

Chapter I–10: *The Work of Drumming*

Today we will start the talk about the work of drumming and what is inside it. As I have told you that drummers have got a lot of respect in Dagbon here, I think it will be good if I talk about how I was given birth and grew up as a drummer and I how learned to beat so many dances. We have many different types of dances and drumming in Dagbon, and I have learned them to my extent. And truly, I am happy that I am a drummer. And so I'm going to start it by telling you how I was given birth.

I Ibrahim Abdulai sitting down, I was born a drummer. We drummers don't do our work because "My friend is doing it, and I will also do it." In Dagbon here, you will not see someone who is not a drummer holding a drum, unless he is not a Dagbana. You will never see a true Dagbana holding a drum unless he is a drummer. If someone who is not a drummer is holding a drum and beating, you will see that the drum is not working all right. And so as I have said that I was born a drummer, what has made me say that I was born a drummer? On my father's side, my father Abdulai was a drummer, and my father's line is a drumming line. The woman who gave birth to my father was called Neena. That is the line of Palo-Naa, and Palo-Naa is the chief of all the drummers in Savelugu. Palo-Naa means the chief of the open field. Its meaning is: this open place, this *palo*, I have given you this palo; it's for you, so eat it. I am going to count my housepeople who ate the Savelugu Palo, those who are my family. Some people's housepeople also ate Palo, but they are not our people. And so I am counting my line in the Palo.

In my father's mother's line, Naa Nyaysi gave birth to Namo-Naa Bizuŋ, and it is this Bizuŋ who started our drumming in Dagbon. Bizuŋ gave birth to Namo-Naa Banchiri and Namo-Naa Lelbaa and Namo-Naa Ashayū. The place where the drummers were staying was called Namɔyū, and so they were the chiefs of Namɔyū, that is, Namo-Naa. They were all following the Yaa-Naa, but I don't know which chiefs they were following; if somebody knows, I don't know. But Namɔyū was where our drumming started. It is the line of Namo-Naa Ashayū that gave birth to the drum chiefs of Savelugu, and so the line of Palo-Naa and the Savelugu drummers comes from Namo-Naa Ashayū. His time is far, far, far, a long time ago. How we drummers call it, Namo-Naa Ashayū gave birth to Palo-Naa Darizɛyū and his brothers Palo-Naa Kosayim and Palo-Naa Ziŋnaa. Palo-Naa Darizɛyū was the elder, and we count him first. He entered into the Palo first. The meaning of *Darizɛyū* is just somebody who is red, like you.

The Savelugu chief who brought them there was Naa Garba's first-born, Savelugu-Naa Mahami. I'm not talking about the Savelugu-Naa Mahami who went to the Zambarima war; the one I'm talking about was Naa Garba's child. Before that time, if there were drummers at Savelugu, there was no Palo. Before then, what I know is that if you hear Namɔyɔ, that is where the drummers were. It's now that you are seeing drummers everywhere, but in those days, the drummers were not many. They had their own place. Today, if you go there, the land is there, but no people are there again. You will see some of the broken houses of the place. That is Namɔyɔ. It's near Diari. We drummers have to ask to know what we know, and if you ask me, this is what I also asked and they told me.

And so Palo-Naa Darizɛyɔ started the Palo and brought our grandfathers to Savelugu, but it was his junior brother, Palo-Naa Kosayim, who gave birth to the line of Palo in Savelugu. If you call Palo-Naa Kosayim, everybody who is in our line will know him, but you have to put it that Palo-Naa Darizɛyɔ came before him. And following the line of Palo-Naa on the part of those who are my own family, I am not counting all of the Palo-Naas, but Palo-Naa Kosayim's first-born son was Palo-Naa Wumbie, and Kosayim's junior brother was Palo-Naa Ziɲnaa. When Kosayim was not there, then Ziɲnaa ate the Palo chieftaincy. Have you heard? When Palo-Naa Ziɲnaa died, the first son of Palo-Naa Kosayim ate, and that was Palo-Naa Wumbie. And when Palo-Naa Wumbie died, then his child ate, and that was Palo-Naa Kpɛmahim.

Palo-Naa Kpɛmahim was another town's drummer. He was a Diari drummer, and he was brought to Palo-Naa Wumbie's house as a boy to be trained. And when he came, he suffered for Palo-Naa Wumbie. He suffered for him as his housechild. And the time our grandfather Palo-Naa Wumbie was going to die, he talked to his sons, Bako and Chimsi. He told them that Kpɛmahim was a Diari drummer, and truly, Kpɛmahim had suffered for him, and he said, "If I'm not there, where I am sitting, you should allow him to eat it before you the children will come and take over." That is why when Palo-Naa Wumbie died, they gave the seat of our grandfather Palo-Naa to Kpɛmahim to sit. And so he has come into our family. When we are counting our grandfathers, we add him. Because of what our grandfather said, we can't say that he's not among us. In our door to Palo, any child from our door, if he's going to count the family without counting Kpɛmahim, it can't stand. That is how it is. And so Palo-Naa Kpɛmahim was not the real son of Palo-Naa Wumbie, but he was given to him, and so they call him as a son of Palo-Naa Wumbie. Anything that has to be done on that side, he must be counted inside, so that people will know that he belongs to the family. Palo-Naa Kpɛmahim was given to Palo-Naa Wumbie from childhood, and Palo-Naa

Wumbie took care of him. And so when Palo-Naa Wumbie was about to die, he told the family that after his death, Palo-Naa Kpemahim was the one growing; even though he Wumbie had given birth to his real children, they must allow Kpemahim to eat that chieftaincy.

After Palo-Naa Kpemahim died, then the children of Palo-Naa Wumbie ate. Palo-Naa Wumbie gave birth to Palo-Naa Bako and Palo-Naa Chimsi, and Bako was senior to Chimsi. When Palo-Naa Bako died, Palo-Naa Chimsi ate. Palo-Naa Chimsi gave birth to Lun-Naa Wumbie. As Savelugu has its drum chiefs, Lun-Naa is the one who follows Palo-Naa. And so listen well: there is Palo-Naa Wumbie and there is also Lun-Naa Wumbie. And Palo-Naa Chimsi also gave birth to Palo-Naa Mumuni. Lun-Naa Wumbie didn't reach the Palo, but he gave birth to Palo-Naa Issa, the one sitting down now. The time you first came and met him, he was Lun-Naa, but now he is the Palo-Naa.

Chimsi's father, Palo-Naa Wumbie, also gave birth to a daughter named Zenabu. That daughter of Palo-Naa Wumbie was our grandmother. She was Palo-Naa Chimsi's sister, and she gave birth to our father's mother, Neena. And so that is our drumming line in Palo-Naa's house. Our grandfathers who ate Palo are eight: Dariɛɛɛɛ, Kosayim, Ziɲnaa, Wumbie, Kpemahim, Bako, Chimsi, Mumuni. They are from our family and they are our grandfathers. This is how it is. All these people were chiefs of drummers, and that is our father's mother's line.

Our father's father was not a drummer. He was called Simaani. Have you seen my small child Osmanu? That child is named after my father's father. Simaani came from chieftaincy, but not drumming chieftaincy. And so our father had the drumming from the mother's side. I'm going to count the line of Simaani and start from Naa Luro, but if you like, you can also say it starts from Naa Nyaysi. Naa Luro gave birth to Naa Tutuyri, and Naa Tutuyri gave birth to Naa Zanjina, and Naa Zanjina gave birth to Naa Garba. Naa Garba gave birth to a child who ate Zakpalisi; that was Zakpalisilana Baakali. Zakpalisilana Baakali gave birth to Boggolana Mahama. This Boggo: it is not the one going from Tamale here to Kumbungu. Kumbun-Naa has his Boggo, leaving our father's side Boggo. The Boggo that our father came from, it is Yaa-Naa who gives the chieftaincy. It is near Galiwe. From Tijo going to Galiwe, you pass Boggo. This Boggolana Mahama gave birth to a man called Laati. And so Laati was a prince, but he didn't eat chieftaincy. He gave birth to Simaani, and Simaani gave birth to our father Abdulai. And this same Simaani gave birth to Zara, our aunt, Nanton Lun-Naa's mother. She was senior to our father.

When they gave birth to my father Abdulai and he grew up, he didn't want to be a drummer. And at that time too, he was always falling sick. They went to see soothsayers, and the soothsayers looked and said that he was supposed to be a

drummer, that his mother's house wanted him to be a drummer. In Dagbon here, if a woman's father's house is from the drumming, if that woman gives birth to children, then whatever happens, at least one of those children who is a boy will become a drummer. And as our father's mother was from a drummer's house, the drumming caught our father. They took our father to his grandfather, and his grandfather took him to Palo-Naa's house in Savelugu where he was given a drum. And they made a sacrifice there, too, because in our way they don't just give someone a drum: there are some customs they perform. And my father collected the drum. Within a short time, all the sicknesses stopped disturbing him. And it was through his drumming that he got a wife and began giving birth to us.

Our grandfather Simaani was sitting at Nantonkurugu. It's a village near to Nanton. And when our father Abdulai went to Savelugu Palo and put the drum in his armpit, he was following a chief called Kantampara, and he followed him to Voggo. If you are following a chief, and the chief goes to eat chieftaincy in another town, if you want, you will go and follow him with your drum. This Kantampara, his real name was Bukari, and he was the chief at Voggo up to the time he ate Savelugu. When Savelugu-Naa Bukari Kantampara ate Savelugu and left Voggo, our father didn't follow him to Savelugu; he remained at Voggo and gave birth to all of us there. And so the drumming caught our father before he went to Voggo. He took the drum to Voggo, and gave birth to us there, and we grew up and saw a drum in the armpit of our father.

And so our father was also a drummer. When he followed Kantampara to Voggo and settled at Voggo, he was beating a drum and following a prince called Sulemana. Our mother Kaasuwa was the daughter of this Sulemana. And so our mother's side is not drummers. Our mother's side is the chieftaincy of Dalun and Singa. Our father's mother's side is Palo-Naa's house: that is why we beat the drum. That is our father's side. But our mother Kaasuwa's father was not a drummer. Our grandfather Sulemana was the son of Singlana Aduna, and that is the line of Naa Siyli. And how I will call my mother's father's house, if I like, I will start from Naa Nyaysi, and if I like, I will start from Naa Luro. Naa Luro gave birth to Naa Zayli, and Naa Zayli gave birth to Naa Siyli. Naa Siyli gave birth to Zoggolana Dasana. Do you know Zoggo? It not far from Nantonkurugu, and it is not far from Savelugu. The people at Zoggo come to Savelugu market. On market days, lorries go there and bring them. Our grandfather Dasana ate Zoggo, and that was the place he died. Zoggolana Dasana gave birth to a son named Ali who ate Zugu; he was Zugulana Ali. This Zugu is different from Zoggo. It is only two miles from Kumbungu. And so both those places are not far from Savelugu. Zugulana Ali gave birth to Singlana Aduna and Dalunlana Blemah, and Aduna was senior. Our grandfather Aduna ate Singa and Dalun

together, both the two chieftaincies. At Singa, there is a river, and Singa is at the other side of the river from Dalun. Aduna left Singa and came to the Dalun side of the river and settled there, and he was holding both chieftaincies. When Singlana Aduna died, his junior brother Blemah ate Dalun. The two of them were Zugulana Ali's children. Singlana Aduna's child was our mother's father, Sulemana, and Dalunlana Blemah was the junior father of Sulemana. And so Singlana Aduna gave birth to Sulemana. Sulemana didn't eat chieftaincy, but his father was the chief of Singa and Dalun, and so this Sulemana was a prince of Singa and Dalun. And they caught our mother's mother, Zenabu, and they gave her to Sulemana, and she gave birth to our mother, Kaasuwa. And Kaasuwa too entered into our father Abudu's house and gave birth to us. And so our mother's side comes from Dalun and Singa.

This Zenabu, our mother's mother, her home was Moglaa; it's a village near Savelugu. On our father's side, we have our grandmother Zenabu, the one following Palo-Naa Chimsi. And on our mother's side, we have our grandmother Zenabu. They are two different Zenabus. You know, a human being is in two parts, father's house and mother's house, and if you like, you can say four parts. If somebody asks you, you will talk about your father and talk about your mother, those two people, and you will come to talk about the ones who gave birth to them. Our grandmother Zenabu on our mother's side came from the chieftaincy of Moglaa. If we want, on her side, we can call ourselves blacksmiths, but it wasn't a blacksmith who gave birth to us. Why have I said that? I will separate it for you to understand it very well. Our grandmother Zenabu, she was not from the drummers, not from the blacksmiths, but from the chieftaincy of Moglaa. Her mother gave birth to her and to her sister Zara, and her sister's father was different from her father. Zenabu was senior, and her father died, and her mother married a blacksmith and gave birth to Zara. And so our grandmother Zenabu's father was different from Zara's father, but they were both from one mother. I don't know whether Zenabu was raised in the house of the blacksmiths, or whether they gathered there, but how we were calling Zenabu our grandmother, that was the same way we were calling her sister Zara, too, as our grandmother. And the blacksmith who was the father of Zara, if we were to have been there at that time, we would also have been calling him our grandfather. And how we called him our grandfather, are we not the grandchildren of the blacksmiths? Inside our Dagbon, this is the way we move with the family. So what I'm talking, listen very well.

What I am telling you is this: the way you are with us here, if I give you one of my daughters and you agree, you will marry my daughter. If you give birth to children, and among your children, there is a girl, it can happen that this girl of yours also goes to marry a German man. If she also gives birth to a child who is a

girl, and the girl too goes to marry a French man, then it will be going. If they give birth to a child, that child can say he belongs to Dagbon, he belongs to America, he belongs to Germany and he belongs to France. And so the family on the mother's side, if any of them gets trouble like a funeral, then all of them, whether they are Dagbamba, American, German or French, they will all have to go to the funeral. They are all involved, because the same line has divided like that. If you are a child of that generation, if they go to cry, you too will cry; and the one who died, if it is their grandfather, you will also call him your grandfather. You will all be crying and saying that your grandfather died. It is because of family, and that is why we say mother's child, mother's child. That is how it is and we say we are related.

And so our mother's father Sulemana married Zenabu and gave birth to our mother Kaasuwa. And how our father got Kaasuwa from Sulemana: our father was beating a drum and following Sulemana. In Dagbon, before you will get a wife, you have to start greeting the father and doing many things for the father, so that if the man has given birth to a daughter, he will give the daughter to you. Sulemana was at Dalun, and Dalun and Voggo are not far. And our father was walking from Voggo to greet Sulemana at Dalun. Every time, our father was going there to greet him. And any time Sulemana went to any place, he called our father to beat a drum and follow him. And so at that time, our mother was at Dalun, and our father was at Voggo. And it came to the time when Sulemana came out plainly to tell our father, "You have been greeting me a lot, and you have suffered a lot for me. And I will not let you suffer again. I will give you a wife. Look round all my children and find the one you want to marry." And our father said, "I cannot look at your children and pick the one I like, unless you look at them and pick the one you want to give me. And if you give me a bad one, I will like it; and if you give me a good one, I will like it." And our grandfather Sulemana said, "I am going to catch Kaasuwa to give to you, because she is the one who always hears what I say." Our mother was already grown up, and Sulemana told our father to go and call his father to come. At that time our grandfather was dead, and our father was living with his uncle. He went and called his uncle, and they went, and our mother's father said he would give our mother to them. And it wasn't three days before they brought our mother to our father's house. It's only now that things have changed, but even up to then, that was how easy it was for us drummers to get a wife. We never used money to get our wives. Nowadays we are using money, but it is still somehow easy for us. It was because of the respect of drumming, that was why they took our mother and gave her to Abdulai. This is how it is.

When the Zambarima war came, Aduna was sitting down, and he took Sulemana and sent him to follow Savelugu-Naa Mahami to the war. The Zambarimas are from Upper Volta and Niger, getting to Niamey, and some of them came here and were fighting. Singlana Aduna gave our grandfather Sulemana to Savelugu-Naa Mahami to be following him, and our grandfather followed Savelugu-Naa Mahami to the Zambarima war. And they went to the war, and the war ate Savelugu-Naa Mahami. What I'm telling you now, it was our mother who told me. Those whom Singlana Aduna had gathered and they went for the war, they sat at one place. And our grandfather Sulemana said that as the war has eaten the chief, and how the chief has died, then as for them, they won't go back home again. How they gathered and sat at one place, we Dagbamba used to say that they gathered themselves in a black heart. What is this black heart? At that time, they would take the mortar they used to pound the gunpowder inside, and they put it in the center among them. And they would swear, "Worms: they usually die together." And they would sit and say, "How we have followed the chief to the war, it means we don't have to go back to our houses and say that we left him there." Then they put the gunpowder in the mortar, and they put fire inside. And the fire caught and burnt all of them. Have you seen the meaning? They followed the chief to the war, and the chief died there, so they said that because he died there, they too would die there, and they wouldn't go back to their towns again. Our mother told me this. And what I am telling you about these people who died with the gunpowder, I can tell you that, if it were this modern time, do you think anybody will do that, that you will all gather and swear like that? This modern time, if something like that happens, everybody will say, "Oi! They were fools! Me, I will never stay there." But what I have talked is true. Our mother's father Sulemana followed Savelugu-Naa Mahami to the Zambarima war, and Savelugu-Naa Mahami died in the war, and it was at the war that our grandfather Sulemana also died. And so we never knew our mother's father. We only know his name. He gave birth to Kaasuwa, and they gave Kaasuwa to our father, and our father gave birth to us. And so her side was Dalun and Singa.

Our father Abdulai and our mother Kaasuwa gave birth to seven children, and three of them died, and we are left with four. The eldest was a woman named Lahiri. She died. And they gave birth to Alhassan. He also died. And my brother Mumuni was the third, and God blessed him and he had life. When he was born, it was during the time of Naa Alaasani. The one following Mumuni was Laamihi: she died; she started walking, before she died. And they gave birth to Sanaatu: she is at Voggo; she is the wife of Nako-hi-Naa, a chief butcher. Sanaatu is senior to Abdul-Rahaman, the father of my son Alhassan. And I Ibrahim was the lastborn of all of us, what we call *kaluyi*. When I was born, it was the time of

Naa Abudu. And so three died, and we are left with us four. We all were given birth at Voggo. Our father didn't give birth to anyone outside Voggo, and our father died at Voggo before we all left Voggo.

The children our father and mother gave birth to, we are all beating the drum. Only one woman was there, and she was not beating the drum, but as she was born in a drumming family, she is inside drumming; she is a drummer, and we call such a woman *lumpaya*, a woman drummer. And so we are all drummers. This woman who was among us was giving birth to children, and the children were dying one after the other. And they went to a soothsayer, and the soothsayer looked and told them that since she is the child of a drummer, then one of her children should be given to drummers so that they would teach the child how to beat the drum. That is why I told you that according to our drumming custom, if a woman brings forth a child, and the woman's father is a drummer, then whatever happens, at least one of the sons the woman gives birth to must be a drummer. And so they brought one of her sons to us. He is now a drummer at Savelugu, too.

And I Ibrahim sitting down, I was born at Voggo, and they looked after me until I grew up. When our father gave birth to me and I was growing up, our father was old. Even when Mumuni was given birth, our father was already grown. I was still very small and growing up when our father became sick, and he became blind. When the eye-sickness caught our father, Mumuni told him that he need not come to the farm again, that he Mumuni would go and be doing the farming. As I was small, I had nothing to do. If day broke and Mumuni went to the farm, then our father would tell me to be following Mumuni and be seeing the way. And so my only work was to lead my father to the farm and to accompany him any time he was going to ease himself. As he was at the farm, he could not see it. He would only go to sit down. When it was time, I would take him home again. And Mumuni would still be in the farm farming. And that time, Abdul-Rahaman too was somehow grown, but he wasn't up to the standard of farming, so he was only following Mumuni to the farm. So my brother Mumuni removed our father from farming, and our father was in the house, and Mumuni was farming for our father like that up to the time our father died. This is how it was up to the time our father died. For about fourteen or fifteen years, I didn't know any town apart from Voggo, up to the time my father died. And all the time I was at Voggo, I didn't do any bad thing, and no one said any bad thing about me.

When our father died, we performed his funeral. According to us Dagbamba, it is a custom that when your father dies, his brothers will come and collect you and the other children who are also small, and they will take you to their houses. And my father's brothers came and took me to Nanton. The one I went to stay with in Nanton was my senior brother who was a drummer. That was

Nanton Lun-Naa Iddrisu. They stood and performed our father's funeral, and after the funeral he also decided to take me away. Our father Abdulai: he and Lun-Naa's mother had one mother, one father. Lun-Naa's mother was called Zara, and she was a senior sister to our father. At that time, Abdul-Rahaman had been taken away by our mother's brother. And by then our mother was a widow and she was old, and she said she would not marry again. As our uncle who had come and taken Abdul-Rahaman away was there, our mother went back to stay with her brother. And Abdul-Rahaman was farming for our mother and our uncle.

When Lun-Naa took me to Nanton, Mumuni was the oldest, and he stayed in our father's house at Voggo. He had a friend called Shiru. This Shiru was a drummer, and he was the junior brother of Alhaji Adam, the one we call Mangulana. The time Vo-Naa Moro ate Voggo and was coming there, he brought this Shiru with him. At that time, our father was still alive. Shiru came and he was in our house, and he was helping Mumuni, and they were holding our father up to the time our father died. The time we finished our father's funeral, Abdul-Rahaman had been taken away, and I was also taken away, and Mumuni decided that he wouldn't go anywhere, and he would remain in our father's house with our brother Shiru. And Mumuni stayed there up to the time he got his senior wife. The time the white men started catching us by force and putting us into the army, Mumuni left Shiru at Voggo and went to the South. Mumuni was at Sekondi when our brother Shiru also got up and left Voggo for Tamale. And so then our father's house was left empty. Then Lun-Zoo-Naa Abukari, the one who died while you were here, he was our uncle, too. And they didn't want our father's house to be empty without anybody inside, so he also left his house and came and settled in our father's house at Voggo for some time. His son is Alhassan Abukari, who was first teaching you to beat the drum. Lun-Zoo-Naa Abukari came and took our father's house. And when he also came to Tamale, our father's house remained empty.

I am the last-born of my father and mother, and I am behind my brother Abdul-Rahaman. We the men are all beating the drums, but Abdul-Rahaman doesn't know how to beat the drum well. He knows to his extent, but he doesn't know much. Why is it so? We Dagbamba share our children in our families, and we drummers don't give our children to our sisters or brothers unless that person is your fellow drummer. But the time we were growing up, before our father died, our mother's brother was there and staying in a small village, and he had not given birth to children, and he came and begged our father for a child to take away. He came and said he wanted me, and at that time I refused and said I would not go to the village, and my father agreed and called Abdul-Rahaman and gave him to my uncle. And Abdul-Rahaman agreed to follow my uncle to his village. When he

got there, he was not doing anything apart from farming. He hung his drum on the wall. My uncle was not beating a drum, and there were no drummers in the village because it was just a small village. It was only two houses. Who was there to teach him how to beat the drum? He could not just beat the drum himself. He was there from his childhood up to the time he was grown up. And at that time, our uncle died. We went to the village to perform the funeral of our uncle, and Abdul-Rahaman followed my brother Mumuni back to Savelugu where Mumuni was staying.

Our Dagbamba have a proverb that says, *Zimmahili n-ni tooi p̄ori, ziṅkuṅ ka tooi p̄ori*: “A wet fish can be bent, but a dry fish cannot be bent.” If you want to bend a dry fish, it will break. This is what let Abdul-Rahaman not know how to beat the drum. His hand was stiff; that is what we mean by a dried fish. He grew up, and now he cannot drum. He beats a drum, and someone who doesn’t understand the sound of the drum and sees him beating will say that he knows how to beat. But we who know, we know that he is not beating well. If you are from the drumming and you hear him beating, you will know that he grew up before he learned how to beat the drum. We know it, but we don’t say it. This is the way of drumming. In our way of living, no one blames another. If you know, and someone does not know, you don’t say, “This man doesn’t know.” If you say that, you have demeaned yourself rather than him. Maybe as you say you know something, someone also knows it better than you. And as you are bending down looking at someone’s anus, someone is also bending down and looking at your anus. In our drumming, if someone is beating and it is not correct, or if he is singing and it’s not correct, you don’t have to tell him that he’s doing the wrong thing. As we beat and some drummers are not doing well, we have a way to call them. We call someone that “he drums and they give him cow’s intestines to chew,” or again, “he drums and eats cow’s blood,” or again, “he drums and eats the worst food.” His way of beating is not nice. But we cannot say that he doesn’t know how to beat. And so Abdul-Rahaman was beating to his extent, but his beating should have been more than that; his hand became stiff, and so we say he was like a dried fish.

But our senior brother Mumuni is very good in drumming. He beats the lundaa, the medium-sized drum, and he is singing, and he is beating *guṅṅoṅ*, too. He can do everything in the drumming. I told you that during the Gold Coast time, when the white men were catching people for the army, he went to the South. He sat at Bibiani, and then he got up and went to Takoradi and Sekondi, and he also sat at Kumasi and at Aboso, near Tarkwa. All these places, he sat there. When he was in the South, he was beating the drum there. Those who were with him were the Dagbamba drummers of those places, and they took him to be

their leader in the drumming. And so how he was beating the drum, he was beating well, but it was when he came back from the South, that was when his drumming got up. If you compare someone who has been drumming in the South to how we the drummers in Tamale beat, our drum-beating will be more than his. The reason is only that we are always beating. Three days don't pass when we won't beat the drum. We are always beating because we know how to beat, and anyone who wants to listen to the sweetness of our Dagbamba dances will send his cola to us. But the time Mumuni was in the South, he was working the white man's work. If Sunday came, and there was a wedding or any gathering, or apart from that, if there was a festival, those were the only days he was beating a drum. And after that, he would go back to his white man's work. That was how it was.

When Mumuni came back to Dagbon, he used to follow the chiefs any time they called the chiefs to gather in Tamale here. He was following the chief of Voggo, Vo-Naa Moro, the one who became ambassador to Upper Volta. He was Vo-Naa Moro's best drummer. Vo-Naa Moro didn't want anybody's beating except my brother Mumuni's. When Vo-Naa Moro died, Mumuni left Voggo to stay at Savelugu, and when he went to Savelugu, he was beating very well. As for drumming and inside drumming, he is a drummer. Mumuni is standing as the brother of the Savelugu Palo-Naa, but Mumuni doesn't want to be a chief of drumming. The chiefs who called him and sat him down and talked to him that they want him to wear the drummer's gown, to be a chief of drummers, and he refused, they are more than five. Nanton-Naa Alhassan, when he was eating Zugu, he called him. Nanton-Naa Sule, when he was eating Gushie, he called him. Lamashegulana Dawuni called him. Pigu-Naa Abilaai called him. Your friend Savelugu-Naa Abilaai, the one who died, he also called him. Mumuni refused all of them. His only reason is that he is holding very strongly to the Muslim religion, and he doesn't want anything to interfere with his praying. You know, if you are a chief drummer, if the chief goes to any place, you will be following, and maybe it will be time for prayers. That is why Mumuni didn't want it. If not that, Mumuni would have been a chief of drummers, but he refused just because of his prayers. And so Mumuni is very good in drumming.

The time our father died and I went to stay with Nanton Lun-Naa, I used to work for him as I used to work for my father, and as I was doing good work for him, he was also teaching me how to drum as he would teach his own child. He told me that a person cannot take a plain white thing and know its front and its back. It is only God who knows it. And he told me again that it is very difficult to look at bee's wax and know what is inside and what is outside. He was showing me some of the secrets of drumming. And I also knew what he was telling me. These two proverbs, it is also inside God's talk that we used to bring these talks,

by saying that if you take a white cloth and look at it, you cannot know the front of the cloth and the back of the cloth, or the right and the left of it. It is one thing, and both sides are white. And the reason why we say that is because, as for God, what he has made us to know is the only thing we know, but what he hasn't shown us, we can never know it.

And the meaning inside drumming is that: what they don't show you, you can never know. You will only know the one they show you. Inside drumming, that is it. What they teach you is what you know; what they don't teach you, you don't know it. And the secret inside it is that when an old drummer is teaching you something about the drum, there are certain things inside the drumming that they don't just bring out and show to small people who are just starting to learn the drum. That is what is secret or hidden inside the drumming. And so if an old drummer tells you something like that, as a small boy, you shouldn't bring it out and tell others that they've already taught you this thing. And inside drumming, the hidden talks that are there: everything has where it must come out. There are certain things inside drumming, when you are going to show somebody, you don't just put him down and show him. It is only when its time comes and you are doing it there, the child will learn it from there. And so if you sit the child down at home and show him this type of talk, it means you are showing him the hidden talk before its time has come. If an old drummer is teaching a child like that, the old drummer will tell the child, "What I am teaching you now, I want you to hear it." He will warn the child that if not the place where he is to show that talk, he doesn't have to talk it, but he wants the child to know that the talk is there. And so the child should not bring the talk out. And Nanton Lun-Naa showed me the talks of drumming, and it was at Nanton that I knew all the types of drumming of Dagbon. I was in Nanton up to the time I was about twenty and some years old, and I didn't do any bad thing. If I had done any bad, they would have witnessed the bad thing about me, and no one witnessed any bad about me. Before I left there, I was in good relation with all the people in that town, and they also liked me.

From Nanton, I came to Tamale here. When I came here I stayed with my junior father Alhassan Lumbila and my senior brothers Mangulana and Sheni. Alhassan Lumbila was the real father of Alhaji Adam Mangulana; he was the one I came to, and I was with him. I can say that it was because of my brother Mumuni that I came and settled at Tamale. The time I was small, when we were at Voggo, Mumuni was a friend to Mangulana. As for Mangulana, when you see him, you won't know how old he is, but I can tell you that in our area, there is nobody older than Mangulana. All the people he grew up with have died. The drummers of his size who were left were only a few, and now it is only Nanton Lun-Naa who can

argue with him on the part of age. My brother Mumuni is older than me by some years, but the time Mumuni was a young boy, Mangulana already had a wife and was giving birth to children. This Mangulana is just a nickname Alhaji Adam gave himself. He is not a chief. Manguli is a village, and there are different ones. Banvim has Manguli Kuku. The Manguli Alhaji Adam is using is under Nanton-Naa: Nanton Manguli. When Alhaji Adam was young, he liked that village very much, and he said that he is chief of that village. He was just joking. It wasn't that he was actually holding the village. But everybody calls him by his nickname, Mangulana.

When Mangulana went to Tamale, Mumuni used to carry yams from Voggo to Tamale and greet Mangulana, and whatever Mangulana had, he would also give him. The way the friendship was between Mumuni and Mangulana, everybody knew of it. If Mangulana was sitting down and he didn't see Mumuni, he would send to Voggo. If Mangulana wanted Mumuni to do some work for him, he would send to our father, and our father would ask Mumuni to go and do the work. And it came to the time that Mangulana's father, Alhassan Lumbila, and Mangulana's mother, Fati Tolon, also knew of the friendship. And Mangulana said that he wanted Mumuni to come and stay with him, and they all came to understand and agree that Mumuni should be with Mangulana. And Mumuni used to come from Voggo to stay with Mangulana for some time.

The one who was following Mangulana was Sheni, or Shembila, small Sheni. Sheni's child is Mohamadu, who has been teaching you how to beat *gungon*. Any time Mumuni would come from Voggo to Tamale, when it was evening time, he used to sit with Sheni and be conversing. And the friendship between them was also very strong. And so how Mumuni was with Mangulana and Sheni, I also saw it when I was small. The time our father died and Nanton Lun-Naa took me to Nanton, I was there up to the time Mumuni left for the South. And when I left Nanton, I said I wanted to come and stay with Mangulana, and Nanton Lun-Naa also agreed. And so it was Mumuni who started with Mangulana, and when I came to Tamale, I was with Mangulana and he was holding me.

And so how our drumming is, we are all one, but it is only that everyone has his family door. Mangulana and Sheni are standing as my senior brothers, but their door is Tolon. Alhassan Lumbila was the child of Tolon Lun-Naa Mushee. And so Tolon is their family side; they are children of Tolon Lun-Naa's house. It isn't that we came from the same father and same mother. But as I have told you that drummers are one, this is it: Mangulana's father Alhassan Lumbila was calling our father Abdulai his senior brother. And since Alhassan Lumbila was calling our father his senior brother, we too, we also called him our junior father.

And Alhassan Lumbila's first-born was Mangulana, so how do you want us to call Mangulana? We will call him our brother. And Sheni, too, he is the son of one of Alhassan Lumbila's junior brothers, and he came and stayed with Alhassan Lumbila as his housechild, and so Alhassan Lumbila was his senior father. And so Sheni, too, he is our brother. That is how it is.

When I stayed in this Tamale, as I was drumming, I was beating the *gunḡḡḡ*. Any time I would beat and get tired and some one would take my place, then I would beat the *luḡa*, the drum. When I was with the drum and there was singing, then I used to sing, and any time I was singing people used to praise me. Sometimes they lifted me on their shoulders because of the sweetness of my beating. And when I was beating the *gunḡḡḡ*, too, I was a very good *gunḡḡḡ* beater. It was only that I wasn't strong. Up to today if you ask anyone to show you the one who knows more about beating a *gunḡḡḡ*, the fellow will tell you that I am the one. It is only that I don't like beating it because I haven't got the strength. And all the time I was in Tamale here, I was getting more knowledge and adding to what I had already learned. And all the time I was here, I didn't do any bad thing, and I didn't quarrel with anybody, and no one witnessed anything bad about me.

And as I came to this Tamale, and as I and my brothers are sitting in this town now, it is because we have seen the sweetness of this town. That is why we are here. As for us drummers, we want where people are, because where people are is where we get what we want. Drummers in villages cannot get what we drummers in town get. When God helps us and we stay here, we gain more than those in the villages. In three days or four days, we go to weddings. We go to the namings of newborn children. What is the naming? In Dagbon here, if someone's wife gives birth, then on the seventh day or on the day the navel falls, they will call the name of the child; that is the naming. When they cut the penis, there is no dancing: can a person get pain and we will dance? We won't. But on the naming day, there are some people who call drummers. In this town, there are people who have the means for that. The big people who are not chiefs but they have money, they are in this town. As there are many people in this town, for most of them, this town is not their town. There are many people staying in Kumasi, and Kumasi is not their town. There are people staying at Savelugu, and Savelugu is not their town. A drummer, or any person who plays, wants where people are. That is what we follow and get to know more. And every drummer knows people to his extent.

At the time I first came here to stay in Tamale, I was up to the age of getting a wife, but I didn't have the means to have a wife. And I left Tamale here and I went to the South. If you want to learn knowledge or get wisdom, you have to be

traveling. If you are a wise person and you go round, you will see people who are also wise. Some of them are wiser than you. Then you will put down your wisdom and follow their wisdom. And so if you want to learn more, you should be a fool and take your foolishness and go around to different towns. Then you will benefit from it. When I went to the South, I went first to Kintampo. I wasn't doing anything there except beating drums, and I was still learning more about the *gunḡḡḡ* and the drum. The people staying at Kintampo are Gonjas and Wangaras. Do you know the people we call Wangaras? There are the real Wangaras, and again there are many tribes from around Bobo-Dioulasso in Upper Volta and going toward Mali and Guinea and Senegal, and we here group all of them and call them Wangaras. It was at Kintampo that I learned how to beat for the Wangaras and the Gonjas to dance. Why do I know that beating? It was because I went and stayed in their town. They had their drummers. Plenty! And I used to go and drum with them. I stayed at Kintampo about two years, and at Kintampo no one witnessed anything bad about me.

And I got up from Kintampo and went to Kumasi. There are a lot of tribes in Kumasi. Every tribe is there. When I was in Tamale here, I didn't know the dance of the Zambarimas. I didn't know the dance of the Kotokolis. The Chembas, I didn't know their dance. The Dandawas, I didn't know their dance. I didn't know the dance of the Yorubas. I didn't know the dance of the Gurumas. It was in Kumasi that I knew all. All these tribes I have named, they have all got their drummers in Kumasi, and I used to go to their playing to watch and learn how they beat. I was in Kumasi for some years, and I didn't quarrel with anyone. We were always on good terms.

Kumasi is an Ashanti town, and I was able to know how Ashantis danced. And I also knew how the Ashanti women danced, too. The Ashanti women used to get some drums from us, and there is a dance they dance when a woman gets her first menstrual period. They beat it for that particular woman to dance, and they dance it away from the public. And there are dances they dance outside before the public, and I know how to beat those dances too. And the type of drumming they beat for their princes, I know how to beat that, too. All this I gained from sitting in Kumasi.

From Kumasi I went to Accra, and I was in Accra for about two years. Formerly they didn't have anyone beating our type of drum in Accra. It is only in this present day that we have drummers in Accra. It was because formerly there were not many Northerners staying in Accra, not like today. I used to go to work, and I was collecting firewood and bringing it on my head and selling it. On Sundays, if there was a wedding, we would go to the wedding and drum. There

were a lot of Mossis in Accra, and it was there that I learned how to beat the Mossi dance.

I was in Accra when my mother died. I came home and performed her funeral. Then I went to a relative of mine staying at Takoradi. During that time there were a lot of white men in Takoradi. They used to hang their pistols round their waists. And they used to chase women as if they were dogs. Any time you sounded a drum, you were given some money. I was in Takoradi for about two years, and I was on good terms with everybody. It was there I learned how to beat the dance of the Walas.

From Takoradi I came home and I stayed in this Tamale. I have been in this town for many years, and now Tamale is my town. When I came and stayed in Tamale, all the knowledge I had gained, I used it in teaching people. All the types of dances I learned, I have been teaching people here. Because of my knowledge, any time we beat any dance, even if my brothers were leading, my beating was always admired. We have many types of drumming, and how I will beat and bring out the differences inside, even someone with strength cannot do it. Those who are now leading on the guṅḡḡḡ, they were small boys when I was beating it. Even with all their strength, if you ask them who can beat guṅḡḡḡ and it will be interesting, they will tell you that I am the one. And in the beating of the drum, too, we have many types. You might see a drummer beating a particular dance very nicely, but if you ask him to beat another type of dance, he will not be able to beat it. But with the exception of just a few, I can beat any dance you tell me to beat.

What makes it that I have learned so many dances? It is patience. If someone has patience, he will get anything he wants. What makes it so? I have said I was at Nanton, and that is how my elder at Nanton taught me. And when I was in Tamale, my senior brother Shenii also told me that I should never say I am too wise. If I say that my eyes are open too much and that people will not cheat me, then I will not get what I want. And so if someone is teaching me something, and the fellow wants to cheat me, I should pretend I don't know about it. If you want something, you should take patience, and you make yourself a fool, and you make yourself deaf, and you make yourself blind. You will be deaf because when you go to search for wisdom, they will tell you something bad, and you will pretend as if you have not heard it. And you will see them doing bad things to you, and you will close your eyes and say you have not seen it. And you will know that they are doing bad things to you, and you will pretend as if you don't know it. Why do you do that? It is because you want to gain from what you are learning. That is why I am sitting as I am sitting today. When I was learning, I

was making myself a fool. And if anyone is following me, and I want to show him the wisdom I have learned, I have to tell him how I also learned all this.

In Tamale here, aren't there drummers? There are drummers. In Kumasi there are drummers. There are drummers in Savelugu, and there are drummers in Accra. But people pass by all these drummers and come here to ask me things, and I teach them, just as you have come and I am teaching you. Sometimes big men come from Accra to ask me certain things, and I tell them. And there are white men too who come to me to ask me things. Some of the people who come to me are Dagbamba, and the Dagbamba who come know that there are drummers in their towns. Why don't they go to their town's drummers? But they come to me. They know that the wisdom I have got, the drummers in their towns haven't got it.

What has brought it? It is because of the advice my senior brothers gave me to take patience and become blind, deaf, and a fool. They told me to be patient, and that is bringing all these things. If you say your eyes are open, and someone says his eyes are open, then the two of you will not achieve anything. I have told you that a wise person and a foolish person cannot stay together. It is only a wise person and a foolish person who can stay together. And so I want to know: between the two of us, which of us is going to be a fool? You have said you are going to be a fool, and as you have said you will make yourself a fool, then make yourself a fool. If you make yourself a fool, you will enjoy it. Maybe you have already been enjoying it. You should make yourself even more foolish. And make yourself deaf, and blind. And you will know that you can see a lot and know that you can hear well. And you will say that you don't see and don't hear. If you say that, then we will all gain from one another. That is the work of wisdom. If you get wisdom, you should not say that no one will cheat you.

From the time I was a small boy and I started beating a drum, from six years and up, I used to go the market to beat the drum. If you want to know more in drumming, you have to follow the elders to the market, because it is at the market that you will get to know many people and how to praise them. I was following the elders like that up to the time I left Voggo. When I went to Nanton, I was doing the same thing. Then from Nanton I came to Tamale. And I was staying with my junior father Alhassan Lumbila, and I was following my senior brother Sheni in the drumming. And by that time I had put my drum down, and I was singing. There was not only one type of my singing. Sometimes I used to sing and some women used to cry because of the sort of words I was singing. And I stopped singing and my brother gave me a *gunḡḡḡ*. If we are to go to a village for a funeral or if we are in Tamale here, I am to beat the *gunḡḡḡ*. If it is a wedding, I am to beat *gunḡḡḡ*. If it was a naming, I am beating the *gunḡḡḡ*. And we used to

go to the old market. The market days were every six days. And we were enjoying the market. Any market day, the young men of this Tamale used to ride horses. And we beat the drums for them. If you wanted to beat a drum like that for a young man, you would lead him and not walk behind him. As he is a young man, you are in front of him. If it were a chief, you would be following behind him; a drummer will not beat a drum and lead a chief. And at that time, we used to beat for these young men to ride their horses to the market.

There was a year when there was a shortage of corn. We called it “the year we brought corn from the South” or “the white-corn year,” because at that time we didn’t know white corn. It was just a few years after the war between the British and the Germans. During that time, they sold one bag of this corn for three cedis and fifty pesewas, and sometimes they increased it to five cedis, and sometimes they sold it for two pounds, that is, four cedis. And it was only a big man who could buy it like that. Those who were selling this corn were those we were beating the drum for, and their leader was called Yakubu Baakobli. He was a butcher. When the Southerners brought the corn, he would stand at the market and sell the corn for them. The meaning of *Baakobli* is “dog’s bone.” Anyone who came to the market would be calling “Baakobli, Baakobli,” because of the corn. It was his praise name in drumming; and we used to beat it for him to dance. The meaning is that a hawk has taken a dog’s bone; whatever happens, he will drop it down to the dog again. Have you heard? A hawk cannot break a bone. If a dog is struggling with a bone, and a hawk comes and takes it away, the hawk cannot eat it, and it will leave it to fall back to where the dog is lying down. If something is not for you and you try to collect it from the owner, you cannot hold it; in the end you will bring it back.

One market day came, and he sent somebody to call us, and we got up. My brother took a drum, and I took a *gunḡon*, and we made a group and went to him. We were about eight. And when we got to Baakobli, Dog’s Bone, he said, “I want you to lead me to the market.” And we took him from his house, and he climbed a horse and was riding the horse. And he sent to inform his neighbors who were of his same size and age, and before we came on the street and looked at our back, we saw more than ten horses. And we were beating drums and taking them and going to the market. At that time, anywhere Baakobli was, there were people following him and praising him. And people would join him with many horses, and he would be jumping up with his horse. Hausa people would be blowing things and praising him, and others would be following and praising him with Hausa words. They would be telling him that nobody is equal to him in the town. They wanted to raise him up and get something to eat, and he would be giving them corn. And when he would stand at one place and come down from his horse,

the dance he would dance was Nakohi-waa, the butcher's dance. His father was the Nakohi-Naa of Kumbungu, Kumbungu Nakohi-Naa Yamusah.

Before we got to the market, come and see! There were many, many people. Many! And I was the only one beating the guṅṅoṅ. If you beat a guṅṅoṅ very well, the horses dance, and by then the horses were dancing. I was not looking at anything; I was just watching to beat my guṅṅoṅ. And so my everything was just looking at the guṅṅoṅ, and I didn't watch anything apart from that. And I was beating the guṅṅoṅ, and one of the horses danced and rose up with his legs and stepped on my face. At that time, I dropped the guṅṅoṅ, but I didn't fall down. Many people were crowding around me to see, and they were saying that they should take me to the hospital, and others said they should take me to the house. And I said, "There is nothing wrong with me. It is only that my face is cut." They brought a plaster and put it on me, and I picked up my guṅṅoṅ again. They thought I couldn't beat again, but I was able to beat. And we went round the market and back to Baakobli's house again.

When we reached his house, Baakobli took a smock and gave it to my brother Sheni, and said that I should wear it and protect myself from sweating. And we thanked him. And we drummers, if someone gives us something, we can use the drums to greet him for the gift, that we thank him. There is a way to use the drum to do that. And we took our drums and beat for Baakobli. That day, we got a lot of money. When we came back to the house, we had not yet sat down when Baakobli and his friends came to our house. We had two doors in our house. Baakobli passed through one door, and his friends passed the other door. And they said they had come to see about my wound, whether it was a high wound or a small wound. And I said, "It is nothing." At that time I'm talking about, a cedi was a big thing, very big. And Baakobli gave me sixty pesewas that I should go and buy medicine and be putting it on the wound. And I received the sixty pesewas. And Baakobli and his friends left.

When we came into the house, I gave the sixty pesewas to my elders and they shared the money among us. I was given thirty pesewas. And what we got from the market when we were drumming, I was given twenty-five pesewas. And by that time, I was becoming annoyed. I was thinking that the money was small. Because of the sort of wound I had, Baakobli gave me sixty pesewas, and now they gave me thirty pesewas. And my brother Sheni looked at me and said I should not be annoyed. And he said that if I am annoyed, I am not a drummer. And I asked him why he should say that? And he said that some day I would be sitting down, and others would be beating drums and bringing me money. And so I shouldn't mind the suffering I was having. A time will come when we will get to some place and enjoy from the suffering we suffered. And he asked me if it was

because I had been wounded by the horse that I was annoyed. And he said that in our custom, we are made from suffering. And I asked why he should tell me so? And he gave me an example. He said a drummer will follow a chief to a war and die, and his death is not from anywhere. If the chief is killed, the drummer has something to say, and they will kill the drummer too. Sometimes the drummer will be riding a horse to a fighting place and be beating and singing, and they will kill him. Where the chief remains, that is where the drummer will also remain. And so my brother Sheni gave me the example, that in case I should follow a chief to a war and be killed, what would I do? How much less is it if I have a wound from the market? And so he said, "How is it that you went to the market and a horse jumped and stepped on your face, and you are annoyed? You shouldn't be annoyed with that." And so the wound I had was part of the suffering I suffered to learn drumming. And what my brother told me that day, it is now that I am seeing some of it.

And so drumming is patience. If patience were not there the time I had this wound, I would have run away and left the drumming. How can I continue beating the drum and a horse will one day step on me and kill me? But as patience was there, as I continued it, I got to know the benefit in it. As my brother Sheni was forcing me to learn it, and I also kept patient to learn it, it is now that I am seeing all that he was telling me.

And what I am seeing is the respect. Sometimes if I am not around, if they want to go and beat drums somewhere, they will use my name to go and beat the drums, and they will get respect just because of me. If they go and beat and get money, they will bring it to me. Even if I am not around, they will bring part of the money and share it among my housepeople. If there were no respect, they would not have been doing that. And all this is from patience, and good heart. I didn't learn drumming with a bad heart. I kept my white heart on everybody. If I had learned it with a bad heart, I wouldn't be seeing its respect, and there would be no benefit in it.

We Dagbamba, as we are sitting, we ourselves have so many types of dances that there are some Dagbamba drummers who will not know all the drumming that even you John can drum. At a wedding house, the drumming is different from a funeral house. The wedding house drumming is only for dancing, and there are some types of drumming that we don't beat at wedding houses. If you go to a wedding house, if you beat something that is a type of drumming we beat only at funerals, maybe you will let someone come to think of something bad, and you will have put something sad inside the wedding. If it is a funeral house, there are some things you will beat when somebody dies and they are burying the dead body. If you take some of the drumming you beat for the wedding house

when everybody is happy, and you take it and beat it at the funeral house, will it be good? It won't do. If it comes to some months and they are going to gather for the final funeral, if it was an old person who lived long before coming to die, by that time the final funeral of such a person is a happy thing for us, and at that time, you can take the wedding house drumming and beat it there.

All this is why I have said that we drummers are in groups on the part of what we know. I told you that there can be a drummer who does not beat well because he entered drumming from his mother's house, and they have only hung the drum on him; we call him a woman drummer's child, *lumpay' bia*. Such people, they are your father's sister's children. Some of them will grow up to the age of getting married before they will be given a drum to beat. What I told you about my brother Abdul-Rahaman, that a dry fish cannot be bent, they are like that. The time they start beating the drum, their arm is strong. It is not soft again. Maybe a sickness caught him and they didn't want him to die, and they searched for soothsayers to look, and they came to see that it was because of the drum: they will find a drum for him. They will find fowls, and they will take him to his uncle's house and tell his uncle that the drum is following him. The uncle will start calling the names of drummers who died, "So-and-so, you beat a drum and left it for me," and when he calls the names of the grandfathers, they will slaughter the fowls. And he will come up to the present time and say, "Our fathers came and gave birth to this man's mother and me together, and this man is my sister's son. And he doesn't sleep. And they searched and searched, and they came to see that our drumming is following him. That is why they have brought him to me." Then they will bring a drum and call him to come, and they will hang the drum on his shoulder and let him use his arm to press the drum. And they will tell him to beat, "*Namɔy' yili mal' kpɔɔŋ kɔam!*": Namɔy's house has strength, plenty. He will be beating, *Kan-kan-kan*: it won't fall. But after he has used the drum like that, they will find a drum and sew it for him. And so such people, when they mix with us and we go to drum, we know them easily. And people who are not drummers but they watch well, they can also know them. The way such a drummer will hang the drum on his shoulder, it doesn't hang correctly. He has just come inside; he is not like you the one who grew up inside the drumming. As for you, you were beating the drum with your fathers, beating the drum with your uncles, beating the drum from the time you were growing. And so these women drummers' children, we joke with them. We call them, "*Jɛ kpibu lunsɪ*": I-don't-want-to-die drummers. They can't bluff, and if you are at some place with them, you will joke with them, "As for you, had it not been for death, would you beat a drum?" And he will also joke, "As for you, I think that you are not my real uncle. All of you, you should go away from here. I don't think you are my real uncles.

As for me, I'm on my own." They are our playmates, and so we joke with them like that.

There are some drummers who only drum when there is a dead person. And there is someone else, you will take that fellow to a funeral house, and he will not understand you when you change to another way of beating. There is someone, if you take him to the Yaa-Naa's house to beat the drumming of the chiefs, he will not know it; he will only know how to beat for the young men or for the women. Such drummers who don't know the beating of the chiefs, we don't even call them drummers. But there is someone who jumps over all of it, and he knows chieftaincy, funerals, young men's and women's drumming. He has known everything. And so there can be a drummer who is like a school child who has only finished middle school: his knowledge will not be all that much because he won't know anything about secondary school or university, and he will only know things to the level of his middle school.

But I want to tell you that learning is in the heart. It is the heart that brings about knowing something. If your heart is bright, and if your eyes are open and can see much, then it can happen that you the one who has only finished middle school can know more than someone who has even been to the university. And that is how we drummers are, too. Someone with a bright heart, even when he is not taught anything, when he goes to see how the funeral drumming is beaten, he will learn it. And with the drumming of the chiefs, too, he will come to know it. He will drum and go beyond the standard of what he has been taught, but he will also come to a point when he cannot go further. But the one who has a bright heart, and he has asked and they have taught him, as for him, he is the one who will know all. He has been taught, and he has used his sense and added.

There are some people: you will teach them how to beat the drum, and they will never know how to beat. Someone like that does not know how to beat because it is not in his heart. His heart has no interest in drumming. And there is someone whose eyes are closed, but the heart is not dead: if you want to teach such a person to do some work, he will get to know that work. But someone whose eyes are open, if his heart is dead, you will teach such a fellow until you are tired, and he will not know how to do it. And so drumming comes about if your heart is alive. If your heart is alive, what they teach you, you will get it, and what they don't teach you, you will be able to hear it with your ears and get to know it.

I cannot hear the Mossi language, but I can beat the Mossi dance. We Dagbamba have the same grandfather with the Mossis, but there is no day when the Mossis can beat our dance. But any time they come out and say that we should beat their Mossi dance, we beat it and they see that it is good. The Yorubas are from Lagos, Nigeria. When the Yorubas came here and stayed, we were able to

beat their dances, and we know how they beat their drums. But some of them stayed here for more than twenty years, and they didn't know how we drum. When they were in Tamale here, any time they were beating, they were only beating their Yoruba beating. When a Dagbana came out, they didn't know how to beat for him. When a Gonja came out, they didn't know what to beat. When a Hausa came out, they didn't know how to beat. They only knew the Yoruba dance. And I have never been to the Yoruba town, but I can beat a drum for a Yoruba to dance and I can take a drum and praise a Yoruba. What I am telling you is that it is the heart that catches everything. It is the heart that brings about all this. If it is not the heart that is catching it, how did we get this knowledge? We have never been to their town, and no one taught us. It is the heart.

This drum we put in our armpit, this *luŋa*, no tribe can try to beat a Dagbamba drum in Dagbani. They cannot beat our drumming. You see the Walas: we beat the Wala dance, but Wala people cannot beat Dagbamba drums. The Wangaras, the Mamprusis, the Hausas -- every tribe, we know how to beat their dances for them, but as for them, they don't know ours. If a Kotokoli man comes here, I can bring out my drum and beat his home town's dance; if he is a real Kotokoli, he will dance it. If he's not a true Kotokoli, maybe he wouldn't hear. But if I bring my drum out, I can beat Kotokoli dances--different ones. There is a Kotokoli dance, if I take my drum now and beat it, and a real Kotokoli woman hears it, she will fall down and be collecting and eating any dirt that is on the ground. And so every tribe: we know how to beat their lunsidrumming, but they do not know ours.

Drumming with this *luŋa* is quite different from beating a drum with the hands the way the Ashantis and the Southerners beat. There is no type of beating that is like lunsidrumming, and there is no beating that has got more styles than our type of drumming. There is no type of beating you can beat that will be more than lunsidrumming. No one knows everything about drumming, and so someone who is going to teach you cannot teach you everything. But if someone teaches you and you learn it very well, if you are also following it, you can use your sense to catch many things. And so learning a drum is from the starting. If you start and learn it well, you will know how to beat well, and you will catch many different ways of beating.

If you want to build a house, you have to make the foundation very strong. If you put the house up, it will stand well on the strong foundation. And so drumming is like building a house: the starting is like the foundation. When you are going to start it, you should not start it in a lazy way. It is good that when you want to learn something, you should learn it very well. That is so with drumming. If you learn it very well and you go anywhere, when they are beating and you just

stand there, you will catch it. Even if you learn it very well, you will not need to go to places to learn it. When you put a drum under your armpit, what you have ever heard will come to your mind, and you will be able to beat it. As for beating the drum, if you learn it very well in your house, anywhere you go where they are beating it, you will be able to beat it. It is only singing that you will have to go and learn. And so using your sense to increase your drumming, it is all from the learning and how you started. If you don't learn it well from the starting, you won't know. And learning too is patience. That is how drumming is. If you learn drumming well, any matter in drumming is going to be like drinking water for you. When you come and stand and see others beating, you will take it and put it in your heart.

When I was a small boy staying at Voggo, whenever I heard a drummer drumming, my heart would get up. I would want to beat like him. And so I was learning the drum at Voggo until I went to Nanton. It was at Nanton that I learned all the different ways of beating the drum in Dagbon. And I came to this Tamale here and I started learning the dances of the different tribes, because there are many tribes in Tamale here. And I took it and went to Kintampo, and at Kintampo I knew that I had reached the right place: there were tribes in Kintampo that were not at Tamale here, and they all had their ways of beating a drum. And I got up and went to Kumasi, and I fell in it there, too. It was there that I learned all its ways. I have told you that drumming has got a lot of talk, and every drummer has got his knowledge. As for the knowledge I have learned, I think in my heart that I have learned much because I got up from this town and went and stayed in the South. And as I have said that it is not anyone who taught me the dances of the tribes, I have learned all this from my traveling.

As I am sitting now, I don't know my age, but I think it will be getting to sixty years, but I am still a young person. The drumming chiefs are there. But the drumming chiefs don't get respect as I am getting respect. Why am I saying this? In Tamale here, if people want to marry, they have to send cola to me. I am not a chief of drummers, and in our custom, if they want drummers, they are supposed to send the cola to the chief drummer. My uncle Lun-Zoo-Naa is a chief drummer in Tamale, but they don't send cola to him. Sometimes they send cola to him that they want him to send drummers to the wedding house, and he has to send somebody to come and see me. If somebody dies and they want drummers to beat Takai, they have to send and tell me. In all of Ghana, if they want the real Takai, they send to tell me. It is because of my drumming that they do all this to me, and it is from my learning that all this has come. There are many drummers who are older than I am or bigger than I am, but if people want drummers, they come to me.

And again, as I am in Tamale here, if anyone wants to buy a drum, he only mentions my name. If the fellow is a Gurunsi, or an Ashanti, or a white man, if he wants a drum, he has to come to me. If the drum breaks and he wants to sew it, he has to come to me. If he changes and takes it to another fellow to sew it for him, he will bring the next one to me, because even one way of sewing is more than another. Somebody may sew a drum, and if you beat it, you will not hear the sound coming out well. Somebody may sew a drum, and you will beat it and press the strings, and the ring that holds the skin will bend, and the sound will not be good. Those who are with me, we know how to make the skin better, and to sit down and sew it, we also know it more than the others.

All the young people who are following me in beating these drums, they are always standing at my back. I don't have to tell you that they are standing at my back because you have been seeing them all the time. If we go to someplace and beat the drums and come back, we have to bring all the money we got to my house, and I will share it among them. We will come to my house, and there are old people who are older than I, but they are all standing and waiting for me to share the money among them. It is not because of anything. It is because of how I learned more about the drumming that they are giving me all this respect. Any time, if I am going to the farm for some days, the drummers who are following me are always worried. They are just worried about my going to the farm and leaving them. Somebody may say that I am telling lies, because sometimes when we are beating, you will come and see me sitting and not beating a drum. I will only be holding the money we are getting and making change for people. Somebody may say: how can a person who always makes change for people know how to beat? But I have beaten a drum for a long time, and it was some time ago that I taught them how to beat. That is why I don't always beat the drum. But sometimes someone will come out and ask them to beat a certain dance for her, and they won't be able to do it. At that time, I will stand up and receive a drum. And so any time my group is beating, whether I am beating or I am sitting down, it is the same thing. As for a learned person, if he's sleeping or not sleeping, it is all working. His everything is knowledge, and so everything he's doing or not doing, he's working.

Why do I say I have learned more? Sometimes we will go to someplace to beat drums, and somebody will come out and call a type of dance, and no one will know how to beat it except me, and I will show all of them how to beat it. Just recently we went to Savelugu for a funeral. There was somebody who was a Wangara, but he came and stayed at Savelugu for long, and he gave birth to many children, and he was the Savelugu Nachimba-Naa, the leader of the youngmen of Savelugu. And he died. We went to Savelugu and we were following the

Savelugu drummers and beating, and we were beating Nakɔhi-waa, Naybiɛyɛ, Naanigoo, Damba, and all these dances. Then some Wangara people came from Techiman, and one woman came out and asked us, “Don’t you know that the dead body was a Wangara?” When the woman came out and said this, we were all just looking at each other. And we kept quiet because we were from Tamale, and we were following the Savelugu drummers because Savelugu is their town. And somebody came to me and said, “My junior father, you have learned drumming in so many places, and so I think you will know how to beat the kind of drumming she wants.” And at that time I received a drum from somebody and started beating it, and when I beat the drum, no one knew how to follow. Then I beat the drum again, and the one who was beating the guɔɔɔ didn’t know how to reply. I called out the beating to him, but he couldn’t get me. Then I removed the drum from under my arm and put it behind me, and I took the guɔɔɔ and showed him how to beat it, and when he received the guɔɔɔ back and started beating, I held the drum and showed the others how to answer. By then we were able to beat the Wangara dance. And the woman said, “Oii! I am very surprised to see that Dagbamba are able to beat the Wangara dance, and there is no mistake in it.” At that place, I was very, very respected. All the drummers who were there, they gave me a lot of respect. And so that was when I brought the Wangara dance to this town.

What I am telling you, if it is boasting, it is all right: I can do it. I have learned it, and I know it, and people give me respect for that. And it all comes from learning and sense. If you have no sense and you go to another town and do some work, you will never get anything. Whatever they are doing in that town, if you are not putting your heart into it, will you do any work that can stand? But if I go anywhere and I am walking and they are beating a drum, I listen to the sound to know how they start beating this kind of drumming. If I stand a minute and listen to the sound, any time anyone asks me to beat it, I can beat it. Someone may be going and hear a drum and guɔɔɔ being beaten, but he will not stand and listen to the whole sound. There are some dances in which the drum and the guɔɔɔ are beaten in different ways, but they are following one another. If you are not listening to all of it, and you stand and listen to the sound, maybe you will only listen to the sound of the drum. What about the guɔɔɔ? As for me, whenever I want to listen to a kind of drumming, I always keep my eye on two sides, by the guɔɔɔ and by the drum.

And so if you want to do something, you have to do it in a better way. I’m not talking of myself because I like myself. If you want, you can ask any of the drummers in my group whom do they respect and whom do they believe among themselves. You should ask them when I am not there. They will tell you that I am the one. They will say that if I am not there, they cannot beat drums. I think in

my heart that in my whole group, there is no one like me. And so if you want to do something, you have to learn it very well.

Somebody may see somebody beating the drum, making styles and doing anything with the drum. Somebody will look at such a drummer and say that he knows how to beat more than I, or say that he is beating very well. It is a matter of watching how to beat. Someone can beat very fast with many different styles, and no one will be able to follow his steps. But as for me, if I learn something and it is small, it's good for me. I will beat it and it will be clean, and there will be no mistake. That is how my drumming came about. And so if I want to talk to you about anything, I have to talk to you up to my standard. And what I know is that if you want to learn drumming, you have to learn it with good character. If you learn it with good character and somebody also comes to learn it from you, he should also learn it from you with good character. By then you will see that what you have learned with good character, people will always be coming to you to learn it.

I can tell you that in Dagbon here, up to the Mamprusi land and the Gonja land, and even in the whole Ghana, any time they want Dagbamba drummers, they call my group. Why is it so? Our beating is different from others, and there is no group like our group. Anyone who has ever listened to our beating, whether man or woman, even if he is sleeping in his house and wakes up to hear the sound of drummers coming, he will know whether it is our group beating. It is just because we have learned our work very well. If we are beating drums at some place and there are other Dagbamba drummers there, you will even see them stopping and coming to look at how we beat. And so if you want to learn a work, you have to learn it very well. That is how work is.

And so if you are going to learn drumming very well, you should learn how to beat the *gunḡḡḡ* and how to beat it very well, and you should know how to beat the *luḡa* and lead. If you go to a town and they beat only *gunḡḡḡ* there, you can collect it and beat; if there are no *gunḡḡḡ* beaters somewhere, you can collect it. Fuseini Alhassan is Alhassan Lumbila's child, and he is my junior brother. Any time we go to beat drums, he is the one beating the *gunḡḡḡ*. Sometimes when we go to weddings and my junior brother Fuseini Alhassan is not around, I have to take the *gunḡḡḡ*, and I beat it and money comes out. If I didn't know how to beat it, that would be all, because those who beat *gunḡḡḡ* are not there. When we go to wedding houses, those who beat and lead are there, and those who beat and answer are also there. If I am not there, and there is no one who can take a drum and lead, then there won't be good beating.

When I got up from Tamale to go to the South, I earned a lot by beating the *gunḡḡḡ*. And the way I beat the *gunḡḡḡ*, I got a lot of respect from that, too. From

the South, I came back to my own town again. Any drummer who travels from another place to this Tamale will not be in front of me. But I am a small boy. There are people who are older than I am, but because I know it better than they do, I always have the respect. This respect is from the drumming. I cannot say that I am better than my senior brother Sheni, because no one ever said he was better than his brother, but I can say that at the present time, I have more respect than he does in drumming. And so in drumming, everyone learns to his extent. You should always know that in drumming, you are better than someone, and someone is better than you.

The guṅḡḡḡ I was beating, it was the guṅḡḡḡ that left me, not that I left it. Any work has got becoming fed up. If you are doing a certain work, at some time you will become fed up with it. But drumming a luṅḡa, you never become fed up with it. Even if you are old and you cannot stand up, if you know you can beat a drum, you can beat. But as for the guṅḡḡḡ, you can't beat it like that. As for a drum, whatever age or size you are, you can beat it, because its talks are many. But as for guṅḡḡḡ, if you come up to the age of leaving it and continue beating it, you will lose your respect. According to the way of drummers, if you are beating the luṅḡa and they tell you to leave luṅḡa and beat guṅḡḡḡ, your heart will be telling you that how you were beating the drum was not interesting, that they are saying that you are not perfect on it, and they have reduced your respect. And so the respect of the guṅḡḡḡ is there, but beating a guṅḡḡḡ is for a young man. It's not that an old drummer cannot beat it. We don't fear work. Old drummers used to stand in front of the chief's house and beat the drum up to daybreak. Sometimes an old drummer will be standing there and counting the chiefs and beating, and the small drummers will be sleeping. But when you see somebody who is old and he is beating guṅḡḡḡ, it means he doesn't know how to beat a drum. If not by force, no one will have a beard and beat guṅḡḡḡ again. Truly, sometimes drummers may go to some place to beat, and the one who beats guṅḡḡḡ is not there, and it is a force that a person who is old and with a beard should beat it. Sometimes it will happen like that, and it's not that the drummer they ask to beat guṅḡḡḡ has been doing it. But if it doesn't happen like that, if you become old and you continue beating guṅḡḡḡ, they will look on your drumming as a weak thing. As I am sitting, to beat guṅḡḡḡ, if there is no one, as for that I will beat. And if there is someone, I will not beat guṅḡḡḡ. But the time I was a young man and I was beating guṅḡḡḡ, I had a lot of respect because of my beating.

I have been telling you that the guṅḡḡḡ has got many different ways of beating. Mohamadu, the one helping you in your practice, is my senior brother Sheni's son. As you are with him, you know that he has many different ways of beating the guṅḡḡḡ compared to the others who are in Tamale here. When

Mohamadu was very young, his father Shenii went to the South and sat at Konongo, and Mohamadu also went there, and I think he stayed about twelve years there. Why is it that those who travel to the South learn to beat better than others? Beating the drums cannot be done unless there are many people, because the drumming of one person cannot be sweeter than the drumming of many people. Someone will learn how to beat the *gunḡḡḡ* and will be beating it alone, but if you hear it, you may think that many people are beating it. I don't think anyone who has never been to the South can beat like that. Why do I say that? The reason why we try to beat like that is that sometimes in the South only three of you may be there to go and beat, but as you are three, you want to beat so that it will look as if many people are beating. The next day, if you go to beat again, you will beat the same thing. And any drummer who has never tried this cannot beat like that. As Mohamadu is beating, he beats like that, and my junior brother Fuseini Alhassan also beats like that, and I can beat like that.

As you have been following different people to beat the *gunḡḡḡ* at wedding houses and funeral houses, maybe you have been watchful. You will see someone who is strong, and he will use his left hand to press the *gunḡḡḡ*. I can say that every *gunḡḡḡ*, if you use the left hand to press it too much, it won't sound. You will only hear "*Bup, bup, bup,*" and the sound does not spread all around. As he has pressed his hand onto the skin, how will the sound spread out? Some who beats in that way, if you are watchful, you will see that the *gunḡḡḡ* does not sound very well. But if you take your hand and swing it up and down, and it is just sleeping on the skin, and you press it but you don't press too much, you will hear the sound of the *gunḡḡḡ*. The string they tie on the face of the *gunḡḡḡ*, *chahirga*, that string: that is the reason why they put it there. When your left hand is running on the skin, you will hear, "*Kre, kre, kre.*" If a drummer is beating, you will hear the sound vibrating inside the ground. Someone can be strong, but he cannot beat like that. And so everybody has the way he beats *gunḡḡḡ*, but if you press it too much, it's not good. This Mohamadu, this Shembila's son, if they gather like that, Mohamadu used to beat better than them. As for him, he used to loosen his hand on the skin. The way Mohamadu beats, that was the way his father used to beat. There are many drummers here who cannot beat *gunḡḡḡ* like that: such a drummer only learned how to beat by himself, and he has never traveled. He has not gone to the South to learn how they beat it there, and if he beats together with those of us who have been to the South, there will be differences. When Mohamadu was at Konongo, I went there one time for a wedding. The day of the wedding I beat the *gunḡḡḡ*. I was not planning to beat *gunḡḡḡ*; Mohamadu was supposed to beat the *gunḡḡḡ*, but he rather gave me the *gunḡḡḡ* to beat. And I took the *gunḡḡḡ* and beat it because I knew why he gave it

to me: when a lion is lying down, if a leopard wants to take some meat, the leopard cannot cross in front of the lion to eat it. The meaning of what I'm saying is that he thought that everything he knew how to beat, I was already holding all of it in my hand, and so I knew it better than he did. It was because of that he gave the *gunḡḡḡ* to me. If he had decided to beat it himself and I was sitting down, probably I would have seen some mistakes in his beating, and he didn't want me to blame him.

You see Fuseini Alhassan: today as we are sitting, truly, he is our great *gunḡḡḡ* beater in Dagbon. We call him *Jɛblin* because he is wild when he beats; he jumps around and brings many styles to his beating. That is why any time drummers are going to beat drums anywhere, they want him to be inside. The way he beats, those who want to follow him always find it very difficult. The way he beats the *gunḡḡḡ*, they have trained him properly, and he has also added his experience, so if you want to follow him to beat all that he beats, it will be difficult. He is always leading, and the difference between him and the others is always there. That is how it is. But if I like, I can say that the way Fuseini *Jɛblin* beats, I was beating more than that. The time I was beating *gunḡḡḡ*, it was different from the way Fuseini *Jɛblin* is beating now. *Jɛblin* beats this time's beating, with many styles. In our time, we were not making many styles like that. We were beating what we call *Taachi*: that is praising.

Taachi: when we gathered to beat the drum, we would start calling people one by one, to come inside and dance and show themselves. At that time, there were many Hausa and Kotokoli people. In their home towns they also have their names in drumming. A drummer would beat and beat and beat, and turn the beating. And I would take the *gunḡḡḡ* and also follow the drum, and also beat it and turn the beating. And the one who was going to sing would be singing. And I would be beating the *gunḡḡḡ*: *Zim! Zim! Zim! Zim!* Then when the one singing finished, then the drummers would respond. And the one you were praising would be giving you money. There was someone who called his name in Dagbani, and sometimes somebody would come inside and call his name with a Kotokoli name. Someone would have his name in Hausa and also call a name in Dagbani or Kotokoli. And the drummer singing would beat the drum and turn the language again. And I would take the *gunḡḡḡ* and start to beat, and the singer would be singing. When the one singing stopped, then the drummers would also respond with drums. It was sweet to the one you were praising: how the one singing was singing and the one beating the *gunḡḡḡ* would be beating, it was very sweet inside your dance. The drummers didn't run about; they were just standing at one place, and everything would be falling nicely.

And so at that time, the way we were beating *gunḡoḡ* was different. The time *Jeblin* grew up and learned, they learned to beat and run about and make many styles. And this time, there are more different dances. But the time I was beating the *gunḡoḡ*, we were using the *gunḡoḡ* to beat names, and those names we were beating, if they give the *gunḡoḡ* to *Jeblin*, *Jeblin* cannot beat those names. And so our beating at that time was different from the way *Jeblin* beats. The way we used to beat with the drum stick was different, and the one who used to beat the *gunḡoḡ* too was different. Our time's beating and this time's beating are not the same. In our time's beating, we had *Taachi*, but this time's young drummers, if not that they have learned *Taachi*, I can beat it now and I can change, and they won't know what I'm doing. At that time, too, I was beating the *gunḡoḡ* and the drum, and I was also singing. But *Jeblin* beats only *gunḡoḡ*: he doesn't sing, and he doesn't beat the drum. But he's the son of a drummer. That is how it is. And so drumming talks are plenty on the part of the *gunḡoḡ*.

Apart from that, sometimes you will go somewhere and see others beating drums, and you have never heard the type of beating they are beating. You will know that if you take their type of beating to your town and beat it there, you will get people who can dance it. If you know you can do that, you will take it to your town and beat it. As for dancing and learning how to beat the drum, you don't sit to learn it only in your town. If you sit in your town to learn, you will always be losing. Maybe the town where you refused to go, there is someone from that town in your town, and he is dancing his town's dance. When that fellow comes out to dance, if you don't know how to beat his dance, will it do? It won't do. You will only say, "I don't know," and you won't gain. And so as drumming has got different types, if you want to sit in your town and learn it, you won't know what is inside it. What are you going to do to know it? What you are taking to bluff with today, there is someone somewhere who beats more than that. Maybe you will change your styles twice, but there is someone somewhere who will change his styles three or four times. That is why I am always telling you that the talks of drumming are so much that if you want to talk about drumming, you will only talk to the extent you know. And someone might know more than the other. As for me, I am always trying to know more. Someone who doesn't want shame always tries to be learning.

And so if you are a drummer, you should try your best. Our *Dagbamba* dances in *Tamale* here are quite different from the dances in the South. When we beat our *Dagbamba* dances in the South, we don't beat them the same way here. The drummers who only stay in the South don't know our *Dagbamba* living. There is some drumming we do called *Punyiḡsili*: on Mondays and Fridays, when the chief is sleeping, early in the morning we drummers go to wake him up. On

Mondays and Fridays, many people will be going to greet the chief. If the chief is sleeping and we are beating, we say that the chief should wake up; it is daybreak; he should get up and pray to God. And so we also call it *Naa-Nyebu*: chief waking. That is another name. And we call it again: *Biεyunaayo*, day is breaking. That is three. The drummers in the South don't know how to beat it because they have not come home to Dagbon.

There are Dagbamba in the South, and they have given birth to children in the South, and the children they have given birth to there, their dances are not the same as the dances we have here. Even drummers who have been given birth in the South don't beat the same way. They know the Southern way of beating, and they don't know the Northern beating. They can only beat their Southern way because where they are, there is no Dagbamba chief, and what we beat here for the Dagbamba chiefs is quite different. When a Dagbamba chief comes out to dance, what we beat is different from what we beat when a commoner comes out to dance. The chief's dance is different, and we know his dance. As for a chief, his everything is "chief," and so the way he dances, that is it. The dancing always comes from those who dance it.

That is what? I will separate it. Somebody wants a hot dance. If you the drummers start and it is cool, you will see him shaking his head and raising his arms to tell them that they should let it be hot. And if he is somebody who dances a cool dance, and the drummers start it hot, then you will see him telling the drummers that they should make it come down. There is a drummer who is going to beat the drum for a chief and turn it to the dance, and all of you will squat down. The drummer will squat down, beat the drum and talk, and when he comes to call the name of the dance the chief wants to dance, the drummer will go back and start beating the drum and turn it to the dance. You will see the chief turning, and the way he dances, you will see it falling. And so everybody and his dance. There are some chiefs who dance a hot dance, and there are other chiefs who dance a cool dance. The whole thing lies in the hands of the drummers. If any chief comes out to dance, if we know the dance he dances, and we beat it, then he will dance it. When we make as if we are going to stop it, he will allow us to stop it. If we stop it and we see that he's not going from the place, then we bring will another dance again, and he will dance. Then we bring another one again, and he will dance. And so we know all the dances he wants. That is the way it is. The styles in the chief's dance are not many, but his changing of dances is plenty. As for a commoner, his changing of dances is not much, and when he dances two, it's finished, and he sits down. But his dancing styles are many inside a single dance.

And so we are more than the drummers in the South because we know all the drumming of the Dagbamba, and we know their way of beating, too. There is

no drumming in Dagbon which drummers will beat, and I won't know how to beat it. Even if I cannot beat all of it, they will drum and I will follow and answer. I don't sing the Samban' luja because I don't have the appetite for it, but in my group we have those who can sing it. And so those of us who are here are more than the drummers in the South. And those who are in my group are also more than the drummers who are here, because we know the South, too. But we are all one. We are all one, but we are more than one another. And it is our traveling and learning that make us more than the others. No one knows all the talks of drumming because no one can learn all of drumming. But everyone will learn to the extent he can learn.

And so it is good if you roam when you want to learn something. If you keep on traveling to learn more, whatever you learn from one place to another, you will see many things, and you will know whether you are doing well or not. But if you continue sitting at one place to learn something, your everything is one. You will only know how to beat the drumming from your town but not from other towns. And so even our mother's children come and ask, and I show them. It's just because I have roamed inside this drumming. If you are a drummer and your eyes are open here, and you go to the South and your eyes are open there, when you come here and other drummers see you, they will respect you. Anywhere you turn, you will eat. And so there are Dagbamba drummers who can drum many dances, and they are still learning drumming. Even I myself, as I am sitting, I am still learning. And so it isn't you alone who is learning all these ways of this drumming. Drumming has no end.

And tomorrow I will continue straightforward with the talk about drumming. And I will take it on the part of the respect of drumming in Dagbon here, and the strength we drummers have with the chiefs. And I will tell you a very deep and hidden story about these drums and how our drumming started.