

Glossary

These are the main terms and expressions in Bambara, the main local language in Mali, which are used most often in the book, with their English and in some cases their French equivalents.

ba	mother
bè bi ba bolo	everyone is in the hands of their mother
bololankoloun	empty hands (French: “les mains vides”)
ka segin bololankoloun	returning with empty hands
bonya	respect
danbé	dignity, honor, reputation
dimi	pain, hurt, suffering (French: “la souffrance”)
ka gwa dèmè	to contribute
fa	father
fa den	child of the same father
fa den sago	the will of the father's children or, better, of his family, is not fulfilled
fadenya	jealousy
fatagna	powerlessness
geleya	difficulty
grin	group of people, often men, who gather around a small stove to brew a drink, usually strong green tea, socialize, and pass the time.
hòrònw	nobility
kunna dija/gèrè diège	luck (French: « la chance »)
maloya	shame (shyness, embarrassment)
monnè	resentment, bitterness, anger
wari ko gèlèyara	money affairs have become difficult
ka taaga wari gnini/warignini	to try to get money (French: “chercher de l'argent”)
ka kè waritiguiyé	to become someone
sago	will, desire
senankuya	joking relationships
sòtigi	head of the family (French: “chef de la famille”)

ni ma tooro	“tired heart” (French : “cœur fatigué”)
tògò nyuman	good name
tounga	the migratory journey, travel, “the adventure” (French: “l’aventure”)
tounga man ja	the trip/the adventure did not work out