

**Denise Paulme.** Les Gens du Riz (The Rice People)

Chapter on Kissi Funerals in the region of Guekedou and Kissidougou

[Note whilst this is based on fieldwork conducted in 1945-6, many of the ritual practices and meanings were current in Kissi villages that we worked among in 1991-3]

(rapidly translated by James Fairhead).

For the Kissi, every life has three critical moments: birth, initiation, death. The primary role of the funeral ritual is to allow access to the rank of an ancestor; a more elevated social rank. Hence the first hours are given to expressing pain (or gladness for an old man).

A dream, a feeling, or the sight of a spitting cobra, or a green banana leaf falling can presage a death (ballo, pl. Ballöla) be it for the person or another. In general, disease is regarded as a punishment; a warning. It always comes after a social fault (even if an unintentional one), but one that the patient must no less confess.

When an infection becomes serious, one approaches a soothsayer, the wanayawa who consults an oracle. The answer hardly varies. The patient has committed a fault which he should reveal or his condition will worsen.

The diviner comes to the bedside:

- "If you want to heal, you must reveal the wrong action you have committed."

"If you do not speak, it is death. If someone has done good, done a service and in return you have slandered the benefactor, it is death. Forget nothing in your confession and you are saved; if you do not confess everything, you inevitably die."

The disease can also be the work of an enemy, a sorcerer who is using a deadly talisman (sambèò, sambiö) hidden in the house or on the path. The patient, believing him/herself pursued, gives up all struggle. Such a death reinforces the prestige of the sorcerer whose identity will be suspected, but who no one would dare accuse openly.

One tries to access the last wishes of the dying, as their anger after death would be terrible if it was not heard and respected. One gives all the food and drink they solicit; and the heirs respect the instructions regarding the distribution of property (if the wishes of the dying are not too different from their interests and desire).

Those dying are usually transported to an empty house. Custom dictates that one should indeed purify and replace the furniture, clothing, provisions that are in the room where a death occurred.

In the past, according to Paulme, the dying were taken at night into the forest; where they were gagged, the nostrils blocked and strangled, so that their death would not defile the village; and they were sure that the breath of the dying would not escape to return to torment the living. This custom

allowed a few days delay to the announcement of the death of a leader, and to accompany the proclamation of his successor, cutting short any political unrest. In the 1940s, the habit was maintained for important people, when they were about to die, to take them out of the village to expire. For individuals of lesser importance, one simply removed the dying to the bare ground, next to their bed. Paulme wrote that such a custom was destined to be forgotten soon, given how the reason for it was also forgotten.

It is forbidden to mourn a death before death is certain. A woman who laments and brings condolences too soon, would be fined. As soon as death is certain, relatives and neighbours undo their hair, throw themselves to the ground, retain only a strip of cloth around his waist, and roll in the dust and mud singing lamentations. Often they would smear their face and body with streaks of kaolin, always screaming and without speaking to anyone, take news to neighboring villages.

Women who then visit to bring their condolences to relatives of the deceased do much the same, they come half-naked, with disheveled hair, run through the town without saying goodbye to anyone, holding their head in their hands; and a continuous wailing grows, and people roll on the ground from time to time. It is only after they have sufficiently expressed their pain that they go and joining their companions at the house of death. This expression of violent grief is necessary: "If I did not cry much, people would think that I'm a witch; that it was I who killed him."

Mourners often refuse any food for a day or two. The death of a hunter, a former soldier, an influential figure, is usually announced by gunfire; all friends who come to attend the funeral will salute the dead with as much powder they have been able to procure.

The **corpse is washed, greased, dressed in their best clothes; then rolled into a mat.** The funeral is **held the same evening of the death, at sunset, or at the latest** the next day to allow maternal kin and friends from neighboring villages to attend.

It has been reported that the dead body might be used to divine their own murderer. Two men would take the funeral stretcher, that they put on their head; with them comes a soothsayer, a wanayawa. If the body is too heavy, the ritual clothing of the deceased is sufficient. After a few moments, the stretcher jogs, indicating the presence of dead person, to whom the diviner asks questions:

"Tell us the cause of your death, the evil deeds you have committed during your life."

The answer is given by dead oscillating the stretcher. Sometimes the dead is capricious, shaking his head at the stretcher bearers, pushing them through the village and into the surrounding forest; he finally calms on the entreaties of the soothsayer and agrees to meet, often through the mouth of one of the carriers

"One day, I asked my neighbor, Tamba to lend me new clothe for a party, but he refused in front of the entire village and he sent me away. I was ashamed and revenge, I..."

The other carrier continues: " I transformed into alligator few days later and I ate his son Saa, who disappeared into the river."

It happened that a person, usually an old woman, is after their death declared a sorcerer, and on attributes to them misfortunes that have recently occurred.

Sometimes, the deceased were asked to nominate the author their death; the sorcerer who had "eaten the heart." Spectators then throw themselves on "culprit", tie them up and transport them to the chief's court. The "witch" could be killed with sticks - court records have kept track. If the individual was saved, he was sold, or had to cultivate the fields of the chief, maintain the widow, or pay a fine: in short, he was reduced to the condition slave in his own environment, little different from the fate assigned to a murderer, Monyo. On the death of an important person, public opinion needed a culprit, designates anyone, innocent or guilty.

Even today, after the too sudden death of a small child, sometimes the father cut the nails and hair of the little corpse, and wraps them in rags. The package is attached to the funeral stretcher, and answered the questions posed by the seer on the father's request:

"Who wanted you dead? God (Hala)? Or your mother's brothers?" Such a question reveals an unconscious hostility of the father against his wife's parents. Having already made him a hefty dowry, and made him wait for his wife and, through her, the possibility of a descendent, they now come now by pure malice, to steal the child object of his affection.

Graveyards are usually absent in the region. The dead are buried inside the village, on the porch or around the house; or under a mound between two houses. The number of these mounds still fresh in some villages indicates a high rate of mortality epidemics (meningitis, pulmonary disease) or the resurgence of sleeping sickness. An oval stone sometimes surrounds the tomb, sayo, on which the hoe handle and the fragment of wooden bowl that was used to dig the grave is abandoned. Often, a stake in the location of the head, supports the cap of the dead (or the old helmet European soldier), or for a woman, her calabash or part of their fishing net.

A chief is buried even in his home even under his bed, sitting on all the cloth that his relatives might have been able to gather. In one hand the dead holds his spear, in the other, a sword. The pit is filled, the ground leveled, the door is closed, and no one will live there. An upturned bucket (the cap of the dead, a badge of command) is put on the straw roof to cap it. A strip of striped cotton, sometimes a simple cotton thread is tied around the house: the dead appeared in a dream to one of his descendants, and called for "a garment." The interior is empty. In principle only the guardian of the tomb, the head of the lineage may enter during the days of offering, where he removes the cooked rice and pours palm wine down the barrel of a gun planted vertically down into the mouth of the corpse. Once a grave, the house of a chief takes the name Mandu.

The chief can also be buried under the Tungo; a hut without walls that serves as a meeting place for men of the lineage. Here this space, the liveliest in the village, is then designated by the same term, Mandu. The Tungo, the hut, still has, at the base of a pillar a clay trough ("mandu") that serves as an altar for the worship of ancestors. Around it, will be found a few carved stones, pömdo, one or two small polished stone axes, some empty bottles, a handful of cotton; all stained with the red juice of cola spat on offering days.

In the south and east, the clay trough is often replaced with large stone blades stuck vertically wasyo: thus is named the slabs at the center of the village square where men sit down to converse. The highest of these menhirs (some exceed 1 m. 50) might be surrounded by a cotton strip - the "garment" required by the ancestor

The grave of a stranger is never dug among houses - which would correspond to the admission of the death in the community - but a bit out of the town, along the way, sometimes at a crossroads: nothing would show it to the eyes of a passerby.

Lepers, and sometimes the blind are buried outside the village, often along the trail to the water point. Those struck by lightning, the object of the wrath of the ancestors, rejected from the community of the living and the dead are buried at the side of the path; people burned by wildfire, at a crossroads.

The drowned, whose bodies are found, have their graves dug by the river. Formerly, according to some, the corpse would lie on an old mat on the shore; and men and women of the village then entered the water with their nets, fished to song - and those who ate fish caught in such circumstances would be assured of not drowning. The funeral was then held at the riverside. According to others, the corpse was thrown to the catfish that haunt that part of river, sacred for the entire lineage, sola dala.

The body of the first child lost to a couple, male or female (this is not necessarily the first born), is the subject of special rites that are observed even if the death is adult. The high rate of infant mortality makes this improbable. In effect the Tuey pyey o (lit.. child in the leaves) are very small children. The body, naked, wrapped only in leaves of banana or pambae (*Newbouldia levis*) is thrown without ceremony outside the village in a wooded area reserved for this purpose and designated the name of the tree whose leaves are used to shroud it.

One washes corpses with the leaves of pambae picked from the same place and this is where all the water used in funeral washing is thrown. The dead child is carried by men if it's a boy, by women if it was a girl. Sometimes all the bad deaths (lightning struck, lepers, foreigners, disabled ...) are buried side by side with the "first dead" pambae o ni.

Subsequently, these bad-deaths are not entitled to the offerings destined to ancestors; to the kulye placed on the altars during planting or harvest. One can celebrate in their honor sara wan'wilèyo, sacrifice the end of mourning (lit. protection, sara, against, or the thin man.) "So that the dead still have something to eat"; but this is in no way a requirement. If one wants to send an offering to the dead pambae o ni (if the dead person appeared in a dream complained of being neglected and threatens to torment the living), rice cooked in the village, and that no one will touch, is provided in a pot that is emptied at the location of the grave. Colas are left whole. One avoids any sharing of food with no contact between the bad dead and the living. At most, if there is a general unhappiness (fire, drought, epidemics [such as ebola] ...), a diviner may indicate that the fanadama, the offering to the dead must be filed not at a crossroads as is the usual practice, but on pambae or on the graves of the "first dead".

A sorcerer who has confessed, or that one recognized to possess a deadly talisman (sambiö) will dies in cruel suffering once his talisman is destroyed by the witch hunter, wulumo. No-one sympathies. No-one cries. The grave is dug in the mud near a pond or river, never in the village. The body, wrapped in banana leaves like a "first death" would be, is placed upside down, with all his sorcerer's paraphernalia (pots, pans, packages and magical powders ...) On the threshold of his house, a talisman is placed to prohibit entry to the wandering soul of the dead. A general belief is that the sorcerer in his nocturnal expeditions, often take the form of an owl, a bird whose language sorcerers understand. As saying even says that "the sorcerer should not take an owl as a witness" – just as one should not accept witnessing by a well known friend. In the days following the death, the area around the house of the deceased will be monitored, nobody dares approach; if an owl comes to rest on the roof, it will be immediately stoned, shot, and killed to general relief: the village feels finally free of the interference, so far as possible, from the sorcerer. The roof of the abandoned hut will collapse with the first rains, the walls will be demolished and the following year a new home will be built on the site but intended, at least in the early days, only to overnight guests.

The death of a pregnant woman or those unsuccessful during childbirth, always gives rise to a complicated ritual. One must distance from the community the evil presaged by such a death' the punishment or the calamity announced

Only sterile women can in principle approach the corpse, or one who has seen the death of all their children; and women who have entered their menopause. As soon as alerted, they invade the village with a yell "similar to the cry of a hunted chimpanzee." At such a cry, all the inhabitants, men, children, even young women lock themselves in their homes. The village is abandoned to the old who roam the streets singing: wana wana tuföndo Pono yolk pè sulukuno, "the women spit, the person who wants to die need only look at the sulukuno" (sulukuno of suruku, malinké hyena, here referring to the elder). They circulate around the house of death, sprinkling a leaf decoction whose nature cannot be specified; then they enter all at once.

At the sight of the body, they develop a new roar, agitated in every way, sprinkle the body and the entire house; seize the corpse and carry it to the point of running water (dala sola) that is the usual place of worship for women. An amulet attached to the door prohibits entrance to the house. At the water, the sulukuno, who is the oldest and also the guardian of this sacred place, opens the belly with a knife, tears out the fetus; and the corpse of the woman is then washed, and stuffed with strips of sewn cloth. Some say that the fetus would be buried on the right bank, the mother on the left bank; a trustworthy informant also assured me that the little body was buried naked in the bed of the same stream, and the body of the mother is taken back to the village for burial following the usual rites. The husband himself is kept in the dark. He dares not question if he young; but older, he grows bolder:

- Who is dead?

The kañbono, messenger of the old sulukuno, leaves to neighboring villages carrying news of the death. She is naked, a cloth around his waist, body smeared with streaks of clay, red and white; she chews red flowers or holds them in the hand, carrying a knife hanging from the shoulder like a man. The kañbono tours the village three times without speaking to anyone, rushes inside houses shouting, upending provisions, emptying baskets, and tearing mats and clothes... On the spot, the women around try to get her to accept small gifts, handfuls of rice, salt. The woman, outside of

herself, listens to noone and laments indefinitely. She finally responds to the elderly women, throwing out a name:

"A name, from a named village."

When pressed, he adds some details:

"- The child presented feet first .."

The shrewd elder women nod: surely the woman had, during her pregnancy, had hoped for the death of the child by hatred of her husband: what could we expect in these conditions? The omniscient ancestors will have punished them by killing both the mother and child. When she returns, the kañbono gives to the elderly woman the gifts that people have passed to be shared among all the elderly women. The sulukuno requires of all girls, pregnant women and young mothers, a gift: colas, cotton, rice, coins or banknotes. Finally the Sarino, charged with the care of the bad dead who are asked to pick up the bodies in the bush, to treat incest ... etc. cleans with her "medicine" the home of the woman who died in childbirth, and the husband and all the villagers gathered there:

"That such a misfortune never returns, than the harvest is good;, that women have many children ..."

The husband of the dead women must pay for the service thus rendered to the women, who can be very demanding: a gun, a bag of salt, a bottle of palm oil, clothes, money ... The husband of a woman who died in these conditions must observe 'a widowhood' (sexual abstinence) of forty days that is to say, longer than usual.

On the death of an old woman, the kañbono runs similarly everywhere without acknowledging anyone, but only goes twice around the village (not thrice), answering neither the men nor young women but only the old women.

The sulukuno who know some remedies, looks after a barren woman who wants a child, and can give her the secret of a plant: the woman prepare an infusion which she will drink a few sips every morning and with which she applies to her whole body. Sometimes, but very secretly, an impotent man too will resort to sulukuno, or his deputy, the kañbono.

On the death of a young girl, the body is washed, rubbed with shea butter or palm oil. She is then dressed in her best clothes, one does the hair very carefully, and one tries to see through every wish that she had expressed. If the date her initiation was already fixed, they call an old women who excises the body [i.e. FGM] and is then rolled into a mat. Spread out in front of the house, the young women perform songs and dances in her honor that mark the initiation ceremony of girls. Thus the dead girl will arrive at the dead with the social status of an adult. Some believe that if the girl was engaged and the wedding date was not far, the groom had to spend a night with the corpse, as without doing this he could not marry as anyone he wanted to marry would die before the wedding.

In 1946, we attended the funeral of a woman in the village of Kolodu, Canton Farmaya.. Musu Yara, aged 35 to 40 years perhaps, married, no children, had died in the night of sleeping sickness. We arrived in the morning, as they were digging the grave under the veranda of her husband's house.

The women present, relatives and friends, wore torn loincloths, disheveled hair; they had rolled in the dust and mud, which had left long gray streaks on their the black torsos. In the afternoon, at the tomb a dance took place of women who had undergone the same initiation as the deceased (sambilo). Some of those attending abandoned these activities and joined, to dance individually to songs - first slow sad songs, but which soon quickened, to become more acute, punctuated by a drum orchestra (yimbora). The purpose of these songs is to help the deceased in the journey she began leaving her mortal coil arrive at tye pom; the village of the dead. The lyrics were of little importance (a song lyric: "People of Bangadu are cowards, without us they never would have been circumcised" - the village in question had "bought" the recent male initiation rite that had fallen into disuse). Near the line of dancers, a praise singer received, announcing loudly, gifts for parents. The body was buried at sunset, after a eulogy of the dead and the usual speech:

"If you die in your evil heart (if your death is the punishment for your sins), sleep in peace and do not come to disturb us; if your death is the work of a spell, take revenge on the culprit (meaning: but on him alone)."

In late December 1948, arriving at Wende, Kissidougou we learned the death on that morning, of the village chief. The deceased was also great dignitary, sökuno of the men's society. After a long illness and on the order of other dignitaries, the dying had been "away from the women" for two days before his death; a maternal relative had carried him to the forest for his last breath.

In the afternoon, five men chosen by the elders dug the grave next to the house: a deep tomb of about 1 m. 30, in steps, so that the deceased could rest under the threshold of the Tungo; the shelter under which men rested and where were already buried his father and an older brother. A griot praise-singer encouraged gravediggers, and sang the praise of the deceased. Women half naked, disheveled, rolled on the ground in front of the pit without worrying whether their genitals were exposed, others, their body covered with mud, roamed the village crying for the dead without paying any particular attention to anyone. When the men had finished (around 5PM), they stripped a lemon branch (Also, a few handfuls of the black earth of rice fields) and covered the part of the mat that was to isolate the body from the earth. Gravediggers were paid on the orders that the deceased himself had given to his family. Before nightfall, the corpse was carried at a run, amid gunfire and screams of women. His initiation comrades had wrapped him in a mat from which the head stuck out alone, wrapped in a turban. A headband kept the jaw closed. One sat the body on the edge of his grave, on the pile of earth; a maternal relative supported the corpse from behind. Then began the speech, punctuated by the griot speech of the maternal nephew; a speech from the younger brother and the heir apparent and the last speech of the District chief speaking in the name of public interest, "for the health of the village." All developed the same theme:

"If you alone have done wrong (if your death is the punishment of your evil deeds), sleep in peace and do not come to disturb us; go and join our ancestors, we ask them for health, that they defend us against the Wizards. If your killer is one of us, come and get him. "

Invocations to death over, everyone was forced to take their distance, including the young district chief who had converted to Islam and who had not been initiated. The order to retreat into the huts

was given to all, we ourselves were asked, politely but firmly, to depart. Only the high initiates stayed at the tomb. The women were crying outside the village. The tomb was filled to the sounds of the iron bell, Kende (instrument of the men's society) along with some sung formulas. Then the wooden drum was struck, and immediately life resumed in the village.

The next day, before dawn, we were awakened by the wailing of women Tyañi SESO "complaints of dawn" or tyañi kara "strong complaints". A little later, the wooden drum sounded while two women disguised as men (in long robes of man, and a conical straw hat) each armed with a sword, danced the yura bora, the dance of the forest, in joking. Around 9 am, on the main square of the village elders and warriors fired many shots during different music; tyando Polo, the "announcement of mourning." A pantomime brought a "captive" that his parents had "buy" this warlike pantomime yura bata, would be held in three occasions: at initiation, performed here strongly resembling the Malinke ritual use (birile); the death of an old man or an important person; the lifting of mourning. We soon returned to the tomb where the wailing of women rolling in the dust, half-naked, disheveled hair, body mud plaster continued. Late in the morning, everyone was transported to the location of the market, on the edge of the village; queues of friends from neighboring villages flocked, bringing their condolences small gifts, tolu wisyo, the "gift for the body." The inlaws of the chief showed themselves among the arrivals, forming a group a little apart. One offered money for gravediggers, for a dress he had intended to present to the dead, for the griot, and a bowl of rice (to feed the assistants).

A griot celebrated the generosity of each donor and magnified the gifts. The bareheaded brother, heir of the deceased was received, impassive that he would shortly make donations.

During the day, secular dances were organized, along with the wooden drum. The dancers were mostly men, but women became more numerous in the evening. At nightfall, in another part of town, the drums, yimböra, profane instruments, called teenagers to dance while others cut up a sheep behind a hut. The character of festivities deepened with the night.

The next day, December 25th, was a day of rest that everyone needed. The old men were talking quietly, grouped near the tomb under the eaves of houses. Some residents of more distant villages continued to come that day to bring their condolences. That evening took place the song of bundo, that is to say, the songs of female initiation society, accompanied by the rattle of cowbells. This was a symmetrical ritual to that observed by the male society to the deceased dignitary. These songs are performed the night after the funeral; the delay was attributable to the absence in the village of a rattle player. This instrument is not used in initiations practiced at Wende; the women who sang that night the songs of bundo all came from other villages.

On the morning of December 26 an ox (rather thin) was sacrificed, offered by the in-law of the deceased "to remove dirt from his mouth" (mouth of the dead) (puruo Pismo ndu o Sondo). Before a Muslim slit its throat, the heir, younger brother of the deceased, said a few words, punctuated by the griot:

"This is not your sacrifice at the end of mourning sara wan'wileyo; Later, we will offer you a fat ox; Today, we want only that the village leaders who have come to greet you do not leave empty-

handed, they know that you had relatives."

The throat of the beast once slit, the blood stream was collected in a bowl, a few drops immediately poured on the stones commemorating the dead ancestors. The division of the body led to a dispute and the district chief had to appoint four young men - one a native of the same place, both from neighboring townships east and west, the last a maternal representative. The pieces were spread on banana leaves and then placed under the watchful eye of assistants. All who came to offer their condolences, left with a small gift of a piece of meat and a piece of liver. A leg and a shoulder was for those close to the district chief; the other shoulder was for maternal heads; the second leg was awarded to a chief of a neighboring village, a great friend of the deceased, a piece was sent to the blacksmiths; the kidney, usually reserved for sacrificing women, were offered to the heads of various villages of rank equal to that of the deceased. No one was forgotten. The order of the division may seem tedious, but it is of great importance to the parties: the person aggrieved by the heirs will keep grudges

The next day, December 27, we still saw brothers and a son of the deceased, grouped at the tomb. They ate a chicken, cooked on site, whose blood had flushed a stone taken from the grave of the elder brother of the dead, and was now resting on the new tomb. A prayer for the deceased accompanied the sacrifice:

"We offer you this chicken that that your kyeo (or your inheritors – of cola and coffee trees as well as of wives and children) remain healthy, so that you greet our fathers and do not arrive empty handed at the village of the dead"

Two days later, finally, on December 28, a pot of rice was put to cook in the open, at the edge of the grave; the heirs shared the content of fresh chicken; rice was offered to the deceased "to remove dirt from his mouth" (a repeat of the rite observed the day before). Before touching cooked food, the heir, younger brother of the deceased, once again addressed to the deceased:

"Sleep quietly if you don't want to hurt anyone. We offer the rice to remove the dirt of the mouth. "

The lifting of mourning is marked by three events, which express the same concern to finally install the dead among the ranks of the ancestor, which remain, however, independent: the sacrifice of expulsion; the laying of a stone on the ancestral altar, and the partition of inheritance. For practical reasons these three moments of the end of mourning almost never coincide.

The sacrifice of expulsion, *saya wan'wileyo* (sacrifice "of" or "for" or "against" the corpse. *Wan'wilèyo* for *wando wisilèyo*, literally "dry" man), is held more or less long after the death of an important person. A bull is provided by in-law of the deceased; or in their absence, by the heir. The animal is slaughtered at the tomb, in the presence of assembled lineage. Before the sacrifice, all those present put for an instant their hands on the victim, lying on its side, legs tied. The heir to the deceased (his younger brother) says a few words:

"Here is your bull. Greet our fathers,... (he lists all ancestors). Ask of them for us health, rice, women and children. "

The slaughtered animal spills a little blood on a stone from the tomb, on which is deposited a piece of liver. The body is cut, divided between all present, and each carries their share of raw meat, carefully wrapped in leaves. The sacrifice would mark the admission of dead among the ancestors, bimba: at least it is the only explanation that an unsuspecting stranger would hear. When questioned, it does not take long to see the indifference that exists in this respect: the term for ancestors, bimba, can be applied to old men who are still alive: the boundary between the living and the dead here fades. In the eyes of the survivors, the essential fact is that after the sacrifice, no sacrifice will be paid to the grave, the dead will be raised with the ancestors on the common altar of the lineage. The ceremony provides a kind of insurance (etymologically, the sara is a talisman, it is also a payment. The deceased has received all the food, all the attention he was entitled, he should henceforth not trouble the living.

Laying a stone on the ancestral altar normally should coincide, if not merge completely with the sacrifice of expulsion of death. We have not had the opportunity to attend such a ceremony, to be held, we have been assured, often much earlier than the sara wan'wilèyo, sometimes only a few days after the funeral.

Taken from the tomb, the stone is solemnly deposited on the ancestral altar, mandu. It will bear the name of the deceased. In principle, only lineage chiefs or influential elders who have fought in wars would qualify for a new stone; but in fact, on places them for anyone whose death has been announced by a funeral drum. A sacrificial beast, beef or mutton, is provided by relatives. While the blood flows on the stone, the head or the heir to the dead says to the deceased:

- Until now you were alone, now you join our ancestors, you came to Mandu. "

**When death occurs away from home and the body could not be brought back, a stone is taken from the tomb and brought to the native village so the deceased will not be less integrated with his ancestors.** If the heir does not have the means to offer the sacrifice that must underline the ceremony, he puts together his own household altar, either at home or at the foot of a tree outside the village (lengo): two stones stained in the juice of cola, two or three balls of rice flour, a piece of mat, a handful of cotton if desired by the death garment, mark the place of worship, where the son and his descendants after him invoke the grandfather, the bimba. It is the birth of a patriarchal religion, which often does not survive more than one or two generations.

**For women, in the villages which have, symmetrical to the altar of male ancestors, a Dunyo, that is to say, a meeting place where famous females worship the cult of mama folanda, of the "grand mothers of yore" one carries there, two or three days after the funeral of an old woman, a stone taken from the grave.** A sacrifice is not so obligatory; However, if the woman is rich and if, above all, she wants to honor the dead (her mother maybe), she kills a sheep or a goat whose meat is given to older women; they cook it and eat it with rice. For young women, there is no public sacrifice; a single

party, but without religion rites, marks the end of mourning. The date depends on the economic resources of the husband and his taste for ostentation. Often, the inhabitants of a village agree to celebrate two or three dead at the same time. The dances that mark the ceremony and make up the bulk with the supply of food, are reminiscent of those that occur immediately after excision. In the south, the women who are present, paint white around their eyes, waving leafy branches, as in the hours following excision. The music is the secular dances: skin drums, or Malinke xylophones which we saw once around Guéckédou join a forked harp töa.

After sacrificing the end of mourning, the dead, so far called wan'wilèyo, the "dry man" becomes a fuino (pl. Foya). There is no clear idea about the mode of transformation: the deceased quickly reach the village of the dead; but invisibly they attend their funeral and feels satisfaction in seeing it celebrated with suitable pomp. It seems that between the death and the end of mourning the dead runs between the living and the dead, but not yet fully accepted in the latter. The sara wan'wilèyo correspond to a double payment: the dead pay their right of entry among the ancestors and the living are released with respect to the death that should not come back to haunt them.

The ceremonies and the observed behavior by the living seem primarily driven by the need to appease the resentment that the dead can show towards relatives who abandoned them, for fear having let them died with this impression. Death is a time of crisis, it can be a cause dangerous tension resulting from the feelings of envy that one willingly attribute to the deceased in respect of the living; often also, the dead will want revenge.

The estate settlement should normally take place at the time of the expulsion of the dead and the sacrifice at the end of mourning. The date of the latter is, however, too uncertain and economic necessity may also mean that the division - which also marks the end of widowhood - might be three or four months after the death and is often unrelated to sara wan'wilèyo.

Etc.

At the husband's death, his widow shaves her head as a sign of grief, and wraps a white fabric the head of a percale wraps (it will do the same to the death of a beloved son). The fabric is white, like the band's widow greenhouse cotton around his waist, which forms their only clothing: color of the dead, the color of mourning, white is only allowed here.

Locked in her hut, the widow remains alone in the dark eating dry rice without seasoning, meat or fish. Millet remains prohibited. She comes out once a day, in the morning to go to the water, dala sola, led by an old widow, who makes her sit in water and rubs her whole body with soap. Out of the water, the widow puts on her skirt and goes, always silent; sandals to protect his feet against possible shock, which would be a bad omen. Once a day, the younger brother of the late deceased passes the closed door, and greets the woman

- Nöm is (oh you!)

She answers:

- MBA (thank you).

The isolation of the widow and mourning shall expire at the settlement of the estate, three or four

months after the death. If the woman is still young, one can shorten her confinement, which would however never be less than forty days. Grief is longer for older women. A new husband cannot wait. The end of widowhood is always marked by a ceremonial bath. The widower is required to similar prohibitions, but his retirement is less strict - he must go to work in the fields - and the much shorter duration of mourning.