

## **Chapter I–21: *Muslims’ Funerals and Chiefs’ Funerals***

As we are continuing the talk of funerals, I think we will start first with how the maalam perform their funerals, and those who are not maalam but they are holding the Islamic religion very well. Their way is different. Their way of performing funerals is only prayers and sacrifices. As for them, they don't shave their children's hair. And they don't beat drums. It can happen that you will see drummers beating at a maalam's funeral, and in that case it is because a chief gave birth to the maalam or a chief had given the dead person a chieftaincy like Limam or Yeri-Naa. If not that, drummers do not go to beat at a maalam's funeral. Where drummers beat, then there is chieftaincy there, and so drummers never beat at an ordinary Muslim's funeral. Muslims take the Islamic way of doing their things, and they don't bring their talks into chieftaincy talks.

In Dagbon here, too, there are differences among those who are following the Islamic religion. We have people who are praying in the Islamic way, and we have people whom we call true Muslims. If somebody is only praying, we call him by that name, that he is a prayer or someone who prays. Apart from that, there is someone who is coming from a family of Muslims, and his father and grandfather and great-grandfather were all Muslims. Such a person puts his everything in the Islamic way. It's not that the Muslims separate these types, because somebody's parents may not be Muslims, but he can decide to become a Muslim. Such a person's family talks can enter into how they will perform his funeral, and the ways can mix, but today I will only take it and follow it on the part of the true Muslims. And truly, it is not a long talk, and so if we talk and finish, I will move straightforward and talk about the funerals of chiefs.

As for Muslims, when their person dies, they make the three days, and going to the next week, getting to the same day he died, they will be performing the funeral. If he was a big maalam and he had people in other towns, they can add some days, say two weeks, and by that time all those who are at far places will be able to come. Someone will sit in Tamale here and give birth to many children, and the children will go to the South. If the children are in Accra and he dies today, they have to send a message. But if the children are somewhere and they don't know where, they have to send someone to search for them. Before the messenger will find the children, it might be about a week. That is why they sometimes wait fourteen days. If he was a big maalam or if he had people in other towns, they can add some days so that all those who are at far places will be able to come. But if all his people are around Dagbon here, they will perform the funeral in one week. And usually if it is a Muslim child who dies, in three days

time they will say their prayers, or if it was a young person, it will be the one week. And so if the person was old, they will perform the funeral in seven days or fourteen days; they can wait fourteen days because his people are living far away. And if they finish the small funeral, the three days and the seven days, the only thing remaining is what we call *daba pihinan*, forty days. As for the maalams, they don't do the showing the riches, and so there is nothing like waiting for three months or six months to perform the final funeral. They finish theirs on the fortieth day, and that day they will do the same thing they did when they finished the small funeral: they will gather and pray and give the sacrifice.

The day this person dies, while the dead body is still lying down, they will get money and read the Holy Qur'an, and the praying they pray will be the Asalaati. They bring the dead body out and stand and say the prayers. This prayer is that God has created him and brought him to this world, and now God is calling him back again. It is his work in this world that is going to hold him in the next world. It is his good work that will hold him. This is the type of prayer they say over the dead body. After they say the Asalaati, they will take the dead body to the cemetery, and they will pray and bury him. Then they will come back to the house and sit together and say another prayer, and everybody will go back to his house.

In the night they will come back and sit outside again. If the dead body had wives, the wives will not come out again; they will be in the room, and others will send food and everything to them. If they are to perform the funeral in one week's time, all the time before the funeral, all the Muslims who are in the town or from other towns will gather in the night, and they will talk talks. The dead body's housepeople will boil tea to give to the funeral strangers, and the maalams will talk and pray. They will just preach and remind people how death is and how people should live in this world. The next day after the preachings, they sit in the morning and read the Holy Qur'an and pray the Asalaati again. They will be praying like that going to the next week or the two weeks, on the day he died, when they will finish the funeral.

As the people are sitting outside like that, if it is just a Dagbana who died, then how the maalams will be coming in the evenings is from the elder of the funeral. If there's a maalam close to you, you can invite him so that he will come and be preaching for the whole week. But the maalams themselves, when a maalam of a very high standard dies, and they are performing the funeral, the maalams are going to be preaching from the first day up to seven days. If the dead body was a big maalam or an Alhaji or somebody who was very respected in the Islamic religion, every town's Limam will come on the funeral day, and every maalam will also come. The day they are going to finish the funeral, you will see

learned Muslims, say, from Savelugu, Kumbungu and other places. They will all come and sit down. When they come to preach like that, they will put a table there, and they will bring their Islamic books and put on the table. And every Limam from any different town, when he comes, he will also get up and speak to the people.

And the last day, this is how they are going to preach until daybreak, or about five o'clock. In the morning, they will boil tea again. On that day they will slaughter cows and sheep to make food for the funeral strangers. Those boiling rice will be boiling, and those pounding fufu will be pounding, and those stirring *sayim* will be stirring. They will gather again, and all the Limams and strangers from the towns and his sitting friends and relatives will get money to share among the maalams who are living in that town. Sometimes they put the money in envelopes and they write their names on the envelopes, and you will count thousands of envelopes. The money they give shows that they are making sacrifices for the dead body. And I have showed you this talk already: they will bring out the *pon*, the flat woven pan, many of them, and the dead person's sitting friends will get food, either maha or kpaakulo. Everybody will bring his pan to the funeral house, and add money, and tell the people, "This is what I am giving to make my friend's funeral." They will put all the food at one place, and they will take all the money and count it and put it on a pan. Then they will bring it outside and tell the people, "This is what we have received to make the funeral." As for the maha, they will share it among the maalams and the people who have come to the funeral, and they will take it and give it to children, too. The Limam of that town will come out and take the money and put it into his pocket, and then he will sit and start saying prayers. At that time, all the people will come forward and give any small money they have, and they will count it again and give it to the Limam. It is this money he will share among all the maalams who helped him say the prayers, but the money he put into his pocket is his profit on the money he used to buy his Limam chieftaincy, and he will not give it to anybody. In the evening the people will come together and go and greet people one by one. After the greetings, they will all go back to their houses, and by that time, they have finished performing the funeral. When the forty days comes, they will all come again, and they will sit down and pray the *adua* and give the sacrifice as they did before. Then everybody will go away. Those people who came from different towns will board cars and busses and go to their places. Those who will go to Tamale, they will go. Savelugu, they will go. Diari, they will go. Nanton, they will go. Kumbungu, they will go. And so that is all. It's finished.

During the forty days, the widows of the dead body will not come out of the house, and after the forty days, they will also come out and greet people. After

greeting the people, they will be at the dead body's house for six months after the death, and then they will go back to their family houses. How the women stay in their husband's house for six months, we call it *takaba*. The reason why the maalam's wives remain in the house is because sometimes, the way the woman slept with the husband, sometimes there may be pregnancy, and it is not up to one month when the husband dies, or this maalam dies. And so if these woman stay in the house like that, if any of the wives took pregnancy with the husband, it will come out for people to see. That is the reason why Muslims put it like that. If the pregnancy comes out and everyone sees it, and the woman gives birth, then at that time everyone will know that the child belongs to the maalam who died. That is why anybody in the Muslim religion, if he dies, his wife has to stay like that. The time these widows are going to leave the house, they will bathe and go back to their family houses. And if a widow is pregnant, she will remain in the house until she gives birth, and at that time they will bathe her.

As for bathing the widows, it is not only the maalam's. Every Dagbana, the widows bathe. If it is a typical Dagbana or a chief, the widows will dress in the white cloth woven by the weavers. If they want, they will wear a white head-tie. If it is on the chief's side, they put the widows at a special place and bathe them, but on the part of the maalam's widows, they bathe inside the house. If they want they will use a white veil to put on their head. As for the maalam's side, if they are going to bathe the widow, it is only some words that the woman will recite and bathe. If she can recite those words, she can bathe herself. But if she can't recite the words, then there are some women who will come and recite those things before bathing her. On that day when the woman is going to bathe, she will go and buy maha, and pray on it and give it as alms on behalf of her husband. And if there are three wives, that is how each will pray for her husband and before she bathes. That day, maalam's will come and sit down and say prayers, and the woman will share the maha to them. And they will say that the widows have gone out of *takaba*. And so we will go there and say prayers, and that is what will let the other people to get to know, because not many people will go there. Then after that, if the woman wants, she will go to her family house. She won't come and enter that house again. As she has finished the bathing and gone to her parents, if the widow is somebody who is not too much grown and she can marry again, she will sit in her family house, and another man will find her and marry her. And sometimes, if she is somebody who has had children with that maalam, she can remain in the maalam's house, just because of the many children there. And sometimes too, if the woman is old, she will remain in the husband's house with her children, and they will be taking care of her. But those who are not old, they will leave the house and marry again.

And again, there is another thing when the forty days comes. There is something called property. They have to share the property of the dead person. If it is the Dagbamba way, they will share the property after the final funeral, but on the maalam's side, normally they will finish it on that day. If the person is not very much holding to the Muslim way, then if the *buni wuhibu* day was yesterday, then they will finish the funeral today, and they will sit down and decide when to share the property. And so on that day, the only work of the maalam is the prayers and the sacrifice — the maha, the kpaakulo, and *fula*. They will share those things among the maalam, and they will cook food and put it inside bowls and give it to them, and the maalam will carry it to their homes. And after that they will remove the hands of the maalam. That is how that one is. And so if the maalam come on that day and finish the prayers, then what is left about the property, they will mention it there. It doesn't necessarily show that they will share the property just on that day. There are some people, on that Friday, when they finish the prayers, they will share it. If they pray in the morning, then after the afternoon prayers, they will do it. And there are some people who will wait up to a year. Sometimes they take it that because of the day, the elder of the funeral is too busy seeing to everybody who ran to the funeral, and so that day they don't have to rush to share the property. When the place is cooled down, and those who have come from other places have gone back home, then the sharing of the property is left within the family. They don't always fix a day when the property will be shared. Sometimes they will even wait for up to a year.

But on the part of the Muslims, if the dead person was holding strongly to the Muslim religion, then when they finish the forty days, they will share. If it is going to be following the way, then they will share the property on the fortieth day. That is how the maalam's way is. On that day they will call all the children of the dead person. They will get a maalam who knows how God said to share a dead body's property among his children. If there is nobody in that town who can do that, they will send to another town to call somebody. Whether the dead person was a woman or a man, the maalam they called will bring out all the dead person's property and put it down. If there is money, he will bring out the money and put it down. If there are books like the Holy Qur'an or Islamic writings, he will bring all out and put them down. He will bring out all the dead person's clothes and things. And he will sit down and read some verses from the Holy Qur'an about how God said they should share property. And he will call and say what part each of the children is to receive. According to the Islamic religion, when they are sharing property, a man will take two parts and a woman will take one part. If a man takes a hundred pounds, a woman will take fifty pounds. If a man takes fifty pounds, a woman will take twenty-five pounds. If the dead person

had cows, if a man takes ten cows, a woman will take five cows. If a man takes one cow, then two women will take one cow. This is how they have put it down, because according to the Islamic religion, the maalams say it is a man's rib that God took to create a woman, and so a woman should not compare herself to a man. That is how Muslims share the property in Dagbon here, and so the talks of one place are not the same as the talks of another place.

And so as they are sharing the property like that, every child will collect like that. But this property is going to these children along with their mothers. If they share the property, you the woman, what your children will eat, you are inside it, and so it belongs to you and your children. All the many things in the house that the man bought for the woman when she came to his house, the pots and cloths and other things, that is already her property along with what she herself owns, and so I'm only talking about the man's property. And so if someone has two wives, and one wife has given birth to two children, and the other wife has given birth to five children, the one with the five children will eat more than the one having two. And so it follows the number of children God has given the woman on the part of the man. This is how the sharing of property goes to the widows and their children. And what they do is that when they are going to share the property, then the women who gave birth to the children, their hands are not there. It is their children they are going to call to the gathering. They look at each mother's side, and they will call the eldest of the children, that he is going to represent his brothers and sisters on the mother's side. And they will show him, "You and your brothers and sisters, you are taking this," and "You and your brother, you are taking this." And this elder child, you are going to share what you collect with the children on your mother's side. And if you will collect it and eat and leave your mother's children, it is over to you. But the way we know it, the elder child will take it and share it with his brothers and sisters. The time the mother's hand will come inside, that is when the children are small. And so the mother will collect on their part. And inside the sharing, there is another way again and the woman will have a way to eat the husband's property, and that is if the woman has not given birth in the man's house. As for that, they won't leave her useless. When they are sharing the property, they will give her.

And the sharing of property shows something again. The time somebody was alive, what he gave to you is not an inheritance. What he died and left behind, that is what they are going to put down and share. This is the way they talk about it. If somebody is still alive, and he takes something and gives it to you as his child, they won't remove you from the sharing. For example, if somebody has houses, maybe he will give one house to one particular child. If that person dies and leave other property, when they are going to share it, they will include the

child who received the house and add something again. They won't say that the father gave the child this house when he was alive, and so now they won't give that child something again. On the way of God, it is not like that.

And as the sharing of property follows the women the dead person married and how they gave birth, sometimes there are other children who will be with somebody, and these children were not given birth by his own wives. You know that how our families are, sometimes you will take your brother's children to be living with you, and you will also give your children to your brother to train. And some people in Dagbon have their way of living. If you are sitting down and your junior brother's children are living with you, you will be looking at them. Maybe some of your senior brother's children are also living with you. If you die, how they are going to share the property, it is only your own children they will share it to. It is only if there is some things remaining before they will share something to your brother's children. And so some people, if they have the means, they will think about this before their death. Your junior brother's children: they have suffered for you. And your senior brother's children living with you, they have been suffering for you. To some people, if they have cows, they will share cows to these children. "You children have suffered for me, and so I have to give you something when I am alive, before I die." As for such people, they have separated the talk. It is there like that in Dagbon. And the reason is that if you die and they are coming to share the property, they are going to look through what the Holy Qur'an says, and sometimes these children will not be considered to be given something. And it is because you cannot use your heart to know what they will do when they share the property. The maalam will decide, and nobody puts his hand inside again. And so if they share the property to the dead person's real children and leave those children who have been living with him, then the dead person underground will be happy that his brothers' children have already got something because of how they stayed with him and suffered for him. And so some people do it like that. And there are some people, if they are owning some houses, they will go to the government office and put the names of the children on the houses. Let's say that one of the wives has got small children: the man can put the house in the name of these children, so that if he dies, the mother will be staying in the house and taking care of the children.

Now that our eyes are open, some people take the white man's way, and they write down how the property must be shared. The educated people, many of them have been doing that, so that if they die, they know where the property is going. But if somebody writes things down and they don't give some of the property to one particular woman's child, or children, then those children can challenge. And so most of the time, people don't write such things down; they let

the maalams share the property because they have trust that the maalams will share it in the correct way. In Dagbon, how the maalams will share property, they won't say that the property should go to the children on one side and leave another side. In Dagbon, nobody can do that. If you want to remove one of your children from eating your property, then you have to declare that the child is not yours, that the child is somebody's child. The time you are alive, that is the time you have to let people know it, before you die. You will let people bear you witness that that child is not yours. And so such a child doesn't have to eat somebody's father's property. But don't say that after your death, they shouldn't leave him anything. If you don't bring it outside to the notice of other people, and it is just that your heart doesn't want that boy or that girl, and you want to divert all your property to the children on one woman's side if you die, there is a way the child can take you to court. The child can go to the chief's court or to the government court. They will gather, with the child they removed from the property children, and they will call the other brothers and ask them why they ate the property and that child didn't eat. They will look into it and see whether this child actually belonged to the man or not. And they will say that the child is for dead person. And the dead person didn't remove him from his children. They will ask, "Why is it that he died and you didn't give this child some of the property?" At that time, you will see that the truth has come. And so as for Dagbon, they don't do that. If you have many children and you want that when you die, the one you like best should go ahead among all of them, then the time you are alive, that is the time you will start giving that child things to keep on his own.

As for the sharing of property, it is very hard. Truly, if not learned people, people are afraid of how to share property. It's a very dangerous thing. If you are sharing it and you move a single step away from the right way, you will face problems. And so the one who does it is somebody who knows what God talks about it. He doesn't share the property according to his own heart. He is going to put down the talks of God, that book, and look into it before sharing. Sometimes you will see someone who has a lot of money. Apart from that, there are tractors, and articulator trucks, and busses and cars. There are houses, too. Such a person, he will be having wives, and with these different wives he has given birth to a lot of children. If such a person should die, the time they are going to gather all this property to share it among all these people, the maalams who are going share it have to decide how they are going to follow the Holy Qur'an according to this particular case. And so that is why the work is difficult.

And so as for us, the only thing we know is that maalams should come and do it. This is the way it is. Somebody can die, and they will bring the paper and look through and see how they are going to share the property. It looks like the



way the maalam is going to look through the Holy Qur'an and share it, but it is only that in the Muslim way, they are following a general rule to share it. As for this place, when they share the property like that, then you have nowhere to take anybody and say that you didn't get this or that. They don't look into what your father said before he died. They only look into the Holy Qur'an to share the property, and that is how it is going to stand.

Truly, if we follow this talk on the part of sharing property, it comes to enter the talk of our Dagbamba families. As for the typical Dagbamba, those who don't know anything about the Muslim religion, their way of living is different. As for them, when they are going to share property, they don't call a maalam to come and show how they are going to share it. And there are many Dagbamba who are praying but they are not maalams, and their talk also separates on some points. And so I will join that talk here on the part of sharing property when a Dagbamba dies.

On the part of us Dagbamba, I told you that all the talks of the funeral are in the hands of the elder of the funeral house. He is the leader of the funeral, and he is somebody like the dead person's senior brother or junior brother, and he is coming to stand at the head of the family to perform the funeral. And I told you that if they finish performing the small funeral and the leader goes back to his house, he will be holding the women and children in his brother's house, sending money and food to take care of all of them. It is one family, and the elder of the funeral house is going to be holding all of them. And so let's take it, for example, that we are children inside a house, and we are not too much grown, and our father dies and leaves us. As our father has died, maybe one of our father's brothers, that is, our junior father or senior father, is also still living. He will come and perform our father's funeral. The one who comes and performs our father's funeral is the one who is going to inherit what we the children are to inherit. If there are cows or sheep or goats, our father's brother will collect all. Maybe our father's brother is not living in the same town. If he is in a different town, maybe he will say that as our father has died, he will come to the house and stay there. If he doesn't like the town where he was staying, after he finishes performing the funeral, he will go back to that town and collect his wife and children and come. If his own children are grown, he can leave his first-born to take care of that house, and he will collect the small children and come, and he will mix them with us the junior children who are still in the house, and he will be in our father's house holding all of us. He is going to take charge of all the small children our father died and left. If some of our brothers are grown, sometimes our senior father will leave those brothers in charge of the house, and he will collect the small children back to his own house. And so in that case, if a child is in the house, if he likes, he can follow the one

who has come to perform the funeral, and he will be staying with his senior father or junior father. And if the child likes, he can remain in his father's house to stay with his senior brother. And so this is what is happening in the villages.

And again, let's say that we are typical Dagbamba; we are not Muslims. And we are in a village like Tampion or Tolon, because in those places things are different from the town. How we come together in our living and how one family stays together in a house, if our father dies and leaves a house, and we all have one father but our mothers are different, and our father built only one house, how are we going to live in that house? If our father dies and leaves the house, we the children of our father, if we are grown, it is our father's first son who will become the leader. He is going to head the house now. As he is holding the house, any one of us children who has sense will bring himself to his senior brother and give himself to the brother, and the brother will also hold him. As for the one who doesn't bring himself to his senior brother, the senior brother will not mind him. What is "bringing yourself to the brother?" If the child stays with his senior brother, he can stay there in two ways. He can take it that the house is for their father and they are all living inside, and they are not holding one another. It is a child without sense who takes this way of living with the senior brother. And the senior brother will also take it like that. If the senior brother is going to the farm, the child will not follow him. He is sitting on his own in that particular place. If something happens to the child, the senior brother will not hold the talk. But if you the child has sense, you will bring yourself to your brother, and anything the senior brother has to do, you will do it for him. As you are doing all his things for him, if he is going to the farm, you will be following him to the farm. Whether or not you and your senior brother have the same mother, you will do everything for him, and he will also be holding you.

And how it happens, let's say we are six children our father gave birth to, and we the first three children are grown up, and the others are small children. If our father dies, we who have grown up are going to take charge of the house, and we the first three children will come together to stay in that house. If we come together like that, it shows that we have one mouth. But sometimes the children will not have one mouth, and what always brings that is if they have different mothers. It is not even they themselves who will bring it: it is their wives and children. The senior one will have a wife and children, and the second one will have a wife and children, the same as the third one. Any time the children quarrel, you will see the wife of the eldest brother saying, "If you children don't take time, my husband will drive you and your father away from this house." It will bring confusion, and the house will break. How is the house going to break? If the brothers don't have patience on the part of holding their wives, sometimes the

junior brothers will leave the house and go to someplace and build their own house. Sometimes it will come like that, and the junior brothers will get up and stand strongly and make medicine to kill their senior brother. If the senior brother dies, they will not stay in the house again. By that time, the house will turn to become a useless house.

It's not all houses I'm talking about. If God has made them well, and they get good wives, and they give birth to children who hear what their fathers say, then the house will stand because all of them have one mouth. You will see that all the senior brother's children and the junior brothers' children will make one mouth and will be going to the farm to be farming. They will farm the same way they were farming for their father before. Such houses are standing up to now, and it does not show that they are having one mother. They can have different mothers, but God has made them. If these elder brothers die, that is the time you will see the house break. At that time their children will stand up, and one will say, "The house is for my father," and another one will say, "The house is for my father." And that is how it is in the villages.

In town here, if somebody dies and he has children and he has one house, they will come and count the number of rooms in the house and divide the rooms among the children. If there are women among them, a woman will take half of what a man takes; and so if a man takes two, a woman will take one. That is how they share inherited property. In a town like Tamale here, sometimes they are going to share the property and there will be quarreling, and they will decide that they should sell the house. It can happen that they will divide the number of rooms for the children, and the rooms will not be enough for them, and then they will have to sell the house. When it stands that they will sell the house, then they will divide the money among themselves. But in the villages, sometimes an old man will give birth to many children before he dies, and the senior children have grown up and built their own houses. If their father dies, they won't have appetite to inherit their father's house.

But in the town here, how we are sitting with each other, it is trouble. If we gather ourselves in one house and our mouths are not one, our wives will cook differently, and the talking will not stop. Every day there will be talking in the house. Our wives will not stop quarreling in the house for even one day. And the children too, any time they fight, you will hear one abusing the other, "This house is not for your father." No one will drive the other from the house; it is your own heart which will drive you from the house, and you will become fed up and leave.

As I am sitting, I have seen it in my family. The house I am staying, it was our house before, and our brother Sumaani sold it to a Yoruba man. You know him; we have the same father but different mothers. He is the one who sold the

house. When the Yoruba man said he was going back to his home town, Sumaani had gone to stay in the South and was not in town here. When the Yoruba man came to sell the house to me, Sumaani's junior brother asked why should the Yoruba man sell the house to me, and if I was able to buy the house, I should put Sumaani's name on it. At that time too, I didn't have enough money to pay for it. Somebody promised to lend me money to buy it, and he gave me the money. At that time, my brothers said, "How?" And there was quarreling among us. And then the one who paid for the house said that he was not giving the house to me, and he was not giving the house to my brothers, and he himself was going to put his own name on the house. And so now as we are staying in the house, we are renting. My brother has fallen, and I have also fallen, and what I have just talked about, has it come or not?

And so in Dagbon here, if you see brothers and sisters living together in a house, you have to ask what is happening within them. If their fathers are not there, truly, it will be difficult for them to remain in the house. If their father died and left the house, and they are staying peacefully together, then in the end you may find they all have one father and one mother. If they have one father and different mothers, they will find it difficult. And if they are staying together peacefully, and you follow it again, you may find that one will be the father's child and another will be the father's brother's child or the father's sister's child. They can come to stay together like that. If not that, then the child I talked about, the one who has sense, he will give himself to his senior brother, and as for him, he can stay with his senior brother in the house. And this is how we group together in a house and how some families are able to stay together peacefully. That is the way it goes. And what I am also telling you is that people with different mothers, it is not often that you will see them staying together in a house. But sometimes we see children of one father and one mother, and even thirty or forty of them can stay together in one house, and they will even send to get their junior brothers' children and bring them into the house, and they will add their nephews too. And so that is how our Dagbamba families are moving.

And I think that how I have talked about the sharing of property and how the maalam and those who are holding the Islamic religion perform their funerals and finish everything, and we have finished that part. That is what I know about it. Our drumming does not enter into the Muslims's funerals unless the funeral is standing on the part of chieftaincy. And the talk of chieftaincy has also got its ways, because when a chief dies, there are many things they have to do before they will get a new chief. And so we will follow it and go.

As for the funerals of chiefs, I have told you that drumming talks are too many, and you can't say everything about drumming and finish. Everyone learns

to the point he can learn. We are all one, but knowledge and traveling has made us to be more than one another. In Dagbon here, the drumming we do when a person dies is different, and it follows the type of person who died. What we beat when a commoner dies is different from what we beat when a chief dies, and if a chief's elder dies, what we beat is also different. They are three things and they are not the same. The tribes who stay with us here, if someone from one of the tribes dies, we don't go to beat; only if they call us to beat when they are performing the funeral, we will go. But when a Dagbana dies, there are certain things we beat. And so to talk about the funerals of chiefs, I am going to separate it by talking about the differences. What I talked to you yesterday, I am not going to show all of it again, but I'm only going to talk about the differences on the part of the chiefs.

Yesterday I told you about some drumming we beat when a Dagbana dies and is still lying in the room. If it is someone who is up to a person, we will go and beat it, and we say we are going to cry the funeral. When we go and we are going to cry the funeral, it is drums we take to cry it. We call it *Be kumdi la kuli*, that they are crying the funeral, and it is also nearly the same as what we call *Kulunsi*, funeral drumming. They don't show this beating to any drummer, and it is only at the funeral houses that a small drummer will learn it. We have never heard that they taught a drummer how to cry the funeral. You will all hold your drums, and the one in front will start, and you will be using your drum to answer. You will play till you finish, and it is only there that anyone will learn to beat it. After we cry the funeral, we will go into the house and beat Dikala in the compound. If it is a big man on the part of chieftaincy who has died, we can beat *Ɔem*, and sometimes *Baŋgumaŋa*. Then we beat *Doyu*, that is, the first-born's dance.

If it is a chief who died, in our tradition, we show that a chief does not die. If a chief of a town dies, someone will take his place, and we will call that fellow the chief of the town, and so we say that a chief does not die. And if a chief dies, how they will dress the dead body, they will get a type of sandals we call *salimata*; they are made with red leather. And they get a white hat; this hat has got something to cover the ears. They get a white gown; this gown is made with the woven cloth made locally by our Dagbamba weavers. And they also get the short trousers which go with the gown. They will dress the dead body with all this. When they are going to take the dead person to bury, we cry the funeral, and when they are going to take him to bury him, they will raise him up. People will be holding him up, and others will be holding his legs. And they will make him walk. The ones holding his legs will make him move the legs, one after the other, and he will walk to the grave. And drummers will be beating until they get to the grave.

The time they make the dead chief walk to the grave, we will beat Ginggaani, and the chief will walk to the grave. How they dig the grave, our Dagbamba graves are not dug straight down: they will dig down and then dig at the side, so that they can lay the dead body at the side. And they will get a lion skin, a leopard skin, and a hyena skin, and they will put these skins inside the grave for the dead body to be lying on. And they will get a pillow and add. This pillow is just a small one made of leather, and they sew it. And when they get there, they will put him inside the grave lying on the skins and the pillow. Truly, it isn't all chiefs they bury like that. There are different ways we beat Ginggaani for the big chiefs, and we won't beat the same thing for all chiefs. The one whose chieftaincy is a small one, then you have to beat the small Ginggaani for him. If he dies, when they are going to put him into the grave, you have to beat the small Ginggaani, because when he was alive, you didn't beat the big Ginggaani for him. And so all the chiefs, everyone has where he is standing. As for the chiefs, they are more than one another. And again, it isn't all chiefs they bury with those particular skins. Some of the chiefs, they bury them on cow skins and the pillow, and it's just because when he was a chief and sitting down, he was sitting on cow skins and a pillow. But if you come to hear of the lion skin and leopard skin and the other skins that will add, then you will know that it was a big chief. If not Yaa-Naa or Kari-Naa or Savelugu-Naa or Gushe-Naa or Nanton-Naa, they don't bury them with those skins. As for them, they are the big people, and they are the ones they bury with such skins. I haven't seen the way they bury all the different chiefs, and so I cannot say exactly which ones are buried with which skins, and so this is the extent I can separate it for you. And when they walk the chief and put him into the grave, then they get big sticks and fix them inside the grave where the dead body is lying before they will push the dirt into the grave. They will hide him in the grave, and then we drummers change and beat *Bimbiɛyɛ*. *Bimbiɛyɛ yaa yɛn gari, miligim' k'o gari*: The bad thing is going to pass; move and he will pass. And this is how they bury a chief. That is our tradition. And this walking, it is not because of anything but what I have told you: in our tradition, a chief does not die, and so we show it. When they finish burying him, we take our drums and cry the funeral again before we go to our houses. And every evening we will come and play Damba at the chief's house until they have done the three days and the seven days, when they will finish closing the hole. That is how they follow the small funeral.

When they finish burying a chief and they have finished covering the grave, they have some things to do on the part of chieftaincy. And they will sit together and decide when they are going to gather to shave the heads of the funeral children, and they will get the first-born of the chief, the *Gboɲlana*, and sit him on

the skin. In our Dagbani, *gbɔŋ* is “skin,” and *lana* is “a person who owns or holds something,” and so the *Gbɔŋlana* is the one holding the skin, and he is going to be sitting on the skin in place of his father.

They will come together and sit down, and they will call the one who is going to perform the funeral. How I will talk about it, this talk enters into the talk of chieftaincy, and the talk of chieftaincy has its own place in our book. As we are going to enter it a little bit today, I think it will be good if I follow it by giving you an example, say, if it is the Savelugu chief who has died. The Savelugu chief is a big chief. During the olden days, when our roads were long, the Savelugu chief was like the Yaa-Naa to this side of Dagbon. As Yendi is there, in Dagbani we call it *Naya*, and people in Yendi call our side of Dagbon *Toma*. And in the olden days, we called the Savelugu chief as *Toma Yaa-Naa*. Any talk that came, if it was a talk that could go to Yendi, they would only send it to the Savelugu chief, and the Savelugu chief would decide and then send to tell the Yaa-Naa. And so Savelugu is a very big chieftaincy.

How our Dagbon is, every chief has the one who is supposed to perform his funeral, and if the Savelugu chief dies, it is the Nanton-Naa who performs the funeral of the Savelugu chief. As Nanton-Naa is coming to perform the funeral of Savelugu-Naa, I'll tell you something. If the Savelugu chief dies and they don't see Nanton-Naa, they can't bury him. Nanton-Naa himself comes. He can never send somebody. Savelugu-Naa calls Nanton-Naa his fellow elder, and Nanton-Naa too calls Savelugu-Naa his fellow elder. When the Savelugu chief dies, they will send a message to tell Nanton-Naa, and Nanton-Naa will get prepared and come. When he arrives and they bury Savelugu-Naa, then Nanton-Naa is going to be lying down there holding the funeral. All those who will run to the funeral, it is Nanton-Naa they are going to see. He will be sitting down up to time they will close the grave, and he will seat the *Gbɔŋlana* on the skins and will still be lying there. He won't go home. Even if something happens at home and they send for him, as he is lying there, he won't go home unless they perform the funeral of Savelugu chief. And the time they will give the chieftaincy to another person, when the new chief comes, he will also go and greet Nanton-Naa, and Nanton-Naa will find elders to take him to Savelugu. And so these two chiefs, this is the way they are standing. Nanton-Naa is for Savelugu-Naa funeral, and Savelugu-Naa is for Nanton-Naa's funeral. If Nanton-Naa dies and they don't see the Savelugu chief, they can't bury him. And if Savelugu-Naa comes and lies down in Nanton, anybody who will come for the funeral, it is the Savelugu chief he will go and see. If Yaa-Naa's messenger comes, the messenger has to go to Savelugu-Naa. That is how it is.

And so if the Savelugu-Naa dies, as Yaa-Naa has sent his elders, they will come and meet Nanton-Naa, and they will greet and give him what Yaa-Naa has

given him for the performing of the funeral. At the funeral of Savelugu-Naa who last died, it was Balo-Naa who came as Yaa-Naa's messenger, along with some others. They will send and tell the Savelugu chief's Gboɲlana, the first-born son of the chief, and Yaa-Naa's messenger will slaughter a sheep for him. And because they are going to seat the Savelugu Gboɲlana, anybody who has anything to do with Yaa-Naa will send a messenger there. Gundo-Naa's messenger is there. Tolon-Naa's messenger is there. Every big chief's messenger is there. Every town or village under Savelugu, that chief will come there. They will all come to see how they are going to sit the Gboɲlana. And they will all come with drummers. As Namon-Naa is the chief of drummers at Yendi, Namon-Naa has also sent his children, and they will come and meet the Savelugu Palo-Naa, and they will give Palo-Naa what Namon-Naa has sent for him. Namon-Naa's messenger will take about two bundles of yams and a guinea fowl. Palo-Naa and his children and any drummer who will come there, they are all going to follow the back of the messengers of Namon-Naa. Sometimes Namon-Naa will send only one person. But any drummer who is in that town is Namon-Naa's child, and so we say that it is Namon-Naa's drummers. We are going to go and carry Namon-Naa's message. That is how it is. And Yaa-Naa's Akarima will come, and just as Namon-Naa's messenger is coming to enter Palo-Naa's house, he is going to stay in Savelugu Akarima's house. When Yendi Akarima is coming, he doesn't carry the timpana from Yendi, but he is holding the sticks, and it is through the sticks that people will get to know that he is Akarima. And the timpana that is at the Savelugu chief's house, that is what he will use the sticks to beat.

If they have performed the small funeral, after the seven days, the seating of the Gboɲlana will come, say, about two weeks after the chief died. At times, some people leave it for three weeks' or one month's time. As for this, they always do it quickly, because they want to show that as the chief has died, if they put the Gboɲlana on the skins, it means that the chief is still there. It's only if there is no food that they will say that they have to wait until the time they get food. That is the only way for them to delay it, but they won't keep long. When they seat the Gboɲlana, that is the day they shave the funeral children. Yesterday I told you that it is the commoners who do the shaving when they are going to show the riches. But on the chief's side, when they are coming to make the final funeral, they don't shave again. It is not inside the tradition like that, but if the Gboɲlana decides that when they are going to make the final funeral, he will shave again, then it is over to him, but they are not going to gather all of them and shave them as they did the first time.

As Savelugu-Naa is a big chief, let's say that the day they start will be a Friday, and early in the morning, all the drummers who have come to the town



along with the drummers of the town, they will go and cry the funeral, and we say that they have gone to wake up the funeral. Everyone will know that today is the day they are going to shave the heads. And when it's about ten o'clock in the morning, Kamo-Naa and his followers will come with their guns, and drummers will go together with the Kambonsi to the chief's house. They will gather around the house, and the Kambonsi will be shooting the guns. And this is how we wake up the funeral.

When they finish shooting the guns, they will get the Pakpɔŋ, the first-born daughter of the chief, and then they will get the Gbɔŋlana. And the funeral children will also gather in the compound of the chief's house. The way they start it, the Gbɔŋlana and Pakpɔŋ are the first people they have to shave, and after that, they shave the rest of the funeral children at that same place. But at times it happens that the Gbɔŋlana or the Pakpɔŋ will decide to shave in their homes before. Usually, they bring the Pakpɔŋ there and shave her. But as for Gbɔŋlana, usually they shave Gbɔŋlana at the house, because some of them don't want to come to an open place and shave; but somebody who likes will come and sit down. It doesn't matter.

And so if the Gbɔŋlana and the Pakpɔŋ come and sit down, they will get Yidan' Gunu, the chief barber. They will let the Gbɔŋlana and the Pakpɔŋ sit, and they get a barber by each one. At that time, Namo-Naa's messenger will get a drum and start beating, and we drummers will be answering. And so the Pakpɔŋ and Gbɔŋlana, they are the two people who are going to start the shaving, because they are the elders of the funeral children. After shaving them, any child who wants can come there and shave. And those who wouldn't like to shave, they only wear something we call *kpari*: it is a woven ring of grasses they put on their heads, but at this time, it is not strong again. And the drummers will start beating Yori, and the barbers will be shaving their heads. And that is *Be pindi la kubihi*, that "they are shaving the funeral children." Yesterday we talked about it. What the drummers are beating in the funeral house, we don't beat it by heart, and we don't joke with it. Apart from the Yori they beat for the Yaa-Naa's daughters to dance, it is only on the shaving day that they beat this beating. And if they are beating it for some time, and they want to beat Doyu, then they can beat it. And if they want to add Baŋgumaŋa too, they can add it. But as for the beginning of the shaving of the heads, it is Yori they use to start it. That is the way it is. People will gather to watch, and money will be coming out. And so after the barbers have shaved the Gbɔŋlana and the Pakpɔŋ, then the remaining of the chief's children, men and women, and his brothers' children, and if they want they will add his grandchildren: all of them will shave their heads.

When the barbers finish shaving everybody, they will all go and bathe and prepare. At that time, the butchers will slaughter a cow. They slaughter sheep,

too. Sometimes they slaughter a number of sheep, but it is the cow that is important. The head of the cow is for the Namonaa's messenger, and a leg of the cow is for the Yaa-Naa's Akarima. The reason why the drummers get the head is that old people say that that is how Dagbon started, and it is the drummers who are in front and the other commoners like Akarima who are following. And so when they are making a funeral, if they slaughter an animal, the head goes to the drummers. And in Dagbon, in any chief's house where they are making a funeral and they slaughter cows, Akarima eats the cow legs. And as it is standing that Yaa-Naa is the head of Dagbamba chieftaincy, then where his Akarima is, he has to collect the legs. That's why when he is present at a funeral, they have to give him those legs, and he will carry it back to Yendi. And if Yendi Akarima wants and he gives it to that town's Akarima, there is nothing wrong. And at times my grandfather Namonaa will tell his messenger that if he comes and they have taken his share for him, they should give it to Palo-Naa. They will bring out the cow head, and Namonaa's messenger will tell Palo-Naa. "My grandfather told me that when I come and they've removed the cow head, that you should take it and cook it for visitors." And if Palo-Naa doesn't receive it, then Namonaa's messenger will carry the cow head back to Yendi.

They will take the skin of one of the sheep they have slaughtered and spread it in the sun, and by the time the Gboɲlana takes his bath and comes out, the skin will be dry. They will put a rope through the skin and put it on the Gboɲlana, because in the olden days we were wearing skins. There is a dress for the chief we call the "red-day dress." What is the red-day dress? It is a war dress. When a chief is made a chief, he will let them sew his war dress. Even if there is no war, he will let them sew it and keep it. There is medicine in it we call *gbɔɣno*, and it will protect the chief from weapons. They will put this *gbɔɣno* dress on the Gboɲlana. And there is a hat we call *buyu*, and they will put it on his head. There is a type of tree, and they take the bark of the tree and they beat it to make it soft, they will sew it to make the *buyu*. And maalams too will put some writings on it. It is a bit tall. They make the same type of hat for the Pakɔɲ, and they will put it on her. Pakɔɲ and Gboɲlana, they are the same. She is a woman, and she is also the first-born. It is the Yaa-Naa's messenger who will put these things on them.

Namonaa's messenger will stand by the door of the chief's compound, and the moment the Gboɲlana brings his head out from the room, Namonaa's messenger will start beating, and he will be walking and they will take him outside. When the Gboɲlana dresses and the drummers are bringing him out, it is Ginggaani. We will beat Ginggaani all the way, and he will come and sit under the shed outside the chief's house. And after he sits, we who are beating the drums, we will stop, and we will keep quiet.

Then Gbɔŋlana will greet the people who have gathered, and they will call the elders and give them cola. He will say that he is greeting his junior father so-and-so, he is greeting his junior father so-and-so, he is greeting his mother so-and-so. After they share the cola, Yaa-Naa's messenger will say, "The chief does not die. As our elder is not there, he is not dead. He has traveled. He has only removed the skin and left the molting. And so he is not dead. He has only removed his skin, and what he has removed and left is going to stand in his place again. And he and his elders will be consulting one another. If something is good, they will take it and come and show him. If something is not good, they will take it and come and show him." And an elder of the chief's house will also stand and talk to all the funeral children. He will look at the Gbɔŋlana, and he will see that all of them are mature. And he will also say that the chief has traveled, not that he's dead. When they say something like that, it is because of how they look at the Gbɔŋlana and the Pakpɔŋ and the chief's children, and they know that they are grown. That is why they say that such-and-such a person, he has taken his body and left the skin behind. And so it is the skin that is representing the children. The body is gone, and they say simply that the person has left the skin and traveled. And so for example, the skin is like a photo of somebody who has died, and they look at it and talk like that. And so the chief has traveled; he is not dead. If you see the children, you are seeing the person, because he children are there to represent the father.

And at that time maalams will say prayers. And the way Yaa-Naa's messenger is there, the Yendi Limam's messenger is there, too; if he comes, he will enter Savelugu Limam's house. And so the time they bring the Gbɔŋlana outside, the maalams will also gather there for prayers, and then the maalams will pray and finish and go. And then the drummers will start beating Zuu-waa, the first-born's dance, and turn it to Doyu. Zuu-waa and Doyu are the same drumming, but one is a bit fast, and so they have the different names. Truly, there are other names: if we want, we can call it as *Dotuli*, or as *Damahili*, "fresh stick." At that time, if the Gbɔŋlana wants, he will come out and dance. And Pakpɔŋ too will come out and dance. And after that, anyone who wants can dance. So that is how it is. That is how they put the Gbɔŋlana on the skins.

And so that is the Gbɔŋlana, and the reason why they do all this is because the way Gbɔŋlana will come out and sit outside in the shed, he will be sitting in the place of his father until the final funeral when they will make a new chief. And so he is Savelugulana. The way his father was sitting down, if people gather, the way his father will give them cola, it is the same thing he is going to do. All these elders will all be present there, and so he is going to call them the way his father was doing it. They will come and squat in front of him, and he will be

giving them the cola. That day, he has turned to be his father. When he talks, you will hear everybody responding “*Naa*,” and they will be clapping their hands. At that time, he is his own father. From that day, if any village chieftaincy falls, then you will see that they will come and start looking for that chieftaincy from him, and he too will be giving the chieftaincy to them. And any elders’ chieftaincy that has also fallen in that town, if they haven’t finished performing that funeral, as he’s sitting down as the *Gboṅlana*, when they make that funeral, it is to him that they will come and search for the chieftaincy. And the one he likes is the one he is going to give the chieftaincy. At that time, this what he will be doing. If somebody sits as a *Gboṅlana*, what his father was doing, that is what he is also going to be doing up to the time his father’s funeral will be performed. And that day when they seat the *Gboṅlana*, they will put down the day for the final funeral.

As we are taking *Savelugu* as an example, if the *Savelugu* chief dies, they will perform the final funeral in six months. And the day of the showing the riches, if it is going to be on a Thursday, then by Sunday or Monday, everybody will be coming. It is those whose towns are far who will be coming by Tuesday. Any chief who follows behind the *Savelugu* chief, when he is coming, his drummers will be following him. Wherever a chief goes, his drummers will accompany him there. Everyone will be carrying his food because when they get to the town, and they are many, no one will be able to feed all of them. The chief’s children do not farm, and they do not know how they will give someone food, and so when a chief is going to perform another chief’s funeral, he carries his own food from his house. When a chief gets to the town, the drummers will accompany him to the funeral house. And the chief will go to the house he will enter and sleep. In the night when they cook, they will cut food for the drummers and the elders, and they will cut food for them every day until the day they are going to show the riches. His *Kamo-Naa* and *Kambonsi* will prepare, and on the day when this chief comes to enter the funeral, the *Kambonsi* will shoot guns, and the drummers will cry the funeral, and they will wake up the funeral. Everyone will know that as they have fixed the day for the funeral, this is the day they are going to start.

These *Kambonsi*, those who shoot the guns, I will tell you something about them. Yesterday I told you that you can know something about the person who died from the shooting of the guns. But I have to separate it for you, because it isn’t at everybody’s funeral they shoot the guns. And so those who die and they shoot the guns: if one of the gun-shooters dies, or if a *Kambonsi* child dies. If a *Kambonsi*’s daughter dies, somebody like that, they can shoot fourteen times, because she belonged to the family. But the woman who will die and you will hear the guns fourteen times, it is not all that common. And so if a *Kamboṅa*

woman dies, and they are going to shoot the guns, then one gun is going to fire four times, and then you will get to know that it is a woman. If not one person is to fire four times, then four people will fire one-one-one-one: four, for a woman. And if it is a man, this gun will sound three times, and you will hear and get to know that it is a man who died. And for a man, one person three times, or three people, one-one-one. As for the one who has eaten Kamboŋ chieftaincy and dies, that one too, they will shoot.

And if a chief should die, the Kamo-Naa will gather his followers to the funeral, and even the Kambonsi who are in other villages can gather. Sometimes they will gather the guns up to fifty. And that one, we call it that “they have entered gunḡḡḡ.” They will go around the chief’s house. If they go around the palace three times, the first one leading them will stop at a point. Then he will get ready with the gun and shoot it, *Krrm!* Then the next one will shoot. Then the next one will shoot. And if the leader gets to know that it has gone through, he will get up again and start going around the chief’s house. They will go round the chief’s house three times. Then they will come and squat down again. Then the leader will take up the gun. If his gun sounds, then the rest will start to fire. And when it gets to the last point again, then he will get up again. And he will go around three times again. Then they have finished. Then after that they will get up and start dancing Kamboŋ-waa. And when they are going, they will start firing again, but that one is just for life. That is the way they shoot.

Apart from that, if somebody like a commoner is there, and his old person dies, he can go and buy the Kambonsi. He will tell the Kambonsi that the day of showing the riches, he would like them to come and shoot the guns. The showing the riches day, in the morning, they will come and fire. And so they have bought them to come and shoot, and it isn’t that one of the Kambonsi has died. Even if a chief’s son dies, they will have to go to buy the Kambonsi to come. Only a chief will die and they will come and shoot without anybody buying them, because it is the chief who gives chieftaincy to the Kambonsi. In the olden days, when chieftaincy was chieftaincy in Dagbon, when you would see Kambonsi, it was the chief who bought them all the guns they would be holding. And so if somebody buys something for you and he is not there, will you bring that thing to his funeral or not? That is why the chief’s funeral is greeted by the Kambonsi. That is how it is. And so on the day of showing the riches, as drummers will also go and wake up the funeral, the Kambonsi too will wake up the funeral.

Yesterday I told you that the day of showing the riches has many things, and if it is the funeral of a big chief, they have some things they also do on that day. The day they are going to show the thing, early in the morning Yaa-Naa’s messenger and Namo-Naa’s messenger will come and meet at the chief’s house.

And any chief who has come will gather with his drummers at the chief's house. If it is the Savelugu chief who is dead, I told you that sometimes the Yaa-Naa's messenger will be Balo-Naa, and Balo-Naa will be coming to make the funeral. And another Yaa-Naa's messenger will be Mba Naa or his child, and Mba Naa has the work he does at Savelugu-Naa's funeral. The Mba Naa has a special club which has been there since the olden days. It is a very heavy stick, a short one, and the mouth is bent a little. On the day they are showing the riches, they will call the dead chief's dog. They call it to come, and if it is not in the house, it will run and come. And when it comes, the Mba Naa takes the club and knocks the dog and kills it. Then they bring the horse that the dead chief was riding. They will dress the horse with the leather things they used to put on it, and they will put the ropes on the head. When they bring the horse from the sitting hall of the chief's house, they put a rope on the horse and tie it, and they let it be standing outside there. Then they will close the door of the hall. And then the Mba Naa takes the club and knocks the horse's nose — *kpo!* He knocks the horse again, and when he has knocked it about three times, it falls on the ground. It's dead.

Then the Mba Naa takes a knife and cuts the horse's neck. Then he takes cola and puts it in the horse's and the dog's blood, and then he breaks the cola and eats some of it. All the elders of the chief and those who have gathered will come forward and eat some of the cola. They are showing that they have not been having sex with any of the dead chief's wives, because anyone who has chased any of the wives, if he eats the cola, he will die. Anyone who has ever chased the chief's wives will not be near that place. Even if he sees the way they have knocked the horse down, he will die. And they will cut some of the meat and put it in wells and into the water the town is drinking, and if someone has been sexing the chief's wives, when he drinks, he will not last on earth. And it isn't all chiefs who have dogs. If the chief is there like that, without a dog, when they come and call, any dog in that town will come there. Any dog that will come, will come. But as for the horse, it is the horse the chief was riding. If the chief had no horse when he died, and he's a chief whose chieftaincy shows that if he dies, they should knock the horse and kill it, they have to go and buy a horse and bring it to do that. As for the chief, he didn't put it down that when he dies they should do such a thing. It is because of the custom, and it shows that we human beings, we don't like one another. And so the killing of the horse and the dog, that is the work Mba Naa will come and do there.

That day, getting to three o'clock, Yaa-Naa's messenger and Namo-Naa's messenger will meet, and Namo-Naa's messenger will gather all his drummers outside. Yaa-Naa's messenger and the elders of the Savelugu chief will enter the sitting hall before coming out again. They will saddle horses, and all the chiefs

who are there will climb their horses. All the dead chief's daughters will take rings woven from the reeds we call *kpari* and put them on their heads. The *Pakpɔŋ* and the *Gbɔŋlana* will wear the same dress they wore for the small funeral, and the hat, and they will get leaves from a dawadawa tree and put them in the *Gbɔŋlana*'s hat by his ears, and the *Gbɔŋlana* will come and climb a horse. They will get a white calabash and put cola in it and put it on a string and give it to the *Pakpɔŋ* to hang on her neck and will take it and be going with her sisters. When she comes out, the drummers will be beating and praising her with *Ɔmantuna yergu*: that is the praise of the *Pakpɔŋ*, and it just means that she can take a calabash on a string around her neck.

Then the *Gbɔŋlana* will be in front, and the *Pakpɔŋ* and the drummers and those who have gathered will all go around the house. No matter how big the chief's house is, they will go around it three times. When they come by the door, they will shout, *Zambuyee! Kpamkpamba, Zabaysi, Sayyersi, heei! Zambuyee-e, heei!* The *Kpamkpamba* are *Konkombas*, and the *Zabaysi* are the *Gonjas*, and the *Sayyersi* are from the *Wangara* side. It's war music, and they are calling the names of tribes the *Dagbamba* have defeated in war. I don't know if we fought these *Sayyersi* people, but they will be singing and calling names, that who and who and who, those people should gather, and we are going to cut them and kill them. In the olden days, if they caught somebody, that was what they would do. How they sing it, it's the same as they do in the *Buyim* Festival, but in the *Buyim* Festival they are only dancing in front of the chief's house. They only go around the chief's house if the chief is dead. The three times they go around and come by the door, they will shout this "Zambuyee," and when they finish they will stand by the door.

As it is *Nanton-Naa* who is performing the *Savelugu* chief's funeral, he will be sitting at the shed outside the chief's house with the other chiefs. They will lead the horse of the *Gbɔŋlana* there, with the *Pakpɔŋ*, and the *Gbɔŋlana* will get down. If the people are six hundred or a thousand, they will all keep quiet. The *Gbɔŋlana* will say that *Nanton-Naa* is without an elder, but he the *Gbɔŋlana* is not without a father. And the *Pakpɔŋ* will also say that *Nanton-Naa* has lost an elder but she hasn't lost a father. Then the *Gbɔŋlana* will say that an orphan who becomes annoyed is someone without a father, but he the *Gbɔŋlana* is not someone who becomes annoyed. The *Pakpɔŋ* will say the same thing. And so the *Nanton-Naa* is there, and he is without an elder. And what they are saying, they are showing that in *Dagbon* here, when someone collects the funeral of someone and performs it, then the children of the dead person become his children. That is how our tradition goes.

Then the *Gbɔŋlana* and the *Pakpɔŋ* will take their hands and cover their faces and enter the hall; sometimes they will cry, "Yee-e-e-e, Yee-e-e." They will

go into the house and come out again, and go and sit under the shed. And the drummers will come and sit down and cry the funeral drumming. And Nanton-Naa will let them be quiet, and he will say that he has got six cows, and they will beg the blessings of his elder the next day, that is, perform the funeral of his elder. When he says that and finishes, then the Gbɔɔɔlana's mother's housepeople will get a cow and tell him to use it to perform his father's funeral. The Pakpɔɔɔ's mother's housepeople will get a cow and give it to the Pakpɔɔɔ to perform the funeral. And the husband of the Pakpɔɔɔ will get a cow, and a cloth, and a waistband we call *shelɔɔrgu*, and forty cola nuts, and add some money. Others will add money and give it to perform the funeral. If the Savelugu chief has got a hundred daughters and they have all grown up to have husbands, all these husbands are going to bring a cow each. The sons who are following the Gbɔɔɔlana, their mother's houses, if they are strong, they will perform the funeral with cows; and those who are not strong will perform it with sheep. As for that, it doesn't matter. But as for the Gbɔɔɔlana and the Pakpɔɔɔ of the Savelugu chief, they will never use a sheep. Even if the Pakpɔɔɔ's mother's house is not strong, she must get a cow. If she herself must get the cow through any other means, that is what she has to do. She will send the cow to the mother's side, and on that day the mother's side will bring it there, and they will say that it is her mother's side that has given her the cow. And when the day comes, they will bring the cow there and give it to her. As for a chief's child, he or she doesn't want the mother's side to be weak. Even the Gbɔɔɔlana himself, if the mother's side doesn't have the means, he too will find the cow and send to them, and when the day comes, they will bring the cow there, and they are going to say that Gbɔɔɔlana mother's side has brought a cow for him. And at that point, can someone know the thing inside it? Nobody can know. That is how we perform the funeral of a chief like the Savelugu chief.

And the animals they are slaughtering, it is all coming from the number of children the chief has given birth to, and as some of the chiefs are marrying many wives, a chief can have many children. The Savelugu chief Abilaaɔɔ who last died, the one who was your friend, I think in my heart that his children and grandchildren are more than three hundred. And the chiefs who also come, each of them has cows to slaughter and perform the funeral. In the olden days when Dagbon was truly there, in those days they could perform the funeral of the Savelugu chief with more than a hundred cows. As for the sheep, no one knew their number. Nowadays, as Dagbon is not there again, if they are going to perform the funeral of the Savelugu chief, they will use about twenty or thirty cows, and the sheep will be about forty or fifty.

The way it is, when the elders of Yendi and the other Dagbamba chiefs come, is it not Nanton-Naa who is the elder of the funeral? When the people come



with their animals, they will come and see Nanton-Naa, and they will gather all these cows and sheep and tie them at Savelugu. As for all these animals they will gather, it will not be all of them that they will slaughter at the chief's house. Sometimes when they are showing the riches outside the chief's house, they will slaughter maybe four or five cows. The remaining animals are going to be eaten by those who come to the funeral. They will share the cows and sheep to others to make food for themselves while attending the funeral. As all the chiefs have arrived, some of small chiefs who attend the funeral will join together, say two chiefs, and use one cow. Someone like Tolon-Naa and the big chiefs, each of them will get a cow, but there is a way to join some elders to Tolon-Naa to give a cow to them together. And Namɔyɔ too, if Yendi Sampahi-Naa comes, they can gather them to give them a cow, or if they want, they will separate Namɔyɔ with one cow, and Yendi Sampahi-Naa will get a sheep. As for the cows they slaughter at the chief's house, if there are four cows or five cows, those heads belong to Namo-Naa's messenger and those behind him. But the cows they will slaughter for the strangers, those cow heads are not for Namɔyɔ; they use them for different things. And so they will share all the cows among all the elders and the chiefs who have attended the funeral. And you the group of people who have come to the funeral, if you decide not to slaughter the animal to make food for yourself, then you can take it with you when you go home. You yourself have been seeing it: you have been going around visiting people in Dagbon and they have been giving you yams and guinea fowls; if you want, you eat it there, and if you want, you take it and go. It's not that they are going to slaughter all of them in front of the chief's house. And that is what we call the funeral of a chief. That is the way it is.

When they finish showing the riches, that night they will dance all the different dances, and the next day they will gather and pray and make sacrifice with maha, and it looks like the funeral I have already talked about. And when they finish the funeral, Nanton-Naa will go to his home town. And the Gbɔɲlana and his followers, the Pakpɔɲ, and the chief's elders like the Wulana and the Kpanalana, they all get up and go to the Nanton-Naa, and Nanton-Naa will also find elders and they will take the funeral children home to Yendi. And the funeral children and the elders will go to Yendi. By that time, anyone who wants Savelugu has already run to lie down in Yendi.

Why have they all gone to Yendi? As they have gone there, everyone has gone to give respect to the Yaa-Naa so that Yaa-Naa will give Savelugu to him. What is the respect? As they are greeting the Yaa-Naa, they are giving money. And the Yaa-Naa has told all of them, "Unless the Gbɔɲlana comes before I will know the one who has performed the funeral. The one who has performed the

funeral is the one who is for the funeral children.” And Nanton-Naa is the elder of the funeral, but when Nanton-Naa finishes performing the funeral, he himself does not go to Yendi. He will send his messenger to follow the Gbɔŋlana and go to Yaa-Naa and tell him that now he has finished with the funeral. And any message that is there, Nanton-Naa’s messenger will deliver it to Yaa-Naa. But Yaa-Naa must hear from Nanton-Naa before he will also decide whom to give the chieftaincy to. If you give a funeral to somebody to perform, and the fellow finishes performing the funeral, how can you give that chieftaincy to somebody before seeing him? And so Yaa-Naa will say that he is waiting to know of the funeral before he will give Savelugu to the one who is looking for it.

But it is not one person who wants Savelugu. The Banvimlana wants Savelugu. When the Savelugu chief dies, the chief of Voggo wants it. If the Sagnerigu chief gets it, he will eat it. The Tibunlana wants Savelugu. The Zangbalin chief wants it. And the Gbɔŋlana is also there, and he wants his father’s house. These people I have counted are there, but there are more. There are people at Yendi side who also want Savelugu. Kpatinlana eats Savelugu; Gbungbaligalana eats Savelugu; Kunkon-Naa eats Savelugu. These are all people who want Savelugu and there are still others. Savelugu is eaten by the children of the Yaa-Naa, but grandchildren also eat it. It’s now that some people are trying to say that only Yaa-Naa’s children should eat it, and they have been saying that Mion and Karaga too, a grandchild should not eat those chieftaincies. But inside our custom, it is only Yendi that a grandchild does not eat. Since the beginning of Dagbon, a grandchild has not eaten Yendi. The one whose father has never eaten Yendi will never get it. Such people cannot search for Yendi, but they can search for any other chieftaincy. Yaa-Naa’s children don’t eat elders’ chieftaincies like Tolon or Kumbungu, but if any other chieftaincy falls, if they want, they can search for it. And so if your father was a Yaa-Naa’s child and he ate Savelugu, and he died at Savelugu, then if Savelugu falls, that is what you are going to search for.

And again, there are some people who will interfere and say they want Savelugu. The Nanton-Naa can also say he wants Savelugu, but he is only interfering, because in our custom the Nanton-Naa does not go out from Nanton to eat another chieftaincy. It is only the position of Savelugu that shows that if Nanton-Naa has a way, he will ask for it. But even if they give it to him, he won’t eat it. Do you see Korli? Kori-Naa, the chief of Korli, is a Yaa-Naa’s child, but it has come and grandchildren are eating it. Kori-Naa can search for Savelugu to eat. Do you see Demon? Demon is for Yaa-Naa’s children, but grandchildren eat it. Demon-Naa can search for Savelugu. We say that Demon-Naa and Kori-Naa are chieftaincies of Yaa-Naa’s children, and if Yaa-Naa’s child gets any

Dagbamba chieftaincy and he wants, he can eat it. But if Savelugu falls and these two chiefs are going to look for it, it will never hold. The Savelugu chief, his own children will also come and be with them, and they will struggle for the chieftaincy. And so people like Kori-Naa and Demon-Naa will never get it. And what they are going to hear is that Savelugu is not their father's house, and so if they want, their father's house is Mion: they should go and search for it. But in the olden days, if Yaa-Naa's son or grandson got any chieftaincy in Dagbon and he wanted it, they could give it to him: if not his senior father who has ever eaten that particular town, then at least his junior father has eaten that town, and so they would see that that child has a way. But nowadays, they will search and search and search and come to find out that this particular person is not entitled for that town, because they will say that the place is not for his father. If not that, they can easily look for Savelugu and eat. It's not that they are grandchildren. And so Kori-Naa and Demon-Naa, if they want, they will say they want Savelugu, but the way they are looking for Savelugu, they are just interfering. If Savelugu falls, they will also go and put their hands inside, and they won't get it, but such people will add themselves to those who are looking for Savelugu. And when all these people get to Yendi, the Yaa-Naa will stop all of them and tell them to be lying in the houses they have entered, and he will be looking for the Nanton-Naa to bring the Gboɲlana, because it was the Nanton-Naa who performed his father's funeral.

Getting to three days, Nanton-Naa's messenger and the Gboɲlana and his followers will come and greet Yaa-Naa, and Yaa-Naa will say, "Take them home and they will rest." If the Nanton-Naa is going to interfere and say he wants Savelugu, it is that day they will know. If he doesn't want it, it is that day they will know. If they know the one they are going to give Savelugu to, when it's daybreak, the Yaa-Naa will send a messenger to that person to inform him, "I have given Savelugu to you." And as my grandfather Namon-Naa is sitting in Yendi, the one Yaa-Naa has chosen will send a message to Namon-Naa. If they were up to ten people looking for the Savelugu chieftaincy, all of them have already gone and consulted Namon-Naa. And when the one who is going to eat the chieftaincy gets the message from Yaa-Naa, he will quickly inform Namon-Naa. And the reason is that if he is not quick to inform Namon-Naa that tomorrow he is going to wear the chieftaincy gown, then tomorrow when he goes to wear the gown, who is going to be there to beat the drum? The time he was looking for the Savelugu chieftaincy, he informed Namon-Naa, and the day he receives the message that the chieftaincy is for him, he will go and inform Namon-Naa again, because he knows when he is going to wear the gown. And the one who is going to eat Savelugu, he will get a gown and cola and money and will give it to Namon-Naa. In Yendi, no one eats chieftaincy without Namon-Naa knowing about it. It is because Namon-Naa stands

for every drummer, and anyone who is proud is standing for the drummers. If there were no drummers, he will eat chieftaincy and no one will see him. And Namonaa will send a messenger to the one who is going to eat the chieftaincy. The next day, all the drummers will gather and follow Namonaa. If it is the Savelugu chieftaincy they are giving, as it is a big chieftaincy, Namonaa himself will go. Namonaa along with his children and the Yendi Sampahi-Naa and the Savelugu Palo-Naa and the drummers from Savelugu who followed Palo-Naa to that place: they will all gather at the Namonaa's house, and they will get up and go to the Yaa-Naa's house. And Namonaa will come and sit down. And the time when the chief's elders take the gown that they are going to put on the new Savelugu chief, then Namonaa will start to do his work. And if Namonaa himself does not do that work and he is just sitting there, then the drummer who will come out and start the singing, it means the drummer is standing in the footprints of Namonaa.

Let's say if it is the Banvimlana they are going to give the chieftaincy, they will take him and let him sit in the hall. Everyone will gather outside, and the chiefs will be coming one after another. All those who want the chieftaincy, they will all come to the Yaa-Naa's house. If they give it to someone, he will come; if they don't give it to someone, he will come. It isn't anyone apart from Namonaa who will show who has come and who has not come. Namonaa will show all. How does he show? Any chief who comes, Namonaa will sing the praises of that chief. If you eat chieftaincy in Yendi, Namonaa will call a name for you before you go home. You don't have the sense to call the name for yourself: it is Namonaa who calls the name for you. And so when they gather, Namonaa gets up and stands with one of his drummers and calls a name for him. They will be coming one after the other, and Namonaa will be praising them. And it is Namonaa who will know the one who has not come.

Then they all sit down, and Mba Duyu stands up. Mba Duyu is an elder at Yendi, and he is the Yaa-Naa's mouth. When he says something, the chief has already said it to him. As they have all gathered, Mba Duyu will stand and tell them, "The Yaa-Naa has given Savelugu to so-and-so. And as the Yaa-Naa has given it to him, he is giving it to him to go and hold the children. And when he gets home, he should pretend he doesn't hear, and he should be blind, and he should be a fool. He shouldn't say his eyes are open, and he shouldn't say he has heard, and he shouldn't say he is wise." We Dagbamba praise chiefs and say *Namazi sheli*, that "Chieftaincy doesn't know anything," because a chief has to pretend that he is a fool.

They will take the gown and put it on the pan we call *pon*, and they will take it to the new chief in the hall of the Yaa-Naa's house, and they will put the

gown on him there. There is a white chieftaincy hat, and they will put it on him. And what Namo-Naa is going to beat is 3em, and the drummers will be beating, and the Kambonsi will be shooting guns. In the olden days, long ago, there was no beating apart from 3em, and they were beating 3em and following chiefs; and that is why they beat 3em when they give somebody chieftaincy. And they will bring him out, and the Yaa-Naa will get cola and give to someone to give to him at his sitting place. The Savelugu chief does not go to the front of the Yaa-Naa to get cola, because Yaa-Naa calls the Savelugu chief his senior father. Savelugu-Naa, Nanton-Naa, Karagalana: they don't squat in front of Yaa-Naa to collect cola; Yaa-Naa gives the cola to somebody and the fellow will take it to them. And so the Yaa-Naa sends the cola to him, and they say what they have said before in front of those who have gathered.

And then all the chiefs who were searching for Savelugu and didn't get it, they will all get up and go to the houses they have entered in Yendi. As they have gone home, everyone is annoyed. Their money they used to look for the chieftaincy has entered the Yaa-Naa's house, and when money has entered the Yaa-Naa's house, whether you get chieftaincy or you don't get it, you will not get back your money. And as money has entered the Yaa-Naa's house, your money has also entered the houses of the Yaa-Naa's elders, and you won't get that money back either. And so all of them are annoyed. In every house where these chiefs are staying, the householder will come and say, "If you are going home, go and farewell the Yaa-Naa's house. If you don't go to farewell the Yaa-Naa, maybe you will be going home, and it won't be daybreak and the Savelugu chief will die. And when he dies, will you want Savelugu or not?" And as some of them are annoyed and some of them are not annoyed, you will see that all of them will go and farewell the Yaa-Naa, and they will get money and put it on the skins and say, *M bo m-pa gbandi zuɣu ka kuli*, and it means, "I put something on the skin and went home." Every chief will give this gift so that if a chieftaincy falls some day and he wants it, he will not be ashamed to come back. And so it is just because of tomorrow that they farewell the Yaa-Naa and put money on the skins. It is not only Savelugu that they eat. Do you see the chief of Korli, Kori-Naa? I told you he wants Savelugu. And again, when the Mionlana dies, the Kori-Naa wants it. When the Karaga-Naa dies, if the Kori-Naa gets it, he will eat. As for Karaga, the Banvimlana, the Sagnerigu-Naa, the Demon-Naa, the Gbungbaligalana, the Kunkon-Naa, all of them eat Karaga. It is only Mion and Yendi that are not eaten by anybody who is not the son of a Yaa-Naa. Since Dagbon started, it's only one grandson who ever ate Mion: Mionlana Mahami, his time was a long time ago. He was a son of Mionlana Mahamuru, and Mionlana Mahamuru was Naa Gungobli's son. Mionlana Mahami didn't get Yendi, but it happened that he ate

Mion. And so he was a grandson, but that is the only person I know. And so our Dagbamba chieftaincies are many, and any son or grandson of a Yaa-Naa will think of that, and if he was struggling for a chieftaincy and he didn't get it, he will hide his annoyance and go and farewell the chief. And that is how our tradition is.

As for the Gbɔŋlana, if he is going to eat his father's chieftaincy, he won't remove his father's hat, the buyu. But if they give the chieftaincy to someone, and they have not called the Gbɔŋlana to go home and eat Savelugu, by then he will remove the hat. Then they will get a chieftaincy to give to him, and they will say that they have taken such-and-such a chieftaincy and removed the gbɔŋ from him. If the new chief was eating a small chieftaincy, they will give that chieftaincy to the Gbɔŋlana. And it can happen that they will shift, and the chieftaincy the new Savelugu chief was eating, they will give it to someone else, and the Gbɔŋlana will eat that person's village. The present chief of Savelugu was eating Tampion, and when he moved from Tampion to Savelugu, they gave Tampion to his brother. And the Tamalgu chief had died and they didn't get a new chief yet, and they gave the Tamalgu chieftaincy to Savelugu Gbɔŋlana. And sometimes it happens that they will give the chieftaincy the new chief was eating to someone else, and the Gbɔŋlana will have to remain like that until a small chieftaincy falls and they give it to him. That is how it is.

And then the funeral children will gather with the one who is now eating their father's chieftaincy, and they will go and greet the Yaa-Naa. And those drummers who followed the Gbɔŋlana to Yendi, and the elders who took the Gbɔŋlana to Yendi, all of them will turn to follow the new chief. And they will say to the new chief that this is the Gbɔŋlana, and they will tell the Gbɔŋlana that he should be following the one who is eating his father's chieftaincy. If the Gbɔŋlana should go and meet a bad thing, he should come and show it to the chief; and if he meets a good thing, he should come and show it. And so the chief is now his father, and whatever happens to him, he should show it to the chief. At that time, the Gbɔŋlana will go behind the new chief and be following him, and that is how he is going to follow him back to Savelugu. When they reach Savelugu, he will see how his new father has come to enter the chief's house. Then he will stay for a few days and give some respect to his new father. And the village or the town they've given to him, then the people of Savelugu, some of them will get prepared with drummers, and they will take him to that town. That is the way it is.

And all of this, this is how they finish burying a chief and they get a new chief. This is how I know it. And so I think we have finished the talk about funerals.