

## Chapter I–25: *How Drummers Share Money*

As I have talked about how we drummers have our chiefs and elders, today I want to tell you how we drummers share the money we get when we go and beat drums, and how our sharing of money shows that we are more than one another. We are all one, but we are more than one another on the part of age and our standing places. And so this talk is standing on the part of the chiefs of drumming and the elders of drumming. And I will start it on the part of the chiefs and talk about it on the part of Yendi before coming to this side. If it is Yendi, when we go and beat the drums and come home, we bring the money and put it in front of the chief of drummers. In Yendi, that is Grandfather Namɔɣu. And so I will start first with Namo-Naa.

For example, if the Savelugu chief dies, Namo-Naa will send his messenger. Let's take it that Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa and Namɔɣu-Yiwɔɣu-Naa will go to Savelugu, and when they arrive there, they will enter Palo-Naa's house. They will arrive on a Tuesday, and on Wednesday in the late afternoon, when they are going to start the funeral, Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa and Namɔɣu-Yiwɔɣu-Naa, along with Palo-Naa and his followers and the small drummers, they will all gather and group themselves outside the chief's house. They will beat Damba that day, and they will get money. When they get the money, Palo-Naa will take a small amount of the money, and he will give the rest to Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa. And Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa will keep it and be holding it.

The next day will be Thursday, and that is the day they will be showing the riches. When they go to show the riches, Palo-Naa, Palo-Lun-Naa, Palo-Sampahi-Naa, and all the drumming chiefs of Savelugu, they will all group themselves with Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa and Namɔɣu-Yiwɔɣu-Naa. After the showing the riches, they will beat another Damba, and they will get money. Palo-Naa will separate a little of the money and keep it with his town drummers, and all the rest of the money will go to Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa and Namɔɣu-Yiwɔɣu-Naa. And Namo-Naa's messengers will add that money to the money they got on Wednesday.

The next day coming will be Friday, when they say the prayers. All the drummers will sit outside, and they will beat and praise everybody who is passing. Chiefs, commoners, princes, princesses, men, women: the drummers will praise all of them. When the maalams gather to say prayers, those who are sitting there will give money to the maalams, and these same people will also give money to the drummers. If there are elders from Yendi there, they will give money to Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa, and he will collect it and give it to Palo-Naa. All the money the drummers get, Palo-Naa will divide it and keep part for himself and his town

drummers, and he will give the rest to Namoyu-Lun-Naa and Namoyu-Yiwoyu-Naa.

Apart from that, I told you that the chiefs who have come for the funeral will come with cows. If any chief has killed a cow, I think that I have told you that when a chief slaughters a cow, the head of the cow is for the drummers. And I also told you that there can be many cows at the Savelugu chief's funeral, but all these many cows, those they are going to slaughter outside the chief's house won't be all that many. These cows, they will take some and give to the strangers. Those who come from Yendi, and those whom the chief sent, maybe somebody like Balo-Naa, and those other people like Mba Naa, and Gundo-Naa's messengers and Yendi Limam's messenger, and any other person from Yendi: they are all there. And the way it is, if Savelugu chief dies and they are sending people or messengers there, everybody's door will come. And adding to those coming from Yendi-side are all the Dagbon Toma chiefs who will come, that is, those chiefs from this side of Dagbon. And the cows, you will see them plenty. If Nanton-Naa is the one who is the funeral head, then all the welcoming of the strangers, he is going to be grouping them, giving them a cow each. Such-and-such a chief and such-and-such a chief, he will group them together and give them a cow. The Toma chiefs who are present, they will give them like that. And coming to the people from Yendi, and they will take one cow, and group them and give to them. And those cows that will remain at the chief's house, sometimes there can be about five or six: these five or six are those they are going to slaughter at the chief's house.

So many of these cows are on the part of the strangers, and they will finish that matter first. But if you come and you don't know, if you see all the cows there at the chief's house, and you don't wait to see what they are going to do with the cows, maybe you will say that all the cows are going to be slaughtered at the chief's house. I have told you that they don't even eat all the cows. The cows they give to the strangers, some people slaughter them and some just take the cows and go. And the one who cannot pull the cow to his own home town, as Savelugu is somehow a town and there are butchers, the butchers are also people who buy cows and sell. When it is daybreak, any chief who can't pull his cow to his home town, the butchers will go around asking them: if they want to sell, then the butchers will buy. And so the chiefs who want, or any of the messengers like Balo-Naa, when they come, if they want, they can slaughter; and if they don't want, they can sell. And the chiefs who don't want to sell will say that they can carry their cow and go, and then they will carry it and go.

And so any cows they are going to slaughter outside the chief's house, as the drummers are also outside the chief's house, beating, as for that, the drummers

are there when they slaughter them. When they skin the cow and finish, they just carry the head and put it in front of the drummers. And my grandfather Palo-Naa will let a child be sending the heads to the house, one by one. By evening time, when they finish and come home, my grandfather Palo-Naa will tell the messenger of Namɔɣu, “These are the heads for you. So you have to know what to do with them.” If Namɔ-Naa’s messenger wants, then he can take some and give back to my grandfather Palo-Naa. And the remaining ones, they will put into fire and burn, and take to Yendi. This is how they share it.

As for the cows they give to the strangers, they don’t bring the heads. When the strangers come like that, they don’t come to slaughter and do the custom. They have only come there just because “They sent me.” And so they are only there to eat. If they slaughter a cow, they are not supposed to send the heads to Palo-Naa. The drummers will only get the heads of the cows they slaughter at the chief’s house. As for those cows, they have to send the heads to Palo-Naa. And if the heads are not coming, then Palo-Naa will send a messenger to go and collect the heads.

And so Palo-Naa is the chief of drummers in the town, but the heads of the cows are not for him. Palo-Naa will give all of them to Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa. If the heads are about six, Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa will remove about two heads and give to Palo-Naa, and the rest will be for Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa and Namɔɣu-Yiwɔɣu-Naa. Palo-Naa will get people to sit down with knives to skin all the heads; they will burn the skins in fire and use the burnt part to rub all the heads. And the following day will be Sunday, and Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa and Namɔɣu-Yiwɔɣu-Naa will go back to Yendi with all the heads and all the money they got.

When they arrive at Yendi, they will go and put everything they got in front of Namɔ-Naa, and they will say, “This is what we got when we went there.” And Namɔ-Naa will say, “May God bless. May God cover the anus of our grandfather Bizuŋ.” Then Namɔ-Naa will call Yendi Sampahi-Naa and the drum chiefs who are under him, and he will call all the drum chiefs from the sections of Yendi: Zɔhi Lun-Naa, Zɔhi Sampahi-Naa, Zɔhi Taha-Naa, Kuya Lun-Naa, Kuya Sampahi-Naa, Kuya Taha-Naa, and all the others. And Namɔ-Naa will tell all of them that he has sent his messenger to attend the funeral of the Savelugu chief, and this is what his messenger has brought back. Namɔ-Naa will take the meat of the cowheads and share it among them. If the money is, for example, one hundred pounds, Namɔ-Naa will take about forty pounds out of it and give the rest to Yendi Sampahi-Naa to get up and share among the others. And Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa and Namɔɣu-Yiwɔɣu-Naa will also get their share. As for Namɔɣu-Lun-Naa and Namɔɣu-Yiwɔɣu-Naa, the time they were leaving Savelugu, the Gbɔŋlana has also said good-bye to them and given them money, “Get and drink water on the

way.” That money, they don’t give it to Namo-Naa. As they have gone to Savelugu, the farewell money is for them. And so Namɔɔyu-Lun-Naa and Namɔɔyu-Yiwɔɔyu-Naa will have that money and will come home and get their share again.

And so Namo-Naa, he has getting, because as for him, he will be sitting down, and they will go every day and bring him. And he gets in two ways. If he sends drummers and they go, they bring meat and they bring money. And again, anyone who is going to look for the chieftaincy that has fallen, he too has to come and see Namo-Naa. From the time Savelugu-Naa has just died, anyone who knows that he is going to search for that chieftaincy, he will go to see Yaa-Naa. Whether he will get that chieftaincy, or he won’t get it, whatever happens, he has to go and see Namo-Naa, too. He will go and see Namo-Naa, and when they make the funeral and leave it, and the funeral children go to Yendi, those who are going to search for that chieftaincy have already taken the lead before the funeral children will come. When they get to Naya, too, they have go and sit down and greet my grandfather Namɔɔyu. Anyone who wants Savelugu will sit down and will give Namɔɔyu, and say, “Collect this and buy cola and put it in the kettle.” That one, all that they will be giving him is for him alone. And when the funeral children also come, and they come to greet, if the Yaa-Naa shows that such-and-such a fellow is to be the Savelugu chief, then when they give that person the Savelugu cola, he too has to find money and go and greet Namo-Naa. And he will tell Namo-Naa that they have given Savelugu to him. As he has informed Namo-Naa, then the time he is going to wear the gown, Namo-Naa will be there. But if he doesn’t inform Namo-Naa, Namo-Naa will not go. Namo-Naa will sit down and say that as for him, he doesn’t know that they have given anyone a chieftaincy. And which drummer is coming to beat for him so that he will wear the gown? So all these people, they will going to Namo-Naa, and he is going to be pocketing. And so as for him, food, always he is getting it, apart from the work he is already doing before the funeral.

Namɔɔyu-Lun-Naa and Namɔɔyu-Yiwɔɔyu-Naa, or if it is Yendi Sampahi-Naa, when they come to the funeral, my grandfather Palo-Naa will take them around to greet all the chiefs. And the chiefs will be calling them “*N yab’ bia, n yab’ bia*”: my grandfather’s child. The messengers of Namo-Naa, they call them like that. And all the chiefs, too, they have to give something to them, because the chiefs want if the messengers of Namɔɔyu go back, they will talk something good about them to Namɔɔyu. And the people of Yendi too, if you do any small good to them like this, when they go back, they will tell him everything. And Namo-Naa will say, “Very good. I thank him.” And the one who has done good, it is that they have raised him. Truly, as for Namo-Naa, he has food. Anyone who will

search for chieftaincy will go and see him. Whether you will get it, you will go and tell him. Whether you won't get it, you have to tell him. And so as for food, he has food. That is how it is.

And Palo-Naa, too, he gets, but his getting is not up to Namoyu. He can't reach Namoyu. As for Namonaa, he is a Yaa-Naa. But Palo-Naa also has people who come to greet him. As Palo-Naa is sitting, too, he eats from the people who are searching for chieftaincy from the Savelugu chief. And the way we beat drums, too, apart from people coming to greet him every day, when Savelugu drummers go to beat drums, all the money they get, they will go and put it in front of him. And this time we are sitting now, there is money. Sometimes they go to some place and beat, and there will be a lot of money. When they give the money to him, he will dip his hand inside and take any amount he wants, and four of them are going to share it: he Palo-Naa himself, Lun-Naa, Sampahi-Naa and Yiwoyu-Naa. Any money he is going to take belongs to the four of them, and the money that remains, he will let the young ones take it. If the money is plenty, he will take plenty. And sometimes they will go and the amount will not be up to that. They will put it in front of him, and he will only take a small amount that the four of them can share and it will be all right for them. That is the way it is. Our beating is like that: one day, one day. The day the drummers get plenty, he takes plenty.

As for Dolsi-Naa and the other Savelugu drum chiefs behind Palo-Naa, their door to the Palo is different, and so Palo-Naa does not give them. Lun-Naa, Sampahi-Naa, and Yiwoyu-Naa: they are Palo-Naa's drummers. Dolsi-Naa, Taha-Naa, and Dobihi-Naa: their hands are not inside. They too, they have their company. When they beat, whatever they will get there, they come and put it in front of them, and Palo-Naa doesn't know. The Savelugu drummers are in two doors. You are for here, and I am for here. You have your drummers, I have my drummers. Even though you are following my back, you have your drummers. When my drummers beat, those ones directly behind me, I share it with them; and you too, you share with yours.

The Savelugu drummers following Palo-Naa are many. If he takes only a little, it is because the drummers are many. He will always think about the small children who are inside to collect the money from the ground: they follow the drummers, too. And those who have wives are there, and they are more than forty. If he takes more, then what remains cannot reach all these people. And even, sometimes they will bring a lot of money and Palo-Naa will take more, and he look at the all of the drummers and see that they are plenty, and he will take some from what he took and add it for them. At times, drummers from other towns will add themselves to the Savelugu drummers, and he knows the number of all the drummers, and he will say, "Oi! You people are plenty." So if he knows that

there are strangers, he won't take as much as he normally would take. And so it is not written down that Palo-Naa should take this amount or that amount. It depends on what they bring and on the number of drummers.

In Savelugu, you know Issa Karimu. His nickname is Issa Tailor. He is the son of Savelugu Yiwɔyɔ-Naa Karimu. He is the leader of the Savelugu young drummers. He is well-known as a singer of the Samban' luɲa. As he is the leader of the Savelugu young drummers, when they beat with the elders, and they get, he will send it to Palo-Naa. As Issa Tailor is there, Palo-Naa is standing as his grandfather. And my brother Mumuni, this Issa is in his hands at Savelugu. In the night, Issa will go to sit with Mumuni and be asking questions. And so Mumuni is also standing as his grandfather. Whatever happens, if it is following the way, when the young drummers beat, the elders will get. And if Savelugu drummers come to this Tamale to join the Tamale drummers at wedding houses, as I am sharing the money, I will put Palo-Naa's share inside. I will give the Savelugu drummers something to go and greet Palo-Naa.

And so as for Palo-Naa, he eats, but he has a limit. But as for Namɔ-Naa, those who like the world, every time, they go and bow down before him. As we are sitting, all the Toma chiefs who are there, plus the princes: somebody will get up and say he is going to greet Yaa-Naa. Maybe he will take bags of corn or other food to give to Yaa-Naa, along with money. And the way he is going to greet Yaa-Naa, it is just because he is hoping to get a chieftaincy. And when he goes to greet Yaa-Naa, he won't neglect Namɔyɔ: he has to go and give the cola for the kettle. And those who do that, they are many. And so if I want, I can say that every day Namɔyɔ receives something in his house. He is sitting, and what he was not expecting to get, he will just be getting it. The way Yaa-Naa is getting food every day, that is the same way Namɔyɔ too gets. So that is how it is.

And so as we have talked about Namɔ-Naa and Palo-Naa, we will join the talk on the part of, say, Nanton. Let's take as an example if a small chief of a village under Nanton dies. In Nanton, Maachendi is the chief of drummers, and Nanton Lun-Naa is also there. When they are going to shave the heads of the children of the dead body, Nanton Maachendi's messenger will come out, that is, Maachendi Wulana. Lun-Naa's messenger will also come out. Sampahi-Naa's messenger will come. Taha-Naa himself will come. Dobihi-Naa is there himself, and Dolsi-Naa is there, and Yiwɔyɔ-Naa is there. As for those people, their chieftaincies are small, and they don't send messengers. All these people will come together and go to the funeral house and sit outside and beat drums, and they will be getting money.

When they are going to shave the heads, Yidan' Gunu is the chief of the barbers, and he will come with his followers. The barbers will sit in a straight

line, and the family will bring all the children and grandchildren of the dead body to sit with the barbers, and the barbers will be shaving them. As they are shaving them, people will be throwing them money, and it will be falling in front of them. Drummers will be beating, and people will be throwing them money, too, and the money they are throwing in front of the drummers will not be falling in front of the barbers.

When the barbers finish shaving, Yidan' Gunu will sit down and call Maachendi Wulana. Maachendi Wulana will come and sit and call Lun-Naa's messenger. They will all come and sit down, and Yidan' Gunu will divide the money the barbers got. Yidan' Gunu will take half and give it to Maachendi Wulana and Lun-Naa's messenger. And they will take the money Yidan' Gunu has given and add it to the money the drummers got when they were beating.

By that time, the Gbɔŋlana of the dead chief will be taking his bath, and when he finishes, he will come out. Maachendi Wulana and the messengers of Lun-Naa and Sampahi-Naa, along with Yiwɔɣu-Naa, Taha-Naa, Dobihi-Naa, and Dolsi-Naa, they will bring the Gbɔŋlana and make him sit down in the open shed outside the chief's house, and they will be praising him. They will be getting money then, and they will take it and add to the money they got when they were sitting outside and the money they also got when the barbers were shaving.

After the Gbɔŋlana sits down, people will be coming out and dancing, and others will be putting money on their foreheads. That money is for those who are drumming for the people to dance; it won't go to the drumming chiefs. And so the money for the drumming chiefs is in three parts: the money they got when they came and were sitting outside beating and praising people, the money they got when the barbers were shaving the children and grandchildren, and the money they got when the Gbɔŋlana was coming out. They will take all this money back to their elders.

When they get back to Nanton, they will go to Maachendi, and Lun-Naa and Sampahi-Naa will come. They will put the money down, and they will show the money they got for each part. Maachendi will divide the money into two, and he and Lun-Naa and Sampahi-Naa will take half. Then he will take what is remaining and give it to Yiwɔɣu-Naa, Maachendi Wulana, Dobihi-Naa, and Dolsi-Naa and say that they should take it along with their followers who went with them. And those people will share that money.

Sometimes it happens that there is a small drummer who was sick and was not able to attend the funeral. Or sometimes a small drummer who has to do something somewhere will come to his elders and excuse himself, "As you are going to the funeral, I am not free to attend it. I have something to do at a certain town, and so I am excusing myself." Or there can be an old drummer who was not

able to go. When the drummers go to the funeral house and beat the drums and come home, when they share the money, they will also share it among all these people. If the small drummer is not yet returned back, they will keep his share down for him, and when he comes, they will give it to him.

Apart from these people, there are women drummers. If I am a drummer and I give birth to my child who is a daughter, she does not beat a drum, but she is a woman drummer — *lumpaya*. When they are sharing this money, any woman drummer, even if she is just sitting in the house and she doesn't know anything about what is happening, they will cut her share and send somebody to give the money to her. Our drumming started like that, that whenever we beat drums and get money, we have to share it and include the women drummers.

And Maachendi, Lun-Naa, and Sampahi-Naa, they will also share their money, too. They will leave some down and share it among those who are behind them, and the small children and the old women who are their mothers and sisters.

If they get cowheads, they will skin and cut the cowheads. If the cowheads are four, Maachendi will take one head for himself and the youngmen in his house; Lun-Naa will take one head like that. If there are sheepheads, say twenty, Maachendi will look and take two, take two more and give to Lun-Naa. They will take the remaining sheepheads and add them to the two cowheads, and they will share them among the other drum chiefs and drummers. Let's say there is somebody like me sitting down in my house, they can give me a head. And the youngmen drummers, sometimes each will get a head. There are some other people who are entitled to eat some parts of the heads. Taha-Naa will skin and break the heads, and if it is a cow, they will take the nose of the cow and give it to the Pakpɔŋ, the eldest daughter, of anyone who received a head. And so Maachendi Pakpɔŋ and Lun-Naa Pakpɔŋ will each be getting a nose to eat. And Taha-Naa will use a cutlass to cut an eye and part of the head away. They will take this part and give it to someone we call Molmoona: he is the one who goes around the town with his drum to beat and inform the people in case the chief wants the townspeople to hear of something. Or if something is going to come tomorrow, then today in the evening this drummer will go around with the drum to announce it. Molmoona is the one who is entitled to eat the eye and that part of the head. And so this is how drummers share money in the towns and villages on the part of going to beat drums.

The way the heads are plenty at the small chief's funeral shouldn't surprise you. Sometimes it can happen that they will get like that. You know, as for the village chiefs, many of them have very large families. And inside the families, many of them have to perform the funeral with cows, leaving aside the one they are going to slaughter outside the chief's house. If all of them are going to



slaughter the cows, as for the village side, they don't sit in their various houses to slaughter the cows. They will bring all the cows outside the chief's house, and all the sheep. And so when they come and slaughter them at the dead chief's house, that is one part. And the day they are going to make the prayers, a drummer will be just sitting outside there and beating, and because the drummer is there when they are slaughtering the animals, when they finish each animal, the head has to come in front of the drummer. If the cows are up to four, all the heads will come in front of the drummer there. And if it is the sheep they slaughter, too, when they have skinned it, they will cut off the head and bring it in front of drummer. I have told you that if a sheep head or any head does not come in front of the drummer, then it means the person has slaughtered it at his house; as for that one too, you the drummer, you haven't seen. But all that is going to be slaughtered outside the chief's house, it will come in front of the drummers. But it isn't all funerals they perform like that. Truly, there are some village funerals where they will slaughter only one cow, and there are some where it is only sheep. And so I am separating it to show you that some of the village chiefs have big families, and the animals they slaughter will be many. And as they slaughter outside the chief's house, the drummers will get a lot of the meat. So that is how it is.

If it is in this Tamale here, and it is on the part of us the drummers from the town, we also have our way. If we are to go to a wedding house and beat the drums, sometimes for one day they will send me cola from about six different houses. If we don't go, we will be in shame: if somebody calls you because of some work he is doing, and you don't go to do the work for him, it means you have disgraced him. And as he has respected you by calling you, you have disgraced yourself at the same time. And so if it happens that on one day there are many weddings, I will call drummers from the nearby villages to add themselves to us. When we go and beat, we are there, Kanvili drummers are there, Choggo drummers are there, Sagnerigu drummers are there. In the morning, all these people will come together, and I will stand up and get five drummers and one gunḡḡḡ beater to go to so-and-so's house, and five drummers and one gunḡḡḡ to so-and-so's house, and this is how I will be dividing them according to the number of wedding houses. They will go, and those people who are at these wedding houses will be happy. They have called us because of something they are doing, and we have also come. When they see us coming, they are happy, and they will bring out food, or some very nice rice. We will take the food like petrol before we get up to start our work. We will be beating dances, and they will be giving out money.

As we are sitting, our money is not money, and every day it is changing. And so I will only give you an example. The way they are giving money at a

wedding house, you will see that one woman will come out and be dancing, and then another woman will come and be putting the money on the forehead of the dancer. And the money will be falling down. Some women will put a shilling, some twenty pesewas, some forty pesewas, and others will put paper — a cedi, two cedis, five cedis, ten cedis. We will go there about nine o'clock in the morning and finish about twelve o'clock noon. If I am at a wedding house, when we are about to finish beating at that house, I will get up and tell the people, "Now it is time, and so we will go back home." And they will answer me, "Be patient. Cool yourself and sit down for some time. We are coming." You will see that they will bring out water, and they will take porridge and mix it with the water. And they will bring out sayim or rice or any food they have prepared, about four or five bowls. And we will sit down and take food again. And they will get some money and add it, anything they want, and give us and say, "This is what we are taking to farewell you." And we will say, "May God bless. As we have seen the wedding, may God let us see the naming day of the child of the married woman." And by that time, they will be very happy, and we will come home.

But I want to separate one way. As we have been going around to the regions with the cultural groups, when we are taken to go to a region to beat, we are given an amount of cedis for a day, and when we beat, people will also admire our drumming with coins and paper, and we pick it up. After the dancing, we will share the money that we have picked up. And we will add the gate fees from the performance, and the Arts Council people will divide it, and when we come back, they will call the Takai dance leader and give him the gate fees to share between the dancers and drummers, and he will give me an amount to share to me and those drummers behind me.

But if it's our everyday drumming, it is the time we come back from the gathering that we will share the money. It's now that cedis are useless, and the money will be in thousands. And so let's take it just as an example that we go to a wedding house and come home, and we have about three hundred cedis. By that time, all the other groups that have gone to different wedding houses are also coming, one by one, with their money. It isn't that all groups will get the same amount of money, and another group will come and have, say, two hundred cedis, or a hundred cedis, or less than that. We will gather all the money like that and add it together. Maybe it will be about six hundred to a thousand cedis. And at that time, we will all sit down.

How do we share the money? Everybody follows another. As we are going to drum, we are not all doing the same work. There are people like me, and we will be holding the money and making change for people, and we are those who show the singers, "This is so-and-so's name, and this is how you have to praise her

or him. And this is the name of her father or his father. And this is the name of her grandfather or his grandfather.” And the singers will be singing and praising them. When a singer is finishing singing, the one holding the lundaa will be following him with the drum, beating, and if that person they are praising comes out to dance, the one with the lundaa will beat and turn and start everything for the rest of the drummers. And then the one beating the guṅṅoṅ and those knocking drums and answering will start to beat the dance. That is how the dance will move.

And so let’s just say that we have grouped ourselves to different houses, and when we come, we have about six hundred cedis. The singer has to eat a larger part of the money, and after him, the next one following is the drummer who was beating the lundaa. If the singer takes twelve cedis, the one beating lundaa will take about eleven cedis. We who are showing the singers how to praise the men and the women, we eat the same amount as they eat. The one beating the guṅṅoṅ will eat ten cedis. Those who are just knocking and following will get maybe five or six cedis each. Sometimes someone who is beating nicely and strongly, and he is taking over for the lundaa at some parts, he will get about seven or eight cedis. As for the small children who come with us and bend down to pick up the money that falls on the ground, we know how we will share money to them, too. We will look at the money that is remaining, and if we see that these children are to eat one cedi each, we will give them. But there is more.

We drummers are holding everything from the past, and we don’t leave anything out. If we have all got our shares, we will leave some money down so that we share it with our mothers and sisters who are in the house. And people like Alhaji Adam and Lun-Zoo-Naa and our elders are there, too. When we come back, the first money I will remove is Lun-Zoo-Naa’s money, and if we got about six hundred cedis, I will take out about ten cedis and give it to Lun-Zoo-Naa, and I will give Alhaji Adam ten cedis, too. If Choggo drummers or Kanvili drummers or Sagnerigu drummers have come to mix with us, I will remove the same amount for their elders, too. People like these old drummers, if they follow us to a wedding house, they don’t beat the drum. Someone like Lun-Zoo-Naa or Alhaji Adam will only be calling people and praising them, and he will be stretching his hands out for people to put money inside. Someone like my senior brother Sheni, too, sometimes he follows us to a wedding house, and he will be praising people, and they will be giving him money. If we go to a wedding house and come, I will ask if any group has seen Sheni at their place. If they all say no, then I will take two or three cedis and give it to Mohamadu to take to his father. This is how we give the old drummers. What they get from their praising, they will keep that

money for themselves, and we will share money to them, too. Even in these modern times, this is what we are still doing.

And again, with those of us who are beating the drums, sometimes it happens that someone's wife will give birth, and he will be having a naming day for the child. He will tell us, "My wife has given birth." And if it's not yet time for the naming, if we go to beat drums at a wedding house, when we come back, we will put down the money and I will tell everybody, those of us from the town and those whom I called from the other villages, "Our mother's child, his wife has given birth just one day or two days ago, and so what are we going to do for him?" And they will only say that only I will know what to do for him. And then I will talk to all the drummers and tell them that I am going to take twelve cedis out of the money we got, and I am going to give it to him to buy firewood for his wife. And they will all say, "It's good. May God bless." And we will call the one whose wife has given birth and give him the money. Even if he has been beating drums with us but it happened that he couldn't come that day, we will still give him the money. And he will get this money and say, "May God let all of our mouths become one." This is what we do. If it is that someone wants to perform the funeral of his father or his grandfather, this is also what we do. If it is that one of us wants to marry, we do the same thing.

And those drummers who got their money, they will also go home and share it. All of us, as we beat the drums, our sisters are in the houses. Our Dagbamba women sing, but we have never seen a drummer's sister beat the drum. But when you go and drum, when you come home and your sister is in the house, you will give your sister some of the money you got from your drumming. If your real father is there, when you go for drumming and come home, you will bring out the money and put it in front of him and count it. He will ask, "How much is it?" And you will tell him the amount. And he will say, "Cut my share for me." He is not going to tell you what amount to cut for him; it is you who will know how an old person eats, and you will also know the amount you will give him, and you will take some of the money and give to him. And when you take it and give him, he will collect it and put it in his pocket and say, *Naawuni lirim Luŋ Bizuŋ gbini*, that "God should cover the anus of Bizuŋ." The old drummer will say that. If your father is not there and you have an older brother who doesn't go out for drumming, when you come and you count the money, you will go and tell him about the money, and he will tell you to remove his part and give it to him. He will get it and say, "God should cover the anus of Bizuŋ."

And all your children and all the children in the house, you will give each of them threepence or twenty pesewas or ten pesewas. Whether or not the child has gone for the beating, you will give. This is what drumming wants. If you do it

today, when you beat the drum and become weak, there will be someone who is also beating and will come to help you. As everything has changed, it has not changed: a drummer does not drum and spend alone. If you don't give like that, you have opened the anus of Bizuṅ. It is even good when you are drumming, if a drummer from another place is passing, it is good you put your hand in your pocket and remove some money for him. When you give him the money, he will say, "God should cover the anus of Bizuṅ." And so it is our grandfather who is covering our anuses.

In these modern times, everyone is apart now, but as for us drummers, when we go anywhere and come back, we don't separate. There are many forbidden things in drumming, and we have them and are holding them. Our drumming is such a thing that when you tell someone about it, he will think that you are telling lies or that what you have said is not true. But we are holding it like that. What I'm telling you now, it can happen that you will sometimes be drumming and praising someone, and that fellow will not have anything. He will put his hand in his pocket and close his fist and bring it out and give it to you, and you will collect it like that and put it in your pocket. You have covered the anus of drumming. As you were drumming for him, if he had told you he had no money, it would have showed that the drumming had opened his anus. And drumming doesn't want that. And this is all from the learning of drumming. When they don't show you, you cannot know. If you haven't learned drumming well, when the fellow puts his hand in his pocket and brings his fist out and puts it in your hand, maybe you will open your hand and say, "You haven't put anything in my hand." At that point, you have opened the anus of drumming. You have revealed his secret that he has not got money. And so in our drumming, we don't open the anus of one another.

When you are learning drumming and you follow the elders of drumming, they will show you all that I am telling you. And if you don't follow the elders, they won't show you. That is why I am telling you that our beating of drums has got some things on the part of getting money. And there are some things that drumming does not want.

The money that we are getting, if the drummers are many, and someone has the knowledge to be singing or to be in front leading the drumming, sometimes money will come out and the one who receives it will steal it. And so the money that drummers sometimes steal is the money that people give them when they are beating. Sometimes a drummer will collect it and put it in his pocket, and when they ask him to bring the money out for sharing, he will not bring all of it out: he will leave some in his pocket. And sometimes those who pick up the money that falls on the ground will not give all of it to those who are holding and counting the money. If someone is stealing the money, whatever happens, his drumming will

not go further. If it is singing, and everyone has been hearing about a singer, it will come to a time when his singing will not go further again. If someone has a lot of sense or knowledge, and he is stealing, it will come to a time when he will not have knowledge again.

And so we don't hide the money that the drummers are getting. Everyone who comes to where drummers beat will see the money they get. It will just be lying on the ground, but no one will want to steal the money. That is how we learned it from our grandfathers. If someone steals the money, everything of his will go backwards. Formerly I was thinking that it was a lie, but now I have seen it and I believe it. I have seen people who have been stealing the money, and now no one is interested in their drumming and they have no respect in drumming.

I have been seeing all this because I am the one who now makes change any time we are beating, and I am also the one who shares the money. It was my senior brother Shenii who made me start all this. At the time, I was beating the *gunḡon* and following him, and he was beating the drum and singing. I beat the *gunḡon* for five years and followed him like that. Any time we went to beat, he was giving the money to a certain fellow, and that fellow was putting the money into his pocket. Whenever we finished drumming and went back to the house and counted the money, the money was never up to the amount it should have been. That fellow was a singer, and when my brother became tired of singing, that fellow received the singing from him. And he was continuing to steal the money, and it came to a time that whenever they asked him to sing, he was not able to sing.

In our drumming, there are two things which decrease the voice of a singer. I told you that a child who grows up, the time his voice is changing, if he doesn't continue singing at that time, his voice will not be open again. And so that is one thing. And the other thing that spoils a voice is for a drummer to be stealing the money of drummers. If he continues stealing the money, his voice will just close and become weak, and it will resemble the child who refused to continue to sing. And we have seen it in Dagbon here.

When my brother Shenii first said that I should start collecting the money, I said, "How am I going to be beating the *gunḡon* and at the same time be collecting the money? And I am also praying: whenever it is three o'clock and we are beating, I will want to go and pray, and if I take this money to the mosque and go and pray, people will suspect me." And my brother said, "If you steal, you steal for yourself; and if you don't steal, you don't steal for yourself." When my brother told me this, I was very surprised, and so I just put it down in my mind. And I collected the money. When we closed from the drumming and came to the house, he told me to share the money among the drummers. And I said, "I am too

small to share the money.” And he said, “I am giving you the right to share the money.” That was the time I started sharing the money. From that time up to now is more than twenty-five years, and no one has ever quarreled with me. Any time we go to beat drums, if it is Sunday and there are four or six wedding houses, they will bring all the money to me, and every drummer will be sitting down. First we will count all the money, and I will put it inside my hand and say, “This person eats like this; this person eats like this; this person eats like this.” I will share the money to everybody. And the elder drummers who are at home, I will send their share to them, because inside our drumming, those who beat the drum, they eat, and those who don’t beat and they are at home, they also eat. I will share everything like that. If another Sunday comes again, that is the same thing I will do.

One day my brother Mumuni came to me and called me, “Alhaji,” and I said “Yes.” Then he said, “As for drum money, don’t share it again.” He told me that I am not the only person who is around, and he said, “You stop sharing the money and let somebody be sharing it, and we will see what will happen.” And I asked him why, and he told me that the reason why he was stopping me from that was that he wanted me to watch how human beings are. And I said, “My brother, what you have said, I have heard it.” Then I stopped it. And they gave that position to one of the drummers, and he started sharing the money, sharing the money. One day he put the money down and was going to share it, and they came: everybody rushed there and started taking the money away. Then everybody left the place. And another time came again, and we went to Tishigu for a wedding, and after the wedding we were coming home, and Abdulai Seidu the boxer called Mumuni, and told him, “My junior father, I am going to tell you. If you don’t put the sharing of the money back to Alhaji, our family will break. If it’s not Alhaji who shares the money, we will fight among ourselves and everybody will go his way.”

And Mumuni did not do anything. And another time came and they held a meeting, and everybody agreed that if it is not I, then nobody will share the money and there will be peace. And they collected it and gave it back to me. And when I told Mumuni that I had agreed to be sharing the money again, he told me now I had seen the reason why he stopped me from sharing the money, that he wanted me to read the world. And he said, “Now that they cannot hold that thing, have they not returned it back to you? Will somebody one day ask you that you collected the sharing of the money to yourself by force? And so as I have stopped you, now they themselves have decided to bring it back to you again.” And up to now I am still sharing the money. It’s not because of anything. It is because of my belief in the drumming: that is why they asked me to share the money. Even if I don’t go to where they are beating a drum, if anyone wants to steal money

from that, others will come and tell me. And so, this is the talk that is inside our drumming on the part of the money we get.

And so this is the one mouth we have and we are doing our work of drumming. When we go and beat the drums and get money, we don't eat it alone. We eat it with others. Everyone or anyone in the house, unless the one we forget, we will share the money and give the person. If you put a drum in your armpit and beat, you have your elders at home, when you bring all the money down, you have to give some to all of them. Those who are present and those who are absent, and your sisters who are drummers, you have to give all of them. And all of them will collect and say, "May God cover the anus of Bizun." Those elder drummers who are in the house, and these your sisters who are around, when they collect, this is the same thing they will all say. And you too, when you put it down and share it among yourselves, if you are going to go away, you will all say that God should cover the anus of Bizun, and give us one mouth, and we will get more. That is what you will all say before you get up and go. That is why there is a benefit inside drumming and singing in Dagbon. It is following our back. This is how our beating of drums is, and this is what our drumming wants.