cycle of life: the beginning and the end, life and death. A corn dries up (it dies) before it is sown and regenerates through germination (back to life). The beginning and the end can be seen in that the grain goes from the hand of God and comes back to God in the form of a beautiful woman who rose from death. The end of the chain evokes a dead woman through whom Fox gets another living woman. Along the story, life seems to spring from death since each element dies then is replaced by another living one. This is the grain of corn that regenerates/germinates when dried up and sown to give more life. What the Gouro person learns from this cyclic order is the respect of all elements of their universe. The tale teaches that all elements fall under the law of the interconnectedness and thereby contribute to harmonious life. They also learn to believe in life and death as two states of being that complement each other, the one being part of the other. The idea that Dead people are part of the living world in the Gouro cosmos thus may be explained through this tale.

The chain of life is also sung in a Gouro song:

*An bu an le fla sonnon Go voh*

My father sowed my corn nearby the village

*An ti an le fla sonnon Go voh*

My mother sowed my corn nearby the village

*Yi le gonen bo dia ta*  
And a capot tree fell over it  
*Man fi an le Gonen bo e vo nan*  
I wanted the capot tree to remain there  
*Yi le 'bahi go bli IE*  
Then the ants consumed it  
*Man fi an le 'bahi e vo nan*  
And I wanted these ants to remain there  
*Yi le manen go 'mlin IE*  
Then the chicken pecked them  
*Man fi an le manen e vo nan*  
And I wanted the chicken to remain there  
*Yi le kwanen go 'jE IE*  
Then the Fox killed them  
*Man fi an le kwanen e vo nan*  
And I wanted the Fox to remain there  
*Yi le seli go coun IE*  
Then the hunting net caught him  
*Man fi an le seli e vo nan*  
And I wanted the hunting net to remain there  
*Yi le kyE go bli IE*  
Then the fire burnt it  
*Man fi an le kyE e vo nan*  
And I wanted the fire to remain there  
*Yi le 'yi go 'lili IE*  
Then water extinguished it  
*Man fi an le 'yi e vo nan*  
And I wanted the water to remain there  
*Yi le blami go toh IE*  
Then human went to fetch it

*Man fi an le blami e vo nan*  
 And I wanted human to remain there  
*Yi le 'jE-bi go 'jE IE*  
 Then illness killed him  
*Man cla li 'jE man ca?eeh!*  
 What can I do about illness? eeh!  
*Man cla li 'jE man ca? eeh!*  
 What can I do about illness? eeh!

Once more, this song begins with 'corn', the life of which amongst the Gouro symbolizes lifecycle of any living entity in the cosmological interaction: when dead (dried up) the corn regenerates from death by germinating to give more life. The corn thus opens a chain of complementarity in which each element's survival rests on another element, and so on. This kind of principle informs the psyche of the Gouro people that there is a logic in all things, that nothing is arbitrary, and that everything has a place in the great scheme things.

## 2. Rhythmo-stylistic analysis

**2.1. Step one: the presentation of the pitgamas on either side of the spine of the page.**

1	An le fiin	2	e jie
3	Ca Zan Bali	4	GowIE do non Kwanen IE
5	Ble ya 'clE e li nonon do yan	6	Ye e da yan e IE
7	e da yi gowIE yan ye ya dia Manen wuo	8	Ye Manen a' mlin
9	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	10	e le gowIE le Manen a mlin bE

11	Wa lEjiman manen non	12	Ye wa lEjiman manen 'non
13	Ye e da ye ya zoun Boli nu va	14	Ye Boli nu a clicli cIE nan
15	Ye wo dola yi manen ta ye wa "jE	16	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble
17	yi e le boli le wa "jE 'bE	18	Wa lEjiman Boli 'non
19	Ye wa lEjiman boli 'non	20	Ye e da ye ya zoun Dri nu va
21	Dri nu a clicli cIEnan	22	Ye wo dola yi Boli ta ye wa "jE
23	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	24	Yi e le boli le Dri nu a "jE 'bE
25	Wa lEjiman Dri non	26	Ye wa lEjiman Dri 'non
27	A yi yan te wa gonan lizan do pa lE	28	Ye Kwanen Dri non 'wo go "jE 'jEta
29	Ye e Lizan sia	30	Ye ya man pa e nonomi
31	Ye ya doh zia	32	Ye e go ye e ble e da Ca Zan Bali nan yan
33	Ca go wi a va	34	Zi lE zan vlin le 'bE da vlan yan bE
35	Blehi an va 'bE e bE cIE Lizan man	36	Lizan dia
37	Ye Kwanen ble yeh!	38	e ya gonan Ca Zan Bali nan yan
39	Ye wa "jEE!	40	BE man wa lEjiman Li non
41	Ye wo Li nonomi do 'non a lE	42	Ye e go
43	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	44	Bah!
45	A ze ji a e 'clin ki kyEle	46	'BE man de yen le e soh lE
47	Ya si va	48	Ye e ble
49	De yen le e ki mi yala	50	e wi zenzi jin sie

51	Ye ya yanen jin si bE
53	A yan le Kwanen e wi zenzi jin sie
55	De 'bE le vie le

52	A va le e ki
54	Ye ya yanen jin si
56	'BE yrrrrrrr kpei!

## 2.2. Step two: the proposition level of repetition of the tale text: at

this level I have marked with the same colour the repetitive pattern of the pitgamas, which are the whole of each box

1	An le fiin
3	Ca Zan Bali
5	Ble ya 'clE e li nonon do yan
7	e da yi gowle yan ye ya dia Manen wuo
9	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble
11	Wa lEjiman manen non
13	Ye e da ye ya zoun Boli nu va
15	Ye wo dola yi manen ta ye wa jE
17	Yi e le Manen le Boli nu a jE bE
19	Ye wa lejiman boli non
21	Dri nu a clicli clEnan
23	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble
25	Wa lEjiman Dri non

2	e jie
4	GowlE do non Kwanen le
6	Ye e da yan e lE
8	Ye Manen a 'mlin
10	e le gowlE le Manen a mlin bE
12	Ye wa lEjiman manen non
14	Ye Boli nu a clicli clE nan
16	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble
18	Wa lEjiman Boli non
20	Ye e da ye ya zoun Dri nu va
22	Ye wo dola yi Boli ta ye wa jE
24	Yi e le boli le Dri nu a jE bE
26	Ye wa lEjiman Dri non

27	A yi yan te wa gonan lizan do pa IE	28	Ye Kwanen Dri non 'wo go jE 'jEta
29	Ye e Lizan sia	30	Ye ya man pa e nonomi
31	Ye ya doh zia	32	Ye e go ye e ble e da Ca Zan Bali nan yan
33	Ca go wi a va	34	Zi IE zan vlin le be da vlan yan be
35	Blehi an va 'be e bE cIE Lizan man	36	Lizan dia
37	Ye Kwanen ble yeh!	38	E ya gonan Ca Zan Bali nan yan
39	Ye wa jEE!	40	BE man wa IEjiman Li non
41	Ye wo Li nonomi do non a IE	42	Ye e go
43	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	44	Bah!
45	A ze ji a e clin ki kyEle	46	BE man de yen le e soh IE
47	Ya si va	48	Ye e ble
49	De yen le e ki mi yala	50	E wi zenzi jin sie
51	Ye ya yanen jin si bE	52	A va le e ki
53	A yan le Kwanen e wi zenzi jin sie	54	Ye ya yanen jin si
55	De bE le vie le	56	BE yrrrrrrrr kpei!

**2.3. Step three: cluster of words level of repetition:** at this level I have marked with the same colour 'a cluster of sounds' in each pitgama to show the incident of repetition at that level.

1	An le fiin	2	E jie
3	Ca Zan Bali	4	GowIE do non Kwanen IE
5	Ble ya cIE e li nonon do yan	6	Ye e da yan e IE
7	e da yi gowIE yan ye ya dia Manen wuo	8	Ye Manen a mlin
9	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	10	E le gowIE le Manen a mlin bE
11	Wa IEjiman manen non	12	Ye wa IEjiman manen non
13	Ye e da ye ya zoun Boli nu va	14	Ye Boli nu a clicli cIE nan
15	Ye wo dola yi manen ta ye wa iE	16	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble
17	Yi e le Manen le Boli nu a jE bE	18	Wa IEjiman Boli non
19	Ye wa IEjiman boli non	20	Ye e da ye ya zoun Dri nu va
21	Dri nu a clicli cIEnan	22	Ye wo dola yi Boli ta ye wa jE
23	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	24	Yi e le boli le Dri nu a jE bE
25	Wa IEjiman	26	Ye wa IEjiman
27	A yi yan te wa gonan lizan do pa IE	28	Ye Kwanen Dri non 'wo go jE 'jEta
29	Ye e Lizan sia	30	Ye ya man pa e nonomi
31	Ye ya doh zia	32	Ye e go ye e ble e da Ca Zan Bali nan yan
33	Ca go wi a va	34	Zi IE zan vlin le bE da vlan yan bE
35	Blehi an va 'bE e bE cIE Lizan man	36	Lizan dia
37	Ye Kwanen ble yeh!	38	E ya gonan Ca Zan Bali nan yan

39	Ye wa jEE!	40	Be man wa lEjiman Li non
41	Ye wo Li nonomi do non a le	42	Ye e go
43	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	44	Bah!
45	A ze ji a e clin ki kyEle	46	Be man de yen le e soh lE
47	Ya si va	48	Ye e ble
49	De yen le e ki mi yala	50	E wi zenzi jin sie
51	Ye ya yanen jin si bE	52	A va le e ki
53	A yan le Kwanen e wi zenzi jin sie	54	Ye ya yanen jin si
55	De bE le vie le	56	BE yrrrrrrr kpei!

~ **Repetition** of a cluster of words which creates a formulaic patterns: 'ca Zan Bali' (in red) appears for example in pitgamas 3, 9, 16, 23, 32, 38, and 43. this formulaic phrase translates the omnipresence of *Bali* in this Gouro narrative. Likewise, the formula 'wa lijiman' (in blue) in pitgamas 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, 26, and 40 introduces with the idea of interconnectedness of the elements being substituted with one another. The repetitive formulas of 'manen amlin' (8, 10, in plum), of 'Boli nu' (13,14,17, in light green), of 'Dri nu' (20, 21, 24, in pink) bring to light in the tale the succession of elements in the chain of interconnection.

The repetition pattern can also be seen in the phrases or episodes which are repeated in either exactly the same words or in similar words, thus creating a formulaic pattern. For example, phrases in this tale are more or less in similar word order in two similar episodes:

\* The episode involving Goats: "ye boli nu a clicli clEnan...ye wa jE" in pitgama 14 (As the goats were gambolling ... they killed it).

\* The episode involving cows: “*ye dri nu a clicli cIEnan ye wa jE*” in pitgama 21 (As the cows were gambolling they killed it).

\* The striking similarities either in form or in content, but not exact repetition. This is evidenced in the narrative in the same trick being always used by Fox in his quest for a “beautiful woman”. He gave the grain of corn to chicken, and chicken swallowed it. He left Chicken among the Goats and they killed Chicken. He left the Goat amongst the Cows, and the Cows killed the Goat. He gave the Cow to Humans, and they slaughtered it. There is thus a similarity in the content of his plan to meet God’s will, and a repetitive pattern of Fox’s actions.

**2.4. Step four: words level of repetition:** at this level I have marked with the same colour the ‘sounds’ patterns in each pitgama to show the incident of repetition at that level.

1	An le fiin	2	E jie
3	Ca Zan Bali	4	do non Kwanen le
5	Ble ya cIE e li do yan	6	Ye e da yan e IE
7	e da yi yan ye ya dia Manen wuo	8	Ye Manen a mlin
9	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	10	E le le Manen a mlin bE
11	Wa IEjiman manen non	12	Ye wa IEjiman manen non
13	Ye e da ye ya zoun Boli nu va	14	Ye Boli nu a clicli cIE nan
15	Ye wo dola yi manen ta ye wa jE	16	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble
17	Yi e le Manen le Boli nu a jE bE	18	Wa IEjiman Boli non
19	Ye wa IEjiman boli non	20	Ye e da ye ya zoun Dri nu va

21	Dri nu a clicli cIEnan	22	Ye wo dola yi Boli ta ye wa jE
23	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	24	Yi e le boli le Dri nu a jE bE
25	Wa lejiman Dri non	26	Ye wa lejiman Dri non
27	A yi yan te wa gonan lizan do pa IE	28	Ye Kwanen Dri non 'wo go jE 'jEta
29	Ye e Lizan sia	30	Ye ya man pa e
31	Ye ya doh zia	32	Ye e go ye e ble e da Ca Zan Bali nan yan
33	Ca go wi a va	34	Zi IE zan vlin le bE da vlan yan bE
35	Blehi an va 'bE e bE cIE Lizan man	36	Lizan dia
37	Ye Kwanen ble yeh!	38	E ya gonan Ca Zan Bali nan yan
39	Ye wa jEE!	40	BE man wa lEjiman Li non
41	Ye wo Li <del>irrrrrrrrr</del> do non a IE	42	Ye e go
43	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	44	Bah!
45	A ze ji a e clin ki kyEle	46	BE man de yen le e soh IE
47	Ya si va	48	Ye e ble
49	De yen le e ki mi yala	50	E wi zenzi jin sie
51	Ye ya yanen jin si bE	52	A va le e ki
53	A yan le Kwanen e wi zenzi jin sie	54	Ye ya yanen jin si
55	De bE le vie le	56	BE yrrrrrrrr kpei!

**2.5. Step five: clamp-words:** at this level I have marked in each pitgama with the same colour the clamp-words, the onomatopoeias, the formulaic expressions of the tale to show the incidence of repetition at these levels.

1	An le fiin	2	E jie
3	Ca Zan Bali	4	GhwIE do non Kwanen IE
5	Ble ya cleEe li nononmi do yan	6	Ye e da yan e IE
7	e da yi gowIE yan ye ya dia Manen wuo	8	Ye Manen a mlin
9	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	10	E le ghwIE le Manen a mlin bE
11	Wa IEjiman manen non	12	Ye wa IEjiman manen non
13	Ye e da ye ya zoun Boli nu va	14	Ye Boli nu a clicli cIE nan
15	Ye wo dola yi manen ta ye wa jE	16	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble
17	Yi e le Manen le Boli nu a jE bE	18	Wa IEjiman Boli non
19	Ye wa IEjiman boli non	20	Ye e da ye ya zoun Dri nu va
21	Dri nu a clicli cIEnan	22	Ye wo dola yi Boli ta ye wa je
23	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	24	Yi e le boli le Dri nu a jE bE
25	Wa IEjiman Dri non	26	Ye wa IEjiman Dri non
27	A yi yan te wa gonan lizan do pa IE	28	Ye Kwanen Dri non 'wo go jE 'jEta
29	Ye e Lizan sia	30	Ye ya man pa e nonomi
31	Ye ya doh zia	32	Ye e go ye e ble e da Ca Zan Bali nan yan
33	Ca go wi a va	34	Zi IE zan vlin le bE da vlan yan bE
35	Blehi an va 'bE e bE cIE Lizan man	36	Lizan dia

37	Ye Kwanen ble yeh!	38	E ya gonan Ca Zan Bali nan yan
39	Ye wa jEE!	40	BE man wa lEjiman Li non
41	Ye wo Li nonomi do non a IE	42	Ye e go
43	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	44	Bah!
45	A ze ji a e clin ki kyEle	46	BE man de yen le e soh IE
47	Ya si va	48	Ye e ble
49	De yen le e ki mi yala	50	E wi zenzi jin sie
51	Ye ya yanen jin si be	52	A va le e ki
53	A yan le Kwanen e wi zenzi jin sie	54	Ye ya yanen jin si
55	De bE le vie le	56	BE yrrrrrrrr kpei!

~ **Repetition** pattern of the clamp words as identified in this text in the cumulative use of connecting words (represented in blue colour) **ye** which appears 29 times, and **yi** which appears 4 times. These clamp-words **ye** or **yi** are recurrent as many times as there are propositions in the story. They clamp the propositions in relating them sensibly and provide a flow of narration. An average of 20 phrases of which this tale is composed are connected to one another by the use of **ye/yi**.

~ **Onomatopoeic repetition:** The storytelling process in itself is more of an imitation of characters, which is a petition of the characters actions, gestures and sounds. For instance, such a phrase as **ye boli nu a clicli cIEnan, clicli** is onomatopoeic of the gamboling of the goats and cows (in this tale), and of animals in general. This constitutes a belief amongst the Gouro who think that animals gambol because they are not rational in their behaviour.

**clikli** (14, 21, in red) is repeated once, establishing the nature of the incident of killing God's Chicken and God's Goat: it is though **clikli** that they are killed. The repetition of **clikli** pair with the word **lejiman**, 'replacement/compensation', to form an important mnemonic component of the story in that it is from compensation to compensation that Fox's divine mission is completed.

~ **Repetition** of formulaic pattern '**yi le Bali ble/ ye Ca Zan Bali ble**', or 'and /then **Ca Zan Bali** said' – appears in four pitgamas: 9, 16, 23, 43. This repetition marks a shift in the episodes of the story. Whenever God intervenes by saying that his property that is destroyed must be replaced, it is ipso facto replaced, thus restoring order. The shift is particularly evidenced in '**yi le/ye**' (and/then). These pitgamas thus function as memory aid in the form of clamp devices. They mark the performance and give emphasis of God's will that must be done. They mark God's interventions and translate his voice, which in actual fact is central to the unfolding of the plot of the story:

**2.6. Step six: acconsonantisation and avocalisation:** at this level I have marked with the same colour in each pitgama the acconsonantisation and avocalisation to show the incidence of repetition at these levels. In these instances I have identified the particular incidence of a combination of a vocalic (A) and a consonant (N) sound, i.e. 'AN'; and the combination of consonant (N) + vocalic (O) + consonant (N) sounds, i.e. 'NON'.

1	An le fiin	2	E jie
3	Ca Zan Bali	4	GowIE do non Kwanen le
5	Ble ya cIE e li nonon do yan	6	Ye e da yan e IE
7	e da yi gowIE yan ye ya dia Manen wuo	8	Ye Manen a mlín

9	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	10	E le gowIE le Manen a mlin bE
11	Wa IEjiman manen non	12	Ye wa IEjiman manen non
13	Ye e da ye ya zoun Boli nu va	14	Ye Boli nu a clicli cIE nan
15	Ye wo dola yi manen ta ye wa jE	16	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble
17	Yi e le Manen le Boli nu a jE bE	18	Wa IEjiman Boli non
19	Ye wa IEjiman boli non	20	Ye e da ye ya zoun Dri nu va
21	Dri nu a clicli cIE nan	22	Ye wo dola yi Boli ta ye wa jE
23	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	24	Yi e le boli le Dri nu a jE bE
25	Wa IEjiman Dri non	26	Ye wa IEjiman Dri non
27	A yi yan te wa gonan lizan do pa IE	28	Ye Kwanen Dri non 'wo go jE 'jEta
29	Ye e Lizan sia	30	Ye ya man pa e nonomi
31	Ye ya doh zia	32	Ye e go ye e ble e da Ca Zan Bali nan yan
33	Ca go wi a va	34	Zi IE zan vlin le bE da vlan yan bE
35	Blehi an va 'bE e bE cIE Lizan man	36	Lizan dia
37	Ye Kwanen ble yeh!	38	E ya gonan Ca Zan Bali nan yan
39	Ye wa jEE!	40	BE man wa IEjiman Li non
41	Ye wo Li nonomi do non a le	42	Ye e go
43	Ye Ca Zan Bali ble	44	Bah!
45	A ze ji a e clin ki kyEle	46	Be man de yen le e soh IE
47	Ya si va	48	Ye e ble

49	De yen le e ki mi yala	50	E wi zenzi jin sie
51	Ye ya yanen jin si be	52	A va le e ki
53	A yan le Kwanen e wi zenzi jin sie	54	Ye ya yanen jin si
55	De bE le vie le	56	BE yrrrrrrr kpei!

~ **Avocalisation and acconsonantisation:** There is also a repetition of the same stream of sounds such as **non**, a combination of consonant, vocalic, and consonant sounds (in blue colour), and a vocalic and consonant sound **an** (in red colour).

In this narrative, besides the recurrence of words and sounds, one can observe two major patterns of repetition.

## 2.7. Concluding remarks.

The textual cohesion of this tale thus results from the formulaic psychodynamics elements that can be observed in multiple layers of repetitions. Many more of the psychodynamic elements can further be isolated, such as the epithetic use of '**nonomi**'. **Ca zan Bali** asks, not for an ordinary woman, but for a '**Li nonomi**' in pitgamas 5, 30, 40 (a **beautiful** woman). Therefore, the price to get such a beautiful woman is the trials and tribulations Fox has to go through. This way of presenting elements of a narrative introduces them into an ideal form, and thus legitimizes actions surrounding them, so as to say that a hero of such a narrative would go as far as his actions require to bring to God, not a woman, but a '**beautiful** woman'.

The repetitive pattern of pairing words may also be highlighted in this tale: the narrative starts with the picture of God giving (a grain of corn) and closes with God receiving (a beautiful woman). God's will is done through a conflicting interaction between the elements of the earth. He provokes such

a conflict, not only to put all elements to the test of a struggle for survival, but also to create a chain for survival. The Gouro belief in this respect is to the effect that all elements of the earth are perishable in 'his' will, and that he is the beginning and the end of everything. In terms of the pairing, the story shows an element which is always killed by another element: Chicken is killed by Goats, Goat is killed by Cows, Cow is killed by Humans, Human is killed by Death

### **3. Gouro lore and lesson of this tale**

\* **Gouro lore of compensation:** The lore of Compensation constitutes an important aspect of the Gouro social Life. When one is, for instance, victimised illegitimately, compensation must be given by the victimiser. This involves too often a process of judgment whereby theft, wrong doing of various kinds, breach of the peace, betrayal of communal security, invasion of another person's privacy are condemned by compensation. This aspect shows evidence in the narrative when the goats must compensate for the killing of a chicken with a goat; or else, when humans must give a beautiful woman in compensation for the one they have killed.

\* **The Gouro lore of the Funeral:** The narrative shows how important a funeral is amongst the Gouro. The Gouro funeral is the last honour that a deceased receives from the living world. Amongst the Gouro, the more cows that are slaughtered at a funeral, the more honourable it is. This explains that, in the narrative, the people abandoned the woman they were taking to the grave to go and slaughter the cow given to them by Fox.

\* **Lesson of survival:** By survival, it is meant the conflicting relations in which the narrative elements are involved. This can be witnessed in physical confrontation between the narrative elements: the stronger kill weaker ones. Chicken pecks the grain of corn; Goats kill Chicken; Cattle kill Goat; Humans

slaughter Cow, and a Human (in the form of a beautiful woman) is taken to God through Death.

Another form of conflictual relation in this tale is intellectual conflict; that is when Fox, a small animal, outwits the others by using tricks. The intellectual domination of Fox aims at satisfying a divine order, and therefore it is subjected to the will of **Ca Zan Bali**. The divine order is a higher form of domination over all. It is that divine order that commends the substitution of each element without any objection whenever an element is killed by another element. Bali says, for example: 'His chicken that the goats killed, they must give in compensation a goat. And they gave a goat in compensation'. There is a logic of obedience to Bali.

## TALE TWO

### The dramatis personae and their characteristics.

**Lion:** He is the host of all the animals as he calls on them to gather in his compound. He is authoritarian and threatening to his guests.

**Gazelle:** Naïve and obeying to Lion's orders

**Goat:** Goat is terrified and very apprehensive of Lion's cruelty.

**Fox:** He shows no fear, is cool-headed and persuasive.

**The other characters** involved are all other animals (unidentified).

### Lion's bloody feast

***An le fiin***

My story

***e jie***

It is past

***Golizra le.***

There was a lion.

***Yi le a yuE ba ya do.***

And he had only one eye.

***Ye e wih nu fafa***

And he called upon all the animals

***laa ble wo da***

to come

**wo fE nonon ki dran**

and learn to count

**e yuE va.**

in his presence.

**e ble,**

he ordered with authority.

**zro, be pehi 'sia.**

"You Gazelle, start",

**Zro ble**

Gazelle said

**do, fie, yaka,**

"one, two, three, ..."

- **Men fE man le I yan sonon man Zro?**

"Why do you insult me?"

**Man I ble**

"I shall eat you!", he roared.

**Ye e Zro "jE,**

And he killed Gazelle

**ye e 'bE bli.**

and he ate her.

- ***Bii Bohi, be nonon!***

"You Goat, count!" he roared.

***Bohi ble yonki yan***

Goat said shaking:

***do, fie, yaka***

"one, two, three, ..."

***e Boli ze "jE***

He killed Goat

***ye e 'bE bli.***

and ate her too.

***Ye e ble***

And he said without contest:

***te de mi le 'bE fE nonon ki pehi 'sia***

"I shall kill anyone

***an yuE ba do yan,***

who insults my one eye

***an 'bE zan ja.***

by starting to count at one.

***Ca 'ca 'ji dwa ble an yuE ba ya do lo?***

Don't you realize that I have only one eye?

**Men fE man le ca fe do?**

Why do you say one then?

**e wih nu fafa "jE a zo.**

He thus killed all the animals.

**De 'wo le**

He even killed those who,

**wo 'clan 'wo "jE ki lee**

out of fear of being killed,

**ye 'wo a nonon ki pehi 'sia fie ta ooh, e 'wo ja.**

started by counting from two,

**Ya fe wo IE ble**

He forced them

**wa pehi 'sia e 'sia nan.**

to start from the beginning.

**e wo fafa "jE titi.**

He killed them all.

**e boh ji 'clin kwanen ta.**

Then came the turn of Clever Fox.

**e ble**

He said with a threatening voice.

***kwanen, be nonon!***

"Fox, count!",

***Ji 'clin kwanen a pehi 'sia ble:***

Clever Fox calmly and slowly started:

***a vlin tEtE ya "bli fli wi yan,***

"The very first is anger provoking,

***ye fie, yaka..***

then two, three..."

***- I ble men fE?***

"What do you say?" Lion raved.

***- Kwanen ble an ble***

Fox said persuasively:

***a vlin tEtE le de wa fi***

"I say the very first that when they say it

***ye "bli e fli 'bE***

it provokes anger,

***'bEE le ki co,***

here it is,

***ye fie, yaka, ...***

then, two, three, ...”

- **Be dErE pehi ‘sia.**

Start again! Lion uttered, seduced.

**Ji ‘clin kwanen golizra cli.**

Clever Fox won him over eventually.

**yi le golizra ble,**

Then Lion said very calmly,

**bii do e bwa fE nonon ki IE.**

“You alone know how to count.

**I ze fE nonon ki dran kyen?**

Tell me where did you learn to count?”

**Ji ‘clin kwanen ble,**

Clever Fox said,

**an ze fE nonon ki dran I yala nonomi coo,**

“I learnt to count from your beautiful face

**I “bli nonomi coo wo man.**

and from your good intention.”

**A zo le e fuu voh golizra “bli man**

That is how he flattered Lion

**ye ‘bE daan man ye e go**

who let him go.

### 1. English reader-friendly version of tale two: Lion's bloody feast

Once upon a time, there was a lion who had only one eye. As the king of the jungle, he called upon all the animals to come and learn to count in his presence. The wild life, without exception gathered at his feet.

- "You Gazelle, start! How does your race count?", he asked in a booming voice which made them all very fearful.

Gazelle started trembling with fear:

- "One, two, three, ..."

- "Why do you insult me? I shall eat you!", he roared at gazelle. And he killed Gazelle and he ate her.

- "You Goat, how does your race count?" Lion asked in a booming voice which made Goat fearful.

Goat started trembling with fear:

- "One, two, three, ...".

- "Why do you insult me? I shall kill you!" He roared at Goat. And He killed Goat and ate her too. And he said without contest:

- "I shall kill anyone who mocks my one eye by starting to count at one.

Don't you realize that I have only one eye? Why do you say one then?

Lion thus killed all the animals. He even killed those who, out of fear of being killed, started by counting from two. He forced them to start from the beginning, and killed them all. Then came the turn of Clever Fox.

- "You Fox, how does your race count!", He asked in a booming voice to make Fox fearful. Clever Fox calmly and slowly started:

- "The very first is anger provoking, then two, three..."

- "What do you say?" Lion roared. But Clever Fox said calmly:

- "I say when the very first is uttered, it triggers anger, then, two, three, ..."

Start again! Lion said, seduced.

Clever Fox won him over eventually. Then Lion said very calmly:

- "You alone know how to count. Tell me, where did you learn to count?" -

"I have learnt to count from his majesty's beautiful face and from his good intention", Clever Fox said. That is how Clever Fox flattered Lion, and he lived happily ever after.

## 2. Interpretation

Although there is a remarked presence of Hare as trickster in most Gouro tales, the ultimate trickster in the Gouro tale repertoire remains the Fox. In Gouro the expression *ji 'clin kwanen*, means the 'Clever Fox', or simply *kwanen*, 'Fox', with whom a clever social character is compared in real life. The Gouro say *mi kwanen*, literally meaning 'little old man'. The name *Kwanen* derives from *kwa*, meaning old. Due to the amount of experiences a person may gather throughout the years, he may be viewed as wise or intelligent. Because Fox thwarts all sorts of traps that humans set in the bush, and thus frustrates them in their plans to catch him, the Gouro believe that Fox must likewise be outwitting the other characters of wild life. His name *kwanen* or 'little old man' is thus coined by the Gouro who associate wisdom, knowledge, and cleverness with age. Fox is, so to say, as wise as an elderly character who outwits the enemy in his planning.

Here, the story showcases one type of the many confrontations between Fox and Lion. In a way, Fox is a character that is determined by frailness and physical disadvantage compared to Lion. But if Fox is confronted with the physically more powerful and fierce Lion, it is a metaphor to mean the power of the words vs the physical strength. Fox symbolizes the power of the words through his intelligence, and Lion, the physically brutal. Fox demonstrates in this tale how a rage can be doused with cogent verb, the determinism of which is reflected in the word 'clever'.

Lion is threatening and authoritarian. **Zro, be pehi 'sia!** Or 'You Gazelle, start!' Lion said. In a Gouro tale performance, an audience can perceive through such an utterance the cruel intention of Lion: to kill his guests. The voice the performer adopts here is an imposing and threatening one. In Gouro, a voice that wishes to express courtesy in such an utterance would say: **Zro l bwa ble be pehi 'sia**, meaning 'Gazelle you may/can start', which is not a strenuous order. If the story features Gazelle in these terms, it is because the Gouro believe that Gazelle is a naïve character who always makes an easy prey for lions. She will always be identified as **bobo je zro** or 'Gazelle the naïve'. The naïve Gazelle who opens the bloody feast is thus opposed to the clever Fox who closes it.

Gazelle, like other animals that were slaughtered by Lion, lacks wisdom and rushes into 'counting'. They were intimidated by Lion's authority. At the level where the animals are called on by Lion to come and count in front of him, the storyteller becomes animated by the creative and imaginative power of selection. S/he can freely go through an imaginary selected listing of animals of his/her choice that have to come and perform in front of the authoritarian Lion until s/he reaches the one who wins Lion over, the Fox. The teller's voice must imitate the fearful voices of these characters. The fearful state of mind is further translated in the story in that some animals omit purposely to say 'one' to avoid the death sentence given by Lion.

Where the other animals start fearfully, 'clever Fox' starts with coolness, using a trick: 'Clever Fox calmly started: The very first is anger provoking'. The functions that play the epithet 'clever ' here go beyond the mere nature of formulaic expressions. In effect, "Lord and Havelock and others noted that the use of stereotyped expressions or formulas (such as epithet) lies at the root of Oral performances." (Ong 1977: 103). They demonstrated that the Homeric poems and other residually oral epics consist largely, if not

entirely, of fixed expressions: the clichés which, according to them, oral cultures live on and which literate cultures teach their members to scorn. Homer for example, always presents his heroic characters but with epithetic attributes of some kind: Odysseus is 'wily Odysseus', Nestor is 'wise Nestor' and Achilles is 'swift-footed Achilles'. In effect, if in tales a 'soldier' is not a mere soldier but a 'brave soldier'; not a 'princess', but a 'beautiful princess', not 'Fox' but 'clever Fox', it is simply because characters of significant actions must be conferred a strong identity and be exhibited under their higher ideal forms. The reason behind that is to unfold truth from its maximal perception so that the morals that are drawn from that comes as a byword, and too often in the form of a proverb, which in very few words tells a story. Such an utterance plays a psychodynamic function in recalling implicitly the whole story. As such, when it is said 'stupid Gazelle', or 'wise Tortoise', or else 'wicked Hyena', it is presenting the moral attributes of their behaviour in two words.

The epithetic determination of 'clever' Fox and its formulaic nature have a psychological significance. It brings back an element to consciousness, it constantly reminds the audience of the admirable witty quality of the Fox. The epithet 'clever' presents Fox as a mentor whose useful deeds have to be appreciated to the maximum. Such an epithetic form in a Gouro narrative particularly is a psychological warrant: it does not add uselessly to thought, but it is the substance of thought itself.

In the present tale, the cardinal values may be presented in various performances in terms of moral power versus physical power, Fire versus water, and ultimately, Good versus Evil. In effect, Lion who is animated with a wicked intention comes up with an effortless way of organising his bloody feast by inviting all the animals to come and learn to count in his presence. Counting necessarily involves a starting number which is the number 'one'. In fact, the Gouro do not have a word for 'zero' because zero implies nothing concrete, it simply does not exist because it is emptiness. In the counting

process then, one appears to be an insult to Lion who is one-eyed. But Lion himself will learn to count from his 'beautiful one-eyed face' and from his fiendish intention when a totally opposed character, clever Fox, seduces him with an unexpected manner of counting. If 'clever Fox' is kept till last to intervene, it is to allow the audience to fully appreciate the intelligence through which he fails Lion in his plan to kill him. Even if it is a last intervention which has a defect, because it only comes when all the animals are dead and does not profit the animal community, it still remains a useful ploy in that it teaches the audience a lesson. Lion and Fox, in that manner, portray the omnipresence of dangers in life, and therefore members must provide solutions like Fox in order to survive.

### **3. Psychodynamic features.**

Narratives are set in a 'real' world, the narrative elements are of the domain of the familiar. The narrative elements are conceptualized with close reference to the real world. Jousse calls this Mimism, and it allows the story to be effectively understood. In the present tale, for example, this aspect patterns Gazelle and Goat with the beginning of the 'bloody feast' because Gazelle is believed by the Gouro to be silly enough not to avoid Lion's trap. In Gouro narratives Goat is always the naive prey of Lions family. The patterning of the narrative elements, in effect, seeks to interact objects that are either compatible or incompatible (depending on the situation) to idealise the combat through their characteristic behaviours. A child who is at his first tale telling experience must always remember, for instance, that a story in which Fox and other animals feature, will inevitably have Fox trick the other animals. In this tale for example, Fox cleverly skips over the number 'one' and starts counting from 'two' because 'one' is an "anger provoking" number to Lion. By starting from 'two', Fox's sense of appreciation is 'quantified' as higher than that of Lion who only considered

'one', his eye. Two also translates a multidimensional approach of Fox's wisdom.

#### 4. Rhythmo-stylistic analysis

##### 4.1. Step one: the rhythmic balancing of the tale text.

1 Golizra le	2 Yi le a yuE ba ya do
3 Ye e winu fafa laa ble	4 'wo da 'wo fE nonon dran e yue va
5 e ble Zro, be peri 'sia	6 Zro ble, "do, fie, yaka, ..."
7 Men fE man le I yan sononman Zro?	8 Man I ble
9 Ye e 'bE 'E	10 Ye e 'bE bli
11 Bii Boli, be nonon!	12 Boli ble, "do, fie, yaka, ..."
13 e Boli ze jE	14 Ye e bE bli
15 Ye e ble de mi le 'bE fE nonon ki perisia e yuE ba	16 e 'bE zan ja
17 Ca 'ca ji dwa ble	18 An yuE ba ya do lo?
19 Men fE man le ca fe do?	20 e winu fafa "jE a zo
21 De 'wo le 'wo clan 'wo "jE ki le	22 Ye 'wo a nonon ki peri sia fie ta ooh
23 e 'wo ja	24 Ya fe wo lE ble wa peri sia e sia nan
25 e wo fafa 'jE titi	26 e boh ji 'clin Kwanen ta
27e ble Kwanen, be nonon!	28 Ji 'clin Kwanen a peri sia ble

29	A vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan	30	Ye fie, yaka, ..
31	I ble men fE?	32	Kwanen ble an ble a vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan
33	Ye fie, yaka, ...	34	Be dErE peri 'sia
35	Ji'clin Kwanen Golizra cli	36	Yi le Golizra ble
37	Bii do E bwa fE nonon ki IE	38	I ze fe nonon ki dran yen?
39	Ji'clin Kwanen ble an ze fE nonon ki dran I yala nonomi coo	40	I "bli nonomi coo wo man
41	A zole e fuu voh Golizra "bli man	42	Ye 'bE daan man ye e go

**4.2. Step two: proposition level of repetition:** at this level I have marked with the same colour the formulaic patterns of the propositions in the pitgamas to show the incident of repetition at that level.

1	Golizra le	2	Yi le a yuE ba ya do
3	Ye e winu fafa laa ble	4	'wo da 'wo fE nonon ki dran e yuE va
5	e ble Zro, be peri 'sia	6	Zro ble, "do, fie, yaka, ..."
7	Men fE man le I yan sononman Zro?	8	Man I ble
9	Ye e'bE 'jE	10	Ye e bE bli
11	Bii Boli, be nonon!	12	Boli ble, "do, fie, yaka, ..."

13 e Boli ze 'jE	14 Ye e be bli
15 Ye e ble de mi le 'bE fE nonon ki peri 'sia e yuE ba do ta	16 e 'bE zan ja
17 Ca 'ca ji dwa ble	18 An yuE ba ya do lo?
19 Men fE man le ca fe do?	20 e winu fafa "jE a zo
21 De 'wo le 'wo clan 'wo "jE ki le	22 Ye 'wo a nonon ki peri 'sia fie ta ooh
23 E 'wo ja	24 Ya fe wo le ble wa peri sia e sia nan
25 e wo fafa 'jE titi	26 e boh ji 'clin Kwanen ta
27e ble Kwanen, be nonon!	28 Ji clin Kwanen a peri sia ble
29 A vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan	30 Ye fie, yaka, ..
31 I ble men fE?	32 Kwanen ble an ble a vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan
33 Ye fie, yaka, ...	34 Be dErE peri sia
35Ji 'clin Kwanen Golizra cli	36 Yi le Golizra ble
37 Bii do E bwa fE nonon ki IE	38 I ze fE nonon ki dran yen?
39 Ji 'clin Kwanen ble an ze fE nonon ki dran I yala nonomi coo	40 I "bli nonomi coo wo man
41 A zole e fuu voh Golizra bli man	42 Ye 'bE daan man ye e go

~ **Repetition** of formulaic pattern mainly in step two in:

\* Lion giving order to the animals to count. This may be seen in blue colour in pitgamas 5, 11, 27, and 34.

\* The animals taking turn to count. This may be seen in red colour in pitgamas 6, 12, 30, and 33.

\* Lion killing the animal. This may be seen in pink colour in pitgamas 9, 13, and 16.

\* Fox's trick that appeased Lion, in violet colour in pitgamas 29, 32.

**4.3. Step three: words level of repetition:** at this level I have marked with the same colour 'words' in the pitgamas to show the incidence of repetition at these levels.

1	le	2	Yi le a yuE ba ya do
3	Ye e winu fafa laa ble	4	'wo da 'wɔ fE nonon dran e yuE va
5	e ble Zro, be peri 'sia	6	Zro ble, "do, fie, yaka, ..."
7	Men fE man le I yan sononman Zro?	8	Man I ble
9	Ye e 'bE "jE	10	Ye e 'bE bli
11	Bii Boli, be nonon!	12	Boli ble, "do, fie, vaka, ..."
13	e Boli ze "jE	14	Ye e 'bE bli
15	Ye e ble de mi le 'bE fE nonon ki peri 'sia	16	e 'bE zan ja
17	Ca 'ca ji dwa ble	18	An yue ba ya do lo?

19 Men fE man le ca fe do?	20 e winu fafa "jE a zo
21 De 'wo le 'wo clan 'wo "jE ki le	22 Ye 'wo a nonon ki peri 'sia fie ta ooh
23 e 'wo ja	24 Ya fe wo IE ble wa peri sia e sia nan
25 e wo fafa "jE titi	26 e boh ji 'clin Kwanen ta
27e ble Kwanen, be nonon!	28 Ji clin Kwanen a peri 'sia ble
29 "A vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan	30 Ye fie, yaka, .."
31 I ble men fE?	32 Kwanen ble an ble a vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan
33 Ye fie, yaka, ...	34 Be dErE peri sia
35Ji 'clin Kwanen cli	36 Yi le ble
37 Bii do E bwa fE nonon ki le	38 I ze fE nonon ki dran yen?
39 Ji 'clin Kwanen ble an ze fE nonon ki dran I yala nonomi coo	40 I "bli nonomi coo wo man
41 A zo le e fiu voh Golizra "bli man	42 Ye 'bE daan man ye e go

**4.6. Step six: epithet level of repetition:** at this level I have marked with the same colour in the pitgamas 'epithets' to show the incidence of repetition at that level.

1 Golizra le	2 Yi le a yuE ba ya do
3 Ye e winu fafa laa ble	4 'wo da 'wo fE nonon dran e yuE va

5 e ble Zro, be peri 'sia	6 Zro ble, "do, fie, yaka, ..."
7 Men fE man le I yan sononman Zro?	8 Man I ble
9 Ye e 'bE "jE	10 Ye e 'bE bli
11 Bii Boli, be nonon!	12 Boli ble, "do, fie, yaka, ..."
13 e Boli ze 'jE	14 Ye e 'bE bli
15 Ye e ble de mi le 'bE fE nononki peri 'sia e yuE ba do ta	16 e 'bE zan ja
17 Ca 'ca ji dwa ble	18 An yuE ba ya do lo?
19 Men fE man le ca fe do?	20 e winu fafa "jE a zo
21 De 'wo le 'wo clan 'wo "jE ki le	22 Ye 'wo a nonon ki peri 'sia fie ta ooh
23 e 'wo ja	24 Ya fe wo IE ble wa peri sia e sia nan
25 e wo fafa jE titi	26 e boh ji 'clin Kwanen ta
27e ble Kwanen, be nonon!	28 Ji 'clin Kwanen a peri sia ble
29 "A vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan	30 Ye fie, yaka, .."
31 I ble men fE?	32 Kwanen ble an ble a vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan
33 Ye fie, yaka, ...	34 Be dErE peri sia
35Ji 'clin Kwanen Golizra cli	36 Yi le Golizra ble
37 Bii do e bwa fE nonon ki IE	38 I ze fe nonon ki dran yen?

39 Ji 'clin Kwanen ble an  
ze fE nonon ki dran I  
yala nonomi coo

40 I "bli nonomi  
coo wo man

41 A zole e fuu voh  
Golizra bli man

42 Ye 'bE daan  
man ye e go

~ **Repetition** of the epithet '*ji clin*' or 'clever', in step six (in red colour) appearing in pitgamas 26, 28, 35, and 39 significantly introduces Fox who is kept last of the list in the counting. To a Gouro audience, the psychodynamics of the repetition of this epithet resides in the fact that it announces Fox's eventual victory over Lion.

**4.4. Step four: clamp-words:** at this level I have marked with the same colour in the pitgamas the clamp-words to show the incidence of repetition at that level.

1 Golizra le

2 Yi le a yuE ba ya do

3 Ye e winu fafa laa ble

4 'wo da 'wo fE  
nonon dran e yuE va

5 e ble Zro, be peri 'sia

6 Zro ble, "do,  
fie, yaka, ..."

7 Men fE man le I  
yan sononman Zro?

8 Man I ble

9 Ye e 'bE "jE

10 Ye e 'bE bli

11 Bii Boli, be nonon!

12 Boli ble, "do,  
fie, yaka, ..."

13 e Boli ze 'jE

14 Ye e 'bE bli

15 Ye e ble de mi le 'bE fE  
nononki perisia e yuE ba  
do ta

16 e 'bE zan ja

17 Ca 'ca ji dwa ble

18 An yuE ba ya do lo?

19 Men fE man le ca fe do?	20 e winu fafa jE a zo
21 De 'wo le 'wo clan 'wo "jE ki le	22 Ye 'wo a nonon ki peri 'sia fie ta ooh
23 e 'wo ja	24 Ya fe wo lE ble wa peri sia e sia nan
25 e wo fafa "jE titi	26 e boh ji 'clin Kwanen ta
27e ble Kwanen, be nonon!	28 Ji 'clin Kwanen a peri 'sia ble
29 "A vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan	30 Ye fie, yaka, .."
31 I ble men fE?	32 Kwanen ble an ble a vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan
33 Ye fie, yaka, ...	34 Be dErE peri sia
35Ji 'clin Kwanen Golizra cli	36 Yi le Golizra ble
37 Bii do E bwa fE nonon ki lE	38 I ze fe nonon ki dran yen?
39 Ji 'clin Kwanen ble an ze fE nonon ki dran I yala nonomi coo	40 I "bli nonomi coo wo man
41 A zole e fuu voh Golizra "bli man	42 Ye 'bE daan man ye e go

~ Repetition of the clamp-words **ye/yi** in step four in red to show the sequential recall of the episodes the killing by Lion. The clamp-words in particular establish a narrative logic between the propositions, thus translating the dynamism of the plot of the story. In this text, the clamp-words **ye/ yi le** (and/then) amount to 10 in pitgamas 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 14, 15, 22,

30, 33. They mainly clamp the formulas as identified in step 2. As it can be seen in the text, the clamp-words **ye/yi le** always precede a new proposition each time they appear. The ten propositions in this tale text are: 1) There was a lion. 2) He had only one eye. 3) He calls upon animals to come and count in his presence. 4) Gazelle started who got killed. 5) Goat succeeded whogot killed too. 6) All other animals got killed. 7) Came the turn of clever Fox. 8) Fox counts with wit.9) Fox convinces Lion. 10) Fox is spared from Lion's killing. By clamping these propositions with **ye/yi le** or 'and /then', the tale text can be constituted.

#### 4.5. Step five: acconsonantisation and avocalisation: at this level I

have marked with the same colour in the pitgamas the acconsonantisation of 'B' sound, and the avocalisation of 'E' sound to show the incidence of repetition at these levels.

1 Golizra le	2 Yi le a yuE ba ya do
3 Ye e winu fafa laa ble	4 'wo da 'wo fE nonon dran e yuE va
5 e ble Zro, be peri 'sia	6 Zro ble, "do, fie, yaka, ..."
7 Men fE man le I yan sononman Zro?	8 Man I ble
9 Ye e 'bE "jE	10 Ye e 'bE bli
11 Bii Boli, be nonon!	12 Boli ble, "do, fie, yaka, ..."
13 e Boli ze "jE	14 Ye e 'bE bli
15 Ye e ble de mi le 'bE fE nononki perisia e yuE ba do ta	16 e 'bE zan ja

17 Ca 'ca ji dwa ble	18 An yuE ba ya do lo?
19 Men fE man le ca fe do?	20 e winu fafa "jE a zo
21 De 'wo le 'wo clan 'wo "jE ki le	22 Ye 'wo a nonon ki peri 'sia fie ta ooh
23 e 'wo ja	24 Ya fe wo lE ble wa peri sia e sia nan
25 e wo fafa "jE titi	26 e boh ji 'clin Kwanen ta
27e ble Kwanen, be nonon!	28 Ji 'clin Kwanen a peri 'sia ble
29 "A vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan	30 Ye fie, yaka, .."
31 I ble men fE?	32 Kwanen ble an ble a vlin tEtE a "bli fli wi yan
33 Ye fie, yaka, ...	34 Be dErE peri sia
35Ji 'clin Kwanen Golizra cli	36 Yi le Golizra ble
37 Bii do E bwa fE nonon ki lE	38 I ze fe nonon ki dran yen?
39 Ji 'clin Kwanen ble an ze fE nonon ki dran I yala nonomi coo	40 I "bli nonomi coo wo man
41 A zole e fuu voh Golizra bli man	42 Ye 'bE daan man ye e go

~ **Avocalisation:** on the one hand the vocalic sound 'e' (in blue in step 5) meaning he, recalling Lion the perpetrator is repeated 14 times in the pitgamas 3, 5, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 23, 25, 26, 41, and 42. This avocalisation sends to the omnipresence of Lion.

~ **Acconsonantisation**: on the other hand the consonant sound 'B' (in red colour, and mostly in the word *ble* meaning to eat) appears 27 times throughout the pitgamas. This acconsonantisation supports Lion's cruel intention of eating his guests.

#### 4.7. Concluding remarks

This particular tale is presented in 21 binary schemas, that is 42 boxed propositions on either side of the spine page.

The story is constructed around Lion's intention of killing and the animals counting performance. As such, the formulas *do, fie, yaka,...* (1,2,3,...), which is the counting process repeatedly appear in pitgamas 6, 12, 30, 33. In addition, '*do*' (one) appears in pitgamas 2, 6, 12, 15, 18, 19, 37. The word '*do*' is indeed essential to the plot of the story. In other words, it is because Lion feels insulted with his 'one eye' that there is killing. What then becomes so memorable about *do* or 'one' in such a story is when Lion says, *men fE man le ca fe do?* (why do you say one?). this utterance goes with a whole propositional geste including all the gestual elements that a teller performs to demonstrate Lion's aggressive attitude towards the animals. These rhythmic qualities, which work as memory support, follow a similar pattern each time the scene is repeated with the animals who take turns to count. There are many other levels of repetition, seen in:

~ **Binary complementarity** shows the balancing of the propositions, of ideas, or of concepts. This can further be exemplified in Jousse's law of 'Bilateralism' that keeps balance of the tale characters and their respective behaviours. In this tale, pairs of narrative elements can be identified as such; the most obvious prospect being often set through a protagonist or hero and an antagonist or anti-hero. In the present story, pairs of the narrative elements can be isolated as follow:

\* **Lion / Fox:** Lion and Fox are the ultimate complementary figures of this narrative. fox, the trickster who wins over Lion the cruel, has the characteristic of being frail and small, a size which contrasts with the physically bigger and stronger Lion. The rationale underlying such a contrasting features is that life does not always advantage the strong over the weak. Depending on circumstances, success in overcoming difficulties in life rather involves an intellectual approach of situations. Such a rationale can significantly be seen in attributes that are mostly typical to the choice of trickster characters in oral narratives. The attitude and movement of trickster characters of tales denote intelligence and quickness of wit: "They are fast movers and good jumpers, like Hare, Fox, Mongoose, Jackal, Spider, Squirrel, etc., thus giving the impression that they cannot be easily caught or trapped. Their quick wit and nimbleness of movements is reflected in the speech form they utilise." (Canonici 1993: 63)

\* **Gazelle / Fox:** Gazelle who opens the bloody feast is believed by the Gouro to be silly. As such, the silliness of the tale opening character, Gazelle, contrasts with the cleverness of the feast-closing character, Fox.

\* **Lion's one sick eye / Lion's one healthy eye:** This contrast is significant since it is the one from which actions arise.

\* **Goat / Fox:** 'Goat said shaking', translates an emotional state of mind which contrasts with 'clever Fox calmly started'. The adverb 'shaking', translates the state of fear in which goat is; which is not the case with Fox who is cool headed.

\* **Death / Life:** The killing situation initiated by Lions is intriguing for his prey who quiver with fear. But eventually this contrasts with Fox's who stays alive. So, while death is celebrated in the feast, Fox refuses, by means of a trick, to take part to the feast, and stays alive.

## TALE THREE

### Dramatis personae

**Spider:** Trickster and dishonest, with a tricky and assertive voice. he is responsible for Elephant's death.

**Elephant:** Victim of Spider's tricks. He is friendly

**Doh-jE-tchetchenen:** Spider's scabious son, despised by his parents, but honest character.

**Colo-bu:** Spider's wife

**Spider's other children:** They are obedient to Spider

**Old woman:** She borrowed her grinder to Spider's wife Colo-bu. She released Doh-jE-tchetchenen from Spider's house.

**Elephant funeral attendants:** They are the ones present at Elephant's funeral, and who beat Spider to death.

### This is Why Spider is found in the eaves

***An le Fiin.***

My story.

***e jie.***

it is past.

***Colo-Tonen le.***

It was Colo-the-spider.

***Ye 'jE boh va.***

And he was bereaved.

**Ye te a bee bleen le ki Vih yan.**  
And his best friend was Elephant.

**Ye e go 'bE va ble**  
And he went to him

**'bE e 'coIE non e IE**  
to Borrow his skin

**e go a yan 'jE ta.**  
to go to the funeral with.

**Ye 'bE yi e 'coIE 'non a IE.**  
And Elephant gave him his skin.

**Ya zen e ta.**  
He dressed in it.

**E ya gona 'bE 'jE ta**  
On his way to the funeral

**ye IEE so a man zia.**  
it started raining.

**Yi glo le e ki da nan te 'bE e zen ta 'bE ,**  
As heavy rain was pouring over him,

**ye e bE doh**  
he caught some water

**'bE yi wuo**

that was dripping from the coat

**ye ya 'dan.**

and tasted it.

**E ble yah!**

He said delicious!

**A zo le yi e bee vih 'coIE ki nenen!**

So my friend Elephant's skin tastes good!

**E go e 'jE ta 'cle ki yan,**

When the funeral was over

**ye e da.**

he came back.

**E ca e dErE yi e bee 'coIE lieta IE e man lo.**

He did not return his friend's skin.

**Yii coo, a nan coo, a le nen nu coo,**

He, his wife and his children,

**wo yi vih 'coIE bli**

they ate Elephant's skin

**ye wa yaan zo.**

till they finished it.

***De vih e 'colE laa do,***

Whenever Elephant asked for his skin back,

***ya fe 'bE IE ble,***

Spider would say to him with persuasively,

***e bee, e ble con ble***

"friend, I was thinking that

***yi l 'colE bo ya 'zru man faa***

I should wash your skin

***ye ya non l IE .***

before I give it back to you.

***e ki an wo bleen bE***

Because it is heavy

***a yan le a 'zru ki yi 'mon nan.***

that is why the cleaning is taking too long.

***l yi fie taba non e IE***

Give me a couple of days more

***ye e da l 'colE bo pa l IE.***

and I will bring back your skin."

***De vih e 'colE laa do,***

Whenever Elephant asked for his skin back,

***Tonen a fe ble***

Spider says,

***de l bee e le soh non l IE***

when a friend gives you his cloth

***be 'zruman faa***

you must clean it

***ye be lietaman.***

before you return it.

***Tonen vo vie wo nan a zo***

Spider kept on lying

***ye donu jE vih "jE.***

until Elephant died from cold.

***Wo ble wo go vih 'jE ta***

As they were going to Elephant's funeral,

***e le nen nu laa,***

he called on baby spiders

***ye e ble:***

and said:

***'Ca da!***

"Come!

***Yi an bee le e 'ga 'bE***

My friend who passed away,

***de caa go jE ta,***

if we go to his funeral,

***ca wu vwa ca?***

how will you mourn for his loss?"

***Nen ki co ble***

Everyone of baby Spiders said:

***de caa go***

if we go

***an wu vwa ble:***

I will mourn that:

***An 'ti bee loo,***

God rest my father's friend's soul,

***an 'ti bee loo.***

God rest my father's friend's soul.

***Colo-bu ble***

Colo-bu, Spider's wife said,

***an ze wu vwa ble***

"I will mourn:

***an zran bee loo***

God rest my husband's friend's soul

***an zran bee loo.***

God rest my husband's friend's soul."

***e boh Doh-jE-tchetchenen ta***

To the turn of Doh-jE-tchetchenen,

***e ble,***

he said slowly,

***an ze wu vwa ble:***

I will mourn that:

***An 'ti bwE o an 'ti bwE***

Friend of my Father, Friend of my Father.

***An 'ti bwE o an 'ti bwE***

Friend of my Father, Friend of my Father.

***An 'ti bwE soh le be non an 'ti IE***

Friend of my Father, the garment you gave  
my Father

***An 'ti go 'jE wuli 'jE ta***

My Father to go to the esteemed funeral

**LEE le zohu glo so an 'ti man**

Heavy rain fell over my Father

**An 'ti 'bE bE doh 'yi wuo**

My Father caught some water

**De a 'yi ya nankan nankan**

As the water was delicious

**Co be bli e wih yan o bee nu**

We ate it for meat, dear Friend.

**Doh-jE-tchetchenen e 'bE IEIE pla ki yan a ta,**

When Doh-jE-tchetchenen completed the song

**Tonen ble,**

Spider raved:

**Heeh!? Bii 'co I ca go co zio lo.**

"What!? You will never follow us.

**LEIE le nen clenon a vwa**

Is that the dirge

**e ti bee 'jE ta yi e ki 'bE?**

that a little baby must sing at his father's friend's funeral?"

**Tonen Doh-jE-tchetchenen coun,**

Spider caught Doh-jE-tchetchenen,

**ye ya voh con 'ji,**  
and put him in the house,

**ye e con IE tan ta,**  
and locked him up,

**ye yii va le**  
And he left

**e le nen nu ponen nu**  
with the rest of his family

**go a bee 'jE ta.**  
to his friend's funeral.

**Wo e go ki yan**  
When they went

**wo fafa ya wu voh ki yan,**  
they were all mourning

**an 'ti bee loo,**  
"God rest my father's friend's soul,

**an 'ti bee loo!**

God rest my father's friend's soul."

**Yi le liplanen do a**

Then, there was one old woman

**e le calo wEE nan,**

who was looking for her grinder.

**ye e da jie IE Tonen le con lEman**

And she was going through spider's yard

*a fi ki yan ble,*

she was complaining that:

- **yi Colo-bu con IE tan yi an le calo ta,**

°Colo-bu locked my grinder in

**ye e go e 'zran bee 'jE ta naan,**

then she went to her husband's friend's funeral,

**man cla ca ye an ze bEE bo e dErE co?**

how am I going to grind my peanuts now?

**Ye Doh-jE-tchetchenen a lele man**

And Doh-jE-tchetchenen heard her voice

**ye e ble a IE ble,**

and he said eagerly to her,

- **An naan, I le calo le e ki con 'ji co.**

°Grand'ma, your grinder is inside the house here.

**I con IE so an ta**

Open the door

***ye man non I IE.***

and I will give it to you.”

***Ye liplanen con IE so a ta,***

The old woman opened the door,

***Ye e ble ‘bE IE***

and he said to her,

***I booh an naan.***

“Thanks grand’mā”.

***Ye e vlan sia wo zizio***

And he started running after them

***‘jE ta***

to the funeral,

***te e go wu voh ki yan:***

singing the dirge:

***An ‘ti bwE o an ‘ti bwE***

Friend of my Father, Friend of my Father

***An ‘ti bwE o an ‘ti bwE***

Friend of my Father, Friend of my Father

***An ‘ti bwE soh le be non an ‘ti IE***

Friend of my Father, the garment you gave my  
Father

**An 'ti go 'jE wuli 'jE ta**

My Father to go to the funeral

**LEE le zohu glo so an 'ti man**

Heavy rain fell over my Father

**An 'ti 'bE bE doh 'yi wuo**

My Father caught some water

**De a 'yi ya nankan nankan**

As the water was delicious

**Co bE bli e wih yan o bee nu.**

We ate it for meat, dear Friend.

**Te e go yi wu voh ki yan zo.**

So he went on lamenting.

**Yi 'jE ta mi**

There, at the funeral,

**te nenen 'ji ya e jE ki.**

a dance was being performed.

**Te Tonen e ki bli 'jE nan.**

Spider was the drummer.

***Nen a da nan wu bo yan.***

The boy was coming so lamenting.

***e ble e boh fla sonon***

When he was at the edge of the village,

***ye wa lele man***

they heard his voice

***ye wo ble:***

and they said:

***'ca ta doh do!***

Silence please!

***dii 'bE daan a zo***

Who can it be

***wu voh ki yan bE?***

that is coming with such a lament?

***Tonen bli ta zen.***

Spider stopped drumming.

***E ya yi ki yan ble***

As he saw that

***Doh-jE-tchetchenen lele le,***

this was the voice of Doh-jE-tchetchenen,

**e coun bli jE ki man pIEpIE,**  
he started beating the drum furiously,

**a fi ki yan minu IE ble**  
telling the people

**'ca da 'ca nenen bo**  
to come and dance.

- **'BE vie wu le nen clenon a vwa bE**  
"You must not listen

**te 'ca tonnen do 'bE IE lo.**  
to the useless dirge of a little boy.

**'Ca da 'ca nenen bo.**  
Come, come and dance!"

**Ye wo ble a IE ble**  
And they insisted that

**e bli ta zen do!**  
he silences the drum.

**E ya e dErE co bli jE ki man do**  
But he was now beating the drum

**Boudou bada boudou bada boudou bada!**  
Boudou bada, boudou bada, boudou bada!

***ble te mi nu e bi lele man lo.***

So that people cannot hear his son's voice.

***Ye Doh-jE-tchetchenen da a zo yi wu yan***

And Doh-jE-tchetchenen came with the lament

***ye e bola 'jE ta.***

and he arrived at the funeral.

*Wo ze yi wu 'ji man ki yan*

When they understood the dirge,

*wo 'zran Tonen jE ki ta wuni yan bih bih bi!*

they rushed to beat Spider with furor

*Ye e ga.*

until he died.

***E ble e ga ye e ble:***

Before he died he said:

- ***Te de ca an 'jE***

"If you kill me

***ca an pa con bla colo ji.***

may you bury me under the eaves."

***Wo Tonen 'jE zo ye wa pa doh***

They flattened Spider

***ye wa pa con bla colo ji.***

and they buried him under the eaves.

***A yan le Tonen ki e dErE co con fafa colo ji.***

That is the reason why spider is henceforth found under every eaves.

### **1. English reader-friendly version of tale three: Why spider is found in the eaves**

Once upon a time, Colo-the-Spider's best friend was Elephant.

As Colo-the-Spider was bereaved, he went to borrow his friend Elephant's skin to go to the funeral with. Elephant gave him his skin, and he went off with it. On his way to the funeral, heavy rain started. Colo-the-Spider then covered himself with Elephant's hide. As the rain was pouring over him, he caught some rain drops from over his new coat and tasted it. He said delicious, So my friend Elephant's skin tastes good! He said. When Spider returned from the funeral, he did not return Elephant's hide. Instead, he, his wife, and his children, they consumed Elephant's hide. When Elephant came to claim for his hide, Colo-the-Spiderhe said to him:

- " Dear friend, I was thinking that I should wash your skin before I give it back to you. Because your hide is heavy, that is why the cleaning is taking too long.

Give me a couple of days more and I will bring back your skin." These were just words for Elephant will never have his hide back anytime soon.

Whenever Elephant asked for his hide back, Spider persuaded him that, when a friend gives you his garment you must clean it before you return it.

And I am still cleaning your beautiful garment. Spider kept on lying until Elephant died from cold.

when Colo-the-Spider's family was about to go to Elephant's funeral, he called on baby Spiders and said:

- "Come baies! My friend passed away and we are going to his funeral. Let me know in advance how you will mourn for his loss when we arrive over there". Everyone of his goats said:

- "If we go I will mourn that: God rest my father's friend's soul, God rest my father's friend's soul." Colo-bu, Spider's wife said:

- "I will mourn that: God rest my husband's friend's soul

God rest my husband's friend's soul."To the turn of Doh-jE-tchetchenen, he said:

I will mourn that:

Dearest friend of my father, dearest friend of my father

Friend of my father, the garment you gave my father

My father to go to the esteemed funeral

Heavy rain fell over my father

My father caught some water

As the water was delicious

We ate your garment as meat, dear friend.

When Doh-jE-tchetchenen completed the song Spider yelled at him furiously, surprised by the incriminating song of his son.

- "What!?! You will never follow us to Elephant's funeral, he said to his ugly baby. That is not the kind of dirge a little boy sings at his father's friend's funeral?"

Spider caught Doh-jE-tchetchenen, and threw him in the house, locked him up, and left with the rest of his family to his friend's funeral.

When they reached over there, they all mourned as planned.

- "God rest my father's friend's soul, God rest my father's friend's soul",  
Baby Spiders mourned. And his wife to also mourn:

- "God rest my husband's friend's soul, God rest my husband's friend's  
soul"

Back in Spider homestead, there was one old woman who was going around  
looking for her grinder. She was going through spider's yard Complaining:

- "Colo-bu locked my grinder in then she went to her husband's friend's  
funeral, am I ever going to grind my peanuts till she returns?"

Doh-jE-tchetchenen who was locked you in the house heard the old  
woman's voice and said eagerly to her:

- "Grand'ma, your grinder is inside the house here. Open the door and I will  
give it to you."

The old woman opened the door. Doh-jE-tchetchenen came out of the  
house and he said to the old woman: 'Thanks grand'ma'. Then, he started  
running after his family to the funeral with his incriminating dirge:

Dearest friend of my father, dearest friend of my father  
Friend of my father,  
The garment you gave my father  
My father to go to the funeral  
Heavy rain fell over my father  
My father caught some water  
As the water was delicious  
We ate your garment as meat, dear friend.

So he went on lamenting to Elephant's funeral.

There at the funeral, a dance was being performed. Spider was the  
drummer. When Doh-jE-tchetchenen reached the edge of the village, the  
people heard his voice and they said, "silence please! Who can it be that is  
coming with such a lament? Spider stopped drumming for a while. But  
when he recognised the voice of Doh-jE-tchetchenen, he started beating the  
drum furiously, telling everyone to come and dance.

- "You must not listen to the useless dirge of a little child. Come, come and dance", he was saying to the people. But they insisted that he silence the drum so that they can listen to the dirge of that new comer. Spider did not want them to decode the message of the girge. He carried on beating the drum even harsher: Boudou bada, boudou bada, boudou bada!

But when Doh-jE-tchetchenen arrived at the funeral with the lament, and that the people understood the message of the dirge, they rushed to beat spider with furor until he died. Before Spider died he said to them:

- "If you kill me may you bury me under the eaves."

They crushed Spider with anger and they buried him under the eaves.

That is why you will always find Spider living under every eaves.

## 2. Interpretation

Sir **Colo** the Spider, another trickster is very present in the Gouro narratives. But unlike the Fox character who always walks away unscathed from his confrontation with stronger opponents, Spider always suffers from his opponents' retaliation. He is a tragic trickster character who always pays for his nasty tricks. Spider tricks large and dangerous animals and thereafter is either beaten to death or is, in other cases, presented with a tarnished image (as in the following tale). His name, **Colo**, stands for 'seclusion', as his last request is always to be buried **con bla Colo ji** or in a corner of the house or else under the eaves. This explains, in other words, the reason why spider is henceforth found in undesirable secluded eaves.

The Gouro even believe that Spider was once as big as his victims, but he ended up being as flat as he is after being crushed from his victims' retaliation. There are many stories where **Colo** the spider is doomed to that fate. One concerns Panther. Panther is taught by spider how to grow yam crops by cooking the yams, spicing them, and burying them well-wrapped.

Spider would then secretly unearth Panther's yams and eat them. But when Panther discovers the truth he beats Spider flat and buries him under the eaves.

The tale under review is an account of a tragic event: Elephant's death. Spider borrows his friend Elephant's skin (garment or coat) to attend a funeral. When Spider came back from the funeral, instead of returning Elephant's skin, he and his family ate it. The skinless Elephant dies from cold as a consequence. When the bad behaviour of spider is discovered, Spider is punished to death.

The story is adopted in a dirge by Spider's undesirable son, **Doh-jE-tchetchenen**. **Doh-jE-tchetchenen** is one of spider's children. He is infected with scabies. Because he is ill and dirty, he is less loved by his parents who refuse to care for him. His name **Tchetchenen** is onomatopoeic with the shaky mannerism that his state of health provoked. The Gouro say of somebody who shakes that **e yon man tche - tche nen** to say 'he shakes sickly'. For the love that **Doh-jE-tchetchenen** does not receive from his parents, he often makes them pay the price. He exposes his father's villainous action that brought about his friend's death. In this narrative for instance, **Doh-jE-tchetchenen** is refused to attend Elephant's funeral because his father fears that his culpability of Elephant's death be disclosed by his dirty son. But his fate is unavoidably commanded by some unfortunate event that releases **Doh-jE-tchetchenen** from the house where his father locked him up to go to Elephant's funeral with the rest of the family. He then follows the family to the funeral, and exposes spider through the incriminating dirge: **An 'ti bwE soh le be non an 'ti IE...De a yi a nakan nakan, co 'bE bli e wih yan o bee nu**, that is, ' Friend of my father, the garment you gave my father...As it was delicious, we ate it for meat, o

friend'. When the villagers heard the dirge, they got angry, and justice is done by punishing Spider.

In the narrational process, some facts are, for example, only told for the purpose of providing information. It is, for instance, told that spider was bereaved and had to attend a funeral: One does not know who died neither do we know of the whereabouts of the funeral, but he had to borrow a garment to get there, and that is why he borrowed a garment from his friend. The story unfolds from that point and leads to Elephant's death, and ultimately to the death of Spider.

Elephant's death introduces a series of morals issues which are translated into the plot of that story: The issues of friendship, borrowing and lending, kindness and helpfulness, lying, irresponsibility, abuse of a sickly and disabled child, discrimination between children, hypocrisy. Gouro society frowns upon the behaviours that typical of Colo-the-spider. The norms of the Gouro society thus include honesty, responsibility, accountability, helpfulness, decency, fairness, and support for the disadvantaged and disabled.

Songs in tales in general, and in the Guro tales in particular, are very important in the transmission of a story. A tale song is always a summarised form of a story developed. Songs in a tale not only play a highly entertaining function, but also are a memory insignia. Jousse maintains that songs are more easily remembered than a normal speech because of their rhythmic pattern, and rhythm is mnemonic element that aids recall ideas, thought, and impressions. Put a story in a song form and it will never be forgotten, such seems to be the psychodynamic insignia of tale songs. When **Doh-jE-tchethenen** tells in a dirge what was done with his father's friend's skin, the cause of Elephant's death is explained, and the guilt of Spider is established: 'O Friend of my Father..., ' he said, the garment you gave my

father to go to the esteemed funeral with, rain fell over. And as my father tasted the dripping water from your skin which he found delicious, we ate it. This explains why you never got your skin back until you died. All the rest is a story.

### **3. Rhythmo-stylistic analysis**

In this tale, I choose to analyse only the psychodynamics of the song. A song in a tale is a summarised form of the story. In this song, for instance, the whole story is reduced to: 'dear Friend of my father. The garment you gave to my father to go to the funeral with. A heavy rain fell over my father on his way to the funeral. And as the rain was delicious, we ate the garment for meat'; notwithstanding that the garment is Elephant's skin. From these lines it is may be left to the audience to guess what happened to Elephant whose skin was eaten by Spider and his family, and what happened to Spider afterward. Without the tale text, this song alone recalls the facts of the story itself. Jousse tells us that a story put in a song form becomes easier to remember than the story itself. This is so because of the typical mnemonics or psychodynamic characteristics that form the backbone of the song: It is rhythmic, balanced and formulaic. The present song for example, encompasses in a fixed form the mnemonic elements par excellence, while the tale itself may often undergo changes depending on each teller's expertise and choice.

#### **The song text**

***An 'ti bwE O an 'ti bwE***

***An 'ti bwE O an 'ti bwE***

***An 'ti bwE soh le be non an 'ti IE***

**An 'ti go 'jEwuli 'jE ta**  
**LEE le zohu glo soh an 'ti man**  
**An 'ti 'bE bE doh 'yi wuo**  
**De a 'yi a nankan nankan**  
**Co bE bli e wi yan O bee nu**

The song that Spider's son sings in this story constitutes the key element of the narrative. It is the report of Spider's guilt, that is the reason why the song constitutes in itself the climax as it is sung. It is a repetition in that it tells what was done by Spider. The song text itself appears in the body of the story and at the end. Within that song text, there are many layers of repetition:

### 3.1. Step one: the rhythmic balancing of the song

1	An 'ti bwE	2 O	3	An 'ti bwE
4	An 'ti bwE	5 O	6	An 'ti bwE
7	An 'ti bwE		8	Soh le be non an 'ti lE
9	An 'ti go		10	'jEwuli 'jE ta
11	LEE le zohu glo so an 'ti man		12	An 'ti 'bE bE doh 'yi wuo
13	De a 'yi a nankan nankan		14	Co bE bli
15	e wi yan	16 O	17	Bee nu

**3.2. Step two: proposition level of repetition:** at this level I have marked with the same colour the repetitive pattern of the pitgamas

1	An 'ti bwE	2 O	3	An 'ti bwE
4	An 'ti bwE	5 O	6	An 'ti bwE

7	An 'ti bwE	8	Soh le be non an 'ti IE
9	An 'ti go	10	'JEwuli 'jE ta
11	LEE le zohu glo so an 'ti man	12	An 'ti 'bE bE doh yi wuo
13	De a 'yi a nanakan nankan	14	Co bE bli
15	e wi yan	16 O	17 Bee nu

**3.3. Step three: words level of repetition:** at this level I have marked with the same colour words in the pitgamas to show the incident of repetition at 'words' level.

1	An 'ti bwE	2 O	3 An 'ti bwE
4	An 'ti bwE	5 O	6 An 'ti bwE
7	An 'ti bwE		8 Soh le be non an 'ti IE
9	An 'ti go		10 'JEwuli 'jE ta
11	LEE le zohu glo so an 'ti man		12 An 'ti 'bE bE doh 'yi wuo
13	De a 'yi a nanakan nankan		14 Co bE bli
15	e wi yan	16 O	17 Bee nu

~ **Repetition** of the key words of the story: '**An 'ti bwE**' (friend of my father), (connected in red), here addressing Elephant who is Spider's friend and victim.

~**Repetition** of '**JE**' in pitgama 10 (the Gouro euphemism for death) recurs twice. The repetition creates an emphatic effect and draws one's attention on the meaning of the word itself. '**An 'ti bwE**', and **je** for

instance, introduce the idea the contrast between '*an 'ti* and *bwE*' (my father and friend) and the death of Elephant caused by his friend Spider.

~**Onomatopoeia**: The sound *nankan nankan* in pitgama 13 (in violet in step 3) is expressive of the licking sound and lip-smacking of a good flavour, as a Gouro would do. In this tale, it is about the good flavour that Spider had of the rain drops from Elephant's skin and which led him to eating the skin.

A rhythmic modulation of inflection may apply to the repeated schemas. This may relate for instance to the first five pitgamas of the rhythmic balancings to indicate inflectional variations in the same sound '*An 'ti bwE*' which is repeated successively five times.

The rhythmic variations that are evidenced in this song observe the initial balanced pattern of the plot of the story. The plot in itself is the mimismic translation of the events that the song supports as memory aid. The rhythmic quality of the song differs from that of the story in that the song text creates a fixed formulaic pattern. In this fixed pattern lives the essence of the story and does not change even though the rhythm of the Timbre (the variation of the vocal colour) may change from one performer to another.

**3.4. Step four: acconsonantisation and avocalisation:** at this level I have marked with the same colour in the pitgamas the acconsonantisation of 'B' and 'T' sounds, avocalisation of 'A' sound, show the incident of repetition at 'words' level.

1	An 'ti bwE	2	O	3	An 'ti bwE
4	An 'ti bwE	5	O	6	An 'ti bwE
7	An 'ti bwE			8	Soh le be non an 'ti lE
9	An 'ti go			10	'JEwuli 'jE ta
11	LEE le zohu glo so an 'ti man			12	An 'ti 'bE bE doh 'yi wuo

13	De a 'yi a nanakan nankan		14	Co bE bli
15	e wi yan	16 O	17	Bee nu

~ **Avocalisation** of 'A' sound (in red) in pitgamas 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, as in combination with the consonant sound 'N' (AN) appears here to translate a lament sound about Elephant's death. The avocalisation 'O' appears here as a rhythm of Duration. 'O', in the Oral performance sounds long 'oooo'. Its mnemonic effect resides particularly in the fact that the duration of its sound effects the plaintive and sadness of Elephant's death. In this visual representation it becomes evident that the intensity is on the pitgamas that involve *An 'ti* and '**bwe**' (my Father and Friend). These pitgamas are repeated over in five schemas, 1, 3, 4, 6, 7. In addition, **An 'ti** is separately repeated four times in pitgamas 8, 9, 11, 12. '**Bee nu**', 'Friends', which is the very last sound of the song, may be contrasted with **An 'ti** (Father), which is the very first sound of the song

~ **Acconsonantisation** of 'B' sound (in blue) in pitgamas 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 14, 17, which the sentence 'Anti **bwE** co **be bli** e wi an o **be nu**' creates major 'B' consonantal sound effect. **BwE** and **Be** both mean in Gouro 'friend'. The incidence of the word **bli**, which is 'to eat' in this particular sentence reminds of the Gouro metaphor of friendship which is eaten. The Gouro say **bee bli**, meaning 'to eat friendship', i.e, to become friend with somebody. This metaphor translates the fact that **de mi fie bee bli** or 'when two persons become friends', they internalize each other. They accept and incorporate each other to become one; only then, there is trust between them. But in this tale, Spider concretely eats his friend Elephant, **e bee bli**.

This metaphor The 'B' sound repeatedly goes with another consonantal sound 'T', which appears in the same pitgamas except in pitgama 10.

**3.5. Step five: clamp-sounds:** at this level I have marked with the same colour the clamp-sounds in the pitgamas to show the incident of repetition at that level.

1	An 'ti bwE	2 O	3	An 'ti bwE
4	An 'ti bwE	5 O	6	An 'ti bwE
7	An 'ti bwE		8	Soh le be non an 'ti lE
9	An 'ti go		10	'JEWuli 'jE ta
11	LEE le zohu glo so an 'ti man		12	An 'ti 'bE bE doh 'yi wuo
13	De a 'yi a nanakan nankan		14	Co bE bli
15	e wi yan	16 O	17	Bee nu

Each of the rhythmic schemas is separated by the vocalic sound 'O' which is by the same token a clamp-sound in this song (in blue) in pitgamas 2, 5, 16. The sound 'O' further introduces the meaning of dear (friend). The ternary rhythmic balancing, '*an 'ti*', 'O', and '*bwE*' invites to consider the nature of the relation between the two friends. This relation further invites to consider the 'Pairing' of the principle characters of the story: *An 'ti* (father, translates Spider), and *bwe* (friend, or Elephant). This pairing obviously evokes the

symbolic opposition in which both characters are placed as good (friend Elephant), and bad (father Spider). They create a balanced pattern of the narrative characters since they complement each other.

The balancing of the rest of the song text accounts for meaning that each proposition makes in a side to side movement patterning of the song performance as a whole.

### 3.6. Repetitive pattern of the tale text

There are also significant repetitive patterns within the tale text. For example:

~ ***wo yi vih 'colE bli ye wa yaan***, Meaning "They ate Elephant's skin till they finished it". To eat means in other words to consume or to finish. But if that phrase is so uttered, it is to emphasise that nothing was left of Elephant's skin and, consequently, he was doomed to death. This pleonasm invites otherwise to consider the phrase as central in the plotting of the story. It simply means that it is because 'they ate Elephant's skin' and that nothing was left of it that Elephant died of cold.

~ ***An 'ti bee loo, an 'ti bee loo!***, or 'God rest my father's friend's soul, God rest my father's friend's soul'; So mourn the other children of Spider at Elephant's funeral. This phrase is repeated in the body and at the end of the story as a parallel antithetical term to the song, so to confront directly the content with ***Doh-jE-tchetchenen***'s laments. It then appears obvious that this phrase comes as a reminder of Spider's treacherous behaviour towards his friend, the Elephant.

~ ***Nen a da nan wu bo yan***; 'the boy was coming so lamenting', is also repetitive of the aforementioned dirge. This phrase is so uttered to remind or to insist on the dirge that will give another turn to the story.

Within the body of the tale text, these repetitions may be presented as a surface repetition because they wish to insist on some key information of the narrative. At a deeper level, there is a similarity in the content of the first episode and the last, which creates a formulaic pattern of the narrative. The narrative starts with a funeral and ends with a funeral. This deep structure repetition creates a balance in the narration, which translates the bilateral law of expression.

In the process, this particular teller of this story uses exaggeration in the scene of rain in the form of repetition: **e ya gona be 'jE ta ye IEE so man zia. Yi glo le e Ki danan bE te 'bE e zen ta:** "He was going to the funeral when it started raining on his way. As heavy rain was pouring over him..." to stress the element that caused Spider to eat Elephant's Skin: the 'rain'. This means that if it did not rain, Spider would not have known how tasty the skin was, and therefore he would not have eaten the skin. 'Rain' is an important narrative element that has to be recaptured significantly by the narrator. So important that it appears in the song as such: **LEE le zohou glo so an 'ti man,** "Heavy rain poured over my father'. The advent of the rain becomes the cause of Spider's decision to eat the skin: '...it started raining', '... As heavy rain was pouring...'

#### ~ Pairing elements of the tale

- \* **Spider and Elephant:** Elephant is giving, and therefore he is an affable friend. Spider is not giving. He refuses to give back Elephant's skin. He is a selfish character.
- \* **Spider and Doh-jE-tchethenen:** Spider is tricky. His son is not obedient to his tricks. That is why he is the black sheep of the family. **Doh-jE-tchethenen** appears here as a hero who triumphs over the evil deeds of his father who is the villain of the story.

### 3.7. Formulaic expression and Lesson

This story ends with the lesson: "That is why Spider is now found under every eave", because he asked to be buried there. But more importantly, the reason of his death remains the real issue of the lesson of the story. And although the narrator does not explicitly state the true moral of this tale, which is what Spider's attitude is about, this last phrase invites one to consider it. This disguised way of stating facts defines too often the nature of the Gouro discourse. A Gouro person who knows the word must too often disguise his/her statement with allegories, proverbs, riddles, or parables. It is a dynamic way of expressing a fact. When it is said for example: 'Do you know the reason why Spider lies henceforth living in the eaves?' The answer is implicitly meant to address 'a bad attitude' of a person. In fact, Spider was buried in the eaves as a consequence of his unsocial behaviour.

~ The teller's work also resides in capturing his/her audience's attention. On the moral issues of a statement: eg. 'Spider kept on telling lies till Elephant died from the cold.' Such a statement is judgmental of Spider's tricky attitude. The audience would thus learn to judge implicitly the characters and their attitudes towards each other.

#### **4. The narrative Gestures**

Observing closely the most important moments of a story, it seems obvious that a teller's verbal rendition of a typically exciting scene will accompany his/her body movements.

The tale starts by introducing two contrasting characters: spider (small in size, light, quick, a trickster) and Elephant (big size, heavy, slow, a tricked). The evocation of two such contrasting characters is performed by a Gouro teller following the asymmetric structure of her/his body; identifying for example the one character (spider) with the left hand, and the other (Elephant) with the right hand.

Human body is structured symmetrically between a left side and a right side, a back and a front, a top and a bottom. As a contrasting pair, the evocation of Spider and Elephant will tend to be reflected in a body movement in which the one character is identified with a left hand gesture and the other character with a right hand gesture. Such shared gesticulations which operate in a variety of forms of bodily expressions are unconsciously meant to create a balanced pattern in a teller's body expression. Each time one character's action has to be contradicted by the other's, the body movement of a teller follows the rhythmic balanced pattern of his or her speech. This may be exemplified in the following statement in T3: "Whenever Elephant asked for his skin, he (Spider) would say to him: "Friend, I was thinking that I should wash your skin before I give it to you Because it is heavy, that is why it is taking too long. Give me a couple of days more and I will bring back your skin" (*P.?*). This statement shows, for instance, that Elephant wants back his skin that he loaned to Spider to attend the funeral. But Spider, in a counter-argument is, through trickery, refusing to return the skin. The bilateral components of this tale may be recapitulated in a synoptic table (as follows further down). In this synoptic table, the gestural patterns (third column), can be seen as the body expressions of a teller that translate the emotional contents of the cardinal scenes (first column), of this Tale. Each column contains the key narrative moments of the plotting. Thus, the cardinal scenes summarised in the first column, show the structural and emotional content of the story. They present the various episodes or scenes in the plotting. The second column constitutes a deeper level of the narrative. Its content introduces a symbolic meaning of life through the interactions of the characters involved in the story. This second column encapsulates the correlation between the descriptive words of the respective characters. This gives for example:

**Trickster – receiving – going – refusal – life – evil-doer – wrong.**

**Education:** The trickster (Spider) receives Elephant's skin to go to a funeral. He refuses to return Elephant's skin, he stays alive and Elephant dies. He is an evil-doer since what he did to Elephant is wrong.

**Tricked (Elephant) – giving – coming – request – death – good-doer.**

**Education:** The tricked (Elephant) gives his skin to Spider to go to a funeral. He comes to request his skin but does not get it back and he dies. He is a good-doer, therefore justice must be done to his fate.

The third column summarises the possible physical enactment of a teller of a story.

<i>Propositional gestes</i> (Structural Content of story)	<i>Complementary features</i>	<i>Gestural Pattern</i>
Spider  Elephant	Trickster  Vs  Tricked	Left } Movement } to identify Right} the characters.
Spider asks for Elephant's Skin. Elephant gives Spider his Skin.	Giving  Vs  Receiving	Backward}hand movement }imitating gesture }of giving (forward) Forward }and receiving }(backward).

<p>Spider goes to funeral.</p> <p>Spider comes back from Funeral.</p>	<p>Going Vs Coming</p>	<p>Forward}hand movement }imitating action of }going (forward) and Backward}coming (backward)</p>
<p>Elephant asks for his skin Back.</p> <p>Spider refuses to return Elephant's skin.</p>	<p>Request Vs. Refusal</p>	<p>Left }hand movement indicating }one who asks and the Right} other who refuses.</p>
<p>Elephant dies</p> <p>Spider attends Elephant's Funeral with family.</p>	<p>Death Vs. Life</p>	<p>Left }Dead Elephant on one side } Right}and living Spider on the other.</p>
<p>Spider's son sings Incriminating dirge at Elephant's funeral</p> <p>Spider beats drum harshly</p> <p>To confuse the message of the dirge.</p>	<p>Good doer (Spider's son) Vs. Evil doer (Spider).</p>	<p>Up }Movement of beating drum }harshly. Down}</p>

<p>Truth uncovered</p> <p>Spider is punished.</p>	<p>Wrong (criminal act of Spider)</p> <p>Vs.</p> <p>Good (Spider brought to justice.)</p>	<p>Up } Hand movement of</p> <p>} of beating up spider.</p> <p>Down }</p>

The cardinal scenes and their gestural patterns are subjected to the individual teller's ability of performance. It is then up to a teller to elaborate on each scene and its descriptive gestures, to enter into detailed descriptions that s/he judges useful to a further understanding of a message, to exaggerate statements pertaining to each scene and/or to exaggerate the gestural counterpart. A teller may not simply say for example: Elephant asked Spider to return his skin, but Elephant asked Spider aggressively/gently/shivering with cold/courteously or else in a friendly manner to return his skin. Or else a teller may not simply say Elephant gave spider his skin, but Elephant gave enthusiastically/doubtfully/joyfully his skin to Spider. In any instance, regardless of the nature of descriptive adjectives or adverbs, a teller may use the mnemonic elements that are still present in the utterance: they are **giving** vs **receiving**, and **forward** vs **backward** movement of a hand. In this way, messages are conceptualised in Gouro tale performance, they are unforgettable through their mnemonic structure, and they are thus passed down from generation to generation over centuries.

The narrative gestures are an obvious behaviour of a teller who becomes part of a

story in the process of telling. Since the process always carries individual teller's moods and creativity, gesticulations are significantly subject to the tellers intentions. Gestures in storytelling must be seen in the light of the specific conditions of importance a teller wishes to paint to the audience.

## **5. Partial conclusion**

What is central to the understanding to Oral-style text in general ,and in particular to the understanding of the Gouro storytelling is that the rules that apply to the written mode of a story do not accommodate the oral-style mode of the same story. In effect, the orally performed Gouro tale is complicated by the correlation between the corporeal-manual enactment and the laryngo-buccal performance. Both performance patterns involve a degree of rhythmic pattern, which does not lend its nature to writing.

## TALE FOUR

### Dramatis personae

**Spider:** The trickster and liar.

**Colo-bu:** Spider's wife. She is affectionate and good housewife

The village community: they are the ones who shout when Spider's fake death is discovered.

### A bad husband

***An le Fiin.***

My story.

***e jie.***

It is past.

***Te lolo e daan te lolo e daan.***

The famine was at its worst

***Te Tonen nan le ki Colo-bu yan.***

Spider's wife was Colo-bu at that time

***De Colo-bu go golo va,***

When Colo-bu goes hunting for food

***de e "saawIE 'sia do,***

and picks up one grain of rice,

***e Tonen ze 'non.***

she gives some to Spider.

***De e gowIE 'sia do,***

When she picks up one grain of corn,

***e Tonen ze 'non.***

she gives some to Spider.

***Te Tonen e ze fafa ble e montren***

Spider was eating all his parts crudely.

***Ye e ze voh.***

She sowed her part.

***Ye e cIE fei bleen yan.***

And it became a big plantation.

***A le "saa doh,***

Her rice gave a good yield,

***a le go doh.***

her corn gave a good yield.

***A 'zran a yi ki yan a zo bE toon,***

As her husband saw that,

***e ble e man e yaa man.***

he faked an illness;

***Yi e man le e yaa man bE ga 'jE le.***

and said that his illness is a deadly illness.

***De e ga***

If he dies

***'wo e pa e nan le "saa fei.***

he wishes to be buried in his wife's ricefield.

***A le to clin***

The following day

***e ble e ga ooh.***

he faked death.

***Wa wu voh***

They mourned him

***ye wo soh pa man.***

and they covered him with cloth.

***e ble***

He said

***wo wuni coo, boh coo, wohi coo, clusosoh coo,***

they must put pestle, pot, mortar, and spoons

***wa pa e va gulu ji.***

in his grave.

***“Saa bli fE fafa,***

All the rice-cooking utensils

***wa pa va gulu ji.***

were buried with him.

***Ye e ble***

And he said

***te ‘wo tErE zen e ta lo,***

they must not cover him with earth,

***CoIE le ‘wa pla e ta.***

but they must close his grave with a bark.

***Ye ‘wa pa zo.***

So, they buried him.

***De behi tan***

When the night falls,

***Tonen e bola man Gulu ji***

Spider would come out of his

***ye e nan le “saa bli.***

and eat his wife’s rice.

***Te ya cla zo yi fafa man.***

He did so every day.

***Yi le yi do man***

Then one day,

***“saa boh vlan ‘sia***

the pot of rice ran away

***ye e da fla.***

to the village.

***Ye Colo-bu ble yih!***

Colo-bu said amazed:

***“saa boh ca***

“what a pot of rice

***‘bE dan fla coh?***

is coming running to the village?

***EEh, trE e ca boh donen man lo,***

Well, tomorrow I will not cook,

***e le “saa boh e daan da IE.***

a pot of rice will come for me.”

***To clin***

The next day

***a taba cIE zo.***

it happened again.

**Ye Tonen ble**

And Spider thought

**e fE do cla**

he must find a device

**te "saa boh ca go fla lo.**

to prevent the pot of rice from running to the village.

**e yiri bEnen clin**

He cut a branch of a tree

**ya voh boh go ji ye ya voh e trE ta.**

and he fixed the handle of the pot around his waist.

**e cIE ki yan toon**

As it happened,

**boh vlan 'sia fla zia Tonen yan.**

the pot started running with spider to the village.

**e ble**

He cried appologetically:

**"saa boh l dan an man,**

"Pot of rice, leave me!

**"saa boh zante,**

Pot of rice please!

***Boh zante.***

Pot I beg you

***I dan an man,***

to leave me!

***De e coun yiri ki co man,***

When he holds a tree to resist,

***'bE e yehi man.***

the tree breaks,

***Ticlii, ye wo bola fla.***

till they reached the village.

***Ye mi nu pla yeeeeee!***

And the people shouted hurrah!

***Doboh e ca ga IE lo.***

So he did not die.

***Yi le Colo-bu ble***

And Colo-bu said that

***yi wi le Tonen a 'cIE e IE bE***

Spider must be judged

***'wa 'gli bli.***

for what he did to her.

***Ye ya zran dooh.***

And she informed their people.

***Ye Tonen ble:***

And Spider said appologetically:

- ***Colo-bu, an nan le ki l yan.***

"Colo-bu, you are my wife.

***lolo jE 'bE an "jE,***

I was only starving.

***be wi vo zo.***

Take it easy."

***Colo-bu ble***

Colo-bu said

***e 'ca we lo.***

she would never accept that.

***A le behi.***

The following night

***Tonen bhobo***

Spider defecated

***ye ya zen Colo-bu pehi man***

and he rubbed it on Colo-bu's buttocks

**Colo-bu e vuo ki yan toon**

As Colo-bu woke up,

**te Tonen a doh ki a poun man,**

Spider was readily standing next to her,

**ye e ble,**

and he said with a mocking loud voice,

- **Coh, Coh, Coh, 'Ca yue pa!**

"Look at that!

**Colo-bu 'bE bhobo e man soh ji bE?**

Is that mother Colo who has defecated in her pant like that?

**Yala 'jE wi le .**

What a shame!"

**Yi le Colo-bu ble e 'zran IE zante,**

And Colo-bu begged her husband

**te ya fi betra lo.**

that he must not take it outside.

**Yi le Tonen ble**

And Spider said

**ya yin sie**

he will only accept

**te de wo ca e ze lolojE 'gli bli IE lo.**

if he is not judged for his hunger.

**Colo-bu ble**

Colo-bu said quietly:

**a fafa wi e vo zo.**

“ let us forget about the whole story.”

**De wo ya e dErE co guli danan**

When they are fighting now,

**Colo-bu e 'zran sonon man ble,**

Colo-bu would swear at her husband as,

**gaa-vuo,**

'come back from death',

**ye a 'zran a ze sonon**

and her husband would swear as

**bhobo-con-ji.**

'in-house-shitter'.

**De 'bE le vie le.**

If this is a lie,

there it is going.

**'bE yrrrrr kpei.**

## 1. psychodynamic Interpretation

All the Gouro tales where the trickster, **Colo** the Spider features, seem to have one significant admonition: 'Do not do like **Colo** the Spider'. His attitude always defies socially acceptable behaviour. Spider indeed has never been a good friend, a good fellow, a good father, a good husband. He is not a good family man. The tale under review translates, for example, how unkind he can even prove at times to his family members, to his wife **Colo-bu**.

**Colo-bu** is a good housewife. During the famine, whatever food she gets she shares it with her husband, Spider. She is such a good housewife that she sacrifices her belongings (her share of livestock) for the better future of the household. She saves her share of cereals; she sows it in order to get more for the family while her husband is eating his. And when Spider discovers that his wife has grown crops successfully, he fakes death, and recommends that he be buried on the crop field so that he can secretly eat (or steal) his wife's crops. But wrong deeds always discover themselves. Discovered then, Spider uses devious means to avoid a sentence of some kind. He intimidates his wife. He fakes an embarrassing situation in which he incriminates his wife, and convinces her to withdraw the complaint against him. But, this does not prevent him from being presented henceforth to the eyes of **Colo-bu** and to the eyes of the community as a 'death-faker'.

The tale thus presents routine behaviour as encountered in family life: Greed, male chauvinism, love, care, trust and family prestige. And because Colo the Spider embodies these family values in their worst forms, he cannot be held up as an example of what 'NOT' to be.

The Gouro have ways of expressing insistence, intensity or thoroughness. ***Te lolo e dan, te lolo e dan*** which literally translates 'hunger was coming, hunger was coming' is for example, one way of insisting on the intensity of the famine. an emphatical meaning can be produced in reduplicating a whole concept in a sentence or a single characteristic sound. They would say, for example ***e baba*** to mean 'much' or 'a lot', and ***zohzoh*** to express the pouring of liquid. A heavy rains pours ***zohzoh***, which gives its name to ***zohou glo*** or 'big pouring' of rain. Reduplication, whether it is of a single sound or a group of sounds, thus adopts the meaning of insistence. But other ways of expressing intensity include prosodic features; by putting a strong vocal emphasis on the last word of an utterance for instance. 'He ate a lot' can be put ***e fon bli, e fon bli***, or else ***e fon bli*** with the stress on ***bli***. ***Ye ya "jE***, and 'he beat it/him/her thoroughly'. These first two ways do not exclude a third possibility, which is ***e fon bli kyEle*** or ***e fon bli e baba; kyele*** or ***e baba*** meaning a lot.

In reading silently, such effects of expressing thoroughness through prosody can be characterized by invariability. Worse, for a non-speaker of the Gouro, the reading can not only be characterized by invariability, but also by monotony, simply because s/he would not differentiate between the sound pattern.

## 2. Metaphoric elements of the tale

\* **Grave:** Spider is buried on his wife's farm. The grave in which he is buried is an element of darkness. This translates Spider's evil actions: He acts like a ghost or a vampire who comes out of the darkness (grave) to steal from living people. The grave as a hole has a female quality too. It is a womb with a maternal protection that Colo-bu has always given to her husband.

\* **The pot:** The pot also translates the maternal womb. It contains food, which is associated with the womb which contain life. If the pot runs to Colo-bu to the village, it is because it symbolizes the maternal womb. It is not only a womb, but also a kitchenware that belongs to a housewife.

\* **Excrements:** The excrements translate the idea of rejection. It is the rejection of what one has eaten. Because Spider is characterised by greed and gluttony in the story, so is he the one who rejects what he has eaten by excreting faeces. If he incriminates his wife with the idea, it is by inversion the rejection of a bad family man by a good housewife.

### ~ Repetitions

The repetition patterning can be seen in the words level, the proposition level, clamp-words.

~ **Word level repetition:** the word *boh* is repeated 11 times in this tale. *Boh* means pot, but this word also stands for food as it is in the pot that food is mostly cooked. When the Gouro say *boh donen* literally meaning 'to cook the pot', he means 'to prepare food'. In this tale the repetition of the word '*boh*' does not exclude the word '*saa*' or rice which is repeated 10 times. This repetition sending to the idea of food or abundance is by inversion that of the famine the tale is dealing with.

~ **The proposition level of repetition:** *Te lolo e dan, te lolo e dan*, literally means "Hunger was coming by then, Hunger was coming by then", here translates the state of distress the famine is causing. The repetition means insistence, and therefore translates the situation of a famine in its most devastating state.

~ *De Colo-bu go golo va, de e saawIE 'sia do, e tonen ze non. Dee gowIE 'sia do, e tonen ze non..* 'When *Colo-bu* goes hunting for food that she picks up one grain of rice, she gives some to Spider, when she picks up one grain of corn, She gives some to Spider'. This is an idiomatic form of repetition among the Gouro. In other words, this is a way of putting

the unselfish attitude of Spider's wife as opposed to her husband's selfish behaviour.

~ **A le saa doh, a le go doh**, ' Her rice gave a good yield, her corn gave a good yield! This is to say that 'whatever she saved and sowed gave a good yield.

~ There is a similarity between the faking of death by Spider and the rubbing faeces on his wife's buttocks. This is a deep structure level of repetition in that Spider plans another bitter trick in order to get away with his embarrassing fake death. By doing so, Spider wishes to see his wife feel guilty of a similar embarrassing situation as his fake death.

\* **Clamp-words:** **Ye** (and), which establishes the textual cohesion. Many other clamp-words also appear in this text. Eg: **De** (when): '**de** Colo-bu saawle sia do, or **de** Colo-bu gohwle sia do e zran ze non' (when Colo-bu picks up a grain of rice, or a grain of corn, she shares it with her husband). Another one is **Te**, Eg: '**Te lolo e dan, te lolo e dan** (the famine was at its worst), **Te tonen e ze fafa ble e montren** (Spider was eating all his parts crudely), and **Te ya cla zo yi fafa man** (He did so every day). The clamp-word **te** in Gouro introduces the idea of persistence or insistence. For examples, instead of repeating a statement many times to show the insistence of an idea (as the Gouro also do), one can precede the statement with '**te**' to clamp it with the rest of the sentences of the speech. As such, **Te ya cla zo yi fafa man** means that 'he did so repeatedly every single day', **Te lolo e dan, te lolo e dan** translates 'the state of distress caused by the famine'.

\* **Clamp-sounds:** **Coo** (with): wuni **coo**, boh **coo**, woli **coo**, clusosoh **coo** (pestles with pot with mortar with spoon). This clamp-sound has an associative function.

\* **Onomatopoeia:** *wo plah yeeeeee!*, literally meaning, 'they shouted yeeeeee'. *yeeeeee!* is descriptive of the hurrah of the crowd; that is to say, 'they shouted hurrah!'

Onomatopoeias are mostly subjected to an individual teller's creativeness. A performer can creatively coin a descriptive sound effect that s/he wishes to associate with particular actions in order to elicit emotion and excitement in the audience. Onomatopoeias are thus sensual and concrete, enabling the listener to identify a feeling, a sound, an expression, or the movement of an action through his own senses.

~ **Pairing elements:**

\* **Spider and Spider's wife, *Colo-bu***, are two elements of a couple. They are husband and wife and so constitute a whole married element. Each is incomplete without the other. But there is the potential for conflict because there are always individuals involved in a couple, each individual having his or her identity. In this tale Spider and *Colo-bu*'s features thus become antagonistic at the end of the story: "When they are fighting now ***Colo-bu*** would swear at her husband as 'Come-back-from-death', and her husband would swear at her as 'in-house-shitter!'. This tale features almost exclusively Spider and his wife. The village community may be pictured in the background of the couple's domestic life, but only in a fainter picture.

\* **Hunger / Abundance:** The story starts by stating that 'The famine was at its worst.' Which contrasts with ***Colo-bu***'s farm: 'Her rice gave a good yield, her corn gave a good yield.' Thereby, the character of Spider is further contrasted with his wife. Spider appears as a mean character with no sense of forethought, 'Spider was eating all his part crudely'. ***Colo-bu*** is provident, 'She sowed her share'.

### 3. Gouro lore and the lesson of this tale

This story addresses particularly married life. By contrasting the partners of that couple, it is wished to present through the behavioural pattern of Spider what possibly brings about trouble in a married life: telling lies, faking situations, abuse, incriminating the other, being selfish, not acknowledging one's errors, are misdemeanors that can corrode a married life.

\* The lore of a marital life is portrayed in **Colo-bu's** character: She is a sharing and a caring person. She shares everything she picks up with her husband, especially in a difficult moment of their life.

- She is fair and honest: she wants her husband to be judged for his bad attitude.

- She has a Gouro sense of family values: what happens inside their bedroom is no one's business, and therefore must not come out.

\* The famine. Famine, drought, and other natural calamities have one major moral standard in Gouro tales in general: it is during these mean moments of life that man faces the worst troubles. When confronted with the hardships of the catastrophe, other social difficulties still lie in wait for the person. In this tale, for instance, it is when **Colo-bu** is in need of her husband's assistance that the latter confronts her with misconduct. Spider abuses Colo-bu, steals from her, and humiliates her. In general, when a natural calamity is evoked in a tale, one must expect some side effects that always affect life in some way.

This tale teaches the values of a good marital life, and trust and love that need to be nurtured in a relationship. If famine is the means in this regard, the lesson one must draw is to stick together during such difficult moments of life: problems are as natural as hunger (seen in famine which is a natural calamity here) is to human life.

## TALE FIVE

### The dramatis personae

**Old woman:** She is the helper (donor) in the story.

**A man:** He is the hero. He is assertive and honest.

**The man's son:** He helps the hero, his father.

**The chief:** He is the antihero. He is authoritarian and abusive.

**The man's family:** The man shares the food that the gourd produces

**The chief's family:** The chief ordered his children and his wives to sing the magic song for the gourd to produce food for them too.

**The gourds:** It is the magic producer of food given to the man by the old woman

**The man who received a magic gourd.**

*An le fiin.*

My story.

*e jie.*

It is past.

*Lolo da blehi va le.*

There was a dreadful famine.

*Yi le gonenzan do le.*

And there was a man.

*e ya jie nan bwii fon wE ki yan lolo yi va.*

He was hunting the bush for food.

***Ye e boh liplanen do man e yanan ki e le 'ban ta.***

And he came across an old woman sitting in her barnyard.

***Yi le yi liplanen ble a IE ble:***

And the old woman told him with a slow and shaky voice:

- ***An le nen, I da***

"my child, come

***I boh I naan lipla va.***

and help your old grandmother.

***I an le conji 'sia an IE.***

Clean my house for me."

***Gonenzan go ye e faanen 'sia***

The man got a broom

***ye e yi liplanen le conji 'sia taa taa.***

and cleaned the old woman's house neatly.

***Ya nan 'saa IE taa taa.***

He washed it very clean for her.

***e yaan, e ble con e go***

When he was about to leave

***ye liplanen a laa.***

the old woman called him.

**- An bi I da co .**

"My son, come here.

**I zinzi cIE an IE .**

You have been kind to me.

**'BE man an bwa I va.**

For that I shall help you.

**I go conba do 'ji mibE.**

You go in a room over there.

**De I go**

If you go

**I bwa tuE nu man.**

you will see some gourds.

**A ki e dan fi IE ble:**

Each one will say:

**I an si, I an si, I an si.**

'Take me! Take me! Take me!.

**Te I 'wo si lo.**

Do not take those ones.

**Yi le e ki e yoh ki con gulu man mi te e ca wi sie ta man bE lo,**

The one that is shut away in a corner of the room,

***yi le be si.***

it is the one you must take.

***A ze ji le fon ki.***

It is the one that contains foods.

***De I go,***

When you go,

***bii coo, I le nen nu coo, I bE man mi nu coo,***

you, your children, and your relatives,

***e fon non ca IE.***

it will give you food.

***Be dola ca gulu ta***

Put it amidst you

***ye be fi:***

and say:

***fE si fE si fE zen,***

'Here and there, food abound!'

***ye fE e bola ca IE***

and food will come out

***ye ca bli.***

and you will eat."

**Gonenzan go,**

The man went,

**e wla ki yan conji toon,**

when he entered in the room,

**tuE fafa zen ta a fi ki yan**

all the gourds rushed over him saying,

**I an si, I an si, I an si!**

'take me! Take me! Take me!

**E 'ca wo do si IE lo.**

He did not take any of those ones.

**Yi tuE nen le e ki e yoh ki congulu man mi bE,**

The little gourd that was shut away in the corner of the room over there,

**yi le ya si**

it is the one he took

**ye e go e le con 'lee.**

and he went to his home. He called his wife.

**e nan laa,**

He called his wife,

**e le nen nu laa,**

his children,

**ye e 'bE man mi nu laa.**

and his relatives.

**e yi tuE dola**

He put the gourd down

**ye e ble**

and he said

**fE si, fE si, fE zen!**

'here and there, food abound!'

**FE toh do do bola:**

All sorts of food appeared:

**"saa, 'ya, mii, buu, bEE yi zian, si yi zian nu, fE fafa.**

Rice, yam, banana, casava, peanut soups, palm seed soups, all sort of  
foods.

**Ye wa bli.**

And they ate.

**Yih fafa man**

Every day

**tuE 'bE fon bola man wo IE**

the gourd yeilded food for them

**te wa ble.**

to eat.

**Wo ya e dErE co e bwa ki titi.**

They were now all looking healthy.

**Wa fi jamlanti IE.**

People informed the chief.

**e ble:**

And he raved:

**Coh! A yan le wo ki e bwa ki**

“Damn! That is the reason why they are chubby

**ye te co ya e cohe ki.**

while we are skinny.

**Ca go yi tuE ‘sia**

Go and fetch that gourd

**ca da a yan an IE.**

and bring it to me.”

**Ye wo go yi tuE sia IE**

And they went to fetch the gourd

**ye wo da a yan a IE.**

and they brought it to him.

**e ble ‘wo go yi gonen zan laa**

He sent for the man to come

***e 'da ya fi e le tuE IE***

and tell the gourd

***'bE e fE bola e IE.***

to produce food for him.

***Wo go***

They went

***wo ca boh IE gonen zan man lo.***

but they did not find the man.

***Wa bi coun***

They caught his son

***wo da a yan.***

and they came with him.

***Jamlanti ble a IE***

The chief ordered him

***ya fi e ti le tuE IE ble***

to tell his father's gourd

***e fon bola.***

to produce food.

***Ye nen ya 'sia e IEIE yan:***

And the child started singing:

**Zahi le tuE,**  
Ggourd of Zahi

**Coo coo zahi le tuE loo ye,**  
Coo coo gourd of zahi loo ye

**Zahi le tuE**  
Gourd of Zahi

*An ti le tuE ca be yan lo*  
This one is not my father's gourd

**Zahi le tuE**  
Gourd of Zahi

**Djamlanti le tuE be kie.**  
This one is the chief's gourd

**Zahi le TuE.**  
Gourd fo Zahi

**Nen yaan IEIE voh ki yan**  
As the child finished singing,

**fon do 'ca bola IE lo.**  
no food appeared.

**Liplanen 'ca coon yi tuE non le a IE lo ba!**

Because the old woman did not give the gourd to him,

***TuE 'cIE a gole po le blon yan.***

Instead, The gourd became a big piece of stone.

***Ye e ble***

And the chief ordered

***e le nen nu coo, e nan nu coo wo IE ble***

his children and his wives

***wo yi IEIE voh.***

to sing the song.

***Wo ze yi IEIE pla ki yan a ta,***

As they finished singing the song,

***tuE wouhan gole yan***

the gourd that became a stone

***ye e coun wo jE ki man.***

started hitting them.

***e wo "jE e baba.***

It hit them so seriously,

***Yeen ya wo fafa ta mi.***

that they were bleeding all over.

***TuE wo je ki 'sia ye yanan li pa.***

The gourd hit them till sunset.

***Ye e mi woun voh 'wo go gonenzan laa fei***

And he sent for the man to the farm to come

***e da e le tuE 'sia.***

and take back his gourd.

***wo go a laa IE.***

They went to call him.

***Ye gonenzan ble bahl***

And the man said no!

***Ye e IEIE 'sia:***

And he started singing:

***Coo coo zahi le tuE loo ye***

Coo coo gourd of Zahi lo ye

***Zahi le tuE***

Gourd of Zahi

***Coo coo Zahi le tuE loo ye***

Coo coo gourd of Zahi loo ye.

***Zahi le tuE.***

Gourd of Zahi.

***An le tuE ca be yan lo.***

This one is not my one gourd.

**Zahi le tuE.**

Gourd of Zahi.

**Djamlati le tuEE kie.**

This one is the Chief's gourd.

**Zahi le tuE.**

Gourd of Zahi.

**Gonenzan ble**

The man said that

**e 'ca e dErE yi tuE 'sia nan lo.**

he is not taking back the gourd,

**e 'ca e dErE co e tuE yan lo bahl**

Since it was no longer a gourd,

**GoIE le e dErE co.**

but a stone.

**Yi tuE vo e goIE yan jamlanti le con 'lee**

The gourd stayed in the chief's yard as a stone

**te e wo ja e blehi.**

and it kept on beating them up.

**Ticlii fIE yih do jie**

A week went past,

**ye gonenzan "bli dolata,**  
and the man was satisfied,

**ye e go e le tuE 'sia IE.**  
and he went to take back his gourd.

**Ye e ble:**

And he said:

- **Ca ze va bE**

" In your community,

**mi titizan 'ca fE ye lo,**  
a poor person must ever be poor,

**fwa mi do bE fE fafa ye?**  
Only a rich person must have it all!

**Lolo blehi va**

During the famine

**Bali yanan ji zen an ta**

God pitied my fate

**ye e fE ble man tuE 'non an IE,**  
and gave me a gourd that can feed me,

**ye ca ble men fE man?**

and you say why he did so?

***Mi ya e zo coo naan,***

You think that someone like me in your community

***'bE e fE ble fla ta te 'wo ya e plaa.***

does not even deserve to feed himself.

*Yi ca bli yanen zi le*

And it is because of your greed

***ca yi an le tuE si an 'lee.***

that you dispossessed me of my gourd.

***e 'ca e ziin vo ca lee lol***

Why don't you keep it now?"

***Ye e da***

And he came

***ye e yi tuE 'sia***

and he took the gourd

***ye e go a yan e le con 'lee.***

and he went home.

***De l mi le fE si e 'lee gla yan,***

If you rip someone of his belonging,

***'IEE yohdo wlevu,***

in thirty years' time (sooner or later),

***yi wi yanen le e ki bE***

the same wrong

***yi e cla l ze IE.***

will happen to you.

### **1. Psychodynamic interpretation.**

Natural calamities are the subjects of stories all over the world. They bring distress and disruption from which humans learn a great number of lessons. They involve drought, famine, and plagues of various kinds. The Gouro have no existing folk narratives involving earthquakes and volcanoes because they have no memories of such manifestations in their world.

Famine, ***lolo***, caused by severe drought is a much discussed topic in tales. Such tales revive the memories of years of meagre harvest. That is when rains become scarce at times, and that the drought frustrates the harvesting of crops. Even water holes get dry, and an entire community is caught in a battle for survival.

The explanations of the natural calamities, according to the Gouro belief system, are mostly grounded in dogma. Calamity is either caused by an offence to some deities or to earth, who refuse to bring assistance to humanity because of the offence. Crops burn, bushes burn, the rains stop, there is a lack of water, and people go hungry for months. To alleviate the

pains of the punishment by the gods, or by the ancestors, oracles are visited and sacrifices are performed. In some cases, a rainmaker is visited to make the rains come.

The distress caused results in many forms of explanations in narratives. The commonest is the dispute between the Heavens and Earth who both wish to demonstrate their authority over each other. The Sky thus momentarily withholds its water (rains), and drought occurs; the Earth suffers until it surrenders through some protocol of resolutions. Tales of this kind, explaining some manifestations through the intervention of the Heavens, the Earth, the Sun or the Moon develop a supernatural perception of life. Their actions that are beyond humanity's control, see these elements as supernatural forces that must be venerated and worshipped. It is not uncommon to see among the Gouro some families who worship such elements as the sun, Iri; the earth, **Tre**; the moon, **Monen**; or **Lahyi** (or sky water) rain.

The tale under review focuses on greed, disrespect, power abuse, and humility, which are the moral issues that the story deals with. The story starts with the announcement of the famine, which prepares us to look in the direction of its effects and thereby the lessons that one would learn. By an opening formula of ***lolo da blehi va le***, 'the famine was coming at that moment', the cardinal point that explains the story is set. There is starvation. A solution to the problem is found by an individual to save his family. He is dispossessed of his gift by an authority. The authority is punished for his exaction and he confesses. The order is re-established.

This Gouro story may adopt two developments. The one (such as the one under review) has a happy ending, the other has a tumultuous ending. Depending on the nature of the lesson, the story adopts at times a different

orientation from the moment the protagonist receives the help to overcome his problem. He is the one who abuses the gift and loses it, sometimes losing his life. Spider mostly enters into the picture in that second case of a tragic ending. Instead of a human character, it is Spider who receives the magic gourd (or whistle in some narratives) and boasts himself of his power. He calls upon the animal community and says 'it is not because of the famine that you must not pay a visit to your dear friend, Colo the Spider?' All the animals would come, and Spider would feed them all with his magic gourd. Food would then become scarce because of the abusive use of the magic gourd. The next step is that Spider goes back to the old witch woman to ask for another gourd. He receives a replacement gourd and leaves.

When Spider henceforth orders the gourd to produce food, instead of food the gourd would produce all sort of venomous insects and flies that would bite him to teach him a lesson of economy. Spider would not take that alone with his family. He invites again all the animals, leaves the gourd with them, asks them to lock themselves in a house to enjoy more this time, and leaves. The guests would then undergo the same physical torture. But they would find spider, and beat him flat. In either orientation that this Gouro story may take, the lessons remain virtually the same. It is all about power abuse and greed.

Before receiving the magic gourd in the present story, the protagonist is put to the test to demonstrate his respect for wisdom (for aged persons). For that he is asked by a dirty old witch for help. He would then clean the smelly room of the old woman, which other people have probably refused to do, and he receives, as reward and due to his magnanimity, a magic gourd. He is furthermore warned about the cardinal value of the story, Greed. Do not take the big gourds that rush onto you saying 'take me, take me, take me!; But take the one that is shut away in a corner of the room... it is the one that

contains food! The old woman would warn him. In these terms, he gets taught humility. There are thus as many values that the protagonist has to observe as precepts to foster the magic power of the gourd. If he fails to do so, he will know a tragic end like spider or simply, he will lose the magic power of the gourd.

But the orientation of the present tale is other than the one where the protagonist himself proves abusive. It is rather the chief of the community who dispossesses the protagonist of his gift, which is another type of power abuse, and demonstration of disrespect for other properties of other people. Eventually, the chief's abuse will not go unpunished. The gourd was not initially given to him, and he ignores the password that triggers the magic power of the gourd.

## **2000      Metaphoric elements of the tale**

\* **The gourd:** The gourd is an instrument of female use in a household: A housewife keeps in it her water, her cereals, corn, rice, and other ingredients. A small gourd is a kitchenware. It is either used as a spoon or as a container to serve a dish in it. Its multiple usage by women as a container and a cooking instrument translates the idea of abundance, which can be seen in the story through the magic provider of food. When the man enters in the room to get the magic gourd, the teller excitedly voices in varying intonation the noise that the bigger gourds make by saying: 'Take me, take me, take me!' This may be done with the hand in the air depending on every storyteller, demonstrating the rush of the gourds to the man. Likewise, when saying *FE si, fE si, fE zen*, (Come here, food, come there food, abound!), the teller's left and right hands respectively move vigorously on each side in an imaginary action of calling.

\* **Stone:** The magic gourd that became a stone that beats up the chief and his family is an element of infertility, as opposed to the gourd which represents abundance. When the gourd becomes a stone to beat the chief, the hitting movements of the stone is likewise performed with the hand imitating the throwing of an imaginary stone.

\* **The old woman:** She is the Gouro mother who cares. She provides her children with food when they are hungry (famine). She is also the symbol of wisdom. She gives instructions to her children, just as she told the hungry man in the story to choose the right gourd: She advises of the right thing to do. When portraying the old woman in the performance, the teller mimes the old woman's movements with slow hand motions accompanying a soft and slow voice. At the old age, one is bound to lack physical energy, and therefore is slow in performing physical gestures. This in other words explains why the old woman needs help to clean her house.

## 2.1. Repetition

~ **Proposition level of repetition:** Usually, the most essential narrative elements of a story are repeated over by a teller to draw the audience's attention to their significance. In this story, repetition occurs in the idea of cleaning the old woman's house: *Gonenzan go ye e fanen 'sia ye e yi liplanen le con 'ji 'sia taa taa. Ya nan saa taa taa* (The man went and got a broom, and he cleaned the old woman's house very neatly. He washed it clean for her). The teller thus insists on this point because the reward of the obedient and helpful man is conditional upon the cleaning of the house.

~ When sending the man to get his reward in a room, the old woman said to him *yi le e ki e yoh ki con gulu man mi te e ca wi sie ta man bE lo, yi le be si*, which is that the must only take the one gourd that is shut away in the corner of the room. The teller repeats once more the action of the man when he went in the room: *yi tuE nen le e ki e yoh ki con gulu man mi bE,*

**yi le be si ye e go e le con 'lee** (The little gourd that was shut away in the corner of the room over there, it is the one he took and he went home.) This repetition is a reminder that the man has to do as recommended by the old woman. In other words, it is a warning against the man's possible greedy decision to pick the bigger gourds that are pushing themselves onto him. The man's action of taking the one in the corner of the room is a sign of obedience too. Since the old woman is a symbol of wisdom, being obedient to her is a sign of good behavior. Obedience to older person is highly regarded in Gouro society.

~ The other dominant scene of the story is the gourd yielding foodstuffs for the man and his family: **fe toh do do bola** (All sorts of food appeared...), *Yi fafa man tuE 'bE fon bola man wo lE te wa ble* (Every day the gourd yields food for them to eat). This repetition is to the idea that the audience must know that the magic gourd played its function of providence, therefore, the action of producing food is repeated.

~ **TuE clE a goLE po le blon yan** ( the gourd became a big piece of stone), **TuE wouhan goLE yan ye e coun wo jE ki man'** (The gourd that becomes a stone started hitting them), **E wo "jE e baba** (It hit them seriously).... 'The gourd hit them till it was evening'. This is another scene that must be remembered of the story. This repetition sends to the scene of reprisals for the misconduct of the chief. He must pay the price of his greed with his family. The tale thus teaches what constitutes civil order in Gouro society.

~ **Word level repetition:** the word '**taa Taa**' meaning ' very very clean' is repeated in two consecutive propositions (**Gonenzan go ye e fanen 'sia ye e yi liplanen le con ji 'sia taa taa. Ya nan saa taa taa.**) to mean that the man performed well the test of cleaning the old woman's house, therefore the reword by the old woman is implicitly expected. Likewise the words **Fon or fE** (food) appears 20 times, and **TuE** (gourd) 29 times. The word *Fon/fE*

sends to the idea of famine and therefore the need for food, and '**TuE**' the idea of abundance through the food that it produces in abundance.

~**Clamp-words:** there are in total 51 clamp-words **ye/yi** which connect together in a logical relation the propositions that develop this tale.

~ **Formulaic expressions:** Some formulaic expressions may be identified in this story:

\* The Gouro mostly say **LEE yoh do wIE vu** or 'In thirty years' time', to mean

sooner or later.

\* **Bali yanan ji zen an ta**, or 'God pitied my fate.' For example, the man happened to be lucky enough to have the magic gourd, which he perceives as a fortunate gift from God.

## 2.2. Pairing:

\* **Lack / abundance:** Once more, this tale is introduced with Famine, which is a disastrous situation from which the story rises into actions. When there is famine food lacks and people go hungry. But very quickly, the protagonist receives a palliative from a helper and has food in abundance. The very first two sentences of the tale show that complementarity: "Once there was a famine. There was a man..." to mean that there was hunger, but there was a man who had food.

\* **The man and his family / the rest of the community.** They were chubby and well fed while the others are skinny and hungry.

\* **The bush / the village.** In this story, the bush is the place from where the solution to hunger is found in the form of a magic gourd that provides food, while starvation took over the village community.

\* **The chief / subject:** The chief orders to dispossess the man of his magic gourd. The chief wants the gourd for himself. This contrast shows abuse of

power and greed, which are punished: the gourd becomes a stone that beats up the greedy chief and his family.

### **3. Gouro lore and lesson of this tale**

It is a truism, not to the Gouro alone, but to many other peoples, to know that when one does good, one receives good in return. When one behaves badly, one pays the price of her/his behaviour. This moral is clearly mentioned by the wise old woman: 'My son, come here. You have been kind to me. For that I shall help you'. As opposed to the abusive chief who gets hurt because he did wrong by dispossessing the man of his gourd. This one incident of bad behaviour is further mentioned by the teller: 'The old woman did not give the gourd to him (chief)'. The bad behaviour of the chief is adopted in the form of a song:

'... This one is not my one gourd ... This one is the chief's gourd'. The song, by inversion, means that the chief has stolen the gourd. This, otherwise, means that if the chief takes from the man his gourd unfairly, he must pay the price of his wrong behaviour. The moral that unwinds from this tale is:

- \* Help, and you will be helped like the good man.
- \* Steal, and you will be punished.
- \* Respect wisdom, and you will be respected in return.
- \* Avoid greedy conduct.

## TALE SIX

### Dramatis personae

**Bua-bonji- Kohou's uncles:** They are the anti-hero.

**A woman:** She is Bua-bonji Kohou, the hero's mother.

**Bua-bonji-Kohou:** He is the new-born and hero of the story.

**The old cannibal:** He is an anti-hero.

**The cannibals:** They are the anti-hero.

**The Evil Rooster:** He is an anti-hero.

**Bua-bonji Kohou's father:** He opposes to his new-born son to go to the bush

**Bua-bonji Kohou's sister:** Since she got married, she has never been allowed by her husband to pay visit to her parents.

**Dog:** The cannibals' dog that the cannibals sent to go and fetch their long-necked-cask.

**Cat:** The cannibals' cat that the cannibals sent to go and fetch their long-necked-cask

### Bua-bonji-kohou

***An le Fiin.***

My story.

***e jie.***

It is past.

***Lezan do le.***

There was once a woman.

***A bon ya e bo ki.***

She was pregnant.

***Yi a bon lee ki e boh ki bE***

As she was very pregnant,

***ye e go kyE yehi IE bwi ji.***

she went to fetch some firewood in the bush.

***Ye a dohzan ca lo.***

And there was nobody to help her carry the wood.

***Yi a dohzan le ca bE lo,***

As there was nobody to help her carry the wood,

***ye coEcoE luo doh bon ta.***

there appeared a pimple on her stomach.

***A ze yi coEcoE luo 'fon ki yan***

As she scratched the pimple

***nen bola pelio ye e doh.***

a baby came out readily and he stood up.

***Ye e ble.***

And he said

***e bu be taba pa ji***

mother add more wood

***ye i doh wo go***

I will help you carry it.

***BE ble yih!***

She said Gosh!

***e ble 'bE IE***

He said to her,

***- I yi kyE taba yehi.***

"get more wood,

***An yi kyE le e ki co e ca kyEle co loo!***

because that wood is not enough.

***e vlata kyE e cla kyEle.***

The wood to nurse me must be a lot."

***A bu kyE taba yehi***

His mother added more wood

***ye ya doh 'bE woun'hi e bEnenwIE do yan.***

and he put the load on her head with only one finger.

***Ye wo 'zi 'sia.***

And they left.

***Wo boh 'ziblan sohutafie ta,***

They reached a junction of seven different roads.

**te 'jE-bi-'jE nu fla 'zi e go.**

There was the road that leads to the village of the cannibals.

**Mi do ca zoun'ho 'bE ta lo.**

No one ever took that road.

**Ye e ble e bu IE**

And he said to his mother:

**- An bu, 'zi ca 'bE ki co?**

Mother which road is this?

**- 'JE- bi-'jE nu fla zi le**

This is the road that leads to the village of the cannibals.

**- An 'ti ya?**

Do I have a father?

**- Hmm I 'ti ya**

Yes, you have a father

**- An bu-lou nu va le a bu-bi nu ya?**

Do I have sisters and brothers?

**- Hmm, I bu-lou ya do**

Yes, you have one sister

**ye e bu bi ya do**

and you have one brother.

**Wo ze boh ki yan con 'lee,**  
When they arrived at home,

**a bu ya bu-bi coo, a bu-lou coo, a ti coo wo goon a IE.**  
his mother introduced to him his brother, his sister and his father.

**ye e wi wo va.**  
And he greeted them.

**Behi tan,**  
The night fell,

**wo go yia le.**  
they went to sleep.

The day broke.

**To clin.**

**A wouhan ki yan toon,**  
When he got up

**e ble**  
he said

**e go**  
he is going

**e vlata wih 'jE le.**  
to hunt some wild game.

**Ye a 'ti ble**

And his father said,

**bah! bii le wo I yaa kyiewo 'bE**

“no! You are only born today,

**bii E go bwi ji?**

can you go to the bush?”

**Ye e ble**

And he said

**e go**

he would definitely go

**yi wih 'jE IE kpoh!**

hunting the wild game.

**e ya gonan**

As he was going

**Ye e boh 'monen man zia,**

he found a mouse on his way

**ye e 'bE coun.**

and he caught it.

**ego**

He went

**ye e boh 'jE-bi-'jE gonenpla man.**

and he found an old cannibal.

**Te wo wih 'jE titi**

The cannibals had hunted a lot of wild games

**te wa 'zran kye ta,**

that they were smoking,

**ye te a ponen nu go luta.**

and the others went for more wild game hunting.

**A ze go ki yan**

As he went

**ye e ble 'bE le:**

he told him:

- **An tra, An le yonon si bwEne le ki co**

"Grand'pa, here is my fatted mouse,

**be panen an IE.**

roast it for me.

**De e man soon,**

If it is well done,

**I maan soon.**

you will be well done.

**De e waan,**

If it burns,

**I waan man.**

you will be burnt.”

- **Gonenpla ble:**

“The old man said:

**yuE man plEplE nen ca ‘bE ki l yan?**

what a disrespectful boy you are!”

**e ble**

He said

**an tra yen ji tenten nen le ki an yan.**

“I am grandpa’s arsehole of child.”

**‘BE yi a le ‘monen panen.**

He roasted the child’s mouse.

**e ble**

He said,

**an tra l ghoooh boglo bola**

“ Grand’pa, take out the ‘ghoh’

**co ‘dan.**

so that we can compete.

**Co go 'dan IE 'bE**

As we are going to play,

**de bii an bo**

if you win,

**I an kyehi drE man.**

you pound on my leg.

**De man I bo**

If I win

**man I kyehi drE man.**

I will pound on your leg too."

**Wa 'sia**

They started.

**gonenpla a bo behi fie .**

The old man won twice.

**e ganen non 'bE IE.**

He gave him his leg.

**'BE ya kyehi drE yiri bo le bonon yan e bE fie yan.**

He pounded on his leg with a heavy big piece of wood with both hands.

**Ye e ble:**

And he said:

- **An tra, an wu voh e yan do 'bE?**

"Grandpa, have I cried in my turn?"

**'BE ble bah.**

The old man said no.

**Bii nen clennon ca non wu voh IE lo**

"You little baby you have not cried,

**maan kwakwa 'bE wu vwa?**

is it me the old man who will cry?"

**Wa 'sia e ziin**

They started again

**ye e 'bE bo.**

and he won.

**e ble 'bE e ze ganen non.**

He asked to pound on the old man's leg too.

**Ya dia 'bE kyehi ta boh!**

He pounded so heavily on his leg

**'bE ya bulu ta ki yan wu yan.**

that the old man was rolling crying with pains.

**e go**

He went

**e yohgoh laa clin.**

and cut some palm leaves.

**e wo le wih baa bo**

He made a load out of their meat

**ye e go a yan.**

and went with it.

**'JE-bi-'jE nu si luta wo da**

When the cannibals came back from the wild game hunting

**wo ble:**

they said surprised:

**- Yih! Men fE E 'cIE?**

Gosh! What happened?

**'JE- bi-'jE gonenpla ble**

The old said,

**nencleannon do le,**

"there was one little Boy,

**yi E da**

he came

**ye e caa le wih baa bo**

and made a parcel of our meat

**ye e go a yan.**  
and went away with it.”

**Wo ble ca vo trE fla oh.**  
They said, well! We are going nowhere tomorrow.

**Caa ta benhe trE.**

We will wait for him.

**Yi nen da wih yan**  
The child came with the meat

**ye e ble e bu IE ble**  
and he said to his mother,

**e vla ta wih le ki co.**  
“this is the meat for nursing me.”

- **An go e drE co si voh IE yi 'jE-bi-'jE nu fla.**  
I am now going to get some palm seeds in the vilage of these cannibals.

**Yi 'jE-bi-'jE nu fla le ki 'bE,**  
In that village of the cannibals,

**yohwIE sasa 'bE ki a nan.**  
there are palm trees in great number.

**e ble e bu IE:**

He said to his mother:

**- I bEE yoh bo**

"Grind some peanut butter

**an go a yan an 'lee.**

to go with it in my hand".

**A bu bEE yoh bo**

His mother ground some peanut butter

**ye 'bE a non IE**

and she gave him

**ye e go.**

and he left.

**e ze go ki yan**

When he went

**te 'jE-bi-'jE nu fafa ya IE ben nan.**

the cannibals were all waiting for him.

**e voh yoh yiri woun'hi**

He climbed their palm tree

**ye e coun wo le si vo ki man kpoh! Kpoh!**

and he started cutting noisily.

**Gonenplanen ble**

The old man said

**yi bawulunen bo**

"it is that dangerous Boy

**yi le e si vwa mibE."**

that must be cutting the palm seeds".

**Wo fafa titi go**

They all rushed to the place

**wo zen wuo.**

and they gathered under him.

**Wo si 'wo le wih zi kyE ta.**

They left their meats behind.

**Ye wo ble a IE ble:**

And they said to him:

**"Yi si le be vwa 'bE**

"That palm seed that you are cutting out,

**I zoun'ho taa**

are you ever going to climb down

**I vo nan lohu mi?"**

or will you stay up there?

**Ye e ble wo IE:**

And he said to them:

- **An zoun'ho lawuco ca va 'bE.**

"I am climbing down amongst you right now.

**eble:**

He said to them:

**An tra nu 'ca 'lee doh do.**

Dearest Grand'pas, open wide your mouths."

**Wo 'lee doh**

They opened their mouths

**ye e bEE yoh voh wo 'lee.**

and he dropped peanut butter in their mouths.

**Wo ble, yah!**

They said delicious!

**fE nenen ya yi nen lee.**

What a food that child has got!

**e ble wo IE ble**

He asked them

**'wo doh 'wo ki bali ta**

to line up

**ye ya taba voh wo 'lee.**

so that he can drop some more in their mouths.

**Wo 'lee doh ki yan,**

As they opened their mouths,

**e coun si din voh ki yan wo 'lee vlu! vlu! vlu!**

he started dropping bundles of seeds heavily in their mouths.

**Wo fafa ya vlan ta wu voh ki yan**

They all run away crying,

**ye wo go.**

and they went away.

**e zoun**

He climbed down

**ye e da e wo le wih si,**

and he came he took their meat,

**ye ya pa wo le si ta**

he added it onto their palm seeds

**ye e go fla .**

and he went home.

**'JE-bi-'jE nu coun fuuki man 'wo le fla ta.**

The cannibals started deserting their village.

**Wo ble 'wo yoban**

They said that they must worship their gods

**te nen clenon bo te e 'wo zio 'zi yi lo.**

so that the little boy must not track them down.

**Wa 'cIE 'bE**

As they left,

**wo ji "san 'wo trazra gankuo man.**

they forgot behind their ancestral long-necked-cask.

**Nen clenon da**

The little Boy came

**e wla 'bE gankuo 'ji.**

and entered into that long-necked-cask.

**Wo ble blen e go 'sia.**

They sent Dog to go and fetch it.

**Blen ble bahl**

Dog said not him,

**de nen e da voh e zio.**

that he does not want the Boy to come after him.

**Wo ble Zanwanen e go.**

They sent Cat.

**'BE go yaanen, yaanen, yaanen**

Cat went on its tiptoe

**ye 'bE gankuo 'sia.**

and he brought the long-necked-cask to them.

**Wo ble wo yoban ye wo gankuo dola wo mlenan.**

They put the long-necked-cask amidst them

**Wo ble:**

and started to worship.

**te yi nen e wo zio 'zi yi lo plo plo!**

"That Boy must not track us down at all!"

**Waa finan a zo**

So were they saying

**ye nen toun bo gankuo 'ji bounh!**

when the Boy farted noisily in the long-necked-cask.

**Ye wo ble:**

And they said:

**Yah! Yi 'wo trazra gankuo co 'bE IE kil**

"This ancestral long-necked-cask of ours is very powerful indeed!"

**Wo yan yo ban ki yan**

As they completed their ceremony,

***ye nen kuo 'wii e ta bEh!***

the Boy broke the cask unexpectedly.

***Wo e a yi ki yan Wo clin e kiman***

As they saw him,

***waa vlan ta e ziin.***

they took to their heels again.

***To clin ki yan***

The next morning

***e go e bu-lou zio***

he went to the village

***'bE zranfla.***

where his sister was married.

***'BE ze bo si fla ta mi***

In that village

***Manen do le ki 'bE e we:***

there was a Rooster that sings:

***yii Zahfla diti le Manen***

"I, Rooster of Zahfla Diti,

***de e wi Manen 'bE ca we lo diti conaanh!"***

when I sing no other rooster sings, diti conaanh'."

***De yi Manen wi***

When that Rooster sings

***fE nan e dwa tetel***

the atmosphere gets still.

***Yi a bu-lou e bo si ki man,***

Since his sister got married,

***a ze 'bEman mi do***

no one from her family

***ca e ganen zoun'ho a zio lo.***

has ever been allowed to pay her visit.

***A vohi ble***

His brother-in-law said

***te a bu-lou e go***

that his sister must no longer go

***e bu vale e ti yi lo.***

and see her parents.

***Ye e ble e ti IE ble,***

And the Boy said to his father:

***'ca nen yaa,***

"you gave birth to the girl,

**de e bo si**

If she get married,

**de a 'zran a fi ble te e zoun ca va lo**

That her husband prevents her from paying you a visit,

**ye ca wi 'bEman?**

And you accept that?"

**Ye yi nen go e bu-lou zio 'bE 'zran fla.**

And the Boy went to see his sister in her husband's village.

**A bu-lou a ta wi man tru e kyen -**

His sister heard about him before.

**A bu-lou a yi ki yan**

As his sister saw him,

**bE 'sia.**

she cried for help.

**'BE ble:**

She said with despair:

- **Yeh! fla le ki co**

This village

**fla yanen le.**

is a very dangerous village.

***Men fE le l da 'cle le co?***

What have you come here for?

***e ble 'bE IE***

He said to her,

***an da i si IE co go ca fla.***

"I have come to take you home."

***e ble e bu-lou 'zran l Eble***

He told his brother-in-law

***'wo ze fla mi***

that in the village where he comes from,

***gulu ji le e yi ja,***

he used to sleep in a hole,

***e 'ca yi ja con 'ji lo.***

not in a house.

***A vohi gulu bo a IE.***

His brother-in-law dug a hole for him.

***'Behi tan.***

The night fell.

***e ble e bu-lou IE ble***

He said to his sister

**e wuo pla man**

that he uses for a pillowcase

**calo coo, wouni coo, senen coo wo ta.**

a grinder, a pestle, and a knife.

**A bu-lou da 'wo yan a IE.**

His sister bought them to him.

**'BE ble a IE ble**

She said to him

**yi fla ta zaa le Manen le ki 'bE de e wi te e cooh lo.**

that he must not move when that Rooster sings.

**Ye wo go yi 'jE IE.**

And they went to sleep.

**Te yeen ya bu-lou ji**

His sister was very scared.

**Zahfla Didi le Manen e wi ki yan,**

As the Rooster Zahfla Diti sung,

**maan Zahfla Didi le Manen**

I, Zahfla Diti Rooster,

**de an wi Manen 'bE co we lo didi conaanh!**

when I sing no other Rooster sings didi conaanh!

***Nen e wi gulu ji mi ble:***

The Boy answered there in the hole:

***Bii Zahfla Diti le Manen***

You, Zhafla Didi Rooster,

***de i wi Manen 'bE e we didiconaanh!***

if you sing another rooster sings didi conaanh!

***'BE ble 'yih!***

The Rooster said Gosh!

***e za voh zan ya kyewo fla co taa?***

There is someone to challenge me today in this very village?

***'BE ze taba wi ki yan,***

And he sung again,

***e ze wi.***

and the Boy answered again.

***A bu-lou wouhan***

His sister got up

***te 'bE e yoon man con 'ji.***

and she was shaking with fear in the house.

***Zahfla Diti le Manen da wiki yan a va zia.***

Zahfla Didi Rooster came singing towards him.

**'BE da**

He came and engaged a fight.

**de 'bE fE voh bih!**

When the Rooster hits heavily,

**Ye 'bE ble:**

he says:

**I ganen 'bE e 'bE clin 'bE.**

This is your leg that I have chopped off like that.

**Ye te 'bE a vwa bE**

But what he was hitting like that

**calo coo, wohi coo, wouni coo,**

it was the Grinder, the mortar, the pestle

**'wo man le 'bE e fe vwa bE.**

that it was hitting.

**Nen e manpa gulu baman.**

The Boy hid himself against the wall of the hole.

**Zah le Manen e 'cIE ki yan ble e yuE pa gulu ji ble e fE nan yi,**

When the rooster tried to look in the hole,

**Vlauh! nen a wuo clin.**

Swiftly, the Boy cut off his head.

***e bola gulu ji.***

He came out of the hole.

***e bu-lou laa.***

He called his sister up.

***Mih fafa bola wo le con ji***

Everyone came out of his house

***wo ble nenclenon IE,***

and they said to the boy:

***“I bhoh kyEwu co IE!***

“Thank you!

***I bhoh kyEwu co IE!***

thank you!

***I co “behi kyEwu!”***

you have saved us today!”

***e ble e bu-lou ‘zran IE***

He said to his sister’s husband

***‘wo go lawuco e bu-lou coo.***

that he would leave with his sister immediately.

***‘BE ble, bah!***

His sister’s husband said,

**zah ca 'bE ta lo,**

"sure! There is no objection to that,

**ca go a yan.**

you go with her."

**Ye wo go 'wo fla.**

And they went to their village.

**A 'ti coo, a bu coo wo ji nanan.**

His mother and his father rejoiced.

**A 'ti dri non IE**

His father offered him a cow

**a bhoh voh fE yan.**

as reward.

**e ble yi e le dri le ki 'bE,**

He said that that cow of his,

**ya vwa e bu yen fla ta**

it must be placed in his maternal village.

**e go voh le**

He went to place it there

**ye e da.**

and came back home.

**De 'IEE clin do,**

Every single year,

**ye e bali nenen do.**

he would make one rope.

**De IEE clin do,**

Every single year,

**ye e bali nenen do.**

he would make one rope.

**LEE sohutafie 'cIE bali sohutafie.**

Seven years made seven ropes.

**e ble e 'ti IE ble**

He said to his father

**'wo go**

that they should go

**e le dri nu si e bu yen fla ta.**

and take back his cows from his maternal village.

**Wo go e 'ti coo.**

He went with his father.

**Wo yii.**

They slept over.

**To clin**

In the morning,

**ye e ble**

he said to his uncles

**e da e le dri nu si IE.**

that he had come to take back his cattle.

**Wo ble a le ble bah!**

They said to him not!

**I le dri bu ca tan nen ya le le,**

Your cow still has not given birth.

**'Wo le dri gonen be nen sohutafie yaa.**

It is our bull that gave birth to seven calves.

**e ble e 'ti IE**

He said to his father

**I wouhan**

get up

**'wo go.**

we go.

**Waa danan**

As they were coming

***ye wo boh 'yiba nen ta,***

they reached a river.

***A 'ti a si e bloh ta.***

His father took him over his shoulder.

***Wo e boh ki yan 'yi gulu ta***

As they reached the middle of the river

***e ble***

He said,

***an 'ti l an zoun!***

"father put me down!

***I an zoun!***

put me down!

***an taan poh ta!***

I walked over a fish!."

***'BE ble a IE ble***

He said to him,

***I ya an bloh ta***

"you are on my shoulders,

***ye l taan poh ta ca?***

how would you walk over a fish?"

**'BE ya zoun ki yan**

As he put him down,

**e vlan 'sia e go e bu yen fla ta.**

the Boy run back to his maternal village.

**e ze go ki yan**

When he reached over there

**te a bubwii nu a fe ble:**

his uncles were gossiping:

**e ble e ji clin.**

He said he is clever.

**e da co**

But he came here

**e boh ble e le dri nu si!**

and he could not take back his cattle.

**Wo ya lui bo nan**

As they were gossiping

**ye e bola vlan ta.**

he appeared running.

**a bola ki yan**

When he appeared

***ye e ble:***

he said with a fast and breathless voice:

- ***Yeh! 'ca wi an IE! 'Ca wi an le!***

"Help! Help!

***An 'ti nen yaa e gonen yan zia!***

My father gave birth to a boy on our way home!

***'Ca da yehi yan***

Bring me a blade

***an go coanen 'clin.***

so that I can go and cut his navel."

***Wo 'zran swE yan a man.***

They started to laugh at him.

***Ye wo ble:***

And they said:

- ***Gonen e nen yaa man?***

Does a male ever give birth?

***EEh trE non taal***

The world must be upside down!

*Ye e e ble*

And he said to them,

**gonen ca nen yaa man lo**

"if a male does not give birth,

**ye ca le dri gonen nen yaa?**

how has your bull given birth?"

**Wo ble a IE ble,**

They said to him,

**I go I 'ti laa**

"go and call your father

**ca da I le drinu si.**

to come and get your cattle."

**Ye e go e 'ti laa IE**

And he went to call his father,

**ye wo da a le drinu si IE.**

and they came to get his cattle.

**Yi bua-bonji Kohou le ki 'bE**

It is that Boy called Bua-bonji Kohou

**yi E da ji 'clin yan.**

who introduced intelligence amongst humans.

**A ta le minu ji ki e 'clin ki kyEwu.**

That is how people became intelligent today.

***Yi E ki e fiin yan***

That is what is a story

***ye le man vwa.***

that I tell.

## **1. Psychodynamic interpretation**

The Gouro tales also involve human characters. If the story does not adopt an auto-diegetic form, i.e. a narration in which the storyteller himself gets involved, human actants get involved in extraordinary deeds. What Cope once said can be justified in this story: "In human stories, the humans are real people (not representation of character types) in a world partly real and partly fantastic, who are required to interact with strange creatures and monsters as well as with one another.... The human stories seem to express the concern of man's sense of insecurity, his anxieties, fear and doubts, they are serious and complex, employ symbolism and present polarities, and could be regarded as philosophical statements." (1978: 185)

In tales, the human characters go beyond their egocentric domination over the other elements of the universe, and journey in the world of these elements, talk to them, and learn from them significantly. Nature becomes one familiar place where all interact, and where all learn from each other's behaviour.

One important medium sponsored by the Gouro narration is to the effect of representing humans in exemplary profile of learning. ***Bua-bonji-kohou*** or 'in-mother's-womb-kohou' portrays that profile. He is the enfant terrible; a new born who just springs out of his mother's womb in an unusual way and

who starts performing extraordinary deeds. What entitles him to the appellation of ***Bou-a-bon-ji-kouhou*** or 'in-mother's-womb-kohou' is that he is a premature child who rushes out of his mother's stomach through a pimple in order to help her carry a load of firewood. His life from then on takes on the definition of hectic actions. His name is enigmatic of a frail newborn who accomplishes amazing actions.

The story is that of a child. His mother like any Gouro housewife whose duties are to fetch fresh water from the backwater, make a provision of firewood, look after her husband and her offspring, goes in the bush to get some wood. As the load was too heavy to lift up onto her head, a pimple appears on her stomach. She scratches it and a baby jumps out and lifts the whole load of wood with one finger upon her head. From there on, the baby goes through challenging adventures: he performs his own nursery duties, he brings back his lost sister, he visits the cannibals in their never-visited-by-humans world, he demonstrates wisdom to a council of elders. The picture that we are presented is that of an extraordinary boy who saves difficult situations, who probes the unfathomable and brings justice. This kind of young person who is a miracle-worker, and is wise beyond his age appears in other cultures' stories: there is for example uHlakanyana in the Zulu and Xhosa stories, Krishna is also such a child in the Hindu belief system, and Jesus in the Christian.

In effect, the symbolism of the actions of Kohou can be seen as mankind in the prime of life. Man, the anthropos, is born with a physical disadvantage as compared to the other animals. The anthropos has only two feet and two hands, and no horns, no canines, no claws to defend himself with in the jungle. But he uses his intelligence to overcome all difficulties and to accomplish unbelievable things. Man is physically weak - like a baby - primate who dominates over all other elements of the earth.

Here the Guro concept of life is metaphorically similar to the story of humankind as constructed in the book of Genesis. The story says that Adam and Eve are the first ancestors of humanity on earth. It is told that they were created ex nihilo. We do not know how they were created out of nothing by God, and doomed to a life of precarious survival as a punishment by God for because they ate the forbidden apple; a punishment that seems too severe and too soon for a newly created couple who has to fight for survival in a jungle. Anyway, Adam and Eve accepted their fate, just like ***Bua-bonji-Kohou*** successfully defies any obstacle to assume his fate in the jungle where he was once born.

***Bua-bonji-Kohou*** performs his own nursery duties. He goes and gets some palm seeds for soup, brings home meat that he takes from the '***jE-bi-'jE***, the cannibals. Kohou is demonstrating at an early age what his father would have done for his breeding: he hunts the bushes for wildgame

***Bua-bonji-Kohou*** demonstrates his manhood by:

- Lifting up a big load of firewood with one little finger.
- Going to the world of the Evil Ones. No human has ever been there.
- Letting his leg be pounded on with a big piece of wood without crying.
- Terrorising the community of the Evil Ones who run away from him.
- Killing the evil rooster and taking home with him his sister.
- Confusing a council of sages with a clever trick. He told them that his father gave birth on their way home. By saying so, he sends back a naïve assertion of the elders who just previously had told him that their bull gave birth to seven calves. But as the elders confessed the 'never-seen-that-in-life', the hero establishes the logic of his cow's calves, and recovers them.

***Bua-bonji-Kahou*** presents us with an ultimate figure of life and the challenges man faces in life. This story teaches us the subject of opposition in its ideal form: a New-born against adults, intelligence against crude forces. It is an opposition without which understanding of life in its vital form cannot be legitimated. In a denouement like this, the subjects of opposition are interrelated in a quite special way in that when one is present in action, the mind foreshadows the other. As such, more than an opposition, it is a binary complementarity.

### **1.1. The Hero's qualities and psychodynamics of his deeds**

As a new-born, the hero's accomplishment represents a symbolic sense of responsibility that is much needed by humans. Since "...the human stories seem to express the concern of man's sense of insecurity, his anxieties, fears and doubts," (Cope 1978: 185), the hero's deeds in this particular Guro tale portray him as:

\* **A Liberator:** ***Bua-bonji Kohou*** kills the terrorising evil rooster, and frees the land from the cannibals, the '***JE-bi-'jE*** whom he chased away. The strength of the boy's tactics in his fight with the cannibal community lies in his intelligence to overcome them. This is put in a comic statement which tells how feared he appears to the '***JE-bi-'jE*** community: '... The child farted noisily from the inside of the long-neck-cask. And they say, that ancestral long-necked-cask of ours is powerful indeed!' This statement always provokes a hilarious reaction from the audience. It also involves suspense in that the farting is not the result of the power of the cask, but of the presence of the cannibals' much dreaded enemy, the boy.

\* **A Justice Maker:** He brings back home his sister who was kidnapped by her husband. He intelligently wins over his uncles in the disputed cattle ownership.

\* **Intelligent character:** He uses tricks to restore some order. For example, he tells his father that he has just walked over a fish while on his father's shoulders in the middle of a river; he tells his uncles that his father gave birth to a child to trap them; he fights the evil rooster from the darkness of a hole so that he cannot be seen, etc. \_

\* **A responsible person:** He is a new-born who performs his own nursery duties, showing a sense of responsibility and courage in his life. This may be seen in exaggerated utterances in the tale, such as 'His mother added more wood and he helped her carry it on her head with only one finger'. To lift the bunch of firewood with only one finger is an expression of the new-born's extraordinary attributes. Likewise, 'He pounded so heavily on his leg, he was rolling crying with pain'. This is demonstrated by the teller how courageous the hero proved to be when he did not cry, as his own leg was pounded on by the old cannibal, but that the latter cried when the hero pounded on his leg.

## **2. Metaphoric elements of the tale**

\* **challenges in life:** The story evokes the conditions of life which is a struggle. The story starts with birth: a woman goes to fetch firewood in the bush and she gives birth to an extraordinary boy who fights against evil-doers. This is to say that life is a perilous adventure during which one must fight for survival. The story ends with birth: A father is announced to have given birth to a boy on his way home. A male character who gives birth is as an unusual occurrence as the tumultuous lifestyle of an extraordinary boy. Bua-bonji Kohou who runs to his maternal uncles to tell them about his father giving birth is recalling by inversion the extraordinary conditions of his own birth. He is therefore reminding his uncles that he is not to be played

with, because he is himself an unusual character. In effect, the child that his father gave birth to on their way home is himself.

The birth of the Hero is an unusual one: He rushes out through an itch from the stomach of his mother. When describing verbally how the mother scratches the itch, the teller's hand moves simultaneously to his stomach, with the jumping of the boy out his mother's stomach. The Gouro express this swift rushing gesture in a metaphoric word *of 'e bola pelio ye e doh'* or he gushed out and stood.

\* **The firewood:** collecting firewood is a daily chore for the Gouro housewife. The firewood that the pregnant woman goes to fetch in the bush is the symbol of fire. The hero is born when his mother goes to fetch firewood: This is a baptism of fire of the hero.

\* **The river:** The river symbolises water, source of life. The hero tells his father that he has walked over a fish while he is on his father's shoulder in the middle of a river. He ran to announce that his father gave birth to a boy (which is himself). That is his second birth: Which is a baptism of water. Through the baptism of fire and that of water, the hero can be admitted in the cast of sages and knowledgeable persons; which he has shown throughout the story.

\* **The palm tree:** When a Gouro baby shows a sign of a dream (gesticulating for example when asleep), he is said to be climbing a giant palm tree. The palm tree is a tree of life. The hero climbs a palm tree to challenge the cannibals whom he defeats. This represents the dreamlike actions of Bua-bonji Kohou.

\* **The long-necked-cask:** The cask symbolises the womb. The unexpected jumping out of the cask to the surprise of the cannibals recalls the hero's

unexpected birth: He came unexpectedly out of his mother's womb, just as he suddenly breaks up the cask in a surprise attack against the cannibals.

\* **The hole:** The hole where the hero slept to challenge the evil rooster also represents the womb. He started fighting against evil from his mother's womb. But the hole can also represent the darkness, the vault. The hero's plan to stay in the darkness to fight the evil rooster and to release a community means: Darkness can only be challenged in the darkness. The underground symbolises a descent to hell to save humanity, which relates to the idea of danger and that of regeneration. One can see to the effect of this that the hero's strength can only be exercised in a mortal battle once he is in a close place. The close place is a metaphor for his mother's womb.

\* **The cat:** The cat goes on tiptoe to fetch the cask. Cat presents with the idea of care, tenderness, as opposed to Dog who refused to go and fetch the cask.

. Cat can be associated to the smoothness, tenderness, and to the care of a mother for a child which is Bua-bonji kohou in the long-necked-cask (the cask symbolises the womb). The idea of tenderness may be seen in the cat going so slowly to collect the long-necked-cask. The Gouro say '**e go yaanen, yaanen, yaanen**', an utterance which is generally accompanied with slow hand movements alternating each other in a forward movement to mean 'to go on tiptoe'. Suspense is often by the teller when he says, for example, that the 'cat went on its tiptoe...' to fetch the long-necked-cask as this implies that one must avoid making noise for fear of attracting the terrible child's attention.

## 2.1. Repetition

There are many levels of repetition in this tale, which contributes to the psychodynamism of the story. There are for example,

~ **Episodic level of repetition:** the scene of birth of the beginning of the tale recurs at the end when Kohou run back to his maternal uncles to tell them that his father gave birth.

\* The hero goes twice into the bush to challenge the strange creatures. The first time is when he takes away their meat. The second time is when he brings home some palm seeds for soup. Likewise, the Hero confronts twice the human community: when he visits his sister to bring her back to the family, and when he faces his uncles in the dispute over the cattle.

~ **proposition level of repetition:** 'And there was nobody to help her (mother) carry the wood. As there was nobody to help her carry the wood...'. This utterance shows the need for the pregnant woman to be helped. By the same token it announces the birth of the boy.

\* **de IEE clin do ye e bali nenen do. de IEE clin do ye e bali nenen do.** (Every single year he would make one rope. Every single year he would make one rope.), this repetition means that the hero made as many ropes as he believed his cow gave birth throughout the years. He would thus use the ropes to herd his cattle to his village.

\* **e ble an ti l an zoun, l an zoun, an taan poh ta** (he said father, put me down put me down, I have just walked over a fish), this repetition is meant to convince bua-bonji Kohou's father that he really walked over a fish. This is indeed a trick to be put down so he (the hero) can go back to his maternal village.

\* **yeh! 'Ca wi an IE, 'ca wi an IE** (help! Help!), this repetition is to create a state of commotion amongst his maternal uncles so that the latter cannot have time to think of his intention and fall into his trap, which is 'a male does not give birth'.

~ **word level of repetition:** the word '**JE-bi-'jE** (the cannibals) appears 8 times. This translates the omnipresence of the evildoer in the tale, and therefore the challenges the hero has to face in his adventures.

~ **Onomatopoeia:** The pounding on the old cannibal's leg is shown by a swift vertical hand movement downward. This is an imitation of a strong blow on an imaginary leg. In the utterance *ya dia kyehi ta boh! Boh!* is onomatopoeic of the heavy sound of the blow makes.

\* Likewise, the swift cutting of the evil rooster's head by the child is shown through a swift horizontal movement of the hand with the word *vlou! Nen a wuo clin*. '*Vlou*' is an onomatopoeic expression of how sharp the cut was.

\* The hero climbs a palm tree to cut the seeds. The onomatopoeic cutting noise that is made, *Kpoh! Kpoh!* is meant to attract the attention of the cannibals in order to confront them.

## 2.2. Pairing elements of this tale

*Bua-bonji kohou* is an enfant terrible whose performances are praised over those of his opponents. For his name to be enigmatic, he confronts in deadly battles strange creatures of the wild and fantastic world. The most obvious pairing element of this story that reveal about complementary elements of the tale are:

\* **Human / non-Human:** This is demonstrated in the character of Hero who challenges strange creatures such as the cannibals and the evil rooster

\* **Infant / Adult:** *Kohou* is opposed to his maternal uncles in an intellectual combat of cattle ownership. He is also seen in a contest with an old cannibal whom he wins in a challenging game of 'ghoh'.

\* **Nature / Culture:** The hero is a product of a culture. He is a human being. He always goes from the human community to the bush (nature) to fight against wild creatures. *Kohou* himself is born in the bush, which contrasts him with the other children who are born within human communities.

## 2.3. Formulaic Expressions

The following expressions are commonly used in the Gouro community. They are formulaic expressions that contribute to the psychodynamics of the narrative in that they help recall the story.

\* ***De an wi manen bE ca we lo***: 'If I sing no other rooster sings'. This is a statement that reflects dictatorship and domination over others. It means that one is in control.

\* ***An ti nen yaa e gonen yan***: "My father gave birth to a boy! Is heard in ordinary speech to mean, ironically, that the world is upside down.

\* ***De e man soon, I maan soon. De e wan, I wan man,***: 'If it is well done, you will be well done. If it burns, you will be burnt'. This statement shows warnings about a situation.

\* 'I will perform my own nursery duties': This means, I will do it myself.

\* ***Eeh, tre nonta!*** or 'he world must be upside down'. When ***Bua-bonji Kohou*** said to his uncles that his father gave birth to a boy on their way home, the uncles' reply was: ***EEh, trE nonta!*** which simply means that the order of the world must have changed to allow a male to give birth instead of a female. They thus fall into the trap of their early naïve assertion that their bull (which is male) gave birth to seven calves.

### 3. Gouro lores and lesson of this tale

\* **The Housewife's duties**: The Gouro housewife's duties are to fetch firewood in the bush (others include fetching water for family use, cooking family meals, looking after children, etc.) \_

\* **Nursery Duties**: When a child is born, the mother must be supplied with provision of whatever is necessary to rear the new-born. This includes meat for sauces, oil, ingredients, rice and other foodstuff. This is what the new-born himself collects in this story.

\* **Worshipping Gods**: When facing a difficulty in life, worshipping is performed at ancestral shrines to ask the gods for assistance, which the

cannibals are doing: "They say they must worship their gods so that the little boy must not track them down."

\* **A family visit by a married woman:** A married woman must be allowed by her husband to pay visit to her parents.

\* **Reward of a good action:** "His (the Hero) father offered him a cow as a reward."

\* **Ownership of property:** The hero gets back what belongs to him: The seven calves, which is fair, since his cow gave birth to them.

\* **Maternity:** Males do not give birth, only females do, as demonstrated by the Hero.

This tale accounts for the various challenges humans are confronted in life, and the possible way in which challenges can be overcome. One way, for sure, is to use one's intelligence, which provides the means for triumph over the worst of the situations, just like Bua-bonji Kohou who is a new-born demonstrates in contests with adults.

## TALE SEVEN

### Dramatis personae

**A man:** The hero; he is honest, self-controlled, and tolerant.

**The man's friend:** The hero's friend who is the bullet owner. He is intolerant, therefore is the anti-hero.

**A woman:** The hero's friend's wife. She is naive

**Centipede:** He is the helper in the story. He is confident, and is Buffalo's friend.

**Buffalo:** Hunted down by the hero but he did not die. He is Centipede's friend.

**Hero's friend's mother:** She dies, and hero's friend borrows hero's star to use it at her funeral.

**Star:** It falls from the sky to hero when he was on his way back home from his farm. Hero picks it up and uses it as a lamp.

### Lesson of intolerance

***Plohgh le tawoman yiri E ki blami yan?***

Since when have Centipedes used humans as walking sticks?

***Plohgh nu le tawoman yiri E ki blami yan be?***

Do Centipedes now use humans as walking sticks?

***'BE 'ji 'ca 'sia IE e pla lo.***

This has a meaning

**'BE 'ji E ki ble:**

that I am going to explain.

**PEniezan do bee le .**

Once, a man had a friend.

**Ye e lu paman e baba.**

And he was a good Hunter.

**Ye e 'IEEwIE do non yi e bee IE ble**

And he gave his friend one bullet

**de e go lu pa IE, 'yee le wih 'jE a yan.**

to bring him some game.

**'BE e go ki yan luta**

when he went hunting,

**ye 'bE yi 'IEEwIE doun Du ta,**

he shot Buffalo with that Bullet,

**ye e ca 'bE Du 'jE IE lo**

But he the shot did not kill Buffalo,

**ye Du go yi 'IEEwIE yan e 'coIE ji.**

and Buffalo went with the bullet in his skin.

**Ye yi pEniezan da**

And the man came

***e le wih laa IE e bee lee.***

to ask his friend about his game.

***A bee ble.***

His friend said

***yi 'IEEwIE bo ya doun Du ta***

he had shot Buffalo with Bullet

***Du go a yan e 'lee***

and Buffalo had gone off with it.

***Ye e ble***

And he said with anger:

***vie le;***

"that is a lie.

***I wih "jE***

You killed the game

***be bli an ji***

and ate it yourself,

***ye I ble***

And you claim

***e ca wih 'jE IE yi an le 'IEEwIE yan lo?***  
you killed nothing with my Bullet?

***EEh I da yi an le 'IEEwIE yan e pa ji!***  
Well, bring back my bullet.”

***A bee zante voh man***  
His friend presented his excuse to him,

***e ble yi can e we lo.***  
but he said he is not a man to accept that

***Mi fafa titi a tolo paa,***  
All the people pleaded,

***e ble yi can e we lo.***  
but he refused to forgive.

***A bee mi fafa woun pa ta,***  
All the people apologized on his behalf,

***e ble e ca yin sie lo.***  
but he he was unforgiving.

***To e 'clin man fE an zo,***  
Every day,

***'bE e go mi nu woun pa ki yan.***

he would send more emissaries to speak on his behalf.

***Yi fafa man***

Every time he was on his way

***de e ya gonan e blali tutu***

to see more emissaries

***mi nu woun pa IE e bee ta,***

to send to his friend,

***wo ki ye Plohgoh yan zia.***

he frequently met early in the morning Centipede.

***Te plohgoh e bee 'blen le ki Du yan.***

Centipede was a good friend of Buffalo.

***Yi le yi do***

And one day,

***ye Plohgoh ble a IE ble:***

Centipede asked him compassionately:

***Wi ca 'bE ki I man ye to fafa man***

"What is that troubles you so much

***de an ble an da do ye co ki yi?"***

that I meet you thus so frequently?"

***Ye e ble 'bE IE ble***

And he told him

**e bee 'IEEWIE non e IE,**  
that his friend gave him a bullet,

**ye ya doun Du ta.**  
and he shot Buffalo with it.

**Yi e bee ble**  
That friend of his

**e da yi e le 'IEEWIE yan e pa ji.**  
is asking back his bullet.

**Plohgoh ble a IE ble,**  
Centipede assured him

**be ca e wi do yan lo,**  
that this was not a huge problem,

**naan e bee 'blen le e ki Du yan.**  
as Buffalo was a good friend of his:

**'BE ble a IE ble,**  
He said to him:

**a va le an go wi IE 'bE;**  
"I am on my way to visit him,

**I da co go"**

come along with me”.

**Wo ble ‘wo boh Du le fenan,**

As they were about to reach buffalo’s home,

**plohgoh blami ‘cIE e le tawoman yiri yan.**

Centipede turned the man into his walking stick.

**Du e a yi ki yan zia**

when Buffalo saw him coming,

**‘bE a ‘sia e IEIE yan:**

he sung out:

**Plohgoh le tawoman yiri E ki blami yan?**

Since when have centipedes used humans as walking sticks?

**plohgoh nu le tawoman yiri E ki blami yan be?**

Do Centipedes now use humans as walking sticks?

- **ye Plohgoh ble bah oooh!**

And centipede said,

**blami ca yan lo.**

“this is not a human being.

**An le tawoman yiri E ki co.**

This is my walking stick.”

**Wo ble wo go Du le ‘jE paa**

When Buffalo's wounds were being tended,

***ye Plohgoh go wo zio.***

centipede followed him.

***Ye Du a 'sia:***

And buffalo sang out:

***Plohgoh le tawoman yiri E ki blami yan ?***

Since when have Centipedes used humans as as walking sticks?

***Plohgoh nu le tawoman yiri E ki blami yan co?***

Do Centipedes now have humans as walking sticks?

***Ye be ble le bah maan!***

And he insisted that

***mi 'ca a yan lo,***

it was not a human being,

***e le tawoman yiri le.***

but his walking stick.

***A yiman***

That day

***te 'IEEwIE so 'coIE ji yi le ki a yi yan.***

was the day Bullet was being taken out of buffalo's skin.

***Wa si 'coIE ji,***

When they took it out of his skin,

***Plohghoh ble 'wa non e IE.***

Centipede claimed to keep it.

***Plohghoh ble***

Centipede said

***fE le yee bee Du "jE 'bE***

he ought to keep the thing

***yi E coun'ho man.***

that almost killed his friend Buffalo.

***Wo da wo boh zia***

On their way back,

***ye blami 'cIE e mi yan e paji,***

the man turned back into a human being,

***ye e yi 'IEEwIE si***

and he took the bullet

***ye e go yan e bee IE.***

and he returned it to his friend.

***A yi fie zan yan***

A couple of days later,

***ye e go fei.***

he went to his farm.

**'Behi tan man.**

The night fell.

**e ya danan zia**

On his way back home

**ye Monen ganen nen zoun IE trE ta.**

a Star fell from the sky for him.

**Ya 'sia**

He took it

**ye e go a yan fla.**

and he went to the village with it.

**Mi fafa zen zi.**

The people gathered to see it.

**Yi Monen ganen nen e ki e dere co yi gonenzan le kye yan.**

That Star was now the man's light.

**De 'jE boh fE o fE an nan**

When there is a funeral somewhere,

**wo daan yi gonenzan le 'Monen ganen laa IE.**

people would come and borrow the man's Star light.

**Ye yi 'IEEwIEzan bo ye a bu ga.**

And Bullet owner's mother happened to pass away.

**Wi le ya 'cIE e li e bee IE 'bE , bE saan bonji.**

He forgot what he previously did to his friend.

**A nan ble a IE ble,**

His wife said to him,

**I go I bee le Monen ganen si**

"go and borrow your friend's starlight

**wo I bu jEta 'cIE a va.**

for your mother's funeral."

**Ye e go,**

And he went,

**ye ya laa.**

and he asked for it.

**A bee ble,**

His friend said,

**coh! man non mi fafa titi IE naan,**

"Of course! I give it to every one else,

**I IE le an ca noon lo.**

why should I refuse it to you".

**Be si I go a yan I bu jEta.**

Take it to the funeral of your mother.

**Ya 'sia swE yan ye e go a yan e con 'lee.**

He took it with joy to his place.

**Wo nenen bo ki 'sia Monen ganen va ti cliiii,**

They danced in the light of the Star until,

**to ya fi ble e 'clin blei an va,**

when the day was about to break,

**manen vini tEtE e wi ki yan,**

when the first rooster reported the day,

**ye Monen ganen wouhan mi fafa wuo**

then the star lifted up from the crowd

**ye e go la ji.**

and went back to the sky.

**Ya 'ji fe e bee IE fE an zo,**

He had no way

**'bE ca bonji lo.**

of explaining the incident to his friend.

**Yanen le ya 'cIE e bee le yiman**

He remembered

**'bE dola bonji.**

how he had once been intolerant to his friend in a similar situation.

**De e go mi kii co woun pa IE e bee ta,**

When he sends emissaries to plead on his behalf,

**Ye a bee ble baah!**

his friend will refuse

**e da e le Monen ganen yan e pa ji.**

and claim back his star.

**e monen 'cIE yaka**

He spent three months

**te e mi woun sasa paan e bee ta.**

sending emissaries to plead on his behalf.

**e cohe yi wi 'ji.**

He lost weight because of that.

**A bee ble e ca yin sie lo.**

But his friend was unrelenting.

**Ya cla ca e dErE co?**

How would he do now?

**e go e dErE co kyen?**

Where would he go now?

***A yan le wo ble***

That is the reason why it is said that:

***de mi ya l bee yan,***

when someone is your friend,

***te be fi ble***

do not not ask him

***'yee le fE man 'ban wo e IE lo.***

to compensate you for a loss.

***De ye l le fE sErE,***

If he wastes your property,

***be vo Bali man.***

leave it to God.

***Ye a yan le***

That is also the reason why,

***de wo zante voh l man wi man***

when one presents you his excuses for a mistake,

***be yin si.***

you must forgive him.

***'BE e ki e fiin yan,***

That is the story

**'bE man 'bE vwa**

that I tell.

### **1. English reader-friendly version of tale seven: Lesson of intolerance**

Since when have Centipedes used humans as walking sticks?

Do Centipedes now use humans as walking sticks?

This has a meaning that I am going to explain. Once upon a time, there were two friends. One was a very a good hunter. On an occasion the one who was a hunter was going on duty, his friend gave him a Bullet to bring him some wild game. When he went hunting, he shot Buffalo with the Bullet, but the shot did not kill Buffalo, and Buffalo went with the bullet in his thick hide. When Bullet-owner's friend came back from hunting, the man came to ask about his wild game. But the hunter regretfully told his friend, the Bullet-owner that he had shot Buffalo with Bullet and Buffalo had gone off with it. Bullet-owner replied with anger that his friend was lying. " You killed the game and ate it yourself, and you claim you killed nothing with my Bullet?" he raved. "Well, bring back my Bullet", he said to Hunter. The latter presented his excuse to him, but he was unrelenting. Hunter sent emissaries to plead on his behalf, but Bullet-owner refused to forgive his friend and claimed his Bullet back. Every day, Hunter would send more emissaries to speak on his behalf.

Every time Hunter was on his way to see more emissaries to send to his friend Bullet-owner, he frequently met early in the morning Centipede.

Centipede was a good friend of Buffalo in those days. One day then, Centipede asked him compassionately: "What is that troubles you so much

that I meet you thus so frequently?” Hunter told Centipede that his friend gave him a Bullet, and he shot Buffalo with it. The Bullet lodged in Buffalo’s thick hide and went off with it; and that his friend Bullet-owner is asking for his Bullet back. Centipede assured him that this was not a huge problem, as Buffalo was a good friend of his: “I am on my way to visit him, come along with me”, Centipede said to Hunter. As they were about to reach Buffalo’s home, Centipede turned the man into his walking stick. When Buffalo saw his friend Centipede coming, he sung out:

Since when have Centipedes used humans as walking sticks?

Do Centipedes now use humans as walking sticks?

Centipede replied, “this is not a human being dear friend.

This is my walking stick.”

When Buffalo’s wounds were being tended, Centipede followed him.

And Buffalo sang out anew:

Since when have Centipedes used humans as walking sticks?

Do Centipedes now have humans as walking sticks?

And Centipede insisted that the stick was not a human being, but his walking stick. That very day was the day Bullet was being taken out of buffalo’s skin. When the Bullet was taken out of Buffalo’s thick hide, Centipede claimed to keep it. Centipede said he ought to keep the thing that almost killed his friend Buffalo. And he left with his walking stick. On their way back, the man turned back into a human being, took the Bullet, and he returned it to his friend Bullet-owner. A couple of days later, Hunter went to his farm. He ploughed till late in the evening. On his way back home, a Star fell from the sky. He took it and went to the village with it. The event drew the crowd in Hunter’s compound for this was a never-seen-before-occurrence. People gathered from all over to see the Star. Hunter, the Star-owner was now using the Star as a lamp in his homestead. On funeral occasions he would lend the famous lamp to the bereaved families to celebrate the funeral

ceremonies with it at night time. People would come from remote areas to borrow Hunter's Star to use it as light at night. One day, Bullet-owner's mother happened to pass away. He thought of borrowing his friend's famous lamp like everybody else. He already forgot what he previously did to his friend about the wasted Bullet. "Go and borrow your friend's Starlight for your mother's funeral", his wife convinced him. And he went, and he asked his friend for his Star. "Of course! I give it to everybody else, why should I refuse it to you. Take it to the funeral of your mother", his friend Star-owner said. And he took it with joy to his homestead to celebrate his mother's funeral. They danced to the light of the Star until dawn. When the day was about to break, when the first rooster reported the day, the Star disappeared from the crowd and flew back to the sky. Bullet-owner under the shock of the incident had no way of explaining it to his friend Star-owner. He remembered how unforgiving he had once been towards his friend when the latter wasted his Bullet in Buffalo's thick hide.

Nevertheless, he sent some emissaries to plead on his behalf. But his friend, Star-owner refused and claimed his Star back. The unfortunate

Bullet-owner spent three months sending emissaries to plead on his behalf. He lost weight because of the anguish of how to get back

the lost Star to its owner. But his friend, Star-owner was also unrelenting. How would he do now to get back the Star from the sky? Where would he go now to get a Star?

That is the reason why it is said that when you know someone, do not ask him to compensate you for a damage he has caused accidentally to your property. If a person you know wastes your property by accident, leave it to God. That is also the reason why, when any person presents you an excuse for an offense done to you, you must forgive him.

That is the story that I tell.

## 2. Interpretation

In the present narrative the protagonist is transmuted into Centipede's walking stick in order to be introduced into the animal world inconspicuously; and the star falls from the sky in the form of a lamp. What indeed lies behind such allegorical characters and their actions that is so recommendable to human morality?

The tale is about a Bullet Owner who gives his Bullet to the Hero (his friend) who is a hunter in order to bring him some game. The Hero shoots a Buffalo with the Bullet, but the Bullet does not kill Buffalo. When told the story of an unsuccessful hunt, Bullet Owner does not accept the loss, and requires his Bullet back. The Hero is confronted with the predicament of getting the Bullet from the Buffalo's skin. But he receives help from Centipede, who is Buffalo's friend, and recovers the Bullet and returns to its Owner. Some time later, the Hero receives from the sky a Star which everyone borrows to use at night during celebrations. Bullet Owner's mother happened to die. He borrows the legendary lamp from the Hero to use at his mother's funeral. It was then that disaster struck. The Star disappears and goes back to the sky. Will Bullet Owner get the Star back to his friend whom he refused to forgive his Bullet loss in the past?

When Bullet Owner asked his friend to bring back his wasted Bullet, he was not expecting anything similar to happen to him one day. But by the natural law of 'what goes around comes around', the moral of this story teaches to 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you'

## 3. Psychodynamic elements of the tale

~ **Repetition of episodes:** There are two major repetition patterns of denouement in this narrative:

\* The one that unfolds from the loss of the Bullet. In that first episode, the narration tends to show the unfriendly behaviour of Bullet-owner towards the Hero, his friend.

\* The second episode develops around the loss of the star-lamp, and makes Bullet-owner feel guilty. In this second pattern, the narration shows how the unfriendly behaviour of Bullet-owner towards his friends has to be paid back. These two episodes form what Jousse calls a 'parallel balancing', which restores balance in the story. Balance between the episodes calls onto balance in the actions of the story in that in the first episode, Bullet-owner is demanding something impossible (getting back a wasted Bullet). In the second episode, Bullet-owner is faced with something truly impossible (bringing back Star from the sky).

~ **Repetition of propositions:** the tale opens with a proposition which is repeated once, and which composes a two sentence-song text: ***Plohgoh nu le tawoman yiri E ki blami yan bE Plogoh nu le tawoman yiri E ki blami yan bE*** (Since when have Centipedes used humans as walking sticks? Do centipedes now use humans as walking sticks?). The significance of this repetition stands for the formulaic nature of this proposition, which is a trigger to the whole story. As such, the story is announced to develop around the reason why humans would become Centipedes' walking sticks. The story thereby unwind in the following proposition which states, ***'BE 'ji ca sia IE e pla lo. 'BE 'ji E ki ble...*** (this has a mneaning that I am going to explain).

•As the story unwinds, the song is repeated three times. This repetition is indeed a reminder as to why humans become Centipedes' walking sticks. As Buffalo sung out this song, his friend Centipede's response is also repeated ***an le tawoman yiri E ki co*** (this is my walking stick, it is not human being)

• **To a fi ble clin bli an va, manen vlin tEtE e wi ki yan....** (when the day was about to break, when the first rooster reported the day). This repetition is to the effect of an important event announcement; so as it was at this particular moment that the 'Star lifted up and went back to the sky'.

• **A bee zante voh a man e ble yii can e we lo. Mi fafa titi a tolo paa, e ble yii can e we lo. Abee mi fafa woun pa ta, e ble e ca yin sie lo. To e clin man fE an zo, bE e go mi nu woun pa ki yan.** Bullet-owner's friend presented his excuses to him, but he he said he is not man to accept any excuses. All the people apologized on his friend's behalf, but he was unrelenting. Everyday his friend would send more emissaries to speak on his behalf). This repetition points to how unrelenting Bullet owner was not to forgive his friend, Hunter.

~ **Word level repetition:** the word **LEEWIE** (Bullet) recurs 9 times in this tale. Its repetition is to the effect that it was because of the loss of the Bullet that complication rises in the story. In other words, Bullet is the means by which the story develops into crisis.

• **Bee** (friend) recurs 18 times. The repetition of this word reminds us constantly the nature of the relationship in which the two main characters of the tale are involved, and thereby allows us to appreciate fully the attitude of intolerance of Bullet-owner toward his 'friend' Hunter.

• **woun pa** (to send an emissary on behalf of somebody) is also repeated five times. This word recurs 3 times in the first episode when hunter lost Bullet and sent emissaries on his behalf to Bullet-owner to ask for forgiveness. The recurrence of the word means insistence on Hunter to receive his friend's forgiveness. The word also recurs twice in the second episode when Bullet owner lost Hunter's Star. Bullet-owner too was in his turn asking for forgiveness from Hunter.

~ **Clamp-words:** *ye/yi* (and/then) appears 39 times throughout this tale clamping together the propositions that make the tale.

~ **pairing element of the tale.**

In this tale, the pairing narrative elements may be seen the complementary relation between:

•**The Hero(the hunter)/Bullet Owner (Hero's friend):** The protagonist loses his friend's property (Bullet), but recovers it and brings it back to its owner. The antagonist loses the star lamp of his friend (Hunter), and does not recover it.

•**Centipede/ Buffalo:** they form the animal characters of the tale. They share similarities with the two main human characters: they are friends.

\* **Human Life / Animal Life:** Two distinct character types are presented in the narrative: Humans (Hero and Bullet owner), and animals (Centipede and Buffalo). Both character types share similarities: The two human characters are friends, and the two animal characters are also friends. This recalls Jousse's Law of 'Mimism'. We can see an imitation pattern in the narrative elements: friendship between humans and friendship between animals. This further tells us the notion of 'imbrication', which Jousse sees as unison between all the components of the universe, the ones being mirrored into the others by the Law of Mimism. Both character types are characterised by betrayal. Bullet-owner knows, for example, that it is impossible to get back a wasted Bullet, yet he asks his friend to bring back his Bullet. Centipede does not want to reveal the nature of this walking stick, yet his friend Buffalo knows all about the identity of the stick. Buffalo sings it sarcastically in a repeated patterned phrase: 'since when have Centipedes had humans as walking sticks. Do Centipedes now use humans as walking sticks?'

• **Bullet / Star:** Both elements share a similarity (like their owners who are friends). They are the properties of two friends: Bullet belongs to Hero's friend, and Star is owned by Hero himself. Both properties get lost. But Bullet and Star contrast from the moment Bullet is recovered, and Star is not recovered when lost.

\* **Heaven / earth:** Star is from the sky, and denotes heaven. Bullet is related earth. The intention that underpins such a patterning is to show the necessity for forgiveness and for tolerance. That is, how an impossible mission it would be to someone to get back a wasted Bullet from the thick hide of a buffalo or a Star from the sky. This recalls Jousse's principle of the 'Celestial Human Mechanics': 'As in Heaven so on Earth', the one being the reflection of the other. This tells the interconnectedness of the creation, which is the domain of the Gouro Bali our Owner, the creator who put all the creations in an interdependent relation.

\* **Day / Night:** The 'star' is an element which is only perceptible at night time. It therefore reminds of the night. This is further demonstrated in the story as the star disappears together with the night: "When the day was about to break, when the first rooster reported the day, then the star lifted up from the crowd and it went to the sky." This symbolically means that the presence of the day is the absence of the night, and vice versa. But day and night must not be seen strictly in terms opposition as such because there is no day without night, and vice versa. Actually, the presence of day in one part of the world means the presence of night in another part of the world. They complete each other and create a regular cycle of life.

#### **4. The Gouro lore and lesson of this tale**

The action pattern of this tale points to the lesson of forgiveness which is developed through mutual loss of element belonging to two friends: Bullet and Star.

The Gouro particularly favour forgiveness and tolerance amongst family members, friends, relatives, and even community members. They do so to prevent conflicts within their society. In case of an offense to a member, the Gouro have the custom of sending emissaries to the offended on behalf of the offender to ask for forgiveness.

This is seen in this tale by Hunter sending emissaries on his behalf to Bullet owner, and the latter also doing the same when he lost hunter's Star. All this points to the idea of forgiveness and tolerance, which is the lesson that this Gouro tale teaches.

## TALE EIGHT

### Dramatis personae

**Lazy Housewife:** She she does not perform her household duties.

**The Husband:** He is a polygamist.

**The Co-wives:** They are the Lazy housewife's Co-wives. They complain about the Lazy co-wife's attitude.

**The Lazy wife's parents:** They are on a visit in their in-law's family.

### The lazy wife

***An le Fiin.***

My story.

***e jie.***

It is past.

***Wo ble wa wa wa conon yowouli lo***

They say wa wa wa here is the big lazy one

***Conon bo sinan da***

The lazy one has come

***Wa wa wa conon yowouli lo***

Wa wa wa here is the big lazy one

***Ta ta cononon***

Ta ta lazy

**wa wa wa conon yowouli lo**

wa wa wa Here is the big lazy one.

**Cononon ta ta**

Ta ta work-shy

**Wa wa wa conon yowouli lo**

Wa wa wa here is the big lazy one.

**'BE 'ji ca 'sia IE a pla lo.**

That has a meaning.

**Wo ble lizan do le.**

They say there was once a woman.

**Yi e go bo si IE.**

She got married.

**Yi bo le e go si le bE,**

In that marriage,

**e ca fE nan 'sia man lo,**

She does not sweep,

**e ca 'yi twa lo,**

she does not fetch water,

**ye e ca kyE yehi man lo.**

And she does not fetch firewood.

**Ye yii E ki li wohi yan.**

and yet she was the last co-wife.

**De wa fe 'zran IE,**

When they complain to her husband,

**ye 'bE ble**

He shouts at them defensively:

**'ca daan an nan man fliih!**

"leave my wife alone.

**Nenclenen da ca va**

A little girl came amongst you,

**ye ca yuE 'ca dwa a man lo.**

and you do not like her.

**To oo to,**

Every day,

**e ca fii cla lo,**

she does not do this,

**e ca glu cla lo.**

she does not do that"

**A vla nu ble**

The first co-wives decided

**wo 'ca e dErE wi sie ta man a zi lo.**  
not to say a word about her any more.

**Yi do man**

One day,

**ye a le mi nu da**  
her parents came

**a 'wohi bo IE.**  
to provide with her dowry.

**Yi a 'wohi le**  
As they came

**wo da bo IE bE**  
to provide with her dowry,

**ye a vla nu ble**  
her co-wives said to her,

**ben nu le wo da bE I 'yi do kyE ta.**  
“warm the water up for the guests

**wo 'zru.**  
to bath”.

**e 'yi doh kyEta**

She warmed the water up

**'wo 'zru.**

and they took a bath.

**To clin,**

In the morning,

**a vla nu ble a IE**

her co-wives asked her

**e go fE bli ki si fei**

to go and fetch food on the farm

**'wa donen ben nu IE.**

to cook for the guests.

**Ya 'ji doh kyEwo ble e le mi nu E da 'bE,**

As she knew that it the guests were her own parents,

**e go fei vlan ta 'ya si IE.**

she rushed to the farm to fetch some yams.

**e go fei,**

She went to the farm.

**ya fi ble e bE cIE 'ya man,**

When she wanted to touch the yams,

**'ya nu a 'sia e IEIE yan:**

the yams started singing:

***Wa wa wa conon yowouli lo***

Wa wa wa here is the work-shy one

***conon bo sinan da***

the lazy one has come.

***Wa wa wa conon yowouli lo***

Wa wa wa here is the big lazy one (w-shy)

***Tata cononon***

Ta ta work-shy

***Wa wa wa conon yowouli lo***

Wa wa wa here is the big lazy one

***Cononon tata***

Work-shy tata

***Wa wa wa conon yowouli lo***

Wa wa wa here is the big lazy one

***Yi 'yawIE fafa ya nenen yan a zi.***

All the yams were dancing around her.

***De e ble e bE cIE 'ya ki co man***

When she wanted to touch some other yams,

***ye 'woe IEIE 'sia te 'wo nenen bo.***

they too started singing and dancing.

***Ye e ble EEh!***

And she said well,

***an go mii voh IE.***

"I am going to get some plantains instead."

***De e ble e caca voh***

When she wanted to cut down the plantain,

***mii yiri man ye 'waa sia a zo.***

they too started singing.

***wa wa wa conon yowouli lo***

wa wa wa there is the big lazy one.

***Conon bo sinan da***

The lazy one has come

***Wa wa wa conon yowouli lo***

Wa wa wa here is the big lazy one

***Tata cononon***

Tata lazy

***Wa wa wa conon yowouli lo***

Wa wa wa here is the big lazy one

***Cononon tata***

Lazy tata

**Wa wa wa conon yowouli lo.**

Wa wa wa here is the big lazy one.

**Wo fafa ya nenen yan vE vE vE!**

They were all dancing mockingly.

**De ya fi coon ble e cIE so,**

When she wanted to get some peppers,

**'wo e yi IEIE do bo 'sia man.**

they too started singing the same song.

**De ya fi coon ble e bE cla fE ki co man**

Anything she wanted to touch

**'woe IEIE 'sia man**

sung

**nenen yan a zi.**

and danced around her.

**Ye e ble EEh!**

She said well then!

**e 'ca go fla lo.**

"I am not going back to the village.

**Yala 'jE wi 'bE**

That would be embarrassing”.

**e yanan.**

She sat down and waited.

**e ki an wo mon nan fei ‘bE,**

As she was taking too long on the farm,

**ye wo ble a ‘zran IE**

They said to her husband

**‘bE e go zio.**

to follow her.

**‘BE e go ki yan,**

When he went,

**te e ya e yanan ki ‘ya ‘ban le man.**

he found her sitting in front of the barnyard.

**Ye e ble a IE ble,**

And he asked her,

**men fE le be cla e yanan ki**

“what do you have to sit here for

**te lolo e minu ja fla mi?**

while the guests are going hungry in the village?

**A nan ble**

His wife said apologetically,

***bah oooh!***

“No dear,

***I da***

come

***I ‘ya si***

and get the yams yourself

***be doh e woun’hi***

to put it on my head,

***ye ‘wo go fla.***

to carry it to the village”.

***A zran go “bli fli ki yan,***

Her husband went fuming with anger

***‘bE ble ‘bE e bE cIE ‘ya man,***

and wanted to touch the yams.

***‘ya nu yi IEIE do bo ‘sia.***

But the yams started out with the same song.

***Ye a nan ble***

And his wife to say,

***wi le e ca go IE fla lo***

“this is the reason why

***bE 'ji e ki bE.***

I could not go back home.”

***Wo fie yanan.***

The two of them sat down there and waited.

***A vla nu e ze da,***

Her co-wives came,

***yi wi do bo yi le.***

and it was the same story.

***Wo do 'ca gonan fla lo.***

No one was going back home.

***Ye lolo ble e ben nu jE,***

Until when the guests started feeling very hungry,

***Ye 'wo ble***

they asked themselves

***'wo fei zi goon 'wo IE.***

to be directed to the farm.

***'Wo e go ki yan***

As they went

**ye 'wo e 'wo yi,**  
and saw them,

**wo wouhan yala jE ki ta**  
they got up disgracefully

**ye wo zen bwi 'ji.**  
and fled into the bush.

**Wo E 'cIE e pahli yan**  
They are the ones who have become the apes

**wo e ki bwi 'ji kyewo bE.**  
that are now living in the bush.

**Pahli nu le ki 'bE,**  
Apes living in the bush

**blami nu kulu le ki wo yan.**  
are a species of humans;

**Caa bu-bi nu le ki wo yan.**  
they are our brothers.

**'BE e ki e fiin yan**  
That is the story

**'bE man E vwa.**  
that I tell.

## 1. Interpretation

The Gouro tales address various aspects of life. As discussed further on in the Gouro tale type, here is, for example, a tale that presents a routine scene of domestic life. It is a story of conjugal life in a polygamous home. In a polygamous home such as the tale under review shows, the last wife along the line, who is *liwoli* in Gouro, literally meaning 'woman-queue', carries the burden of the household under the guidance of her senior co-wives or *vla*. She is regarded as *woli*, the queue, because she is the last co-wife in the line. If there are many of them, *Liwoli*, the junior, receives orders from her senior co-wives and executes them. She must demonstrate that she is capable of keeping a good 'place' amongst her *vla* to whom she owes respect. Her duties include fetching water from the backwater, making provision of firewood, pounding rice, yam, banana for dinner or *yananli fE*, fetching foodstuff from the farm, warming up the water and serving hot water for family members for bathing, waking up with the roosters to sweep up the homeyard. The Gouro *Li woli* is a very busy housewife. But mostly these duties are shared and performed according to the number of wives.

Although polygamy is a traditionally accepted fact by the Gouro woman, manifestations of jealousy is not to be excluded in some polygamous households. Too often, the first wives think that their husband loves the new co-wife more. That brings about fights, resulting from rivalry. But the matter is generally settled by members of the family who teach the co-wives the values of polygamy. Mostly, when they are many co-wives, the scope of jealousy is little because the great number of wives minimizes the pains of their shared love. When there is a frustration, they share the burden and

each carries a little of it. This is unlikely in the case of two wives; which is a situation where one co-wife carries alone the weight of a frustration. The husband plays the role of a regulator between his wives. An experienced polygamist must not show overtly that he loves one wife more than the other(s) even if it is the case. Polygamy has rules that a polygamist must know. One is to treat his wives fairly according to the conventional norms of the tradition to avoid frustration of some kind. Above all, a polygamist must speak fairly before his wives. He must always recall their moral duties, must tell whoever is the proper authority, etc. He himself has authority over his wives.

In the present narrative, much of the household duties are not performed by the last co-wife. '... she does not sweep the yard, she does not fetch water, and she does not fetch firewood' And when the other co-wives complain about her laziness, their husband takes her side. He says, 'leave my wife alone. A little girl comes amongst you and you do not like her'.

In this narrative, the houseman's intervention implies that the other co-wives may feel jealous of the last co-wife, that is why they complain about her. But because in this particular story it is not a question of jealousy, but rather a question of the laziness of the last co-wife who does not perform her duties as required, the senior co-wives decided not to mention it any more. A day will come when they will be proven right.

'One day then, her parents came to provide with a dowry', and she had to go and fetch food on the farm. That is when her laziness turns in a dramatic situation. Whenever she wants to get some foodstuff, yam, banana, or pepper, all refuse to be taken by her because she is lazy and she has never tended them. Her blame falls eventually on the whole household, including the co-wives and her husband because she did not behave in an exemplary way. Out of shame, none of them will return to the village to feed the guests

and they will stay in the bush just like apes, singing and dancing in the wood.

But the laziness of a married woman points out the failure of a mother to prepare her daughter well for her conjugal duties. One major role of the Gouro housewife is to train with dignity, her daughter to cope with her future household life. As such, when a married woman proves lazy, the blame directly falls on her mother who failed to raise her with domestic works. The song with which the story starts, evokes the blame which it roots in the origins of the lazy wife *conon bo si an da* is 'the lazy one has come', and her origins are her parents who failed to train her to work. As usual, songs are the summarized forms of the story that they support. The present story introduces the meaning of the song, as the teller starts the narration with the formula 'This has a meaning', because tales date from immemorial times, the song form, in which a story is fixed is often in very archaic words. They do not grant a straight-forward meaning to the audience in time. Although a song may be adopted easily, its words can be difficult to understand. The word *conon*, meaning 'lazy' is, for example, hardly used in the present spoken Gouro language. Language is dynamic, and one may understand that *kwan* is used today to say 'lazy'. *kwan zan* is a 'lazy person', which the tale protagonist is, and whom *Li woli* in polygamous homes (if these still exist amongst the Gouro) must not resemble.

## **2. Psychodynamic elements of the tale.**

~ **episodic repetition:** Repetition supports the memory (psycho), and the action expression (dynamics) which is the external manifestation of that memory.

In the present tale, there is an episodic repetition of what duty must be performed by the last wife. The first Co-wives remind her that *e yi do kyE ta*

**'wo 'zru** (She must warm the water up for the guests to bath), that **e go fE bli ki si fei 'wa donen ben nu IE** (She must go and fetch food on the farm to cook for the Guests). With this repetition, more emphasis is placed on a housewife's duties, with which the Lazy Wife is identified.

\* The other episodic level of repetition is when the lazy wife, the husband, and the co-wives take turn on the farm to and that the farm produces refused to be taken by them: **a 'zran go bli fli ki yan , 'bE ble 'bE e bE 'cIE yah man, yah nu yi IEIE dobo 'sia** (her husband went fuming with anger and wanted to touch the yam. But the yams sung out the same song); **A vla nu ze da, yi do bo yi le** (her co-wives came, and it was the same story).

~ **Proposition level repetition:** The repetition of the phrase, **wa wa wa...** Here is the big lazy one', and the word 'lazy', appears in every single line of the song text. This is to announce the importance of the word 'lazy' in the development of the plot. The psychodynamics of the concept of 'laziness' around which the story develops lies in the fact that it attracts the attention of the audience on such a behaviour that is not accepted in the community (psychologically), and teaches by the same token to behave (action) in a way that can be accepted.

~ **e ca...** (She does not ...) is uttered three times: **e ca fE nan 'sia man lo, e ca 'yi twa lo, ye e ca kyE yehi man lo** (she does not sweep, she does not fetch water, and she does not fetch firewood), and twice by the husband: **e ca fii cla lo, e ca glu cla lo** (She does not do this, She does not do that). This refrain of 'She does not do...' recalls the attitude of laziness.

~ **De ya fi ble e cla...wo IEIE 'sia man** (When she wanted to touch... they started singing.'When she wants to touch other yams, they start singing.'When she wants to cut down the plantain trees they start singing too.'When she wants to get the peppers, they too start singing the same song'. These repetitions show the crisis in which the woman's laziness resulted. The song that is sung by these farm products is a protest song against laziness.

~ **clamp-words:** besides the recurrence of 24 *ye/yi* which clamp the propositions together, there is also the appearance of other clamping devices such as *De*. *De* has a particular clamping function in that this word clamps propositions that express decisions. In this tale for example, it translates the idea that ‘when the lazy wife chooses an alternative decision to get this or that farm produce’ the produces all refuse to be touched: *de e ble e ‘clE yah ki co man...* (when he wants to touch this yam...), *de e ble e caca voh mii yiri man...* (when she want to cut down the banana tree...), *de ya fi coon ble e clE so...* (when she wanted to get some pepper), ‘de ya fi coon ble e cla fE kii co man,...’ (anything she wanted to touch...).

### 3. Gouro lore and lesson of this tale

That narrative addresses particularly housewives of the Gouro world. It has a cultural meaning in that it presents perceptions of a housewife’s behaviour in a polygamous family. This can be seen in:

\* **Co-wives:** The co-wives are presented in terms of the duties that they must perform when they get married. They must sweep the homeyard, fetch water, fetch firewood. In a polygamous household, the older wives are entitled to supervise the younger co-wives’ duties. This explains that there are complaints about performances of the last co-wife of the story.

\* **Husband:** The husband’s duty is shown in this tales in terms of his intervention to regulate tension between his wives. The wives must report to him household matters and related problems. They can complain to him about each other’s attitude: Eg. “ when they complain to her husband ...”

\* **Liwoli or the last wife and her obligations:** The narrative features significantly the last wife in terms of her marital obligations, as the teller announces her: “They say there was once a woman. She got married... “. Her depiction in this tale presents her as a negative role model by inversion since her behaviour contrasts with her obligations. She is the leading

character of the story, but she is not painted as a role model. The song is a protest message against her attitude: "The lazy one has come..." She contrasts with her status of a last co-wife. But the parallel cognate is to the effect of teaching the value of that reality. The lesson is thus taught by inversion, by presenting the opposite side of her household duties. By saying that the heroine does not do this, and she does not do that, the duties of a *liwoli* are recalled and taught implicitly.

\* **The family-in-Law and the dowry:** A married woman's family is required to pay a dowry to their son-in-law. If in this story the junior co-wife's family is introduced, it is because they bear a part of the responsibility for her laziness. They must therefore pay for their share of responsibility by not being fed in their daughter's household.

\* **Embarrassment:** The Gouro have an almost sacred respect for their in-laws. The in-laws deserve good care to show them that their son or daughter is in good hands. This means that when a daughter or a son is not able to give food to the family-in-law, it is a big shame that can result in a loss of credibility. Just as when in deep humiliation one often wishes s/he had wings to fly away, the disgraced son-in-law and his wives fled into the bush, and they '...became the apes that are now living in the wood.' They were so humiliated that they were unable to feed the family-in-law that they refused to come back to them in the village.

The Gouro do not encourage laziness in general, and particularly lazy housewives. Laziness in a household can be at times embarrassing in front of some guests. The psychodynamics of this story is to the effect that it teaches (recommend to memory) through the mnemonic construct of the story in terms of repetitions and formulaic expressions the right behaviour (action) in a household.

## TALE NINE

### Dramatis personae

**The Hero:** Empowered with magic, he is self-confident. He steals Crocodile's skin and his girl friend is taken by Crocodile.

**Hero's friend:** He is the Anti-hero. He betrays the Hero and gets punished by being transformed into a Dog.

**Crocodile:** Anti-hero who becomes later Hero's helper. His skin is stolen by Hero.

**Old Woman:** She hosts the Hero under the water and helps him. She has a shaky voice.

**Hen:** Old Woman's pet, and a helper in the story.

**Cat:** Old Woman's pet, and a helper in the story.

**Chief:** He is informed by Hero's friend about the fraudulent magic practices of the Hero, and summoned a gathering in the Hero's homestead.

**The Girl:** She was abducted by the Man who wanted to take her in marriage. The under water community: they gather on one of their market day to watch the Man identify his transformed wife.

**Hero's village community:** Their properties were being transformed by the hero with his magic talisman.

### The man who could not keep secrets

*An le finn!*

My story

*e jie.*

It is past

**Gonen do le.**

There was a man.

**Ye e li si ye e go voh IE.**

He abducted a Girl.

**Yi go le e ye wo nan a voh IE 'bE,**

As he was taking the Girl away,

**ye e boh 'yi man.**

he came across a river.

**Ye e ble e 'zru man faa**

And he decided to bathe in the river

**ye e go.**

before carrying on his way.

**e lizan yanan yoh yiri nen do wuo**

He seated the Girl under a small palm tree,

**ye e go 'zru IE.**

and he went to bath.

**Te yiwohi e da coon 'zru IE**

Crocodile came earlier to bathe in the same river,

**te bE e ze 'colE pa yi yoh 'bE ta.**

and also left his skin on a branch of the same palm tree.

***e yiwohi 'colE si***

The man took crocodile skin,

***ya yooh***

hid it,

***ye e go 'zru IE.***

and went to bathe.

***E si 'zru nan mi e da***

When he came back from bathing

***e ca boh IE e nan man lo.***

he did not find his wife.

***Yi fafa titi man te e daan zo 'yi man***

Everyday he would come to the river

***e nan wEE IE.***

to look for his wife.

***De e da yi fafa man***

Every time he came,

***e bwa yiwohi man te 'bE e 'zu man.***

he would find Crocodile bathing.

***Yi do man***

One day

***ye e ble yi wi bo ya sie ta man yiwohi IE do.***

he decided to speak out his concern to crocodile.

***Ye e ble yiwohi IE ble:***

And he said to Crocodile with a supplicative voice:

***An nan 'san,***

"My wife has disappeared;

***yii le man wEE man blehi fafa bo va co.***

she is the one I am looking for every time around here.

***Man yanan yiman yoh yiri le ki mi 'bE a wuo***

I seated her that day under that palm tree over there

***ye e 'san soonh!***

and she disappeared without trace."

***Yiwohi ble a IE ble:***

Crocodile said to him,

**2000** ***An ze 'colE pa a yiman yi yoh yiri 'bE ta,***

"I too left my skin that day on a branch of that palm tree

***ye e 'san soonh!***

and it also disappeared without trace."

***Ye te 'bE yiwohi da a yi ta***

In fact, when crocodile came that day

**'bE ca e 'coIE yi IE lo,**  
and did not find his skin,

**'bE boh yi lizan man yi yoh yiri wuo,**  
he saw a woman under the palm tree,

**ya 'sia**  
and took her with him

**ye e go a yan e fla 'yi wuo**  
to his village under the water.

**Gonenzan ble yiwohi IE ble:**

The man confessed to crocodile with a low and slow voice:

**Maan I 'coIE 'sia,**  
"I am the one who took your skin.

**yi le ki co.**  
Here it is."

**Yiwohi ble a ze IE ble,**  
Crocodile said to him that:

**maan I nan 'sia.**  
"I am the one who took your woman.

**I da co go.**

Come along with me.

***I coun an bEnenwIE dwEnen man.***

Hold my little finger.”

***Wo ‘san yi wuo***

They disappeared under the water

***ye wo bola yiwohi fla.***

and they appeared in crocodile’s Village.

***Yi fla ta mi***

In that village

***wo le vih nen an e ki,***

they have a talisman.

***de be doun fE ti IE,***

If you hit something that is black in colour with it,

***‘bE e cla e fuu.***

it turns white.

***De be doun fE fuu IE,***

If you hit something that is white with it,

***‘bE e cla e ti.***

it turns black.

***Te ‘bE yiwohi go yi a nan yan ‘wo fla ‘bE,***

As Crocodile took his wife to their village,

**'bE 'wo le vih nen doun 'bE IE**

he hit her with their mane talisman

**ye 'bE man non ta.**

and she changed of colour.

**Wo e go ki yan**

When they went,

**yiwohi gonenzan yanan liplanen do va.**

crocodile seated the man by an Old Woman.

**Yi liplanen le yenenta Manen bu do ya,**

That Old Woman owned one Laying Hen

**ye a le Zanwanen do ya.**

and one Cat.

**'BE liplanen ble a IE:**

The Old Woman asked him with anguish:

- **An bi, wi ka 'ji le I boh co fla co?**

"My son, what matter brings you to this village?"

**e ble 'bE IE ble:**

He said to her:

**An li si,**

"I abducted a girl.

***an ya gonan a voh IE***

On my way

***ye an boh 'yiba man,***

I found a river in which a

***te yiwohi e 'zru man,***

crocodile was bathing,

***ye an yiwohi 'colE si.***

and I stole his skin.

***Ye yiwohi an ze nan si.***

And crocodile took my wife

***Yi an nan zio le an da.***

It is after my wife that I have come."

***Liplanen ble a IE, kplE!***

The Old Woman said with a desperate tone:

***I nan bo I 'bE ye e dErE col?***

"Gosh! Will you find that woman of yours?

***Co fla le e ki co***

In this very village,

***de fE fuu da nan***

when a white thing comes

**'bE e cla e ti.**

it turns black.

**Ye de fE ti da nan**

And when a black thing comes

**e cla e fuu.**

it turns white."

**De liplanen fE donen**

When the Old Woman cooks

**de 'bE yi gonenzan ze pa,**

and serves the man,

**ya dia man 'bE le Zanwanen le,**

he shares his dish with her Cat

**ye ya dia 'bE le Nanen bu IE.**

and her Laying Hen too.

**Liplanen zran dooh.**

The Old Woman announced him to the village community.

**'BE ble mi fafa titi IE ble**

She invited everyone

**wo kiyi fIE yi ta ooh!**

to meet the next market day.

***FIE le e daan boh IE 'bE***

"This coming market,

***ca kiyi ooh!***

let us meet!

***Gonenzan do an e ki,***

There is one man.

***yiwohi a nan 'sia,***

Crocodile took his wife.

***e da yi e nan si IE ooh!***

He has come to get his wife back."

***e ya wo va mi ble***

They thought

***e ca danan yi e nan yi IE lo.***

he would never recover his wife.

***Fle boh.***

It was market day.

***Mi fafa 'zran 'gli man.***

The people gathered.

***Te yeen ya gonenzan ji.***

And the man was very anxious.

**Liplanen ble a IE ble,**

The Old Woman told him,

**yi l nan bo, de e ya yiman e ti,**

“your woman, if she was black,

**fE fuu le e dErE co man.**

she is now white.

**De e ya yiman e fuu,**

If she was white,

**fE ti le man.**

she is now black.

**Ye de ‘wo go**

an if we go,

**de ya fi li an IE ble,**

the woman to whom I will say:

**an lu l bE pa an lee,**

my daughter, shake hand with me,

**te yii le man!**

she is the one.

**Zanwanen ble,**

The Cat said,

***Te de an ze go***

"When I go

***ye an jie li an ganen man yeretee,***

and touch the legs of a woman gently,

***te yi le man.***

she is the one."

***Manen bu ble:***

The Laying Hen said:

***De an go si ki yan bih bih bih!***

"If I fly swiftly

***ye an bhobo li an ganen ta,***

and shit over the foot of a woman,

***te yi le man.***

she is the one."

***Ye mi fafa zen.***

And the people gathered.

***Liplanen go***

The Old Woman went,

***'bE ble***

she said,

***e lou l bE pa e lee.***

daughter shake hand with me,

***'BE e bE pa 'bE lee.***

and she shook hand with her.

***Zanwanen go***

The Cat went

***'bE jie lizan ganeman a zo.***

and rubbed himself against the woman's legs as he said.

***Ye Manen e ze go***

And the Hen went in her turn

***ye 'bE bhobo a ganen ta a zo.***

and shit on her feet as planned.

***Liplanen ble,***

The Old Woman said,

***de wo yi l nan non l IE,***

"when they give you your wife,

***ye wo 'wo le vih zinzi nu fafa bola,***

and that they take out all their good talismans,

***a ten nen an e ki 'bE,***

There will be a red little talisman.

***yi le be si va,***

It is the one you must choose,

***ye be doun I nan IE.***

and hit your wife with it.

***Yi E ki fe man nonta vih yan.***

It is the one talisman that changes things round.

***Wo ble yi gonenzan***

They then asked the man

***e nan si li nu fafa le wo ki e zen ki***

to identify his wife

***'bE wo va.***

amongst all the women that were gathered.

***e e go ki yan fihaan***

When he went,

***e be zoun e nan man.***

he pointed his finger at his wife straight away.

***Wo pla tchi tchi tchi tchi tchi!***

They shouted Hurrah!

***Wo ble***

They said,

***yi nen co E ki plEplE***

this boy is a strong one.

***Ye wo ble a lE ble,***

And they said to him:

***yi l nan le e ki 'bE e 'ca yiman a zo lo.***

"your wife was not like that before.

***Yi vih le 'wa 'zran 'bE***

The talismans that are out there,

***be do si va***

choose one

***be man nonta a yan.***

and transform her with it".

*Chan vih nu, zehi vih nu.*

There were golden mane talismans, leather talismans.

***Yi a ten nen le e ki e tri yan e doh ki***

But it was the dirty little red one

***yi le ya si va.***

that he chose.

***wo ble:***

They said:

***Yi nen co yi e ki pIEpIE .***

This boy is a very strong one indeed.

***ye wo go e nan yan.***

And he went back with his wife.

***e dErE co***

From now on,

***yi a ze vih le e ki 'bE,***

it is that mane talisman that was given to him

***a yan le e fE nu man nonta man.***

that he uses to transform things in his community.

***De mi le manen a jie nan,***

When people's chickens are passing by,

***ya doun man***

he hits them

***ye 'bE man e non ta.***

and they change.

***De dri nu a jie nan***

When the cattle are passing by,

***ya doun man,***

he hits them,

**ye 'wo man e non ta.**

and they change.

**e dErE co, a le bla gloh ya,**

He owned now a farm of sheeps,

**dri gloh ya,**

a farm of cattle,

**manen gloh ya**

a farm of poultry.

**Ye e le lo voh.**

And he cut down a palm tree for wine.

**Ye ca ki 'bE,**

As you know,

**bee ki e 'wo bee ja.**

some friends are real trouble to their friends.

**Yi a ze bee le ki 'bE,**

The friend of his,

**a yan le wo go lo ta,**

he is the one he goes tother with to tap his palm wine

**te wo wen mlin man e kiva.**

and drink together.

**Ye a bee ble a IE yi do ble:**

And his friend said to him one day with a confidentially slow tone:

**Ah! an bee,**

“Ah! My friend!

**I ya e fwa yan e dErE co,**

You have become so wealthy

**I si ki man I le li voh nan fla an ta co.**

since you came back from the village where you took your woman away.

**I le fE a yita fie co kyEle e babal**

You have now a lot of properties.”

**e ble ‘bE le ble,**

He said to him quietly:

**an ya gonan an ji gli wo IE I IE.**

“I am going to tell you my secret.”

**Ye e yi vihnen ‘ji fi ‘bE IE**

And he explained the secret of the mane talisman to him.

**Ye e ble ‘bE IE**

And he said to him that

**te ‘bE ya ‘ji bola lo.**

he must not reveal the secret to anyone.

**Wo da e yanan li,**

When they came in the evening,

**'bE go fla zan va.**

the man went to the head of the village,

**Ye 'bE ble:**

and said to him:

**An bee le e ki co e si vih yan yiwohi fla.**

"My friend came with a talisman from the village of Crocodiles.

**A yan le**

It is the one

**e fE nu man non ta man e dErE co e ze IE.**

he uses to transform things to his benefit.

**A yan le a le manen coo dri coo, bohi coo, bla coo wo gloh ki.**

That is why he has chickens, cattle, goats, sheeps".

**Fla zan ble**

The head of the village ordered

**'wo zran dooh.**

to convene a gathering.

**Ye wo zran dooh ble,**

It was announced

**'wo kiyi gonenzan va con 'lee.**  
to gather in the man's homestead.

**To clin,**  
The following morning,

**ye wo 'zran a man.**  
they gathered in his homestead.

**Ye e ble yih!**  
And he said : "damn!

**Yi gli le ya wo e bee IE 'bE yi le ya ji bola 'bEE?**  
So, my friend has disclosed my secret!

**EEh! an ye 'bE ca tonton lo.**  
Well, that is not a big deal."

**Manen vini e wi ki yan,**  
When the first rooster reported for the morning,

**ye e wouhan**  
he got up

**ye e go e le lo ta.**  
and he went to his palmwine tapping place.

**'Gli zran a man.**  
They gathered in his homestead.

**Wo yanan ploplo,**

They sat there for hours.

**ye e ca danan lo.**

But he was nowhere to be found.

**Wo ble a bee IE ble:**

They said to his friend:

**bii E zio dooh,**

"You are the one who knows where he went,

**I go laa.**

go and call him".

**Ye 'bE go a zio lota.**

And he followed him in the wine tapping place.

**'BE boh man.**

He found him.

**A bee wen toh ya non IE.**

His friend served him some drink.

**ya mlin**

He drank.

**ye e ble 'bE IE ble:**

And he said calmly to him:

***Yi an ji wi le man fi bii an bee IE bE***

“The secret that I said to you as a friend,

***yi le be ‘ji bola mi nu IE ‘bE?***

is it what you disclosed to the people?

***EEh, ‘bE ca tonton lo!***

Well, that is not a big deal!”

***e le vih nen bola***

He took out his mane talisman

***ye ya doun ‘bE IE.***

and hit him with it.

***A bee ‘cIE e vla blen yan.***

His friend became a Dog.

***Ye wo da fla.***

And they came back to the village.

***e ‘bE blen toh pa,***

He named the Dog,

***A-‘cIE-bo-le-zan.***

He-who-did-it-to-himself.

***Ye wo yanan ‘gli ta.***

And they sat in the audience.

***Ye wo ble a IE ble ye I bee ni?***

And they asked him where his friend was.

***e ble***

He said

***e ca tan a yi lo.***

he has not seen him yet.

***De blen a fi ble e 'lee sie ta coon ble ya fi ble,***

When the Dog wants to open his mouth to say,

***maan le ki co,***

"here I am",

***ye a bee ble a IE,***

His friend says to him slowly:

***A-'cIE-bo-le-zan I yia fliih!***

"he-who-did-it-to-himself, keep quiet!"

***Te de ca yi ble***

If you can see

***blen 'lee IE ca taan e dErE lo,***

that Dogs' mouth can no longer close up,

***'bE 'ji le e ki 'bE.***

that is the reason why.

**Ye wo ble,**

And they asked

**ye e ya kyeen?**

where he was?

**Yii bo E wi fi**

He was the one who talked,

**ye e ca nan e dErE lo**

and now he has disappeared.

**Flazan ble,**

The chief said with anger:

**ye te vie le ya wo e bo bee maan!**

"he told lies about his own friend then!"

**De ya fi ble e wouhan**

Whenever he wanted to get up

**ya fi man le ki co,**

and say "here I am",

**ye a bee ble,**

his friend says slowly,

**A-‘cIE-bo-le-zan**

“He-who-did-it-to-himself,

**I yia fliih!**

keep quiet!”

**e ya e dErE co e yia ki**

He was now lying down,

**te a ‘lehi e tooh man.**

while his saliva was dripping.

**yuE ka man lo.**

He was nowhere to be found

**Yanan li pa zo**

till the sun set.

**Ye wo ble**

And they said finally:

**te vie le ya wo man.**

“he is a liar then.

**Ca ‘gli wouhan.**

Let us end the meeting.”

**Ye gonenzan ble:**

And the man said to them:

- *ca doh, an le blen le e ki co ca 'jE*  
"Wait, kill and eat this Dog of mine

*'ca 'gli bohi 'clin a yan.*  
to end the meeting."

*Ye wa "jE*  
And they killed him,

*ye wa bli.*  
and they ate him.

*Mi nu le wo yi blen 'bli bli,*  
The people who ate the liver of that Dog,

*wo E ki lui mi nu coulou yan.*  
they are the ones whose descendants are gossipers.

*BE e ki e fiin yan*  
That is the tale

*'bE man 'bE vwa.*  
that I tell.

## 1. Interpretation

The present tale assumes many aspects of symbolic significance, as well as it addresses aspects of Gouro social values such as betrayal, theft and the consequences

In order to present the symbolic import of that particular narrative, it is necessary to recall the significance of its imagery, and to interpret it psychodynamically. But before, it is important to briefly describe the main points in the development of the story.

A man abducts a girl. On the way, he seats her under a palm tree to bathe in a river. The girl is taken under the water by a Crocodile who lost his skin that he had put on a branch of the palm tree. The man is taken under the water to recover his lover as he confessed that he was the one who had stolen Crocodile's skin. There, he gets the girl and gets empowered by a talisman that he henceforth uses to become wealthy. He confides his secrets to his friend who reveals the secrets to the chief. A gathering is called upon, in his homeyard. But he turns his gossiper friend into a Dog with the magic talisman and proves innocence. His friend-Dog is sacrificed to end the meeting.

This narrative gauges some typical features of the Gouro worldview that needs to be explained. These features are presented to the reader through the symbolism of the palm tree, and the symbolism of the liver.

The palm tree, which is recurrent in that story, has a symbolic significance. The Hero loses his lover under a palm tree (but recovers her through a perilous journey in the underwater world). He confides the secret of his wealth to his best friend at the palm-wine-tapping-place, and the Hero makes his best friend pay for his betrayal at the palm-wine-tapping-place by turning him into a Dog with his magic mane talisman. What symbolic features surround the palm tree in the Gouro worldview then?

## 2. Psychodynamic metaphoric elements of this tale

### ~ The Significance of the Palm tree in Gouro life.

The palm tree grows all over Africa and other parts of the world. But it is mostly found in the forest zones and rarely in the savannah or in the desert. The palm tree is viewed by the Gouro people as a very special tree: it serves to many purposes. The symbolism of that tree makes that it is significantly used in proverbs, tales, allegories, songs, riddles, etc. Its use ranges from the secular to the sacred. Its variegated uses include its seeds that are edible. The seeds are collected to make sauces or oil which are very much present in the Guro people's diet. When the seeds are boiled, diluted and sieved, the water is cook as a sauce (*si yi zian*). The diluted solution is often boiled to produce oil called *yonon ten*. The greasy fibres left over with the nuts are dried up and used in making fire. The kernels can be used to make a white oil, *loh coh yonon*, also used in cooking or else *cohi yonon*, which is used as a body lotion by women. The kernel is also used to make soap. The burnt kernels are very much favoured by rodents and therefore are used in traps to catch them.

The leaves of the palm tree are used in roofing, making string, making brooms, or in weaving baskets. The palm fronds are used in shrines or to identify sacred places. They are hung, for instance, at the gate of a sacred wood where sacred masks, the *jE, lo, jeen* are kept.

Sometimes to extract the succulent sap of the tree itself, it is uprooted and tapped. *Yoh* or palm tree, when uprooted becomes *lo bo*. The palm wine or *wen fuu* (say 'white wine') is a fermented sap collected in a clay pot placed under a cut made on the upper part of the palm tree trunk. The palm wine brings friends and relatives together in the evening to drink and talk.

Sometimes the dregs of the wine are used to predict the future. This is done by soothsayers who throw the dregs on the ground and read through the marks that it leaves. The palm wine is also used in rituals. It is the wine for communion with the ancestors and other hidden forces that are fed, say **yoh ban**, by pouring libations. **Lo bo ta** or **Lo ta** is the palm-wine-tapping-place where friends also meet and chat around a full calabash. A palm tree is tapped over a period of a month before it is out of sap. When it is out of sap, the Gouro say **lo sia man**, chrysalises lodge in the cut. They are fatty worms that transmute into insects with time, both edible by the Gouro. The palm tree trunk also produces a mushroom called **boga**, which is used by housewives in their cooking.

Serving to so many purposes, the palm tree is seen by the Gouro as a tree of life. Consequently, the tree lives in various Gouro sayings, proverbs, riddles, and songs. The Gouro say, - for example: **yoh fahy fuu ble ca zi non e ki IE**, meaning the white palm Fronds says 'Let us make way for each other'. The Gouro translate that into solidarity, co-operation, and consolidation. By making way for each other, they make space for everyone, and thereby growth and strength follow. This saying is vividly witnessed on the trunk of the palm tree which carries the growth marks of the leaves that wither, die, and fall off. The leaf-marks on the palm tree trunk determines its age.

\* **An ca yoh glE dwa lo**, 'I do not know the limits to a palm tree'. When a Gouro person says this, it means that s/he does not discriminate between people, but treat them all equally.

The allegory here is that since one cannot distinguish which palm tree grew out of the seeds of which specific palm tree, one must consider all palm trees without prejudice. A palm tree is a mother tree since its seeds can be spread out and germinate in many unforeseeable places. That is to say, one

does not know the limits that palm seeds can reach. The same saying is also used to mean, 'I do not know'.

\* **yohwIE** (giant palm tree) or **si wle** (palm nut). When a Gouro person says **yoh wle** or **si wle** in a speech s/he simply means the conundrum of the palm tree and its seeds: which one generated the other in the beginning of their existence? The tree or the seed? The Gouro, like many other peoples, see a conundrum in the origin of the palm tree; just like the egg and the chicken dilemma.

\* The Guro also say **De l za ya mi ji l go a yan lo ta** meaning, 'if somebody holds a grudge against you, take him to the palm-wine-tapping-place! With the help of the palm wine and the talk, he will reveal the rancour that he harbours against you. That is to say, take him to a wine place, he who bears you a grudge. The perception is a place where people meet and talk, relax and exchange news and views, and settle their differences. The worst can also happen at a wine place; and if friends do not choose to settle with each other convivially and peacefully, someone can get hurt. This is what is happening between the Hero of the tale and his friend. It is at the palm-wine-tapping-place that he confides the secret of his wealth to his friend, and it is at the same place that he settles with him by turning him into a dog.

\* When a new-born is dreaming he is said to be 'climbing a giant palm tree', **e ya yohwIE jie nan**. A Gouro baby does not dream, he climbs a palm tree. A new-born who shows signs of a dream by gesticulating or by making movements of some sort while asleep, is believed to be climbing a palm tree. This is an allegory that implies that his spirit is floating in the air on top of the tree of life, the palm tree.

The palm tree thus constitutes a very significant element in the Gouro lifestyle and belief system. It serves many purposes in their lives. This also explains why some Gouro people are required by soothsayers to grow a

palm tree in their homestead and feed it ritually. By so doing, one is believed to boost her/his spiritual condition in order to successfully confront the many facets (like the multi-purposes to which this tree serves) of life. By watering the palm tree which has as many purposes as it has roots, one is strengthening his own roots to withstand the problems of life.

#### ~ **Significance of the Liver**

The Hero's friend betrays him by telling the secret of his wealth to the community. The mane talisman that the protagonist won from his trip in the underwater world, enables him to transform other people's assets to his benefit. He transforms people's cattle and poultry with the magic talisman, and changes them so they can no longer be recognized by their original owners, and so they become his property. Because his friend betrayed him, he transforms him into a dog and offers him for a present to end the gathering in his yard. In fact, when a man hosts a meeting of the community on grounds of an accusation, **de 'gli zran mi man**, he customarily has the ritual duty to end the gathering by offering a present to the guests. It is a sign of a welcome resolution. But the sacrificed friend leaves a heritage that henceforth marks humankind: the gossip. Those who ate his liver became contaminated by a gossiping behaviour. Why that is so is to the effect that the Gouro people in their belief system identify in the human anatomy the liver as the centre for all senses, not the brain. The Gouro think in their stomach, in the liver, not in the brain. Their characteristic expressions witness that belief:

- \* when a Guro person says, **e ya l "bli ji mi ble** ..., he means 'do you think that (... so and so), 'which literally reads 'it is in your liver that...'
- \* **An "bli do ble** (...) which literally translates 'my one liver says' meaning, 'I have a mind to do (so and so)'.  
\* **Wi pla mi "bli ji** is to keep a word in one's liver, meaning 'to bear in mind'
- \* **"Bli fli ki** means 'boiling liver', which is losing one's temper or acting in anger.

\* **“Bli yanen** is a ‘bad liver’. This is said of a greedy person or an unsympathetic person.

\* **“Bli vEvE** means impatient liver. This is especially said of a person who lacks a quality of patience.

That said, those who ate the gossipers’ liver adopt his character type simply because the liver symbolizes in the human body the organ that commands the behaviour and the actions of a person; the Guro would say so.

~ **The river:** The river in which the hero bathes symbolizes his cleansing from the abduction of a girl. After the cleansing, he is taken under the water where he becomes empowered with a talisman. Under the water he comes across an old woman who helps him.

~ **The old woman** is the symbol and the source of knowledge and wisdom. She is also the mother who cares for her children in a world full of hard tests: She feeds the Hero, she tells him the secret of the transmutations that visitors to the aquatic world go through (white becomes black, and black becomes white), she tells him the secret of the talisman. The idea of motherly support is carried out by the laying Hen (in other words, a mother), and by a Cat. A Cat is tenderness, and a laying Hen is protection (over her eggs).

~ **Talisman:** The talisman that the Hero obtains during his trip has a magic function. It denotes knowledge, wisdom, and power. It is with the virtues of this talisman that he will become wealthy, and therefore respected in his community: He uses the talisman to transform people’s properties to his own benefit.

The protagonist has one major defect in this story: he is a thief. He stole Crocodile’s skin which was on the palm tree, and he uses his magic talisman to dispossess people of their belongings. His journey underwater seems to have strengthened more the very cause for which he undertook the journey.

Indeed it is because of robbery that he found himself in crocodile's village under the water. The old woman who hosted him conferred on him wisdom, enabling him to recognize his wife among thousands, and to get the talisman. Old women in the Gouro tales symbolize wisdom. They are the matrix characters of wisdom.

The underwater or the aquatic world is a different world. The difference is seen in the fact that when anything from the terrestrial world reaches over there it becomes transmuted. "In that village they have a talisman. If you strike something that is black with it, it turns white. If you strike something that is white with it, it turns black!" And this is the magic that the Hero brings back on earth with him as a momento of his journey.

The social-cultural values that are highlighted in this narrative are of a significance to the Gouro people. Stealing is not good, and the Gouro do not recommend stealing. But if theft goes unpunished in this particular story it is because there is a more highly valued principle at stake in this story: secret keeping. The hero's friend is transformed into a dog and killed. He was not recognized by the community members. He dies in a very secretive way. In effect, the Gouro value secrecy because it constitutes one basic principle of their ritualistic learning process. The world is a secret place where there are hidden forces or *yoh* that condition life. As such, human society must fall under secrecy and teach the members who wish to know more about life through secret rites.

Secret keeping is a sacred act by the Gouro because their learning of a higher order operates through secrecy. A man who gets initiated to the *jE*, *lo*, or *jeen*, for example, is taught secret stories in the sacred wood or bush through rites that he must not disclose to common people. As such, a man who cannot keep secrets is referred to as *Lhou zi bo zan* or *Lui bo zan*.

He is the 'one-who-jumps-over-the-bush' to disclose the secrets, just like the protagonist's friend who discloses the secret of his friend's wealth. Amongst the Gouro then, a person is required to 'keep in his liver' the secrets of the sacred elements that regulate their life. In the Gouro world then, a gossipier who cannot 'keep words in his stomach or liver' gets punished, just like the one in the tale.

## 2.1. Psychodynamics of secrecy

\* Because the moral of this narrative favours secrecy, the story is notably articulated into mimismic secret motifs:

~ **Secrecy of the girl's abduction:** the protagonist takes a girl away secretly from her family because he wants to marry her.

~ **Secrecy of the protagonist's trip under the water:** The protagonist keeps that adventure secret. He does not want his community to suspect the origin of his wealth.

~ **Secrecy of the protagonist's wealth:** No one in the community knows how he suddenly became so rich.

~ **Secrecy of the protagonist's dog's nature:** no one in the audience gathered in his homeyard knows that his dog is his transmuted friend.

\* There is also the motif of the palm tree, which appears in two scenes. Each time the palm tree is mentioned, it seems to bring trouble to the protagonist. But he likewise gets the help of a donor to restore the original position: for example:

~ The Hero loses his lover that he seated under the palm tree. But he gets Crocodile to help him recover her.

~ The Hero tells his friend the secret of his wealth at a palm-wine-tapping-place. But he uses his magic talisman at the same place to transform his gossipier friend and thus restores the situation.

## 2.2. Repetition:

~ **episode level of repetition:** there is a repetition pattern in the hero's actions: he steals a woman (he abducts her), he steals Crocodile's skin, and he steals the village community's goods with his magic talisman.

~ **proposition level of repetition:** \* *e li zan yanan yoh yiri nen do wuo* (he seated the girl under a small palm tree...). The repetition of this proposition is meant for the audience to remember the metaphoric significance of the palm tree, which in the Gouro cosmos denotes secrecy, a concept around which the lesson of this tale is interlocked.

\* *'coIE pa yi yoh yiri 'bE ta* (left his skin on a branch of the same palm tree), is also repeated to over once to the same effect as the above.

• *e go 'zru IE* (and he went to bathe), reinforces the idea of water and the cleansing of the hero who is about to receive a magic power from the underwater world.

• *de fE ti da nan e cle e fuu, de fE fuu da nan 'bE e cla e ti* (when a white thing comes here it turns black, and when a black thing comes it turns white) indeed this chiasmic proposition echoes with the use of the magic talisman which transforms things: *de be doun fE ti IE 'bE e cla e fuu. De be doun fE fuu IE 'bE e cla e ti* (if you hit something that is black with it, it turns white, and if you hit something that is white with it turns black). The repetition of these propositions point to the power of the magic talisman to transform anything it touches. The repetition of *fE man nonta* (transform things) is thus to the effect of the power of the talisman.

• *an lu l bE pa an lee* (my daughter, shake hand with me). The old woman told Hero that she would shake hand with hero's wife. She thus informed Hero prior to the big gathering, she stated the same utterance to the woman in question, and she performed the action of shaking hand with the woman.

~ **Clamp-words:** there are in total 89 clamp-words *ye/ yi* (and/then). Besides these clamp-words there are also 14 *Te* and 16 *De*. Mostly two of the identified clamping devices can be used together, but then they adopt a

different meaning. Although they all initially mean 'and/then', but when they are combined, they may mean 'if/ when'. Eg. **te de be doun fE ti IE bE e cla e fuu** ' means ' if you hit a black thing with it, it turns white'.

~ **Onomatopoeia:** **Wo pla tchi tchi tchi tchi tchi!** (they shouted hurrah!), that is when the man chose the right talisman and transformed his woman with it. This is mostly an onomatopoeic imitation of acclamation.

~ **Pairing elements of this tale**

\* **Air / Water:** There are two worlds in which the plot of this story develops. The story starts in a normal human environment until the hero is taken under the water by a crocodile. He goes through events under the water, which he keeps secret from other people. He returns to earth and the plot continues. This contrast can be further viewed as 'secular' vs 'sacred', which complement each other to balance the actions of the tale.

\* **Secular / Sacred:** The events that take place in human community are a shared knowledge, as opposed to the events that take place under the water and which the protagonist keeps secret.

\* **Protagonist / his friend:** The two characters respond to Olrik's law of twins. They are initially presented as friends, but they finally become opposed. Furthermore, the protagonist knows how to keep secrets, but his friend does not.

\* **Gift / theft:** Two moral values appear in this narrative in terms of gift and theft.

~**Gifts:** The Hero is given back his lost lover. He is also given a magic power. The Hero gives drinks to his gossiping friend before punishing him. He gives his transmuted friend as a present to his guest.

~**Theft:** The Hero is a thief. The Hero steals (abducts) a girl, he steals Crocodile's skin from a palm tree, he steals people's goods that he transforms with his magic talisman, which is illegal. The psychodynamics of these two moral values points to the fact that 'gift and theft' have to

compliment each other in deeds in the story in order to appeal to the sense of judgment of the audience.

In the Gouro tale performance some expressions used by the teller also leave indirectly to the imagination of the audience the meaning of a situation. Noss (in Dorson 1972 [a]: 86) refers to this linguistic technique as 'allusion'. At these, mostly, very brief statements, the audience needs no further description as they know what they imply in a particular context. They are cultural concepts living mostly in idiomatic expressions. In this story for example, the word *A-clE-bo-le-zan*, which is the name given by the Hero to his traitorous friend turned into a Dog, is a typical idiom in Gouro to identify someone who becomes a victim of his/her own actions. This idiom used by the Hero to name his friend simply means that the Hero had no intention of turning his friend into a Dog with his magic talisman. He did so because his friend disclosed the secret of his wealth. He is so transmuted into a Dog because he is a gossiper. ***A-clE-bo-le-zan***, thus means 'He-who-did-it-to-himself', that is, he who pays the price for his bad behaviour.

### **3. Gouro lore and lesson of this tale.**

This Gouro tale teaches the reason why a person must learn to know how to keep secrets. The tale translates the Gouro belief that all things are not good to reveal because of the super-natural forces that underpins some of them. Like Hero's friend who discloses the secret of his friend and get transmuted into a dog, anything might happen to anyone who tells all things to everybody.

## TALE TEN

### Dramatis personae

**Death:** Death acts in the capacity of a hero. He is friend to Humans in the beginning, but becomes their enemy at the end.

**Humans:** They were initially Death's friends, became his enemies at the end.

**The Lady:** Death fell in love with her, and she died.

The tale is told with a dialogue between Death and Humans. But there is no apparent vocal variation in the teller interventions recalling the characters. But exaggerations occur where death praises the beauty of the girl, and also where the girl's family mourns deeply for their daughter.

### This is why there is Death

*Fe le e cIE ye ga ki bE,*

What happened and there is Death,

*ca 'ji dwa?*

do you know?

*Te fE le e cIE ye ga ki bE,*

The very thing that causes Death,

*ca 'ji dwa?*

do you knowit?

*Fla do le,*

There was once a village,

**ye 'blenzan nen do ya ta.**

and there lived a lady.

**Yi 'blenzan le ki bE de be yi, a zo 'bE bla mi nonomi ca lo.**

No such beauty had ever existed on earth as that Lady.

**Ye ga le e ki bE te mi le e li.**

And Death at that time was a human being.

**e daan**

He used to come

**te e yanan mi nu va con le te wo gli wo 'wo coo.**

and share jokes with Humans in their homesteads.

**'Wo zanan nu ja e ki va wo yan.**

They used to play together.

**Yi le yi do man**

Then one day,

**e da**

he came

**ye e ble mi nu IE ble**

and said to Humans:

**- Ah!, 'blenen ka**

"Ah! Who is that Lady

***e ki ca fla bE?***

who lives amongst you?

***'Blenzanen le ki bE e soh an IE e baba.***

I love that Lady very much.

***an ya an va ble an bwE bli a va.***

I would like to propose to her."

***Ye mi nu ble, coh!***

And the Humans said, why not?

***I bwE bli a va!***

Go ahead and propose to her.

***Ye e ble:***

And he said:

- ***Ah! Ya fi ble e bwE ble a va bE,***

"Ah! But if I do propose to her

***de e bwE bli a va ye ya si,***

and take her with me,

***A le mi nu e daan wu voh le kyEle.***

her parents will mourn a lot."

***Ye wo ble:***

And Humans insisted:

***I bwE bli a va.***

Propose to her.

***Ye ga ble bah!***

And Death insisted:

***Li le ki bE de man si kpoh***

“If I do take that lady,

***wi yanen e cla.***

bad things will truly happen.”

***Ye wo ble a IE ble:***

And they said to him:

***Te e ca soh IE I le e wo lo?***

That simply means that you do not love her then?

***Ye yi ga yi ‘blen zan si***

And Death took the Lady.

***To clin e blali,***

The following morning,

***a le mi nu e wola con ‘ji***

as her parents entered in the house,

***te yi ‘blen zan ya e ga ki.***

they found the Lady dead.

***Te ga a si e wo bE.***

Death took her then.

***Yah! Wu bEEh!***

They could not mourn enough.

***A kiiko e dwa e woun'hi ye 'bE e dia,***

Everyone would fall over his head here.

***a kiiko e dwa e woun'hi ye 'bE e dia.***

Everyone would fall over his head there.

***Ye wo yi 'Blenzan 'zru***

And they washed the girl,

***ye wa yaan pla saa 'ji.***

and they put her corpse on a mat.

***Yih fie a yaa zan yan***

The third day,

***ye wo go a pa IE.***

they went to bury her.

***Wo si a pa nan mi ye wo da,***

When they came back from the burial,

***Wo fon doh kye ta.***

They cooked food.

**Woli ji e we bE fafa ta fon yan**

Food was being pounded in mortars all over

**'jEta mi nu IE wEE fe yan.**

for the people attending the funeral to eat.

**Wo fon bli.**

They ate a lot.

**Wo non fon ble bE**

As they were eating,

**te wo ji ca "san IE bE lo?**

they forgot about the pains of Death.

**A man le ga ki e dErE co.**

That is how there is Death henceforth.

**De be caan lo**

If not before,

**e li man te ga ya bla mi bee yan.**

Death was a friend of humans.

**De 'bE le vie le**

If that is a lie,

**'bE yrrrrr kpehi.**

there its is running away.

## 1. Interpretation

This story explains how death has come to be an affliction to life of humankind when he used to be a friend to them, and how the affliction is overcome. Indeed, although death is an accepted reality by the Gouro, its occurrence is always subject to a deep affliction. The expression ***a kii e doa e woun'hi ye 'bE e dia***, meaning 'each one stands over his head and fall' characterises, in mourning for a person, the mind-set related to the affection that one has for the deceased, and one's deep affliction by his death.

Depending on the gender of the deceased, the corpse is exhibited for days before burial takes place. A male is buried after four days consecutive to his death. A female stays 'in the mat' for three days.

During that period of three to four days, the Guro say ***mi yaan ya saa 'ji***, or 'the corpse is in the mat' because they traditionally did not have a coffin or bed, but mat.

Until the burial takes place, those who feel deeply afflicted by the event of the death can fast, or ***wo loto son***. This is a physical expression, or corporeal-manual expression of grief in Jousse's terms, which seems to be one major means of overcoming the affliction by the Gouro.

The Gouro funeral is an event of wealth demonstration. Food is cooked in abundance over days to feed to satisfaction all the attendants. Dances are performed to entertain them. Funerals prove at times more joyful than sorrowful among the Guro. Celebrations of various kinds during a successful funeral campaigns are more for forgetting the pains of death.

One does no more see ordeal, but one sees joy. That is the ambivalent nature of death that the present tale indicates. Death fell in love with a beautiful lady and took her with him. She dies. People are afflicted and mourn for her a lot. But during her funeral, food is cooked in abundance, and people eat a lot, and they forget about the pains of the advent of Death.

The tale explains that the passage between life and Death is only an exercise of transmutation. If there is death, there is also life; so the complementarity of the binary pair of 'Life' and 'Death'. Death has to be so that people can live and enjoy life: 'That is why there is Death.' This story demonstrates the Gouro belief –as discussed in the first chapter- that Death must be simultaneously mourned and celebrated to show the pains that the deceased's departure provokes to the living world, and by the same token to wish her/his a good bye to the ancestral world.

## **2. Psychodynamic metaphoric elements of this tale**

\* **Death:** The death of the Girl in that story is metaphoric of the concept of marriage. In effect, when a girl is taken in marriage, she ceases to be for her parents. Her departure to live with her husband is symbolized by her death because she will henceforth be absent from her initial home. Her departure is painful to her parents and relatives because they will miss her. The pain is thus translated in the story by the parents bitterly crying, and going through corporeal expressions of grief. But everything comes back to normal in the end, as they cook and eat a lot, because marriage is part of life. Time heals the wounds of a beloved person's death. The cooking and the eating at the funeral can be symbolically associated with the wedding celebration.

### **2.1. Repetitions**

~ proposition level of repetition: **fE le 'cIE ye ga ki bE ca 'ji dwa? Te fE le 'cIE ye ga ki bE ca 'ji dwa?**(What happened and there is death, do you know? Tell me, what happened and there is death, do you know?). This apostrophe of the members of the audience by the narrator is often seen in etiological narrative opening formulas. If the teller does not say, for example, that: 'What happened and there is this or that, I will explain to you', the teller can introduce the narrative with such a question: 'Do you know why...so and so?' Even though the audience happens to know the story, they will still tell of their ignorance of the story by saying 'no', simply because they still want to hear the teller's version of it. This kind of repetition is an invitation by a teller's audience to listen carefully to the story.

- Death repeatedly utters: **e soh an IE e baba. Ya an va ble an bwE bli a va** (I love her very much, I would like to propose to her), meaning implicitly the inconvenience of his love. In other words, this insistence translates that if death proposes to the lady and takes her,

- **wi yanen e cla** (...bad things will happen) and **a le mi nu e daan wu voh IE kyEle** (Her parents will cry a lot). The repetitions thus an insistence on the drawbacks of death's love for a person.

- \* **yah! Wu 'bEEh! A kiiko e dwa e woun'hi ye 'bE e dia, A kiiko e dwa e woun'hi ye 'bE e dia** (They could not mourn enough. Everyone would fall over his head here. Everyone would fall over his head there). These repetitive phrases emphatically translate the emotional state of mind of the girl's family, which is the pain and affliction that death provokes.

- \* **wo fon doh kye ta. Woli ji e we bE fafa ta fon yan 'jEta mi nu IE wE fE yan. Wo fon bli. Wo fon bli...** (They cooked food. Mortars were pounding all over with food for the guests. They ate a lot). This other episodic repetition is to the effect of how the funeral activities sooth the senses of the afflicted people. **wo fon bli 'bE te wo ji ca san IE bE lo?** (As they were eating, they forgot about the pains of Death). A funeral is the occasion of

dances, singing, socialising, and eating. On these occasions, the dead is little thought about.

~ **clamp-words:** besides the 17 *ye/yi* that clamp the propositions of this tale there are also 4 *Te*.

~ **Pairing:**

\* **Death / Life:** This story is a form of explanation of the origin of Death. The story says the reason why there is Death, and how the advent of Death introduces sorrow and pain amongst Humans. "They could not mourn enough". This situation of sorrow and pains contrasts with the scene where "They (Death and Humans) used to play together". In short, The complementarity may be seen in terms of joy of life (as when death was living friendly with humans), and pains of Death (as when death afflicted humans by taking away their beloved one).

\* **Love / hatred:** The element of love is introduced by the love that death has for the beautiful girl. But when death is in love with a person, he takes that person and thus afflicts the others. Death is then hated for his love because his love introduces pain into people's emotions. There is a further contrast between the beauty of the lady and the ugliness of Death.

### **3. Gouro more and lesson of this tale**

Death and humans are presented in the beginning as friends. "He (Death) would come and sit with the people on their homestead to chat with them. They would play games together." They were thus as close as friends. But Death ends up being hated by his friends, Humans, because he is afflicting to them. The lesson thereby becomes apparent: Death is still Human's friends because he is around them. He would visit every single one of them some day and take him/her. If so it is that Death will visit one day everyone, a funeral is to celebrate his visit and forget about the affliction that he is

bound to bring along with him. When Death loves a person and takes her/him, the wedding is celebrated in funeral. Such seems to be the implicit in Gouro belief.

## **Conclusion**

The intricacies of an orally delivered story are the dynamic features emerging from the memory structure of a teller as seen in repetitions, clasp-words and sounds, symbols, metaphor, and pairings. These narrative elements are always repeated sufficiently and frequently in a story to create a formulaic pattern that will be embedded in a listener's memory. As they are discussed in the Rhythmo-stylistic analysis, they form a memory supporting structure and effect the recalling, the telling and the transmission of a story without altering a story's initial meaning.

The psycho-physiological laws as identified by Marcel Jouessee in terms of imitation, rhythm, balance and formula then become the fundamental principles that regulate the oral-style of composition and improvisation informed by the mnemonic laws foregrounded in the Rhythmo-stylistic analysis.

## CONCLUSION

This thesis investigated the possibility of putting into practical writing in Gouro, ten Gouro tales and endeavoured to interpret analytically their psychodynamic features. That is, the mnemonics contents of a telling process that effect the telling tradition of these tales. This thesis also attempted to translate into English, the ten Gouro tales. Indeed, in writing the tales in Gouro, and translating them into English, it is intended to capture in a more direct way as in a live performance, the particulars of the Gouro language. That is, how the Gouro conceive their world in their speech metaphorically and symbolically. The symbolic and metaphoric content of the tales thus constituted within the Gouro tale construct an important aspect of the interpretation and analysis of the tales. The methodology adopted to execute the interpretation of the tales accounted for the French anthropologist Marcel Jousse's psycho-physiological Laws of human expression.

Marcel Jousse's psycho-physiological Laws of the Oral-style composition are empirical laws because they can be observed in a natural human phenomenon. The Oral-style composition was thus used to reconstruct and apply in 'Rhythmo-stylistic Analysis' to the Gouro tales to reveal their structural dynamics. The 'Rhythmo-stylistic Analysis' disclosed the translation of the visceral mnemonic contents of a Gouro tale expressed initially in movement and speech into visible mnemonic elements. The Laws of Mimism, Rhythmism, Bilateralism, and Formulism identified by Jousse as anthropological Laws which characterise human expression were applied to the Gouro tale analytically, together with other Mnemotechnical Devices that play significant mnemonic functions in storytelling. These Laws and

Mnemotechnical Devices principally apply to the aspects of composition, recalling, and transmission, thus unfolding the organic structural content of the Gouro tales. The mnemonic elements of the Gouro tales identified in the various levels of repetition, symbolism, metaphor, clamp-words and sounds, binary complementarity or pairing elements thus allowed the recording in a Gouro storyteller's memory to ensure that a story is understood, recalled, and transmitted faithfully and reliably. Such an analysis of orally derived texts draws one's attention on the complex skills required of storytellers in general, and of Gouro storytellers in particular.

In consideration of this study, a number of outputs have emerged:

1. The Gouro, their history, and their mores: A historical overview of the Ivory Coast and the Gouro was made in the first chapter. This chapter revealed that, based on the present day historical allegations, the Gouro claim their affiliation with the Mande group of the north western part of the Sahara. Their settlement in the mid-western region of the Ivory Coast may be the result of socio-political upheavals that took place in the great empires of the Middle Age, such as the Ghana and the Mali empires in the upper Senegal-Niger. The French colonial rule that applied to the country from 1893 to 1960 did not favour the development of a scribal form for any of the sixty ethnic languages of the Ivory Coast. The Gouro language, therefore, has no formal scribal written form up today. This first chapter further presented the Gouro belief systems, their social organisation, and what the Gouro believe is a society building capacity: '**wi**', the 'word'.

In terms of the translation of the Gouro tales, a number of outputs have been identified:

•An oral-literate level of translation was identified to account for the writing down of the Gouro language, which has no standardized scribal written form. The Gouro version of the Bible was critically used as a reference in this regard for the spelling system of the language's sounds pattern.

- An inter-modal level of translation was identified to accounts for the putting of the Gouro tale performance on the page. The transfer of the physical performance mode to a written mode adopted the body of Marcel Jousse's 'Rhythmographic' recording. The 'Rhythmography' principally accounts for the psychodynamics of the Gouro tales because it evidences in the written text the bilateralised rhythmic delivery of the tale. A 'Rhythmo-stylistic Analysis', which is a strategy for analyzing the psychodynamic features of an Oral-style performance in a written record was thus used to isolate the dynamic mnemonic contents of the Gouro tales.
- An inter-lingual level of translation was identified, that is, the transfer of meaning from the Gouro tales to the English readership. In order to stay as closeas possible to the way the Gouro people express their world in their tales, a 'mimismic metaphoric' translation was used, which is a literal translation of the Gouro tale language construct. In order to allow a direct comparative access to the Gouro language idiosyncrasies, each Gouro tale text line was coupled with its English translation.

With regard to the problems that arose at the inter-lingual level of translation, i.e. culture-specific concepts, complex semantism due to the tonal faces of a word, expressive meanings, the meaning-specific body language, strategies were suggested for a more pragmatic translation of the tales under review. The strategy suggested particularly a recreation of the Gouro language imagery in an English translation, whether pertaining to body language or to specific cultural concepts, and to

translate the propositions according to their descriptive function in an utterance or to signify in translation the evaluative elements by means of building the metaphor of identification.

3. The psychodynamics of tale telling performance among the Gouro allowed to identify the Gouro tale types and their general structures. In these terms it was established that the Gouro narratives range from the secular to the sacred. They account for daily behaviour of the members (they are routine- dependent). The tales can also be concept-related, that is when they are set to explain a linguistic concept or a belief system for example. The Gouro tales can further be secrecy-related, i.e. for initiation purpose, or history-related, or else myth- related.

Given the aforementioned products that emerged from this research work, one needs to ask: what psychological import does tale telling take on in the Gouro society? And what does the study of the dynamism of the tale account for?

To answer these questions is to assess the nature of a Gouro narrative. In the particular perspective of the Gouro belief systems, their tradition and their cultural particulars, the Gouro tales performance fulfill more importantly a function of education rather than a function of pure entertainment. More than an entertaining activity, the Gouro tale performance:

- (1) Is a court where the communal conscience learns through animate and inanimate characters. The Gouro tales thus give an account of a code of conduct to social members.

- (2.) Is a memory bank of knowledge and understanding the world and its various manifestations.
- (3.) Is an instrument for the promotion of social norms and rules. This explains that knowing tales and quoting tale characters in speech, using them in sayings and proverbs or praises, is synonymous with wisdom.
- (4.) Provides a reference source for what is considered to be proper Gouro behaviour, and provide a set of values by which the Gouro people live

It would be useful to know to what extent the particular Gouro ethnic narratives present the material world and the non-material world, (the hidden), as an imbricated whole. There is no separation and all categories are in an interactional linkage of *Bali*. Animals, plants, invisible forces, the aquatic world, humans, all talk to each other and tell each other the secret of their existence. This is the instance of the narrative (T9) where transmutations are allowed. A man turns into a stick to enter the animal world.

This association with other components of nature can further be objectivised in metaphorical use of transmutation in Gouro. In human society, a stupid member will be identified (transmuted) with a Gazelle, the gloomiest of all Gouro tale characters, while a clever person will be identified with a Fox, the wiliest character of the Gouro tales.

Von Vexküll once said that "every natural organism 'constructs' its own 'world' from the flux of events constituting its natural environment." (1983:42). This is the anthropological Law of Mimism – imitation- which

Jousse identified as a primordial characteristic Law of human expression, and which is particularly true to the Gouro who conceive their narratives from the observation of their environment to construct their social realities. The Gouro tale world is thus governed, not by fictional laws, but by moral laws that regulate their social order which itself is grounded in the order of their cosmos.

The psychodynamic interpretation of the selected Gouro tales is then a work that quests for fresh insight and understanding of the worldview of the Gouro oral tradition in presenting its values to the new world. This thesis thus opens a way to future research of the Gouro cultural idiosyncrasies in respect of which a number of priorities present themselves:

- 1.) A substantial documentation of the Gouro oral tradition and cultural values that are fast disappearing. This can allow further interpretations and analyses in studies pertaining to the ethnic data of the Gouro, or offer references as a variety of cultural sources.
- 2.) The development of a scribal standard form for the Gouro and other tonal-gestual languages in Africa. The limitations in the dynamics of reading tale texts for example, minimise the impact of a performance on thought. This is so because the written records do not accommodate all the performative traits: Gestures, intonations, facial expressions. In a record device that needs to accommodate these expressive features of a tonal language such as the Gouro, a text must function as an agent of multi-dimensional performance. Only such a form of record can account for the dynamics of an oral performance of the kind of tales, riddles, praises, proverbs, songs, etc.

- 3.) Develop recording of other performed psychodynamic or social mnemonic texts in a field of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Oral Studies.

Because such a study will be primarily based on oral traditions, they should be both theoretical and applied. It is therefore interesting for the outcomes to encourage 'insider' (Jousse 1997, 2000) and 'implicative' (Stoller 1996) research perspectives that would engage African Scholars, whether scribally literate or not, in the interpretation of their own cultures for the rest of the world. The "Sensuous Scholarship" (Stoller 1996) may be useful for the collection, translation, and explanation of ethnic manifestations to contribute to our understanding as humans.

- 3.) Develop recording of other performed psychodynamic or social mnemonic texts in a field of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Oral Studies.

Because such a study will be primarily based on oral traditions, they should be both theoretical and applied. It is therefore interesting for the outcomes to encourage 'insider' (Jousse 1997, 2000) and 'implicative' (Stoller 1996) research perspectives that would engage African Scholars, whether scribally literate or not, in the interpretation of their own cultures for the rest of the world. The "Sensuous Scholarship" (Stoller 1996) may be useful for the collection, translation, and explanation of ethnic manifestations to contribute to our understanding as humans.

## GLOSSARY

This is an interpretative glossary of Gouro words and their English translations. The meanings given for the Gouro words are the various tonal facets that a word can take on, and also its context-related usage. This glossary lists only examples of basic forms of words touched upon in the tale texts and should not be considered as a Thesaurus of the Gouro tonal words. The numbers are keyed to identify the pages and instances where the word is found in the tale texts.

**Bali** 125, 126, 128-130, 237, 304.

**God, rope, cord, thread, wire.**

That which unifies or which connects one to another.

**Ban** 304

**hut, bat, to feed, debt (payment), bust or chest.**

Protection from the bad, as a hut shelters from bad weather, or like the bust shelters the heart. The bat has likewise impermeable wings that protects its body like a hut. *Yo ban* is to feed the hidden forces/to worship by pouring libations or offering of some kind to ask for protection. The meaning of payment or debt introduces the idea of exchange value which means equality of ration and justice.

**BE** 125, 126, 179, 180, 184, 255, 273, 318, 333, 335.

**Hand, branch, other.**

This word points to a sub-section, a limb or offshoot like a branch. As an offshoot, it means a part other than the main part. A hand or branch is other than the main body or trunk.

**Behi / beri**

21, 215, 268.

**night, horn, rule, to save, to jump to dry, whistle, to heal,**

Depending on the tonal inflection, this word meaning to jump points to the imagery of a 'horn' springing out of a head (animals);

Or how an ill person can jump out of a grave (healing).

Likewise, when one is 'saved' from a dangerous situation, it is a step to jump forward in life. Another inflectional variation meaning 'night' may then mean a jump ahead of the day.

**Blehi**

129, 236, 268.

**Moment, time, period.**

**Blen**

174, 176, 263, 370- 373.

**Big, dog, lady.**

The meaning of 'lady' is more about female Character in her youth. The *Plohben* say **NANEN**, in other words, to mean young lady. The youth introduces an idea of fullness: Full of energy, of life, of herself because she is desired by men. Therefore, the idea of 'big" (which indeed is an inflectional variation).

Probably because a 'dog' is a loyal companion to humans as a female is to a male, it also carries another inflectional variation.

**Bli**

154, 155, 186, 187.

**Liver, drum, to swell, garbage.**

This word is rooted in the imagery of the liver as symbolised by the Gouro (See commentary T9). The Gouro consider the liver the central organ in the human

- body, it regulates the body as the rhythmic beat of a drum would do, or when it inflates and becomes as big as possible, it is the liver, because nothing in human can be as big as liver (a Gouro view). They say **bli blen**, i.e. 'big liver' to mean greed for example
- Boh** 154, 185, 210, 212, 213, 344, 408.  
**Pot, to arrive, cooking, to jam.**
- BwE** 179, 180, 184.  
**Friend, boil (furuncle).**  
This polysemantic word likens 'boil' to 'Friend' because the Gouro believe that a boil announces that one is about to have a new friend, or that one has too many (girl/boy) friends.
- Bwii** 248  
**Bush, witchcraft, savannah.**  
The word derives from the concept of the savannah which is clearer than the forest (**Ploh**).  
A Gouro woman who is lighter in complexion is called, for example, **Bwita**, i.e. 'From savannah'. Associated with witchcraft (another inflectional variation of the word) translates the Guro belief that a witch or wizard can see clearer than a normal person. A witch or wizard is believed to have a second eye which allows him to see at night time or beyond the normal visions. They say: **A Yue Zi ya** or **E Yere Ye**, meaning the wizard can see beyond or can see more clearly or brightly as in a savannah.
- Ca** 125-129, 152, 153.

mean shoes, which cover the feet.

**Dan** 175, 254, 255.

**To taste, to sell.** With two tonal inflections.

**DErE** 155, 217, 236, 303, 342, 347, 355, 356.

**new, now, to hammer.** The word may be also pronounced **Dede** for 'new', a slowly emphatic pronunciation. For its existence in time 'newness' translates the idea of 'now' to the Gouro. There is no tonal variation for the two concepts in the language.

**Doh** 185, 209, 261.

**To stand, to build, to help one carry something on the head, to stop, to design, to wait.**

This word translates the concept of physicality, a concreteness in Gouro. Whether the word takes on one of these meanings, it is for one to see or to notice. A standing position is physical and concrete, so is building which is concretely experiential. To design also lends to a concrete reality being replicated in graphism.

**Dola /data** 126, 226, 228, 230, 264.

**to lay down, to tread.**

The word carries the meaning of 'contact with the idea of standing on: **Doh**, (stand), and **TA** (on).

**Doun** 337, 347, 353.

**To shoot, to hang up, to hit, to give a blow.**

The word sounds onomatopoeic with the meaning of 'to shoot' or 'to hit'. The Gouro say, for example, **ya je du** S/he hit or beat him/her/it **Du, Du** is the Guro sound that a heavy blow makes. The word **Doun** may have derived from that sound. The second tonal variation meaning 'to hang up'

is related to the idea of 'weigh' (heavy - like a blow).

**FE**

228, 230, 232, 237, 318, 321, 342, 347, 369

**Food, thing, something.** This word is generic. It applies to Anything regardless of its credential name. Even if there is a variety of foods with specific names, the word is mostly used (in conjunction with **Fon**) to mean the routine of eating 'something'.

**Fon**

373, 374.

**Food, to pierce**

**Fuu**

155, 337, 342.

**Air, wind, breeze, white, shade.** More onomatopoeic of the Gouro noise of the blowing wind: **FFFF** ! Often it is identified with shade or shadow, which points to the concept of breath or spirit.

**Ga**

210, 214, 369, 372-374.

**To die, death, dry, to dry up.** Absence of life.

**Gulu**

**Hole, grave, beyond, depth, corner, that (or this).** That which is unfathomable. A bottomless hole or depth. That which creates shade or darkness. The Gouro word, **Gunu** (darkness) derives from this word.

**JE**

126-129, 151-153, 174-178, 180-188, 210, 215, 292, 294, 299

**Wound, funeral, to beat, to kill, also Guro sacred masquerade.** That which causes pains.

**Kye**

248, 260, 300, 317, 373.

**Firewood, hot, fire, light.** A polysemantic word

**Lee**

251, 261, 351, 411, 354.

**Mouth, palm.** Which carries. The mouth carries a

	person's words. The palm is also a carrier.
<b>LEE</b>	174, 179, 180, 184, 239, 274. <b>Rain, year, age, iron.</b> Points to the idea of seasons. Rain comes with a new season, which is used to determine how old a person or an object can be. The second tonal variation means 'iron' which is as hard as a rain and can destroy the strongest object.
<b>Man</b>	304, 352 <b>Against, side, around, by.</b>
<b>Mi</b>	317, 337, 340, 347, 370. <b>Person, there.</b>
<b>Mlin</b>	125, 352. <b>To swallow, to drink, to surpass (outdo), broom.</b> Figuratively, the word translates an idea of domination. One can only swallow what is smaller in size than him or her self.
<b>Monen</b>	300-303. <b>Mouse, moon.</b>
<b>Nan</b>	208, 210, 215, 301, 341, 346. <b>Wife, place, grandmother.</b> A housewife makes the household, and thereby makes the pride of the house man. She makes a place for a lineage to grow, she is a place.
<b>Pa</b>	210, 211, 373. <b>Footprint, to bury, to serve, to accompany.</b> This word relates to the idea of moving from one place to another, therefore walking or footprint. To bury a dead person is to take from the living world to the beyond. To accompany is to go from one place to another.

<b>Pehi /peri</b>	215 <b>Buttocks, piece, beginning, bit.</b> <i>Peri</i> is preferred to the <i>Plohben</i> pronunciation. It sends to the image of a 'bit' from where something begins to take shape. The buttocks are Considered by the Gouro as the 'bit' from where the human body grows because they are soft and can allow growth easily. The word also applies to the rear of any other object by implication.
<b>Pla</b>	214, 345. <b>To put, to shout (acclaim), nothing.</b>
<b>Saa</b>	208, 209, 211, 226, 230. <b>Rice, mat, bed, arrow, to clean with water, to cleanse.</b> This word introduces three different meanings with three different tonal variations.
<b>San</b>	335, 374. <b>To lose, trap, beam.</b>
<b>Sia</b>	151,153, 183, 255, 267, 291, 319-321. <b>To take, to scream, to cry, to shout, rubber.</b> To Scream/shout/cry echoes figuratively with the extensibility of a 'rubber'. The meaning of rubber 'may be rooted in shouting which is extending to a certain emplitude the voice. 'To take' comes from the concept of <i>Pehi/Peri Sia</i> , which is 'take the bit' (See <i>Pehi</i> above), to extend or to grow or to start from the bit whatever it is that must be performed.
<b>Soh</b>	180, 184, 371, 372. <b>Cloth, to fit, to please, to like, enough.</b> The root meaning is to 'fit pleasingly'. <i>E Soh</i> with one tone may then mean 'it fits perfectly' or 'it fits enough'.
<b>Sonon</b>	151

**Next to, to insult, near (by).**

A word-concept meaning near by.

It implies insult (as a verb or as a noun) because the Gouro conceive of the idea of 'insult' as that which pertains to one's nature. That which is close to/near/or even in one's nature and that must be revealed when it is a bad feature.

**Tan**

181, 251.

**To close, to weave, to seal.**

**Ti**

178-182, 184, 232, 233, 274-276.

**Father, black, dark.** In two inflectional variants.

**Va**

174, 208, 341, 370, 371.

**Amidst, amongst, by, according to, (V.I.P.), with.** This word implies the idea of with or acceptance. When she/he/it is amongst or with the people, s/he/it is accepted.

**Vih**

174-170, 337, 344, 346, 347, 349, 350, 353.

**Elephant, flower, hairy (tail).** That which comes into bloom. Applies to elephant which is the most totally fulfilled body, it is in full bloom.

**Voh**

181, 209, 339, 258.

**To sow, to place something by someone, to drive (car) to cut down.** Something passing from one form to another or from idea to form. To sow implies to reproduce, to yield. So is the idea of investment: A Gouro person customarily places his/her she-goat, cow, hen (it has to be a female animal) by someone else who would look after it to yield more offspring, which they share. The cutting down (a tree) implies destruction of a

construction. To drive a car (bike) is the practical aspect of what one thinks can be saving his or her energy, which is sparing them to use their feet/walking to go to places.

- WIE** 125.  
**Bone, coin, grain.** That which is hard.
- Wo** 151, 153, 176, 177, 181.  
**They, them, their.** With three different inflectional variations, the word means three different pronouns.
- Woli / wohi** 271, 374.  
**Tail, mortar, lice.** The *Plohben* prefer *woli*, a dialectal variation of the word.
- Wuo** 271, 269, 336.  
**Head, bottom, beneath, under.** The two tonal variants Pointing to the idea of under (down) and Head (Top) may suggest two antipodes.
- Yaa** 275, 278, 279.  
**To bring forth, burning sensation, yam.** Points to the idea of pains.
- Yaan** 176, 226.  
**To finish, corpse.** This word implies the idea of non-existence.
- Yanan** 322, 324, 373.  
**Pubis, work, job, anger, ape, to sit down.** With four tonal variations. The first tonal quality means both pubic or work, depending on the context. But the association of both meaning may suggest that one work for survival. Survival here being symbolically seen in the sexual references of the pubis, the lower area. Sitting down may raw on the lower position, as opposed

- to standing up.
- Yeen** 234, 341.  
**Blood, to fit admirably.** Points to the idea of a perfect match, like blood in a body that make one.
- Yehi / Yeri** 248, 278.  
**Blade, to break, laughter.** The *Ploben* say *Yeri*. The word implies a break apart which is the function of the blade. The third tonal variation meaning, 'laughter' draws on the same idea: the Gouro mostly say *E dia yehi/yeri yan*, meaning "she fell with laughter". The idea of falling lends to the notion of breaking and falling apart.
- Yi** 127, 269, 333, 334, 336, 349.  
**Water, day, sleep.** The water is like daylight. It is Clear. To sleep, the Gouro say *Yi je* which is to kill the day. That is, when one closes the eyes, the daylight ceases to exist, therefore one has 'killed the day' when sleeping.
- Yoh** 258, 259, 335.  
**Palm tree, to hide, paste.** This word is rooted in the notion of hiding. It brings about a word such as *yo* which means talisman, the sacred, magic power. The point in these words is that they hide extraordinary forces.  
 Likewise, the palm tree has the secret of its existence that no one can figure out since it is almost not conceivable that a single tree performs a lot of functions. (SeeT 9 for palm tree symbolism in the Gouro cosmogony). The meaning of paste implies the idea that one ignores what a paste hides within it.
- YuE** 151, 152, 271.  
**Eye, colour, manner, way.** This is a root word for sight

and its function. The eyes allow one, for example, to distinguish between colours, therefore the second tonal inflection of this word means colour. The third inflection means 'manner' because it is also what one can note with one's eyes in another person/animal's behaviour/manners. 174, 175, 345.

**Zen**

**To wear, to pour, to gather.** The meaning of gathering implies the idea of abundance, therefore is associated with the idea of pouring (like abundant or heavy rain). The meaning of wearing (a cloth) points to the figurative sense of covering the body with a heavy material which hides the skin. The word has two tonal variants, suggesting the pouring effect, from top to bottom, to the '*legs*', which is another meaning of the word.

**Zenzi**

227

**Good, kind, to gather around something, someone.**

This word translates the idea of beauty, something so good, so beautiful that it deserves to be gathered around to admire. A beautiful Gouro woman is thus named **Zenzi**, i.e. surround her to admire her beauty.

**Zran**

179, 182, 187, 216, 217, 316, 322, 341.

**Husband, game (play), to fall.** This word is rooted in the concept of falling. It symbolically applies to the meaning of husband from this Gouro story: A girl before marriage is full of life and standing young and strong on her feet, just as her breasts stand on her chest. When she is taken by a man (the Gouro say **Si**), the man brings her down, **ya bo**, or subjects her to him by giving some goods to her parents. After a maternity, her breast, hitherto, standing up, fall flat. She will henceforth call the man who made her

breasts fall flat her 'Faller' or **An Zran.**

**Zru**

176, 333,334.

**Heart, to wash.**

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### BIBLES

- 1979                      *Kazambale Le Sebe Sauunnu*. La Societe Biblique en Afrique Occidentale. Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.

### PUBLICATIONS

- Abrahamsson, H  
1977                      *The Origin of Death: Studies in African Mythology*. New York: Arno Press.
- Al-Shahi, A. &  
F.C.T. Moore.  
1977                      *Wisdom From the Nile: A collection of Folk-stories from Northern And Central Sudan*. Translated with an Introduction by Ahmed Shahi and F.C.T. Moore. Clarendon Press. Oxford.
- Andrew, D. and  
Bill Guest  
1989                      *Natal and Zululand from Early Times to 1910: A New History*. University of Natal Press. Shuter & Shooter.
- Arewa, E.O.  
1966                      *A Classification of Folklore of the Northern East African Cattle Area by Types*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation in Anthropology, University of California. Berkley. Published by Arno Press in 1980.
- Baddeley, A  
1989                      *The Psychology of Remembering and Forgetting in Memory: History, Culture and the Mind*. Basil Blackwell: Oxford.

- Baker, M.  
1992 *In Other Words: A Course Book on Translation*. Routledge: London and New York
- Blake, J.W.  
1997 *West Africa : Quest for God and Gold 1454 - 1578*. Curzon Press. London. Rowman and Littlefield: Totowa.
- Bascom, W.R.  
1965 'Four Functions of Folklore', in Dundes, A. (ed) *The Study of Folklore*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.
- Bascom, W.  
1968 *Ifa Divination, Communication Between Gods and Men in West Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Bascom, W.  
1975 *African Dilemma Tales*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Bascom, W  
1996 *African folktales in the New World*. Indiana University Press. Bloomington and Indianapolis
- Bascom, W.  
1993 *Sixteen Cowries: Yoruba Divination from Africa to the New World*. Indiana University Press.
- Bassnett, S. and  
Andre Lefevere (eds)  
1990 *Translation, History and Culture*. Cassell.
- Bauman, R.  
1977 *Verbal Art as Performance*. Rowley, M.A.: Newbury House.
- Bauman, R. &  
Joel Sherzer  
1974 *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Ben-Amos, D.  
1976 'Analytical Categories and Ethnic genres." In *Folklore Genres*. Edited by Dan Ben-Amos. Austin: University of Texas Press. Pp. 215-42.
- Bloomfield, L.  
1933 *Language*. London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd. Museum Street.
- Bolinger, D.  
And Sears  
1968, 1981 *Aspects of Language*. New York. Harcourt Brace. Javonovich.
- Brislin, E.W. (ed)  
1996 *Translation: Applications and Research*. Gardner press, Inc. New York. Distributed by Halsted Press. A division of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. New York, London, Sydney and Toronto.
- Brown, D.  
1998 *Voicing the Text: South African Oral Poetry Performance*. Cape Town/ Oxford University Press.
- Brown, D  
1997 Oral-print transfers and linguistic mediations: 'Cultural translation' in the oral storytelling of the /Xam Bushmen. *Voices 1*. Centre for Oral Studies, University of Natal, Durban.
- Brown, D  
1999 (eds) *Oral Literature and Performances in Southern Africa*. James Curry: Oxford.
- Camara, S.  
1997 *Tale in the Night: Toward an Anthropology of the Imagery in Varia Folklorica*, edited by Alan Dundes. The Hague: Mouton.
- Calame-Grimaule, G.  
1976 *Langage et Cultures Africaines: Essais d'ethnolinguistique*. Etudes reunies et présentées par Génévieve Calame-Griaule, Francois Maspero. 1, Place Paul-Painleve, Ve Paris.

- Canonici, N.N.  
1996 "Texture, Text and Context in a Zulu Folktale". Journal of the University of Durban-Westville, New Series 2.
- 1986 *Izinganekwane : An anthology of Zulu Folk Tales*. Department of Zulu Language and Literature. University of Natal, Durban.
- 1988 Educational Aspects of Trickster Folktales: *Catching Winged Words: Oral Tradition and Education*. Selected conference papers edited by E.R. Sienaert and A.N. Bell for the Natal University Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban.
- 1989 *Zulu Folktales*. Durban: University of Natal, Durban.
- 1991 Traditonal Cannibal motifs in modern Zulu fiction. *Oral Tradition and Innovation: New Wine in old Bottles?* Selected conference paper edited by E. Sienaert, N. Bell and M. Lewis for the University of Natal Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban
- 1993 *The Zulu Foktale Tradition*. Zulu Language and Literature. University of Natal, Durban.
- 1994 Rhythmic pattern in Zulu Oral Narratives. *Oral Tradition and its Performance: Beyond the verbal/non-verbal divide*. Proceeding of the fourth International Conference for Oral Studies. Centre for oral Studies, University of Natal, Durban.
- Carpenter, A. & James H.  
1977 *Enchantment of Africa: Ivory Coast*. Children Press, Chicago.
- Chamberlain, T.E.  
1998 Doing things with words. Putting performance on the page. *Voices 1*. Centre for Oral Studies, University of Natal, Durban.
- Chevrier, J.  
1986 *L'arbre á palabres: Essai sur les contes et recits traditionnels d'Afrique Noire*. Hatier.

- Chinweizu.  
1987 *The West and the Rest of us: White predators, black slaves and the African Elite* Pero Press, Lagos, Nigeria, 2nd Edition.
- Chomsky, N. &  
Morris Halle  
1968 *The Sound Pattern of English*. Harper and Row, Publishers. New York and London.
- Connolly, J.L.  
2000 *An annotated and Glossed English Translation of Memory, Memorisation and Memorisers in Ancient Galilee by Marcel Jousse: A Study of the Origin, Nature and Recording of Mnemonic Rhythmo-Stylistic Texts*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation in Orality-Literacy Studies. University of Natal, Durban.
- Clark, J.P.  
1978 *The Ozidi Soga*. Collected and translated from Ijo of Okabou Ojobobo. Ibandan
- Cope, A.T.  
1976 "Towards an Appreciation of the Zulu Folktales as Literary Art" in Argyle, J., and Preston-Whyte, E. (eds.) *Social System and Tradition in Southern Africa*, Cape Town: OUP.
- Cope, A.T.  
1986 Literacy and the Oral Tradition: The Zulu evidence, *Oral Traditions and Literacy: Changing visions of the world*. Selected Conference papers, Natal University Oral Society and Research Centre, Durban.
- Crowley, D.J.  
1977 *African Folklore in the New World*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Derive, J.  
1975 *Collecte et tradition des Litteratures Orales: Un exemple negro-africain*, S.E.A.F., Paris.

- Derive, J.  
1980 'L'utilisation de la parole orale traditionnelle dans *Les soleils des indépendances* d'Ahmadou Kourouma. *L'Afrique Littéraire et artistique*. 54/55.
- Diop, Birago  
1958 *Nouveaux Contes d'Amadou Koumba..* Paris
- 1961 *Nouveaux Contes d'Amadou Koumba.* Paris.
- Dorson, M.R.  
1972 *Folklore: Selected Essays.* Indiana University press: Bloomington/ London.
- Dorson, R.M. (ed)  
1972 (a) *African Folklore.* Bloomington. Indiana University Press.
- 1972 (b) *Folklore and Folklife.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Douglas-Klotz, N.  
1999 *The Hidden Gospel: Decoding the Spiritual Message of the Aramaic Jesus.* Quest Books. Theosophical Publishing House, Wheaton, Illinois, Chennai (Madras) India.
- Dundes, A.  
1964 'Texture, Text and Context'. *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, Vol. 28.
- Dundes, A.  
1965 *The Study of Folklore.* New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.
- Dundes, A.  
1980 *Interpreting Folklore.* Bloomington: Indiana University press.
- Dundes, A.  
1989 *Folklore Matters.* The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville.
- Durosimi, J.  
Eustace P., and

- Marjorie J. (eds.)  
1988 *Oral and written Poetry in African Literature Today.* James Currey.  
London: African World Press. Trenton
- Finnegan, R.  
1967 *Limba Stories and Story-Telling.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Finnegan, R.  
1970 *Oral Literature in Africa.* Oxford: At the Clarendon Press.
- Finnegan, R.  
1877 *Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance and Social Context.* Cambridge  
Cambridge University Press. London, New York and Melbourne.
- Finnegan, R.  
1988 *Literacy and Orality: Studies in the Technology of Communication.*  
Basil Blackwell.
- Finnegan, R.  
1990 What is Orality - if anything? *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*  
14: 130-149.
- 1991 Problems in processing of 'Oral texts': Some reflections on  
The researcher's role in innovation and consolidation. *Oral Tradition  
and Innovation: New Wine in Old Bottles?* Selected Conference  
papers, edited by E. Sienaert, N Bell and M. Lewis for the University  
of Natal Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban.
- Finnegan, R.  
1992 *Oral Traditions and the Verbal Arts: A Guide to Research practices.*  
Routledge. London and New York.
- Fage, J.D.  
1968 *A History of West Africa: An Introductory Survey.* 4th Ed. Cambridge:  
At the University Press.
- Fine, E.C.  
1984 *The Folklore Text: From performance to print.* Bloomington: Indiana  
University Press.
- Foley, J.M.

- 1988 *The Theory of Oral Composition*. Indiana University Press. Bloomington and Indianapolis.
- 1995 *The Singer of Tales in Performance*. Indiana University Press. Bloomington and Indianapolis.
- Frazer, J.G.  
1910 *Totemism and Exogamy: A Treatise on Certain early Forms of Religion and Society*. Four volumes. London. McMillan.
- Freud, S.  
1913 *Totem und Tabu*. Leipzig and Vienna: Heller.
- Freud, S. &  
D.E. Oppenheim  
1958 *Dreams in Folklore*, New York, International University Press.
- Freud, S.  
1959 "The occurrence in Dreams of Material from Fairy-Tales", in *Collected papers*, Vol 4. New York, Basic Books (236-43).
- Fuze, M.  
1976  
by *The Black People and Whence they Came: A Zulu view*. Translated H.C. Lugg. Edited by A.T. Cope. University of Natal Press. Pietermaritzburg and Killie Campbell Africana Library. Durban.
- Gate, H.L., Jnr.  
1988 *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African American Literary Criticism*. Oxford University Press. New York, Oxford.
- Geert, Z.  
1973 *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York Basic Books.
- Giglioli, P.P.  
1972 *Language and Social context*. Penguin Education.
- Goody, J.

- 1987 *The Interface between the written and the Oral.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, London, New York, New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney.
- Grimal, H.  
1965 *Decolonization: The British, French, Dutch and Belgian Empires 1919-1963.* Translated by Stephan De Vos. Routledge and Kegan, Paul. London and Henley.
- Groenewald, H.C.  
1990 *Oral Studies in Southern Africa.* H.S.R.C. Publishers.
- Hargreaves, J.D.(ed)  
1969 *France and West Africa: An Anthology of Historical Documents.* MacMillan: St Martin's Press
- Haring, L.  
1972 'A characteristic African Folk tale pattern', in Dorson, R.M. (ed). *African Folklore.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Havelock, E.A.  
1963 *Preface to Plato.* The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England.
- Hewson, L & J. Martin  
1991 *Redefining Translation: the Variational Approach.* Routledge. London and New York.
- Holloway, J.  
1979 *Narrative and Structure: Exploratory Essays.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. London, New York, Melbourne.
- Horton, R.  
1967 African Traditional Thought and Western Science. *Africa* 37. (1 & 2), 50-7, 155-87.
- Hymes, D.  
1977 *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach.* Tavistock Publications.
- Innis, R.  
1982 *Semiotic Foundations of Language theory.* Plenum Press. New York and London.

- Jacobson, R. &  
Linda R. Waugh.  
1979                    *The sound shape of Language*. Harvester press.
- Jousse, M.  
1924                    *Le syle oral rythmique et mnemotechnique chez les Verbo-moteurs de Philosophie*. (Cahier IV, 1-240). Translated by E. Sienaert and R. Whittaker.
- 1925                    *Le Style oral rythmique et mnemotechnique Chez les verbo-moteurs*. Cabriel Beauchesme, Paris.
- 1925                    *The Oral Style*. Garland: USA.
- Jousse, M.  
1997                    *The Anthropology of Geste and Rhythm: Studies in the Anthropological Laws of Human Expression and their Application in the Galilean Oral Style Tradition*. Edited from the original French by Edgard Sienaert and translated in collaboration with Joan Conolly.
- Kaschula, Russell  
1997                    *Xhosa*. The Sosen Publishing Group, Inc. New York.
- Kipre, P.(ed.)  
1992                    *Histoire de la Cote d'Ivoire*. AML: Nathan
- Kirk, G.S.  
1970                    *Myth: its meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures*. Cambridge University Press. University of California Press. Berkley and Los Angeles.
- Kirk, R.  
1986                    *Translation Determined*. Clarendon Press. Oxford.
- Kourouma, A.  
1972                    *The Suns of Independence*. London
- Laban, R.  
1966                    *Choreutics*. Anotated and edited by Lisa Ullman. Macdonald and Evans. 8 John Street, London, W.C.I.

- Laban, R.  
1975 *Laban's principles of Dance Movement Notation*. 2nd edition. London. Macdonald and Evans.
- Laban, R.  
1976 (Revised and enlarged by L. Ullman). *The Mastery of Movement*. Donalds and Evans: Great Britain.
- Levi-Strauss, C.  
1962 *La pensée sauvage*. Paris: Plon.
- Levi-Strauss, C.  
1962 *The Savage Mind*. London: Weidenfield & Nicolson.
- Levi-Strauss, C.  
1969 *The Raw and the Cooked*. New York: Harper. Colophone Press.
- Levy-Bruhl, L.  
1975 *The Notebooks on Primitive Mentality*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Lord, A.B.  
1960 *The Singer of Tales*. Harvard University Press. Cambridge. Massachusetts and London, England.
- 1985 *Words seen and Words Heard. Oral Traditions and Literacy: Changing visions of the world*. Selected Conference papers, Natal University Oral Documentation & Research Centre, Durban.
- Malinowski, B.  
1926 *Myth in Primitive Psychology*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Marivate, C.T.D.  
1973 *Tsonga Folktales : Form, Content and delivery*. Unpublished M.A. Dissertation, Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- McAllister, P.A.  
1986 *Conservatism as ideology of resistance among Xhosa-speakers: The implications for Oral Tradition and Literacy. Oral Traditions*

- and Literacy: Changing visions of the world.* Selected Conference Papers, Natal University Oral Documentation & Research Centre, Durban.
- 1988 Inclusion and exclusion in the Oral Transmission of Ritual Knowledge: A Xhosa Communicative Strategy. *Oral Traditions & Education: Catching Winged Words.* Selected Conference papers, Natal University, Oral Documentation And Research Centre, Durban.
- 1991 Oratory and innovation in Xhosa ritual practice: The case of 'making known the homestead.' *Oral Tradition and Innovation: New Wine in Old Bottles?* Selected Conference papers edited by E. Sienaert, N. Bell, and M. Lewis for the University of Natal, Oral Documentation & Research Centre, Durban.
- McQuillan, M (ed)  
2000 *The Narrative Reader.* Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group. London and New York.
- Meillassoux, C.  
1967 *Légende de la dispersion des Kusa: Epopée soninke*. Dakar
- Mitchell, C. &  
Weiler, K.  
1991 *Rewriting Literacy: Culture and the Discourse of the Other.* Bergin & Garvey. New York. Westport, Connecticut, London.
- Mofokeng, S.M.  
1954 *The Development of Leading Figures in Animal Tales in Africa.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Witwatersrand South Africa.
- Montenyohl, E.  
1992 Strategies for the presentation of oral Tradition in Print. *Oral Tradition.* 8/1 (159 - 86).
- Msimang, C.T.  
1987 *Folktale Influence on the Zulu Novel.* Pretoria : Acacia.

- N'da, Pierre  
1984 *Le Conte Africain et L'éducation*. Paris: Editions l'Harmattan.
- Neethling, J.  
1986 From Griot to written folktale: *Les Contes d' Amadou Koumba*, by Birago Diop. *Oral Traditions and Literacy: Changing Visions of the World*. Selected conference papers, Natal University Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban.
- Neisser, U.  
1982 Memory: What are the important Questions? In U. Neisser (ed) *Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*. W.H. Freeman  
& Co.: San Francisco.
- Noss, P.D.  
1972 'Description in Gbaya Literary Art', in Dorson, R.M. (ed) *African Folklore*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Okafor, C.A.  
1983 *The Banished Child: A Study in Tonga Oral Literature*. London: The Folklore Society.
- Okpewho, I.  
1979 *The Epic in Africa: Toward a poetics of the Oral Performance* New York. Columbia University Press.
- Okpewho, I.  
1983 *Myth in Africa*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.
- Okpewho, I.  
1990 *The Oral Performance in Africa*. Ibandan: Spectrum Books Ltd.
- Olrik, A. (1908)  
1965 'Epic Laws of Folk Literature', in Dundes, A (ed). *The Study of Folklore*. Englewood Cliffs. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Olrik, A.  
1992 (translated by K. Wolf and J. Jensen). *Principles for Oral Narrative Research*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis.
- Ong, W.

- 1967 *The Presence of the Word*. New Haven & London, Yale University Press.
- Ong, W.  
1977 *Interfaces of the Word: Studies in the Evolution of Consciousness and Culture*. Cornell University Press. Ithaca and London.
- Ong, W.  
1982 *Orality and Literacy: the Technologizing of the Word*. Routledge. London and New York.
- 1997 *Interface of the Word*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca.
- Opland, J.  
1983 *Xhosa Oral Poetry: Aspects of Black South African Tradition*. Raven: Johannesburg.
- 1989 *The Magic Tree: South African Stories in Verse*. Cape town. Maskew Miller Longman
- Ottenberg, S.  
1975 *Masked Rituals of Afikpo: The Context of an African Art*. University of Washington Press.
- Parry, A. (ed)  
1971 *The Making of Homeric Verse: The Collected Papers of Milman Parry*. Clarendon Press: Oxford.
- Paulme, D.  
1972 'Morphologie du Conte Africain' in *Cahiers d'études Africaines*. 12: 131-63.
- Paulme, D.  
1976 *La mère dévorante: Essai sur la morphologie des Contes Africanins*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Pei, M.  
1952 *The History of Language*. London. George Allen and Unwin Ltd. R Suskin House, Museum Street.
- Pepper, H.,  
De Wolf, P. &  
P. (eds)  
1972 *Un Mvet de Zwe Nguéma, un chant épique Fang*. Paris.

- Peires, J.B.  
1981 *The House of Phalo: A History of the Xhosa People in the Days of their Independence.* Ravan Press. Johannesburg.
- Pelton, R.D.  
1980 *The Trickster in West Africa: A study of Mythic Irony and Sacred Delight.* Berkley and Los angeles: University of California Press.
- Phelan, J.  
1996 *Narrative as Rhetoric: Technique, Audiences, Ethics, Ideology.* Ohio State University Press. Columbus.
- Plato  
1972 *Plato's Phaedrus.* Translated by R. Hackforth. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Plotkin, V.Y.  
1972 *The Dynamics of the English Phonological System.* Mouton. The Hague. Paris.
- Propp, V.  
1968 *Morphology of the Folktale.* Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Propp, V.  
1984 *Theory and History of Folklore.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Radcliffe-Brown, A.R.  
1950 (ed) *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage.* London: Oxford University Press.
- Radcliffe-Brown, A.R.  
1952 *Structure and function in Primitive Society.* London: Cohen & West.
- Rattray, R.S.  
1928 *Some Aspects of West African Folklore.* *Journal of the African Society.* 28: 1-11.
- Richad, W.B.  
1986 *Intercultural Interactions: A practical Guide.* SAGE Publicaions.

- Robson, W.W.  
1982 *The Definition of Literature and Other Essays*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, London, N.Y., New Rochelle, Melbourne Sydney.
- Rosellini, A.  
1976 *The Ivory Coast in Picture*. Sterling Publishing Co.Inc. New York. Oak Tree Press Co. Ltd. Lodon and Sydney.
- Rousseau, J.J. & Herder, J.  
1965 *On the Origin of language*. Translated by J. Moran and A. Gode. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Saussy, H.  
1997 Repetition, Rhyme and Exchange in the Book of odes, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 57 (December 1997) PP519-542.
- Saussy, H.  
2000 *Appropriations: Between languages, among nations: A work-in-progress Symposium at Stanford University, May 2000.*  
<http://www.Stanford.edu/saussy/appropriations.htm>
- Scheub, H.  
1972 "The Art of Nongenile Mazithathu Zenani, a Gcaleka Ntsomi performer", in Dorson, R.M. (ed): *African Folklore*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press.
- 1975 *The Xhosa Ntsomi*. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press.
- Schulte, R. & Biguenet, J.(eds)  
1992 *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago and London.
- Senghor, L.  
1993 *Negritude: A Humanism of the Sedar. Twentieth Century. Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*. Harvester Wheatsheaf, Great Britain.

- Shakow, D. &  
D. Rapaport.  
1964 *Psychological issues: The Influence of Freud on American Psychology.* International University Press, Inc. 227 West 13th Street. New York, N.Y. 10011.
- Sheeban, P.  
2000 *Cultures of the World: Côte d'Ivoire.* Times Books International. Singapore, Kuala Lumpur.
- Sherzer, J.  
1990 *Verbal Art in San Blas: Kuna Culture Through its Discourse.* Cambridge University Press.
- Short, M.  
1996 *Exploring the language of Poems, Plays and Prose.* Longman: London and New York.
- Sienaert, E.R.  
1986 *Reading a Story carved in Ivory. Oral Traditions and Literacy: Changing visions of the world.* Selected conference papers, Natal University Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban.
- 1990 Marcel Jousse: the Oral Style and the Anthropology of Gesture. *Oral Tradition* 5/1: 91-106.
- Sienaert, E.R.  
1996 Not 'The Mandarin pursuit of a Leisured Minority': the case for Cultural Heritage Studies. Keynote address for the Biennial International Conference of the Southern African Folklore Society: September 1996.
- 1998 *From Folktale to Short Story: The Birth of a Renaissance.* Unpublished keynote address: Swaziland University conference.
- Snell-Hornby, M.  
1988 *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach.* Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamin.
- Soga, J.A.  
1931 *The Ama-Xosa: Life and Customs.* Lovedale Press: Lovedale, C.P. South Africa. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd.

- Soko, B.J.  
1986                      *Translating Oral Literature into European Languages. Oral Traditions and Literacy: Changing Visions of the World: Selected Conference Papers*, Natal University Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban.
- 1988                      *Traditional forms of instruction: The case of the Jando Initiation Ceremony. Catching Winged Words: Oral Tradition and Education.* Selected Conference papers, edited by E.R. Sienaert and A.N. Bell for the Natal University Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban.
- Soyinka, W.  
1993                      *Art, Dialogue and Outrage: Essays on Literature and Culture.* Methuen, London.
- Stillinger, J.  
1991                      *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius.* Oxford University Press. New York, Oxford.
- Stoller, P.  
1996                      *Sensuous Scholarship.* Pennsylvania: Philadelphia.
- Tcherke'zoff, S.  
1987                      *Dual Classification reconsidered: Nyamwezi sacred kinship and other examples.* Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, New York New Rochelle, Melbourne, Sydney.
- Tedlock, D.  
1977                      "Toward an Oral poetics". *New Literary History*. 8: 507-19.
- 1972                      *Finding the Center: Narrative Poetry of the Zuni Indians.* New York Dial Press.
- Tucker, E.  
1980                      *Toward a computerized type Index for African Tales: Some Theoretical considerations.* *Research in African Literatures*. 11: 356-67.

- Turner, V.W.  
1967 *The Forest of Symbols. Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* . Ithaca, New York  
Cornell University Press.
- Turner, F.  
1986 Performed Being: Word Art as Human Inheritance. *Oral Tradition*.  
1/1: 66-109.
- Tutuāla, A.  
1961 *The palm-wine Drinkard and his Dead palm wine Tapster in the Dead's  
Town*. London: Faber.
- Worton, M.  
& Still J. (eds)  
1990 *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*. Manchester University Press.  
Manchester and New York.
- Werner, A.  
1896 African Folklore. *Contemporary Review*. 70: 377-90.
- 1899 The Tar-baby story. *Folklore*. 10: 282-93. 1906-1907  
Language and Folklore in West Africa. *Journal of the African Society*.  
6: 65-83.
- Werner, A.  
1933 *Myths and Legends of the Bantu*, London: George G. Harrap & Co.  
Ltd.
- Willis, R.  
1990 *Signifying Animals: Human Meaning in the Natural World*.  
Department of Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh.  
Routledge. London and New York.
- Wiredu, K.  
1996 *Cultural Universals and Particulars*. Indiana University Press.  
Bloomington and Indianapolis.
- Wynchank, A.  
1986 The Griot as a source for Ahmadou Kourouma's novel,  
*The Suns of Independence*. In *Oral Traditions and Literacy:  
Changing Visions of the World*. Selected conference papers, Natal  
University Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban.
- 1988 Manners (and, in Mali, the Sundiata Epic) Maketh man.

*Catching Winged Words: Oral Traditions and Education.* Selected Conference papers, edited by E.R. Sienaert and A.N. Bell, for the Natal University Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban.

1991 *Wangrin: A modern African Epic. Oral Tradition and Innovation: New Wine in Old Bottles?* Selected Conference papers, edited By E.R. Sienaert, N. Bell and M. Lewis for the University of Natal Oral Documentation and Research Centre, Durban..

1994 *The Cineaste as a Modern Griot in West Africa. Oral Tradition and its Performance: Beyond the Verbal/non-verbal divide.* Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference for Oral Studies, Centre for Oral Studies, University of Natal, Durban.