

Chapter II-5: *The Yaa-Naa and the Yendi Elders*

Today we are going to start the talk about chieftaincy, and we will start it by talking about the chief of the Dagbamba, the Yaa-Naa. The talk I am going to talk to you, I am not going to cheat you. I am going to talk to you the same as when there is a drummer and I am talking to him. And I am going to talk to you what I have heard. As for an old talk, no one has ever seen it. It is our forefathers who spoke and put it down for us. And our fathers talked and put it down for us. And so all of it is like property that we have inherited. And as we talk, we are going to get it and stand on it again. This talk, it is a talk about Dagbon, and it is also your own town's culture's talk, because every town has got a chief. Every town has got its ways, and these ways can come and be the same as another town's ways, and so I think in my heart that this talk can come to enter into your talks, too. Or maybe it will not enter. We will follow it and see.

How I will talk this talk, I want to take it from how we Dagbamba eat the chieftaincy of Yendi, and how our chiefs die and we make new chiefs. If you want to see wonders in Dagbon, then you have to see how Yendi is when they perform the funeral of a Yaa-Naa and get a new chief. And this talk, there are many people inside it. Who are these people? They are the elders of Yendi. And I will join to show you the work the Yendi elders do when a Yaa-Naa dies and they are going to make a new Yaa-Naa. And I will follow this talk again to count the Yendi elders and show you what the elders do when a Yaa-Naa is sitting. And I am going to start it and tell you how a Dagbamba chief dies, and how they bury him, and when they finish hiding him, they do *daba ata*, that is, the "three days," and they take the first-born son and make him sit down as the Gboɲlana, the Regent. This is how I am going to start it for you as we are sitting. And if it finishes, I will know what we will take again. And if it doesn't finish, tomorrow we will follow it again. Dagbamba say, "'I will eat and finish' is in eating." If it doesn't finish, can we know what it is? And so this is how we are going to start it and go.

On the part of the Yaa-Naa, the Yaa-Naa's town is Yendi, and so it is Yendi talks I am going to talk to you. How the chief of Yendi is, if you just look at his talks, it looks as if he is a big chief. Apart from that, there are towns like Savelugu, Mion, Karaga, Nanton, Tolon, Kumbungu; there are small chiefs; there are village chiefs; and there are we commoners. All of it is there, but I am going to start it with our biggest chieftaincy, because the chief of Yendi is our big chief.

We have many names for our chiefs in Dagbon here. Whatever extent you can know, it's not a fault. If you can call only one name, it's not a fault; if you call

only two, it's not a fault; if you call three, it's not a fault. Yaa-Naa: he is the leader of our Dagbon chiefs. Naa Gbewaa: he is the leader of our Dagbon chiefs. Sayinlana: he is the leader of our Dagbon chiefs. He will pray to God, and the land will be cool. Rain will fall, and farmers will farm and get their crops, and we will make food and eat. That is the meaning of Sayinlana. It is three names I have called, and it is one chief. That is Yaa-Naa.

In Dagbon here, we Dagbamba say that a chief does not die. In the olden days, when a Yaa-Naa was going to die, no one would even see him die. How a chief is, in the olden days, as there were wars, when everybody else was sitting down, the chief was eating medicine. There will be somebody who eats medicine, and when he is going to die, fog will enter his room. Someone will eat medicine and turn into a bush animal or a python. Somebody will turn into a bad spirit when he is going to die. And there is somebody, too, when he is going to die, if you are sitting by him, he will take you and die. And what we heard is that when a Yaa-Naa was going to die, he could turn himself into a spirit or a snake. If you were standing by him when he turned himself into a spirit or a snake, you would also die. And so when a Yaa-Naa is sick, people only get near him when he is strong, and the time he comes to be very weak, people don't get near him at all.

Naa Zokuli was a chief who died and changed himself. He didn't die in the house. When he was made a chief, he said he was going to search for gold, and he went to a town called Gbano, at Ivory Coast side. He got the gold and was coming, and he came to a river and entered and died, and when he died, he turned himself into a crocodile. One part was a crocodile and one part was gold. Those who were waiting for him waited for about two months, and they went to look for him. When they came to the river, the crocodile came out, and his children who saw the crocodile recognized that it was their father who was in the river. And they said, "Naa Zokuli went to buy gold, and he bought the gold and came and remained in the river." And so, in the olden days, our Dagbamba chiefs used to turn themselves into many forms, and it is inside the tradition of our chiefs.

Long ago, when a Yaa-Naa was sick and it reached four days, and death was coming, those who knew death would come to look at him and know that he was going to die. They wouldn't hold him while he died. We have a type of bell we call *bulimbuylinga*: they would take this bell and tie it to his leg. And they would go out from the room and close the door and leave him. You know, death pains the one it catches, and when somebody is coming to die, death will be pulling him, and he will be kicking. And the time he is kicking, the bell will be crying. They will hear the bell ringing — *bungalung, bungalung, bungalung*. When the bell cries, they would just keep quiet. And when they don't hear it again, they will still

keep quiet. It will keep some time like that. Is he sleeping? Dead? They cannot know whether he has died or he has not yet died, unless they let it be daybreak. When they reach daybreak and the bell does not cry again, they will know that he is dead. If the chief started kicking in the early morning and they didn't hear the sound of the bell again, then they would wait until night before going into the room.

In the olden days they would get someone with medicine to come and open the door. Sometimes the medicine-man would open the door and see the chief dead, and sometimes he would open the door and see the chief alive. As a chief might die and turn himself into a snake and occupy the whole room, if you didn't have medicine and you saw him in that form, you would die. But if the medicine-man saw him in that way, he knew what he would also do to make the snake go away or to turn the snake back into a human body again. Sometimes a Yaa-Naa would die and they would open the door and not see him: he has gone. They would only see the skins he was lying on but they wouldn't see him. And if they were going to bury the dead chief, they would gather the skins and bury them, to show that it was the chief they buried. But now they don't tie them with bells like that. It was in the olden days that they were tying the bells, not now. They did it to chiefs, and there were some people who also had a lot of medicine. If such a person died, he used to change himself. This is why they were tying the bells to the chief's legs, not because of anything except what I have counted. And because of all this, they didn't say he was dead. They didn't say that he's not there and he's not going to come back. This is how it was.

Up to now, if it is according to our tradition, we don't say that the Yaa-Naa dies. When a Yaa-Naa dies, Dagbamba say, "The earth has shaken." If somebody says that, it is a big talk in our Dagbani. Children who have no sense, or children who have sense but who don't know of the Yaa-Naa's death, they will ask, "How is it that the earth has shaken?" Why our grandfathers have said it like that is because if you don't know and somebody says that the earth has shaken, when you come out, you will walk slowly, very slowly on the earth. You will walk like that because they have said the earth has shaken. It is only some of them who will know that it is our lord Yaa-Naa who is not there. And so, long ago, when our forefathers were children, when they walked on the ground, they stepped lightly. They thought that as they had said the ground was shaking, it was true. They were walking like that just because they were children, and they didn't know that he was dead.

And if you follow it, you will see that when a chief has died and they are going to bury him, they hold him up, and they will move his legs and let him walk

into the grave. It started with the Yaa-Naa, and that is the tradition with Dagbamba chiefs. If it is the Yaa-Naa, or the Savelugu chief, of the Nanton-Naa, or the Gukpe-Naa, any of them, they make them walk and enter the grave, and drummers will be beating. And it is the same with the chiefs of drummers, because we drummers are following the way of the chiefs. And so nowadays, the tying the bell to the legs is not there again, but they still make the chiefs walk to the grave. It is there today and tomorrow because they say that a chief does not die. They say he is traveling, and as he is traveling, he will come back. That is why they make him walk. When a chief dies and a new chief is put on the skins, we say that the chief has come back from his roaming. And the works the dead chief did before he died, the one who has taken over his place, if he has patience, he will work and do the work which was not finished. That is how it is.

And so in the olden days, when the Yaa-Naa was sick and was becoming weak, they used to tie a bell to his legs, and they would hear it ring and then wait before entering the room. Nowadays, when a Yaa-Naa dies and they enter the room and see, at that time, they will call an elder. This elder is the Kuɣa-Naa. He is the one who will come and see whether the Yaa-Naa is dead or not dead. When he comes to see, he enters the room, and if the Yaa-Naa is dead, Kuɣa-Naa will come out and he won't tell anyone anything. He will come and sit in front of the Yaa-Naa's house, and he will say, "War has beaten us," and everyone will know that the Yaa-Naa is dead. And he will send to call the Mionlana, the chief of Mion. The Mionlana is the Yaa-Naa's son, his trusted son. The Mionlana will come, and Kuɣa-Naa will say, "Your father did not sleep last night." At that time, the Mionlana will know that his father is dead. If a Yaa-Naa dies and they call the children, and any Yaa-Naa's son is eating chieftaincy in another town and he comes, it is Kuɣa-Naa who will say, "My child, Naa So-and-so, is not there."

The time Kuɣa-Naa brings out the death, they will gather the chief's elders. Mba Duyu is the elder who is always by the chief. If Mba Duyu is not with the Yaa-Naa, the Yaa-Naa is not there; and so the Yaa-Naa and Mba Duyu are one. Mba Duyu will gather all the people who are supposed to be called, and they will bring out the death of the Yaa-Naa. By that time, the death has reached one day, two days, or sometimes three days.

How this talk is, it separates, because it can happen that the Yaa-Naa will be sick and they will know that he is going to die, and they will send to inform the first-born son. If the sickness starts, they will send a message to the first son. It can happen that the Yaa-Naa will die and the first son will not be around, because sickness sometimes doesn't catch a person but he can die. But if a strong sickness catches the Yaa-Naa, they will send for the first son. And so let me add salt to the

talk. If it is that the Yaa-Naa is sick and is coming to die, they will also send someone to go and tell the Mionlana that his father did not sleep.

Truly, there are two ways. When a Yaa-Naa is sitting on the skins, the Yaa-Naa's first-born son does not sit near him. If the Yaa-Naa's first son is not yet a chief, he will be staying with the Baggo-Naa. Baggo is a village near Yendi. If the first son is with the Baggo-Naa, then Mba Duyu will send to Baggo-Naa and tell him that his father did not sleep last night. The Baggo-Naa will know that it is because the first son of the Yaa-Naa is with him that this message was given to him. Then he will stand and send a message to Mion, and the Baggo-Naa will come together with the Mionlana. If the first son of the Yaa-Naa is a chief, then there is not any talk: they won't send to the Baggo-Naa; they will just go and tell the Mionlana and the first-born son.

If the Yaa-Naa dies, when the Mionlana arrives, he will ask Mba Duyu, "Now, as it has spoiled, how will we catch?" Then Mba Duyu will say, "The Yendi elders who are there and are good for us to tell, we will tell them." And they will tell Grandfather Namo-Naa, tell Yendi Limam, and tell Kamo-Naa, the chief of the Kambonsi, the soldiers. They will come first before anything will start. Akarima, the one who beats the timpana, is already at the chief's house, too, and so these people will come and see. After they see, they will come back again, and they will send and tell Gundo-Naa. As for the chieftaincy of Gundogu, it is the Yaa-Naa's first-born daughter who eats it, and if the Yaa-Naa has given birth to daughters, the one who is senior will be the Gundo-Naa. And Gundo-Naa will come and add herself to the others I have counted. What Gundo-Naa does if she comes: she is in charge of preparing the food we call *solì sayim*, journey-traveler's food, and that is what they will give to the strangers who come.

And so let's take it that the Yaa-Naa died yesterday. They will not bury him on the same day he died. When they have finished bringing out the death, that is when they will start to dig the grave. In these modern times, everything has changed, but this has not changed: the Yaa-Naa cannot die today and they will bury him today. After the Mionlana has arrived and they have called all of the elders to come and see, then they will say that they should look inside the house of the chief. There is a room in the Yaa-Naa's house we call *Katin' duu*, that is, the Katini room. This Katini was the name of one of Naa Gbewaa's wives, and the second wife of the Yaa-Naa is called Katini. They will follow each other inside the Katini room, and that is where they will dig the grave. They will start it in the Katini room and dig down and over and stop under another room.

As for the grave, those who are going to dig the grave will dig it sometimes for two days. They start in the Katini room and they dig the grave like a bore-

hole. They dig until they can enter and it will be at about their chests, and then they will go to one side and dig it straight. It will be like two rooms, and it will reach about thirty or forty feet. As they are going, they will put lanterns inside it, because if there is no light, they can't see. They use our local Dagbamba lantern made from clay; we call it *firla*. They put that type of lantern in the grave. When they reach the end, they will widen it. There is a type of wood we call *lanjina*, and it is stronger than any other wood. Apart from iron, there is nothing stronger than it. They will get this type of wood and cut it into pieces and put it down. At that time they will find a leopard skin, a lion skin, a hyena skin, and they will add a cow skin, and a mat, and a pillow; then they will spread all of them in the grave.

Then the Yendi Limam will call maalam to come, and they will bathe the dead body. According to our Dagbamba custom, they have to get some types of clothes to dress the dead body. After they have finished bathing him, they will get a type of gown we call *buuli* that is woven by our local Dagbamba. They will get about three of them, and tear them and sew the cloth to make a small jumper for him. And they will sew *kpalana*, something like shorts, and sew trousers. And they will wrap him in a cloth we call *kahinna*. They will get a turban we call *bantabga*. And they will get *alichebba*, which is like an overall, and cover his body leaving only the face — the eyes and the nose, and the mouth. They will get a red hat. And they will get some rings we call *anzinfa*, like silver. And they will get some sandals we call *salimata*, with red tassels and fringe. And so when they have finished digging the grave, and they have bathed the dead body, they will dress him in all of this when they are going to bury him.

When they have put on the sandals, they will hold him and lift him up. If they take him and they are bringing him out, there are some other people who have a part to play. As the Yaa-Naa is, he has his grandchildren apart from his relatives and his own children's children. Who are they? Mossis and Gurumas: they are the Yaa-Naa's grandchildren in Dagbon because the Mossis and the Gurumas are our playmates. When they are bringing the Yaa-Naa out, Mossis and Gurumas will come and stop them and say, "We are coming to collect him." And they will have to give something to the Mossis and the Gurumas and the grandchildren before they can pass. They have to give them a sheep and three thousand cowries. And so if a Yaa-Naa dies, and these tribes are in the town, that is what they do. Those who are taking the Yaa-Naa will have to give the grandchildren all this before they agree and let them go and bury him.

Then they will take the Yaa-Naa and go to the grave. Some will hold him, and others will hold his legs, and they will be raising the legs and he will be walking. This is what they are going to do: they will let him be walking until he

reaches the grave. As he is walking, Namonaa will be behind singing. Namonaa will tell them everything on that day. That day, anybody who understands drumming will cry. Namonaa will count the Yaa-Naa's grandfathers, those who are dead, what they did and how they are not there again. And Namonaa will say that the road he is walking, too, it is the road of everybody. And Namonaa will say that this road will reach everybody, and he will say, "As for this road you are walking, it is just ahead, and everybody is going to reach it." And Namonaa will say, "This road is a stake in the middle of a family, and everybody has to hold it. You are not the only one who is going to hold it. Your grandfather did this and left it for you." This is what Namonaa will sing until they reach the mouth of the grave.

Then they send the Yaa-Naa inside the grave and lay him down. He will be lying on his right side with his face looking toward where the sun rises. They will pull the cloth back to leave his face. At that time, those who are his relatives will be coming one by one and touching him and going out. Sometimes they only come and look, and if they see him or they don't see him, it's all right. It is a custom with the Dagbamba that if you want to look and see, they will ask you, "Is he your father?" You will answer "Yes" three times before they let you look. And the Dagbamba say, "Yes, it is true. He has washed his hands and put them on his father." It is a big talk in Dagbon, and we use it in knocking our chests. Any Dagbamba who touches a dead body will wash his hands, and so we show that such a person has washed his hands, and it means that he has entered the grave of his father.

If the relatives have finished looking at him, they will get the wood they have put down, and they will use the wood in covering the place where he is lying. Those people burying him will get sand and dirt and mix it, and the maalamas who said the prayers will collect the sand and spit on it, say prayers and give the sand. The maalamas will collect the sand three times. Then they will take the sand and be throwing it into the holes between the sticks, until there is no small hole left. When they have finished closing these holes, they will push the sand and close the grave. And this is how they bury our lord Yaa-Naa. And the chiefs who are big chiefs, they bury them like that, too.

And so how they bury the Yaa-Naa, and they say the prayers, they have closed the grave, but they will say again that they are going to "close the hole," that is, the *bɔyɔli lɔybu*. It will be seven days before they close the hole. As the Yaa-Naa has died, they have sent and told the chiefs, and every chief will be coming to Yendi. They send and tell the Savelugu-Naa, the Karaga-Naa, the Sunson-Naa, the Tolon-Naa, the Gushe-Naa, the Kumbun-Naa, all of them. They

will send and tell every chief. And they will go and tell the Mamprusi chief, and the Nanumba chief, and even though we and the Gonjas are not the same mother's children, they will go and tell the Gonja chief. And we and the Ashantis are friends, and they will send and tell the Asantehene. It is only three Dagbamba chiefs who don't go to Yendi: the Gushe-Naa, the Tolon-Naa, and the Kumbun-Naa will be at home. But all the other chiefs, some of them will be there, and some will be arriving, and some will be on the way coming. But as for the Mionlana, he has already been there while they do all this work. When a Yaa-Naa dies, the Mionlana is for everything, because on the way of our custom, the Mionlana is the most loved child of the Yaa-Naa, and so he should be there. When the chiefs arrive in Yendi, or when "the three days" or "the seven days" have reached, they will close the hole. At the three days they will shave the children of the funeral house, and at the seven days they will get the Gbɔŋlana, the first-born son of the Yaa-Naa, and they will put him on the skins. I told you that in our Dagbani, *gbɔŋ* is "skin," and *-lana* is a person who owns or holds something. The sitting of the Gbɔŋlana is on the seventh day. But they don't fix one time to do it. It is coming from the elders of the funeral. If they want, if they finish closing the hole in three days, they can decide to sit the *gbɔŋ* in seven days. And so that is the Gbɔŋlana, and he will be sitting in place of his father until they make a new chief. The Gbɔŋlana will be sitting as the Regent until the time the final funeral is performed.

All the Dagbamba chiefs who have come to Yendi, they will all stay in Yendi until the final funeral is performed. Savelugu-Naa won't go home unless they perform the funeral. Karaga-Naa won't go home unless they perform the funeral. Sunson-Naa won't go home unless they perform the funeral. It can happen sometimes that Tolon-Naa or Kumbun-Naa will run to Yendi for the closing the hole, but when they finish closing the hole, they will go back home again. They will not come back to Yendi until the final funeral is performed. As for the Gushe-Naa, he will never go to Yendi until the final funeral. In the final funeral, when they are going to do what we call *buni wuhibu*, that is, "showing the riches," on the day of showing the riches, that is the day the Gushe-Naa will enter Yendi. But all the other chiefs will run to the funeral and they will stay in Yendi for six months or one year until the final funeral is performed. The funeral will be finished and somebody will be sitting on the skins as a new Yaa-Naa before these chiefs will go home again. This is how a Yaa-Naa's dying is, and this is what happens.

All the chiefs who have gathered in Yendi, they all have the houses they enter in Yendi. Each will be staying in the house where he will be staying, and it

has never happened that two chiefs would gather in one house. Formerly the Yaa-Naa's funeral was performed in one year, but nowadays, sometimes it is six months. It was the white men who put it like that, because some of the chiefs were sitting on the councils with the white men. But it was one year, and it can still reach one year: when Naa Abilabila died, it was one year before they performed the funeral.

And so in Dagbon here, and how it was in the olden days, if the Yaa-Naa dies, everything in Dagbon dies. Why is it so? When a Yaa-Naa dies in a certain year, hunger falls. As the chiefs are lying in Yendi, many people don't farm that year. The chief is sitting on the land, and when he goes to Yendi, he will take his housepeople and his elders. He will only leave maybe his senior wife and four women to remain and watch the house. Someone will go and take two or three of his house's youngmen. They are all people who are farming. Unless the funeral is performed, they won't go home. If your father is dead, do you go home? The Mionlana, the Savelugu-Naa, the Kari-Naa, the Nanton-Naa, the Sunson-Naa, the Demon-Naa, the Kori-Naa, the Yelizolilana, the Sanglana, the Tugulana: they are all children of the Yaa-Naa, and when the Yaa-Naa dies, they all go to stay in Yendi. The Voggo-Naa, the Zangbalinlana, the Zugulana, the Yamolkaraga-Naa, the Gaa-Naa, the Galiwe-Naa, the Zulogulana, all of them, they are children of the Yaa-Naa, and they also go to stay in Yendi. None of them stays back. Even now that our eyes are opened, Nanton-Naa, Savelugu-Naa, and all of the chiefs from this area will get up from this place and go to Yendi. The Savelugu-Naa is the leader of the chiefs in this area. Can the Savelugu-Naa go and the Vo-Naa will be sitting down? Will the Sagnerigulana sit down? Will the Tibunlana sit down? The Diarilana won't sit down. The Banvimlana won't sit down. Any chief who is sitting will not sit: they will all follow each other and go. They will go to Yendi and sit for the six months or one year. As it is, will farming be there? And so when they finish performing the funeral, hunger will fall in Dagbon. And that is why I said that when the Yaa-Naa dies, everything in Dagbon also dies, unless we come to get a new chief. And every talk will also become a new talk. This is how it is.

When they are coming to perform the Yaa-Naa's funeral, those chiefs who are big chiefs, each can get about twenty cows. Nanton-Naa, Savelugu-Naa, Mionlana, Karaga-Naa, Tolon-Naa, and Kumbun-Naa: each of them can get about twenty cows. Sunson-Naa can get about ten cows; Tampionlana and Voggo-Naa can get maybe five cows. Where do they get the cows? It is the people on their land who give them, on the part of the villages these chiefs are holding. These villagers are giving because of what they will want some day. If someone wants

his talks to be good on the part of the chief, he is going to give a cow and say, “I am giving you this cow to take and perform your father’s funeral.” If a chief gathers twenty cows like that, he will take ten and put them in his house as the profit of his chieftaincy, and he will take ten cows and go to Yendi. If it is food, the chief will also get a lot of food from his villagers, and he will be taking it to Yendi. He takes all this because it is not only his housepeople who are going. Every chief is coming with his Kamo-Naa and his soldiers, and as the Kamo-Naa’s housechild is there to shoot the guns, a chief like Nanton-Naa or Savelugu-Naa can send thirty-three guns. Yidana Gunu’s housechild is there, Limam’s housechild is there. And drummers will also go. Those who are the chief’s elders and the big people in the town, they will also follow him and go. Some of those who have followed their chief from their town, they will stay with the chief. But it isn’t everybody who will remain there waiting for the funeral. Some of those who have no role to play will go back home, and when the funeral time comes, they will return. And those who remain with the chief will be lying outside the house where the chief is staying. The food and the cows the chief takes to Yendi, that is what they will be eating while they are making the Yaa-Naa’s funeral up to the day of showing the thing. The chief will be removing cows one by one and slaughtering them, and he and his followers will be eating. If it were ten cows he took, on the day of showing the riches, he will give two cows to the Gboɲlana and kill them on that day. This is how they will kill cows to perform the Yaa-Naa’s funeral.

It is when they perform the funeral that they will know who is going to become the Yaa-Naa. If the Yaa-Naa is not there, it is a son of a Yaa-Naa who will come and eat the Yendi chieftaincy. In our tradition, we stand that when a Yaa-Naa dies, it is four people who want Yendi. The Savelugu chief wants Yendi; the Karaga chief wants Yendi; the Mionlana wants Yendi; and the Yaa-Naa’s Gboɲlana, his Regent, wants Yendi. And among these four people, there are two who are senior than the other two. Who are they? When the Yaa-Naa is not there, the Mionlana and the Gboɲlana are stronger than the Savelugu-Naa and the Karaga-Naa. They are stronger because when a Yaa-Naa’s grandchild gets Savelugu, he will eat it. And if a Yaa-Naa’s grandchild gets Karaga, he will eat. And as a Yaa-Naa’s grandson can eat Savelugu and Karaga, a Yaa-Naa’s grandson cannot eat Yendi. Since Yendi started, a Yaa-Naa’s grandson has never eaten. But only a Yaa-Naa’s son eats Mion. And again, when a Yaa-Naa dies, his first-born son, the Gboɲlana, is sitting, and as he is sitting on the skins, he also wants Yendi. The Gboɲlana wants it along with the Mionlana: they are struggling. But the Savelugu chief and the Karaga chief cannot get Yendi unless they are Yaa-

Naa's sons, and as the Yaa-Naa's children eat Savelugu and Karaga, they are also there. I can call the names of Yaa-Naa's children who ate Savelugu and Karaga, and the grandsons who ate Savelugu and Karaga are not many. It's now that grandsons are eating. As for Mion, it is only one grandson who ate Mion. But when the Yaa-Naa is not there, sometimes the Gbɔɔɔlana will become the chief, and the Mionlana won't get it.

Let me add you salt. If you follow it, in the olden days, it was not only these four people who searched for Yendi. Naa Gungobli was eating Yamolkaraga, and he came and ate Yendi. Naa Garba came from Tampion to eat Yendi. Naa Zanjina was not eating chieftaincy. Naa Saalana Ziblim was eating Kpatinga, and he came and ate Yendi. Naa Siyli was given the chieftaincy of Singa, but it wasn't that he went to Singa and ate it. Naa Siyli was in war, and they said that a chief's son who has not eaten chieftaincy should not fight a war, and so he was given that chieftaincy in the war. And so it is only from the time of Naa Ziblim Bandamda that the one who becomes Yaa-Naa is eating Mion, Savelugu, Karaga, or is the Gbɔɔɔlana.

And so when the Yaa-Naa has died and the chiefs of Dagbon have come to Yendi, at that time, everybody will add himself in Yendi talks. I have said that only the son of a Yaa-Naa can be a Yaa-Naa, but if the Savelugu-Naa is a grandson, he will interfere. And if the Karaga-Naa is a grandson, he will interfere. The Mionlana will interfere. If Yendi falls, it is their gown that makes them enter the talks. They know they will not get it. Since our starting, a Yaa-Naa's grandchild has not eaten Yendi. Everything has turned upside down, but that one has not happened. That is how it is. As for the Gbɔɔɔlana, he is sitting as the Regent, and he will not interfere, and he will be sitting quietly. It is only when Yendi talks are difficult that they will give the chieftaincy to the Gbɔɔɔlana. If you hear that they have repaired Yendi and the Gbɔɔɔlana has eaten, you will know that there has been an argument inside it. But these three chiefs — Savelugu-Naa, Karaga-Naa, and Mionlana — they are the ones who will be fighting for Yendi. This one will say he won't leave it for that one, and that one won't leave it for this one. and three people cannot take one thing. If it comes like that, the Yendi elders can say that they should stop the arguing and give it to the Gbɔɔɔlana. And this is why the Gbɔɔɔlana will sometimes sit on his father's skins and remain there. And this is how a Yaa-Naa's death comes.

It is not until they perform the final funeral that everyone will know who will be the Yaa-Naa. It is Gushe-Naa who will let people know that so-and-so is the Yaa-Naa, and Gushe-Naa doesn't go to Yendi unless they are going to perform the final funeral of a Yaa-Naa. It is a custom in Dagbon that Kuya-Naa will

consult soothsayers in front of the chief's house, in the open. Kuya-Naa will take the stone that the soothsayers have caught, but he will not say whose stone it is until he goes to meet Gushe-Naa. It was only Naa Gungobli whom the soothsayers caught, but the remaining Yaa-Naas, the soothsayers didn't catch them. The time of Naa Gungobli, all the children of the Yaa-Naa wanted chieftaincy, and a soothsayer came and separated them. I can count the sons of Yaa-Naas who became Yaa-Naas without the soothsaying catching them. Truly, they show that they do the soothsaying, but it is not soothsayers who catch a Yaa-Naa.

And so in the custom, the soothsayers are not there to catch the Yaa-Naa. It is the Yendi elders who sit and decide who should be Yaa-Naa among the children, before the soothsayers will also catch. The Yɔɔyu [Yendi] elders will pick the stones, and they know whom that stone represents. And when the soothsayer picks a stone, the elders know whom that stone represents. But they don't put the soothsayer into the custom to say, "Now we are looking for a chief, and you are supposed to catch him." The way they show it, they can ask and ask again in the soothsaying many times, and the one that it is catching, they will go and tell Gushe-Naa, "This stone, this is the person whose name it is, and we searched this number of times, and the soothsaying was catching this stone. And so this is the person it has caught to be Yɔɔtolana [Yaa-Naa]. When the time comes, and we remove the grass, this is the person you should give it to."

I am going to show you the way old drummers say it. How the soothsaying entered during Naa Gungobli's time: he was eating Yamolkaraga, and he was very poor. His brother was Galiwe-Naa, and he had wealth. Their brother was Naa Zokuli, and he died, and Galiwe-Naa said he would go and eat Yendi. And he sent and called Naa Gungobli that he should accompany him to Yendi, and that he would give Galiwe to Naa Gungobli. And Naa Gungobli said he didn't have anything to go to Yendi; he had no horse, and he had no gown. And Galiwe-Naa got those things and gave to him, and Naa Gungobli followed his brother and went. When he got to Yendi, as he was poor, he didn't have a house to stay in, and he went and entered the house of a Konkomba woman. When they finished the funeral, and they collected the stones of those who were searching for Yendi, they started searching. The soothsayer would catch his stone and tell them that if they want Yendi to be well, this stone must eat. And they too, they didn't want him to eat. And they would get up again. They went around all the soothsayers in Dagbon. If they heard about any soothsayer, they would say they should go and bring him. They would put the stones, and the soothsayer would say that the kapok tree is starting to rise at Yamolkaraga. And they would leave it again.

They would go and bring another soothsayer, and they would put the stones in front of him representing the chiefs who are searching for Yendi. The soothsayer would look and look, and he would come out to say that if they want the better kapok tree, it is at Yamolkaraga. And all the soothsayers were all holding Yamolkaragalana. And they said that he was a poor chief, and they said he was the son of a Yaa-Naa. And so they gave it to him, and Galiwe-Naa went home.

And so this is where the soothsaying started. It was in Naa Gungobli's time. Because it started like that in the olden days, they don't argue with it again. But today, if a Yaa-Naa's child is eating Yamolkaraga, he will search for it, but they won't give him the chieftaincy. Those who were Yaa-Naa's children and they ate a chieftaincy like that and then they ate Yendi were there. Now they are going to say that the chieftaincy like that is too small to get up from there to go to Yendi. But when the soothsaying started, the reason why soothsayer's hands were inside was that they were making argument. The elders didn't want to say that such-and-such a person should eat, and later others would say that they chose that person from their own wish. And if it was that the one they like is the one they give the grass to, I can tell you that that is the thing that has broken Dagbon now. Now it has spoiled. Maybe they will go and bring government inside. Now that they are taking what their heart wants, that is why it cannot stand. Naa Mahamadu: it was the soothsaying that caught him, and they refused it. As for Gushe-Naa, whomever they will go and catch, he won't refuse it. He does not ask them whether it was soothsaying that caught the person or what. But as for government, government can refuse it. That is what is standing now. That is it.

And so it is the elders of Dagbon who choose the Yaa-Naa, and truly, I cannot say that there is anyone who is holding the customs of Dagbon. As for our Dagbamba custom, if you look at it, you will see that it doesn't stand at one place. Every town has got the way of its customs. At Yendi, they have got their customs. Savelugu, Nanton, Kumbungu, they all have their customs. If it is on the part of the chiefs, the customs have got differences. And so it is good, if you are going to talk about the customs of Dagbon, you separate them. You see these tindanas: some of them hold our customs. You see the elders in the chief's house: some of them hold our customs. When one of these people is not there again, his housechild eats his position because it is on the way of the custom. Even in Yendi, those who hold Yendi custom's things are many. But if it is that we want to say who is the leader of all of them and give him a name, then I think in my heart that there is one who is in front. That is the chief of Gushegu. If it is not Gushe-Naa, then there are those who say it is Kuya-Naa. If you look, Kuya-Naa is a Yaa-Naa's son who didn't get chieftaincy to eat, and Kuya-Naa is the Yaa-

Naa's housechild who is outside. Kuya-Naa makes sacrifices for the Yaa-Naa, and the Yaa-Naa calls Kuya-Naa his grandfather. And so there are those who say that Kuya-Naa is the strong elder of Yendi. And there are those who say that it is the Gushe-Naa who holds Yendi's everything: it is Gushe-Naa who is the final person to take the decision of the elders and give the grass, and so it is from Gushe-Naa that people know who is going to be the chief. But if it is Yendi talks, Kuya-Naa is inside Yendi. Gushe-Naa is living in his own town. The elders who are outside Yendi are elders of Yaa-Naa, but those who are inside Yendi itself, the position they are holding as elders is stronger than those who are outside Yendi. If anything happens inside Yendi, it is people like Kuya-Naa who will hear it. If the Yendi elders don't hear it, then somebody like Tolon-Naa or Kumbun-Naa or Gushe-Naa will not hear it. The elders inside will sit down and decide before the information about Yendi will get to the elders outside Yendi. And what I also want you to know is this: how Dagbon is, the Gushe-Naa, the Kumbun-Naa, the Tolon-Naa, and the Gukpe-Naa, they are the strong elders of the Yaa-Naa. They are sitting in their own chieftaincies, and their tradition is different from the others. When one of these people disagrees with the Yaa-Naa, then Dagbon will not be well. That is their tradition, too.

As for the Gushe-Naa, his chieftaincy is old. The Gushe-Naa does not go to visit the Yendi chief. When there is no Yaa-Naa, they send to tell him. The only time he goes to Yendi is when they are performing the final funeral of the Yaa-Naa. When they are going to perform the funeral, the Gushe-Naa and his followers will ride horses and come, and there are drummers drumming, and flutes blowing. And they will be coming as if they are going to fight a war against Yendi.

When Gushe-Naa is getting near Yendi, he will stop at a town called Malizheri; it's not far from Yendi. Gushe-Naa will lie down at Malizheri and the Yendi elders will gather their mouths and go and meet him there and show him whom they have caught. Grandfather Kuya-Naa will go and see Gushe-Naa. And Kuya-Naa will come with Tuyrinam, Kpatii-Naa, Zohi-Naa, Balo-Naa and Gomli. They are all elders of Yendi. Those who go will go; we only say that the elders go to see Gushe-Naa. There are many people who catch the Yaa-Naa, but if they want, it is these people who will go and meet Gushe-Naa. Those who go will go; we only say that the elders go to Malizheri. And he will ask them, "Whom have you got to be locking the door of the hall?" If they want, they will say, "We don't know. We are going to consult the gods of the land." Then they will go and get a soothsayer again, and the soothsayer will look, and he will catch the stone of the one who is going to eat the chieftaincy. When the soothsayer is looking, Gushe-

Naa's elder is there, and they will take the stone and give it to the elder to give to Gushe-Naa, "This is the stone we have got." And Gushe-Naa will say, "We are going to give the chieftaincy to this person, and there will be no fighting, and there will be food in Dagbon and we will eat." And the Gushe-Naa will be sitting in Malizheri.

Thursday is the day of the funeral, when they are going to do the showing the riches. That is the day when Kumbun-Naa will arrive in Yendi. When the Kumbun-Naa is coming, since the olden days, there is a very large quiver with him. The mouth of the quiver is wide, and they put arrows inside. The Kumbun-Naa gets strong young men who are not matured, that is, who have never known a woman, and they will carry the quiver. They put this quiver on the boy's head to carry, and it will be shaking him, and throwing him here and there. Then another one will carry it. They use the leaves of the dawadawa tree to make something to put on his head before he carries it. A young boy who carries the quiver, he has health, but if he comes home, they will make medicine for him because this quiver has got old talks. There are some bees, and no one knows where these bees are, but the day the boy carries the quiver, you will see that these bees will come, many of them, and they will be following the quiver and going around Kumbun-Naa's people. The bees will be moving around it, but they don't bite anybody. And everybody who sees it will know that truly, there is some old talk inside it. When they are going, the one carrying the quiver does not go by the road, because the bees are inside the quiver. The boy carrying it will be going and turning his head. We have heard that these bees are war-fighters. If it is a time of fighting, when the Kumbun-Naa and his people are going, when they get to the place of the fighting, these bees will come and add themselves to the fighting. This is how it is. That is why nobody wants trouble with the Kumbun-Naa. These bees are wonderful. Something like this will let you know that custom is strong, and that if you play with custom, it will eat you. Living things like that are following Kumbun-Naa. What I'm telling you, if you ask anyone from Kumbungu, it is the same thing he will say. The Kumbun-Naa and his people will be coming to Yendi, and if they come to a town, the bees will pass the town and rest, and the Kumbun-Naa and his followers will meet them again on the Yendi road. If it is Tugu they come to, or any town, the bees will go in front and rest. And the bees will be with them up to the time they reach Yendi. The house Kumbun-Naa enters to stay in Yendi, the bees will group themselves by the side, and they won't spread again until he goes home. When he steps outside, they will follow up. Since Kumbungu started, these bees were there, and up to now, it is still there. As for these bees, whenever there is a war and the Yaa-Naa is going, he goes along with the Kumbun-Naa.

Any arrow the Kumbun-Naa takes from the quiver and shoots at any person, that fellow will die. And the bees will also be going and stinging people. That is the Kumbun-Naa's work.

When Kumbun-Naa reaches Yendi, all the people of Yendi will come and meet him, and they will take him to the Yaa-Naa's house. He will take the quiver and go around the Yaa-Naa's house when they are showing the thing. He goes around the house three times, and then he goes to the house where he will sleep. And when it's night, he goes again to the Yaa-Naa's house and goes around it three times, and the bees will be following him. And those following will be holding fighting things like knives and cutlasses. They will be blowing the flute, and the *gungon* will be crying, and they will be singing, "Dasambila has drank and become drunk; if you shoot and miss him, throw a club at him." This is how Kumbun-Naa's people will be coming, and you will see that everybody will become strong, and they will be going round the house. And the *Gbojlana* will meet them and be riding a horse, and this quiver is what the Kumbun-Naa brings to enter the Yaa-Naa's funeral.

In the morning of the day of showing the riches, Thursday, that is the day the Gushe-Naa will enter Yendi. The Gushe-Naa will dress and ride a horse. Around eight o'clock going to ten o'clock, he will take all his people and enter Yendi. When you see them, they look as if they are going to fight a war. What they are going to do is something like a play, but it is a red-eye thing, too. Those who hold axes are there, and those holding bows and arrows, guns, spears, cutlasses, knives; they will sit on horses and ride and enter Yendi. At that time, the Yendi elders will prepare and be sitting at the Yaa-Naa's house. And the Yendi elders will also dress and stand at the Yaa-Naa's house, as if they are going to fight. Gushe-Naa and his followers will ride and come and stop a short distance from the house, and they will sit. And the elders of Yendi will stand in front of the Yaa-Naa's house, and they will be holding war-things. And they will say that the Gushe-Naa should not enter Yendi. And Gushe-Naa will stay a small distance away, and he will remove some strong horseriders, about three or four, those who can ride horses and control them very well. They will hold knives and spears and to run with their horses to the chief's house, and they will go, and the Yendi elders will drive them back. They will go again, and those standing there will refuse them, and they will turn and run back. And they will raise their cutlasses and rush at the house a third time, and those who are standing will fear fear. And the Yendi elders will say, "These people's eyes are red. Let us give them way." Then the Gushe-Naa's followers will come, and they will go to the entrance room of the chief's house and remove some of the grass from the thatched roof.

By that time, Gushe-Naa has come down from his horse and will be sitting near to the front of the chief's house. Drummers will be beating and following him, and they beat a dance called Dimbu. Talks will be talking. Women will be ululating. And they will be following the Gushe-Naa. Then the one holding the grass will take his horse and rush towards Gushe-Naa. He will come to just in front of Gushe-Naa and stop, and he will get down and give the grass to Gushe-Naa. Gushe-Naa will collect the grass and break it, and he will get a cloth and cover it. And the Gushe-Naa will take his people and enter the Yaa-Naa's house. And gathering will gather. And all the things they beat, they will be beating them. And guns will be shooting. That is the day Gushe-Naa enters Yendi to see the funeral. Have you heard?

Then Gushe-Naa goes to the house where he stays in Yendi and sits down. When it is late afternoon, that is when they will be showing the riches. They will get the Gbɔŋlana of the dead chief, and they will take him around the house three times and let him sit outside. And those who have come to the funeral will come and greet, and they will tell him, "We have got fifty or a hundred cows which we will slaughter for our strangers." And they will give all the cows they have brought to perform the funeral of the Yaa-Naa. And there will be drumming, and guns will be shooting, and dances will be dancing.

When they are performing the funeral and they finish showing the thing, the making of the new chief is not far. They will show the thing today, and the next day, Friday, they will call maalam to come and pray. Getting to the evening, about four o'clock, they will finish preparing the food and sharing it to people, and they will finish the prayers. Going to eight o'clock or ten o'clock, the Gushe-Naa will send his elder to call the Kpatii-Naa. Gushe-Naa will give him the grass that has been removed and say that he should take it and go and meet Kuya-Naa and they should go and give it to Tolon-Naa. And Gushe-Naa will say that they should take it and give it to the Gukpe-Naa to give it to the one who is going to eat Yendi. And Gushe-Naa will say, "Go and give this to so-and-so, that he should get it and burn firewood for dead people." If it is the Gbɔŋlana who is going to be the chief, Gushe-Naa will say, "Go and give this thatch to the Gbɔŋlana." And if it is to be the Karaga-Naa, he will say, "Go and give this to the Karaga-Naa." If it is the Savelugu-Naa, he will say, "Go and give this to the chief of Savelugu." And if it is the Mionlana, he will say, "Go and give this to the chief of Mion." These four people are the people I have told you who become chiefs of Yendi. Out of those four, Gushe-Naa removes one of them and makes him the chief. If it is the Gbɔŋlana or the Mionlana or the Karaga-Naa or the Savelugu-Naa that Gushe-Naa tells them, that is the one who will be the Yaa-Naa. That is why I have said that

on our way, we know that it is Gushe-Naa who knows the Yaa-Naa, and in all the customs of Yendi, Gushe-Naa is senior. Truly, Gukpe-Naa has his part to play when they are installing the Yaa-Naa, and Tolon-Naa is also there, but even if you look at Kumbun-Naa, he has nothing to do apart from coming with his quiver. Gushe-Naa is the one who is going to remove the grass and give it to someone before they will know that “This is the Yaa-Naa.” And this is why they say that the Gushe-Naa is the elder of Yendi, because it is this grass they will remove that will show, and everybody will know the Yaa-Naa. It is the Gushe-Naa who knows who will be the Yaa-Naa, and the one Gushe-Naa says, that is the one they will catch, and that is how Yendi chieftaincy is. This is how I know it.

Whoever is going to be the Yaa-Naa, they will take the grass and go and give it to him. And they will also give cola. And they will tell him, “Your grandfather Gushe-Naa says I should bring this grass and give to you, and you should take it and be burning it and be preparing dead people’s fire.” And the one they have caught will know that he is the one they have given Yendi to. They will do that and come back and sit down again. And the Gukpe-Naa will come back and say, “I have gone and given it to your grandson the Mionlana,” or “your grandson the Savelugu-Naa,” or “your grandson the Karaga-Naa,” or “your grandson the Gbɔɲlana.” This is how it is.

When it is night, they will call the one who has been given the thatch. It is Gukpe-Naa who will be in front to go and catch the new Yaa-Naa. When Gukpe-Naa goes, by that time, everybody is asleep. When Gukpe-Naa walks, dead people follow him, and as he is coming with dead people, everybody runs into the room. These dead people have their walking sticks, and nobody sees them, and Gukpe-Naa’s work is to catch the Yaa-Naa and bring him to a room in one of the chief’s compounds. The room they enter is the room of the second wife of the Yaa-Naa, and her title is Katini. I have told you that she follows the Gbanzaliɲ, the Yaa-Naa’s senior wife. I told you that it was this Katini who was Naa Gbewaa’s wife. We call a room “duu” in Dagbani, and so that place is the Katin’ duu. The Yaa-Naa’s house in Yendi has four different compounds, and they are near one another: Gbanzaliɲ has her compound; Katini has hers; there is a small one called Yilibila where the Yaa-Naa is; and there is one called ʒee. And the Gukpe-Naa will take the new Yaa-Naa and enter the Katin’ duu.

Gukpe-Naa holds his hand and enters the room with him in the dark. There are many walking sticks in that room, and all the walking sticks have got names because they are the walking sticks of the former Yaa-Naas. Every Yaa-Naa has got his staff or walking stick, and it is standing as, “This is my grandfather’s staff.” And so these are the walking sticks of all the Yaa-Naas who have died, and

the walking sticks are against the walls. And they tell the new chief to go and choose one of the walking sticks. There is no light, and they don't take any lantern inside. That is why some people say the chief closes his eyes to take the walking stick. It isn't that he closes his eyes, but as it is dark, he cannot see clearly. When Gukpe-Naa takes the new chief into the room, the new chief will be feeling around until he takes one of the walking sticks. If he takes a walking stick that was used by a chief who fought wars, then he will also fight wars. If it was a chief who used to kill people, then he will also kill people when he is the Yaa-Naa. If he takes a stick that was used by a chief who was there when there were no rains, then during his time there will also be no rains. If he takes a walking stick of a chief who kept long on earth, then he will also keep long. If it was a chief who did not last long, then he will also not last long. If the new chief takes the walking stick of a Yaa-Naa whose time was good, the Gukpe-Naa knows it; and if he takes the walking stick of someone whose time was not good, the Gukpe-Naa knows it. But the Gukpe-Naa will not tell anybody. It is only the Gukpe-Naa who will know whose walking stick the new chief has removed and the work that chief did. This is the work of the Gukpe-Naa, and when he finishes this work, he leaves.

After the new chief has chosen a walking stick, there are some other things on the part of custom. And there are also elders who are holding the things of the custom: Gomli, Mba Buḡa, Tuḡrinam, Gagbindana, Zandu-Naa, and Kpatii-Naa. They are for the customs. They are all elders of Yendi. As for Tuḡrinam, it is not the Yaa-Naa who gives him his chieftaincy. Tuḡrinam is the child of Kuḡya-Naa, and it is Kuḡya-Naa who sends Tuḡrinam to go and do his work. Gagbindana and Mba Buḡa are elders in Yendi, and they have their sections where they sit. As for Kpatii-Naa, he is his own chief at a village called Kpatia. Kpatii-Naa and Gomli follow one another, and Kpatii-Naa is senior. As for the Zandu-Naa, if there is a war, the Yaa-Naa will send to the Zandu-Naa and tell him that the Zandu-Naa should send his children. And the child of the Zandu-Naa is the Tolon-Naa, and it comes from how the Tolon chieftaincy started because the time of Naa Nyaysi, Zandu-Naa was the father of Tolon-Naa, and so Zandu-Naa is older. If there is a war, it is Zandu-Naa who will call the chief of Tolon and tell him, "I want you to follow the chief to the war, and you should throw spears and cut off heads and come home." If they are going to make a new Yaa-Naa, these elders will all be in Yendi and add to the elders to catch the new chief, and they are the ones who are holding custom's things. And so all of them are inside custom, and they do work. And they add themselves to Gushe-Naa, Kuḡya-Naa, Gukpe-Naa, Tolon-Naa, and Zohi-Naa when they catch a new Yaa-Naa. And so the work of catching a Yaa-Naa is with all of them.

These custom things are the things that make the new Yaa-Naa a chief. These things are all separated and are with different people. There is something with the Zandu-Naa. It is the Zandu-Naa who brings spears which they will put around the chief. After the chief takes the walking stick, it is Kpatii-Naa who does his work first on the part of custom. Kpatii-Naa will sit the new chief on a something built like a small chair, and we call it *gbolin*; if a chief eats Yendi and he has not sat on it, then he is not a Yaa-Naa. Then it is Tuyrinam who will dress the new chief, with his gown and sandals and beads and everything, along with the skins on which he will be sitting. Gagbindana is holding the gown, and Gagbindana is also holding a hat, and it is a hat that covers the ears; and Gagbindana is also . He comes and gives these things to Tuyrinam, and Tuyrinam will collect them to put on the new chief. They don't use a new hat; as for that, it shows that as they have finished the funeral of the dead chief, his things are no more in the house. Then Gomli takes an eating bowl and enters, and Gomli shows the new Yaa-Naa how a chief eats food.

When Gomli finishes, they will go and tell my grandfather Namo-Naa, and they will tell Akarima, the one who beats the timpana. At that time the Yaa-Naa has become a chief, and if there is anybody again who has some work to do on the part of custom, that person will go and enter and do his work. And they will get youngmen from elders' houses, and they will enter the room and be pressing the Yaa-Naa so that he will not sleep. If the Yaa-Naa sleeps, it means he has taken the chieftaincy to sleep, and it means the land will spoil.

The chief will be in the Katin' duu until daybreak. And my grandfather Namo-Naa will be beating till daybreak, and the Akarima will also be there beating the timpana, and guns will cry, and they will beat the Samban' luja until the next day. When day breaks in the morning, all the elders and every Dagbamba chief will gather. If they are going to take the chief out from the Katini room, there is a small room they will take him and enter before they come out. Mba Buṇa is the one who is for the work in this room. And when he comes from the room, they have put down hoes, and he will be walking on the hoes and not on the ground. And Mba Buṇa will come and let the chief sit on a donkey, and then the chief will sit on the donkey and come down. When the chief gets down from the donkey, he goes to Zɔhi, a section of Yendi. When the Yaa-Naa goes to Zɔhi, those who have gathered will lead him. And it is there they will know that he has become a Yaa-Naa. The Yaa-Naa will be there with Zɔhi-Naa for about one week, and Zɔhi-Naa will be showing him sense. The Yaa-Naa calls the Zɔhi-Naa his senior brother, and it is a child's senior brother who shows him sense, and that is why he sleeps there. When he gets up from Zɔhi, he goes to Mba Buṇa's house,

and when he leaves Mba Buja's house, he goes to Mba Duyu's house. When he leaves there, he goes to one of the chief's house compounds, and we call it Yilibila, that is small house. By the time he goes back to the Yaa-Naa's house where he stays, at that time he is a Yaa-Naa.

When day breaks on the next Friday, all the elders will gather and greet, "How is our good luck." They have got a new chief. And at that time, what the Yaa-Naa's tongue is on the part of chieftaincy, he will take it and talk to the elders. Then he goes to the chief's house, and they will call maalam to come and sit down and pray. And it is there the chief will work what his chieftaincy-work is. It is there he is going to beg for the good of the land. And he will beg for every Yaa-Naa's child who is eating chieftaincy in any town. And when they are taking him to the chief's house, my grandfather Namo-Naa will be beating. On that day, you won't know him. He wears a dress we call alichebba, and he will dress all his body, and only his nose and his eyes will be free.

When they take him and let him sit down, the maalam will finish praying, and the elders and the Yaa-Naa's princes who are eating chieftaincies in other towns, they will all come and be greeting him and going back. As they are greeting, they are not greeting uselessly. Somebody will bring ten pounds and say, "You should buy cola and put inside the kettle." Someone will bring a hundred pounds and say, "Get this and pray to God, and the land will be repaired." This one will bring seventy pounds; that one, fifty pounds; and this is how they will be coming and farewelling the chief, and going home. And on the following days, the different sections of Yendi town will be coming one after another to greet the chief, and they will all come and greet until they finish greeting. And so that is how we make a Yaa-Naa. And this is how we catch our Yendi chiefs, and it is not anyone who catches them apart from those I have showed you. The Yaa-Naa doesn't take money and go and search for his chieftaincy from another chief. This is how it is.

And so those who catch the Yaa-Naa are many. And in this our book, if you say that it is the elders and the soothsayers who catch the Yaa-Naa, then that is it. If you say it like that, nobody is going to challenge you. This is what everybody knows. The elders and soothsayers come out and pass it through to Gushe-Naa, and they catch the Yaa-Naa. Everybody, this is what they know. And so how it is standing: it is the custom that catches. And I have told you that our Dagbamba custom does not stand at one place. Our custom is not something you can stand at one place and hold. It is slippery. As I'm talking about it, I am not trying to confuse you. There are many things someone will talk to you, and he will add again that the way he talked to you, it is there, but you shouldn't talk it for

someone to hear. And this talk about the Yaa-Naa, there are people who will read it and will not want this book again. I have told you that one bad yam can spoil fufu. This one talk inside all our talks, there are people who will say that the book has revealed some hidden talks that should not come out into the open. And so I don't want the book to show that the custom is something standing at one place, so that anybody concerned can easily hold it. That is what has spoiled Dagbon.

I have told you that those who are the Yendi elders use their sense to catch Yaa-Naa. As for the sense they use to catch, nobody is among them, and they don't come out to tell us. All the chiefs and their followers lying down in Yendi, none of them knows what the elders are doing. If someone should stand to say that this is how they catch, he is going to tell lies. The elders will sit down with their sense, and they will go to Malizheri and tell Gushe-Naa the one he should give the grass to. Gushe-Naa will go and give it to one person, and the others sitting down will say that it is because Gushe-Naa likes that man. But he was sitting down, and they came and told him. All the consulting of Kuya-Naa and the elders, it is Gushe-Naa who is coming to open the door for people to see what is inside, to see the one he will give the grass to. And so they will put all the blame on him. They will say it is Gushe-Naa who chose that person. Because of that, drummers praise Gushe-Naa and call him Duniya Yu' Biɛyulana, the owner of the bad world, or the owner of the bad name. The elders' names won't come out. All the bad things of chieftaincy, they will put them on his head. It is Gushe-Naa who will carry the bad name. That is why they praise him like that.

Savelugu-Naa is a son of Yaa-Naa. Mionlana: Yaa-Naa's child. Kari-Naa: Yaa-Naa's child. Three, and adding the Gboɲlana. All of them, their father's house has fallen, and they are looking for it. The way the four of them are searching for it, they know that only one person is going to eat it, and they know about the custom too. If day breaks, if Savelugu-Naa should eat it, or Kari-Naa should eat it, or Mionlana should eat it, or the Gboɲlana, then it will be left with three. If it is somebody's own heart wish that he will choose somebody to go and eat that chieftaincy, or if Gushe-Naa should use his own choice, that means that it is not the custom. The three people remaining, what are they going to say? They are going to tie war. If they get to know that it is Gushe-Naa's wish that he chose that person, they will find a war to spoil the whole thing. That is what spoiled Dagbon now. The custom caught Naa Mahamadu. Andani house said they won't agree, and they knew where to pass and buy strength and come and push it down. That is what broke Dagbon. I have been telling you that there are some talks people don't like talking, and this is one of them.

That is why we say that it is the custom that catches. That is how it is standing. You know that they are consulting, but you don't say that the elders take their own heart or their wish to select the Yaa-Naa. If you say that, someone will ask, "Is it Gushe-Naa who told you that he used his own choice or what? Or Gukpe-Naa came and told you? Or Kuya-Naa? Or Tolon-Naa? Or Tuyrinam? Or Zohi-Naa? Or Kpatii-Naa?" These are the people holding the chieftaincy custom. They will never agree that they used their own heart wish to choose the Yaa-Naa. It is there, or it is not there. You know it, but you step on it. They don't say it like that. That talk is the thing that broke Dagbon. And now at this time, is it spoiled or it is repaired?

Dagbamba have a proverb that a child's mouth is more than the hard sorghum. If you say that the sorghum will not be matured, then where will you pass to eat it? That is why Dagbamba say it like that. In Dagbon, there are some things inside old people's hearts, and it is worrying them, but they can't open their mouth to say it. An old person can even tell a lie and nobody can tell him that he's telling lies. It is still inside Dagbon. If you say that the elders catch and send it to soothsayer to finish it, that is the way it is. Whether they take their own wish, we don't know. As for drummers, they just say they have gone to consult a soothsayer. Even Namo-Naa is the drummer for the chief, but he is not inside the soothsaying. He is just sitting at one place, and he has nothing to do inside it. How much less all the drummers of Dagbon? Those who are holding the power, they are holding it. If it is what their heart wants, they are holding it. Or if it is not what their heart wants, they are holding it. This is the secret inside within them. What you have to know is that what the elders will decide before the soothsaying, that is it. And you have to know this one talk, it will be there, and nobody can say it. This is what I have to tell you. If you or anyone hears it, it is good. If someone doesn't want to hear it, I have talked to you. This is how it is.

Do you see how all this talk is making confusion in Dagbon? It is the white men who came and spoiled Dagbon. You brought it that you want to write it down. At first, we didn't know how to write anything on paper. If Yaa-Naa died, and they were going to catch, then what the elders would come and say, nobody argued with it. Nobody entered into it. At that time, if Yaa-Naa died, we were just sitting down looking. Whatever the elders said, that was the end. We would take it. Whether you like, or you don't like, you have to take it. But the white men brought schooling here, and you entered into it and spoiled it. How it was with the elders: whatever decision they reached, that was final. But now, you can see that people take their wish to enter into it. All of that comes from the white people. In the olden days, we didn't know eye-opening. These white-skinned

people, they brought eye-opening inside it, and then we got to know how to eat bribes. In the olden days, commoners didn't want to enter into chieftaincy matters.

I think maybe there is a way they could write it the right way, and there would be no argument over it. But they can't write it now. Why is it so? It is because the one they wrote the first time, that one is still there, and so if you write another one now, even if it is correct, that first one will still come to challenge it. And my reason for saying this is because these talks have come to enter into the court. If some talks have come to enter into court, is it not an argument that sends talks to court? They have taken it to court, and the court passed its judgment on it. Today the court says that this one is the right one, and tomorrow it will say that it is not the right one. How are they going to write and make it well again? In the olden days, what the elders would come out and say, that is what we would follow. But in this time, since the white man came here, people want to go into them to know the way they are catching. And that one can't stand. These elders who catch the Yaa-Naa, when they go to the court, they tell the court that they catch Yaa-Naa, and the court too wants to ask how they catch the Yaa-Naa, and that is what the court is not supposed to know. And so the court will say they are liars. That is why we are suffering.

And so the elders know the sense they take to catch. It's not what their heart wants. If it shows that they take what their heart wants to catch Yaa-Naa, it means that there is no custom. I want to tell you that everybody has a custom. Even within the white people, it is there. Maybe there is a chieftaincy the white people eat according to its way. And if such a chieftaincy should fall, and they come to bring their own hearts inside, then the others, what will they think? What are they going to do? And so you can't say the elders take their hearts to catch Yaa-Naa. What your heart wants: that is spoiling Ghana. You have to cut it short. You can let it stand to say simply that it is the elders who catch. Everybody: this is what they know. When the Yendi elders go to Malizheri and inform Gushe-Naa, nobody knows how they have consulted among themselves. Nobody knows whether they have consulted Gushe-Naa and he knows. And the elder chiefs, like Tolon-Naa and Kumbun-Naa and Gukpe-Naa, whether the Yendi elders have consulted with them, nobody knows. That is why they say that the custom is hidden, and there are some things you cannot talk about. That is why I said that the custom is slippery. And so how custom is, and how I am telling you, it shouldn't come out to suggest that the custom is something you can just stand and hold it.

And so these elders, when they are going to catch Yaa-Naa, if they see that if this one comes, this is what is going to happen, and if that one comes, this is

what is going to happen, they will sit down and repair it. And as they search inside like that, they fear. His grandfather came and met the custom, and he told his father. And his father who gave birth to him, he met the custom, and he told him. And the child who is now the elder sitting down today, he also met it. And so he is standing on their talk, that if this thing or that thing should happen, this is how the custom is. And so he shouldn't go beyond it. If he is going to jump over what his grandfather or his father told him, then the talk will come and eat him. And so the elders are inside the custom, and they fear.

And so if it comes to look that it is going to tighten up, these elders will gather themselves. They will sit down and decide the way they can take to solve the problem, according to the old people. They will say that if we don't repair it in that way, we will spoil it. And so they will sit down and take their sense. They will see themselves, and they will see the way they are going to select. They will find a way they can compare something with what is happening, and it will look alike. And nobody outside them will be able to know exactly what they are doing. Even if you are a Dagbana, if you are not inside, you will never know what they are doing. How much less someone from outside? They take the custom, and they take their sense and add, and they repair it. Nobody can sit outside them and tell them that they take what their heart wants to do it.

Do you know a zana mat? Dagbamba weave it from grass, and they use it like a wall or a fence to divide a room or to separate something. That is how the custom is. The elders take a zana mat and suspend it between themselves and the public. Nobody will know what they do there and the custom will stand very well. This is the way they repair the custom. But nobody can know it because you are not inside them. When they sit down and take their decision, they won't come out to tell any outsider that this is what they have decided. And so how will you know it? And when they come out, too, you won't hear somebody coming from outside to say that what they have done, as for him, he hasn't agreed with it. All the elders are going to inform one another before they take that decision. And it will never happen that someone like Tolon-Naa or Kumbun-Naa will later come out to say that he does not agree with it.

And so as for the custom, it is there. When they bring it out openly, and you see it, then you only have to take it that that is the way the thing goes. But if you want to look at what is happening, to use your own idea to break everything to show that this is what it means, then you are at a loss. When the elders are making their decision, they take what they are going to stand on and give it to one another to smell. If they don't give it to everyone to smell, and after smelling it, everybody will end up saying that the smell is fine, then the custom will spoil.

And as they give the smell to everybody, the custom will stand. This is what I'm telling you. This is the way the elders repair the custom. But if you look at the part that is in the public, you are going to get lost. When it comes out like that, if you are somebody standing and looking at it, you are going to put it in your mind that this is the way the thing goes. And that time, you will get lost. That is not the way it is. And so according to my thinking, these elders will sit together and repair everything before it will come openly at the funeral ground of Yaa-Naa.

I am going to give you an example. The way someone will be able to know another's house talks, for example, if we drummers are talking about custom, like the way I'm talking to you, you have to put your mind down, and listen very well. You don't have to argue with it. We are inside the custom. Now I'm going to ask you: if somebody comes to tell you that Bizuŋ is not somebody who was there, will you agree? If you are going to start the drum, whom are you going to call? Every day you have been calling the name of Bizuŋ. Why do you call the name? It is because of the drum you beat. And is Bizuŋ your grandfather or not? And so if somebody happens to tell you that Bizuŋ is not inside drumming, will you agree? No. And so we know the custom and we talk it. If somebody who is a drummer tells you Bizuŋ is not somebody who existed, then you have to tell the person that he's not a drummer. He's only carrying the drum; he doesn't know it. And if somebody who is not a drummer says something like that, then you have to say that he doesn't know it, and that is why. As for him, you don't have to mind him.

That is the thing that works inside the custom, and it is the same thing with a family. How a family is large, those who can break the family are there. In every family, we have people who break it. The family will be moving without disturbance, and those who will come to cut the family into two, they will come out. It is these family breakers who have entered into the chieftaincy now. And they are part of the chieftaincy too. And so every family has a family breaker. They themselves, they know the custom and they are breaking it. The way they collected the custom, do they look like custom people? And so what is forbidden has now come inside. And so this is the place I'm standing to repair it.

You have to watch what I have told you about the way a drummer is inside the custom. That is why I want to give you the example and you will take it to watch. If you watch inside chieftaincy, we ourselves and you are doing the same work. If drummers gather and they are sitting, and we are going to talk something about drumming, we call our grandfather's name Nyaysi, and we call how it happened and he gave birth to our grandfather Bizuŋ. Up to today we are doing it. Today, if our wives give birth, they call that small child, Bizuŋ's child. The child

can't say that he is not Bizun's child. And if you go and beat a drum and bring money, and you put it down to share, they will send some to give to those who are not there, that this is their Bizun. And the women, they should also collect some, that this is their Bizun. With this talk, we are joining the families. Is our grandfather Bizun alive again? The way we go to beat the drum, he's not the one who beats for us. If we were people who break the family, we would say that such-and-such people didn't go to beat, and so we will not give them. But we don't say that. In the custom, all of you will be one. That is the example I'm giving you.

And so what I'm telling you is that the elders will hold the custom and give everything to Gushe-Naa to join it, and he is also going to work with the custom. And it is the same thing with the soothsayers, because they are sitting at their place, and the elders call them. All that you will see in Yendi when they make a Yaa-Naa, the elders do it before Gushe-Naa comes to finalize it, and Gushe-Naa will carry the bad name. It is not only today that Gushe-Naa is not inside. From the beginning. Gushe-Naa will never enter Yendi unless Thursday of the funeral. And so the elders of Yendi know what they hold, and they will go and inform him. If he comes and he's doing something, and you are looking at him as the one doing it, you are wrong. You are not a stranger in Dagbon. Have you ever heard that they asked Gushe-Naa to give the thatch, and he said he doesn't agree with it? No.

As for Naa Mahamadu, he was the Yaa-Naa because he was the one the elders caught. The Gushe-Naa who died, he removed the grass and gave to Naa Mahamadu. And when the government told the new Gushe-Naa to give the grass to Yakubu, he refused to give it to Yakubu because Gushe-Naa doesn't have to do it twice. It's not that they don't like Yakubu. If Yaa-Naa doesn't die, you don't catch another Yaa-Naa and add to the first one. And so they said they won't catch another one on top of Naa Mahamadu. That is why Tolon-Naa refused that he wouldn't go there. They were those who caught Naa Mahamadu. And Gukpe-Naa Alaasani who died, they said he should come and catch again, and he refused. Tolon-Naa and Gushe-Naa and Yelizolilana and all the Yendi elders, and those who hold the chieftaincy things: if they had all agreed that they had already caught Mahamadu but they would push him aside and catch Yakubu again, the custom would not be there again. Is Gushe-Naa going to perform a new funeral? Is Gushe-Naa going to get grass at that new funeral and give Yakubu the same grass he gave to Mahamadu? And the skin Gukpe-Naa gave to Mahamadu to wear, is he going to find new one again, and go back to the same procedure or what? And the chair inside the Katin' duu, are they going to send Yakubu into the room and carve a new chair for him, or what? The work in the Katin' duu is where

they take the new chief to go and wear the chieftaincy things. If any one of them would send Yakubu into Katin' duu, it is forbidden in the custom. That part is different from catching the Yaa-Naa. If they don't catch the chief, nobody goes into the Katin' duu. And I told you that the work they are doing, they do it, but they have fears inside. Those who caught Naa Mahamadu, all of them, they removed their hands. They don't know Yakubu to be a chief.

It is not even Yakubu's talk they are talking. His father's talk, Mionlana Andani: that is the one they are dealing with. You should ask very well. As for the proper Dagbamba, when they are talking about this chieftaincy dispute, they don't bring Yakubu's name inside. They are judging it from the father. And so if you want to ask, you should ask those who are holding the truth and not lies. It is Yaa-Naa who will give birth to Yaa-Naa. And Mionlana Andani, from that time up to today, they are calling him Mionlana Andani. All the people who are the elders of Yendi, and those holding the custom things, as for them, they don't call Mionlana "Yaa-Naa"; they call him Mionlana Andani. And how can Mionlana's child come to eat Yendi? This judgment they have been looking for, it is not on Yakubu: it is on his father. The elders didn't give Yakubu's father the chieftaincy. It was government who sent him inside. If they agree for him as Yaa-Naa, then today and tomorrow, there is no custom again. And so the elders still want to hold the custom. Where they are standing is that they don't want the custom to spread so that they wouldn't have custom again. That is why they are disagreeing with Mionlana Andani as Yaa-Naa. By their disagreement, they show that the custom is still there.

From the beginning, government never caught chieftaincy for anybody. And so those who give the chieftaincy things, they gave them to Mahamadu. And all of them said that they wouldn't repeat it for another person. The elders were standing on the custom. They said if you perform it once on somebody, then you don't do it again until the person has died. When government said Yakubu is to be the chief, then government sent for the people to come back and perform the thing for Yakubu. And they refused. Then government said that if the elders won't do it, government will collect the things and do it. And so what they did and installed Yakubu, nobody knows.

This talk I am talking to you, I am talking about custom. And so anyone who is an outsider, or even a judge, if he wants the truth, he should forget about all that happens in the public on the part of the chieftaincy, and rather put his eye on the elders of Yendi. They are those who make the chieftaincy. That is the thing Nkrumah did when he wanted to find out. He didn't pass through all that was happening. They showed him that these are the people who choose Yaa-Naa, and

he only used their words to stand that they don't remove a Yaa-Naa. That was all. Nkrumah wanted the truth, so he didn't have to follow what you will see when they are making a new Yaa-Naa. He forget about all that happens there, and rather followed it through the elders. And he also went behind them and asked other chiefs — the Bimbila chief, the Mamprugulana, and the Gonja chief — about Yaa-Naa. He joined the talks together and they looked alike. He said he wanted the truth, and it was true. And he wanted the custom to still be there. And if it is the strength that does work, is there any government that is stronger than Nkrumah's government? But the way Nkrumah wanted the truth, don't you see that he also followed it into the way of custom? And so if you go to give this talk to people who don't know, who will just look at what is happening behind the wall, and will not try to see what happens inside the wall, they will eat money and just look at what is outside in order to judge it. If you don't know anything, and they come to give it to you, that is the way you will handle it. That is what we have in Dagbon now.

But when Dagbon was Dagbon, and if it is on the part of custom, those who catch the Yaa-Naa, they are the elders of Yendi, and they are many. As I have shown you the parts they play when the Yaa-Naa dies, I will add salt to this talk and show you more about them. The senior of the Yaa-Naa's elders is the Kuyā-Naa, that is, "Chief of the Mahogany Tree." I have already told you something about Kuyā-Naa. Kuyā-Naa Subee Kpema, that is, Subee the elder, was given birth by a Yaa-Naa. Kuyā-Naa's father was Naa Gbewaa, When Naa Gbewaa died, Naa Gbewaa's son Naa Shitōbu sat on the skins and remained in the chieftaincy. And so Subee Kpema was Naa Shitōbu's brother, and he became the Kuyā-Naa. Kuyā-Naa Subee Kpema was there with his brother Naa Shitōbu and his brothers Karaga-Naa Beemoni, Sunson-Naa Buyyilgu, and the rest of Naa Gbewaa's children. And Naa Shitōbu gave birth to his first-born, Naa Nyaysi. And Naa Shitōbu told Naa Nyaysi to go and fight wars. That was the time Naa Nyaysi went and collected the whole Dagbon. I told you that when Naa Nyaysi got up and was coming to ask for the war, Kuyā-Naa was the junior father of Naa Nyaysi, and Kuyā-Naa told him, "I cannot leave you and throw you away, and so I am going to follow you and be sacrificing to the gods and be repairing the shrines for you." That is how we drummers know the starting of the Kuyā-Naa. In the olden days, before Naa Nyaysi beat Dagbon and the chiefs came out, Kuyā-Naa was there with the Yaa-Naa. And every Yaa-Naa calls the Kuyā-Naa his grandfather.

I have told you that Kuyā is a small village near Yendi. That village is for the Kuyā-Naa. And the work the Kuyā-Naa does for the Yaa-Naa, if anything

happens or any talk comes on the part of the elders in the Yaa-Naa's house, it is Kuyā-Naa who will leave the other elders and go and tell the chief. If a Yaa-Naa dies, it is the Kuyā-Naa who brings out the death. Apart from that, on every Friday when the elders gather at the chief's house, if Kuyā-Naa is not around, they wait for him: it is Kuyā-Naa who will lead them to go and greet the chief so that they will observe the Friday. If it is Damba day, if all the chiefs have gathered at the Yaa-Naa's house, they have to wait for Kuyā-Naa: Kuyā-Naa will come before the Damba will be danced. If it is the Water-Drinking month after the Ramadan fast, or if it is the Chimsi Festival, it is the same thing. And so Kuyā-Naa is the senior of the Yaa-Naa's elders.

The elder who follows Kuyā-Naa is Zōhi-Naa, that is, "Chief of the Flies." Zōhi is an area of Yendi, and Zōhi-Naa is in charge of that area. Any Yaa-Naa's son who is eating chieftaincy — Savelugu-Naa, Nanton-Naa, any Yaa-Naa's son — when he goes to Yendi, he goes to Zōhi-Naa, and Zōhi-Naa will take him to Mba Duyu before he goes to greet the chief. And when any chief dies, any person who is searching for that chieftaincy will go and tell Zōhi-Naa, and Zōhi-Naa will take him and go and tell Mba Duyu, and Mba Duyu will go and tell the Yaa-Naa. This is the work Zōhi-Naa does in the Yaa-Naa's house. If it is Friday, Zōhi-Naa also gathers with the other elders. And in Yendi town itself, Kuyā-Naa and Zōhi-Naa are the elders of the elders.

The Kuyā-Naa only goes to the Yaa-Naa's house on Fridays, and the Zōhi-Naa only goes to the Yaa-Naa's house on Fridays and Mondays. If it is not some talk that comes, they do not go to the Yaa-Naa's house at other times. But sometimes a talk can come to worry the chief's wives or the chief's children, and the wives or the children will go to Kuyā-Naa on the part of going to the chief.

The one following Zōhi-Naa is Balo-Naa, that is, "Chief of the Male Dogs." Balo-Naa also has his area of Yendi. His area of Yendi is called Baloyu. As for Balo-Naa, he doesn't miss the chief's house: he is there all the time. If a small talk comes, and it is not a big talk for Kuyā-Naa or Zōhi-Naa, it is Balo-Naa they will go and tell, and Balo-Naa will tell the chief. And as Yendi is sitting, Balo-Naa has got his area, Baloyu, and he has his elders, and he gives them chieftaincies. And if the chief wants somebody from another town, Balo-Naa is somebody the Yaa-Naa will send to call the person.

The one following Balo-Naa is Kumlana, that is, Chief of Death. As Zōhi-Naa and Balo-Naa have their areas, Kumlana also has his area: Kum. The talks Balo-Naa or Zōhi-Naa is holding in his area, when something happens in Kumlana's area, Kumlana takes the talk and goes and tells the chief. And Kumlana too is also a Yaa-Naa's messenger, because the Yaa-Naa can send him to call somebody.

The one who follows is Gagbindana, that is, “Chief of Under the Gaa Tree.” Gagbindana also has his area or section of the town. His area is called Gagbini. He goes to the chief’s house on Mondays and Fridays as Balo-Naa and Kumlana also go, and if there is some sending that is worrying the chief, Gagbindana is also among the messengers. The one following is Mba Buṇa, that is, “My Father Donkey.” He has also got his area. How the others are going, that is how Mba Buṇa is also going.

All the elders I have counted — Zɔhi-Naa, Balo-Naa, Kumlana, Gagbindana, Mba Buṇa: they are added to Kuyā-Naa, and they are separate from the Yendi chief, and they all have their own sections of Yendi. If you go to Yendi, you can call, say, *Mba Buṇ fɔŋ*, that is Mba Buṇa’s area, or *Mba Zɔhi fɔŋ*, that is Zɔhi-Naa’s area. As Yendi is big, some trouble can worry somebody, and he is not sitting in somebody’s area. Any person who wants to see the chief can come and meet Mba Buṇa, Gagbindana, Kumlana, or Balo-Naa, and that elder will take the fellow to the chief’s house. And so somebody who comes and meets any of these elders, any of them can take him and go.

Apart from these elders, there are elders who are in the chief’s house. If the Yaa-Naa gets up in the morning or the night, he is with them, and he doesn’t separate from them. As for them, we call them Naazoonima “the chief’s friends.” One of them is Mba Malle, and this “Malle” means “collect this and repair it.” The meaning is that if the Yaa-Naa is holding something, Mba Malle collects it from the chief, and so when any talk comes, it is Mba Malle collects it and repairs it and puts it down. The one adding to Mba Malle is Zalankolana. Kpihigu-Naa is there. Another one is Mba Kpahigu: he is also a Naazoo, a chief’s friend. All the Yaa-Naa’s children who are women, if there is any talk on their part, they go to Mba Kpahigu. Mba Naa is there, too. And the chief’s friend who is added is Sɔypilsi-Naa. His name shows that he hides to tell something. He is there for anything the chief’s wives want to do. If it is any talk, they can go and tell him, and he will tell the chief.

The one adding to Mba Malle and Zalankolana and the other Naazoonima is Mba Duyu. Truly, Mba Duyu is the senior of all of the Naazoonima, and he has more strength than all of them. If you like, you can say that Mba Duyu is the Wulana of the Yaa-Naa. When all the elders get up, they leave Mba Duyu with the chief. And when anybody comes from his house to see the Yaa-Naa, that person will meet Mba Duyu already with the chief. Even Kuyā-Naa will come and meet Mba Duyu with the chief. And when some talk happens and the chief is coming out, the elders will be sitting outside, but Mba Duyu is already with the chief. And so when you see Mba Duyu in this Dagbon, then you have seen the

Yaa-Naa. Mba Duyu looks like a person who feeds a house because there is no talk that is hiding from him inside the house. Mba Duyu is the chief's everything: how is the chief going to hide anything from him? Even the troubles of the chief's wives are not hidden from him. Even if the chief eats medicine, it is Mba Duyu who goes and eats the medicine and comes and gives it to the chief. If they call a medicine man or an elder to come to Yendi, it is Mba Duyu who is going to mix the medicine and cook it. It is not a woman who will cook it; it is not the chief's son who will cook it: it is Mba Duyu himself who will cook it. The walking stick the chief holds does not lie on the ground: it lies across the legs of Mba Duyu. When the chief is sitting down, the walking stick is with Mba Duyu, and when the chief gets up, Mba Duyu will take the walking stick and put it in the chief's hand. And when the chief is walking, Mba Duyu tells him, "Mba, baalim, baalim," that is, "Father, slowly, slowly," and Mba Duyu tells him, "Kunkuna, naylima," that is, "This is a high place, this is a low place," and so the chief should be careful. And that is Mba Duyu.

And so Mba Duyu is the Yaa-Naa's closest elder. Wherever the Yaa-Naa is, Mba Duyu is there. If a prince or a chief wants chieftaincy from the Yaa-Naa, he has to go and see Mba Duyu. Everybody respects him, and he is everybody's father. If the Yaa-Naa becomes weak, and Mba Duyu is there, it means that Yaa-Naa is there. All the strength of the Yaa-Naa's mouth is in the hands of Mba Duyu. Any very sweet food which the chief is to eat, he also eats it. And where the chief dies, that is where Mba Duyu dies too. Why do I say that? When there is a war, the elders are the first people to come out before the chief. That is it. Apart from that, if the Gukpe-Naa dies, it is Mba Duyu who comes and eats the Gukpeogu chieftaincy, and as Gukpe-Naa is the one who catches the Yaa-Naa, when they are coming, people who don't want the Yaa-Naa can try to stop them on the way and kill them. Where the Yaa-Naa dies, is that not where he dies too? And so Gukpe-Naa and Mba Duyu, that is how they are. And so the talk of Mba Duyu comes to enter the talk of the Gukpe-Naa. If the Gukpe-Naa dies and Mba Duyu eats Gukpeogu, if it is following the way, the Gbɔŋlana of the dead Gukpe-Naa will go and become Mba Duyu. And again, a pure Dagbana does not become Gukpe-Naa, and a pure Dagbana does not eat Gukpeogu. Those who eat Gukpeogu are half-half, and we call them *siŋkaafa ni waache*, "rice and beans," or mixed. And these are the sort of people who become the chiefs of Gukpeogu. And these are the sort of people who become Mba Duyu.

Why are they mixed? I can tell you that it was the Yaa-Naa's slaves who used to be the chiefs of Gukpeogu, and it was the Gurunsis who were the Yaa-Naa's slaves. In Dagbon here, when you hear someone say "Gurunsi," it has many

meanings. All the people in the Upper Region, if they are not Mamprusis, we call them Gurunsis. In the olden days, when you took some millet or some guinea corn and you went to Bolgatanga, you would buy them and bring them. Or others would bring them and sell them to you, and they would collect food and go home. If God agrees, if the slave was a man and he is going to find a woman, if he found a Dagbana woman and she gave birth, then he has turned himself, because the children have become half-half. Apart from that, there are Dagbamba whom we call “Gurunsis.” In the olden days, if you were walking and somebody was able to catch you, he would take you and sell you. You have become a Guruṇa, a slave. If your mother was a witch and she ate somebody, if they took her to the chief and the family could not pay, she and her children would become slaves. If you borrowed money and you could not pay the debt, you could become a slave. You father borrows money and cannot pay: he can sell you. Do you hear the talk? They have sold you. In Dagbon here, when we say Gurunsi, it doesn’t mean only those people from the Upper Region. There are Gurunsis among ourselves.

And I can tell you what brought about all this in the olden days. These slaves, many of them are the Yaa-Naa’s elders, and during the olden days, they used to remove their testicles. And the Dagbamba used their sense and gave them these elder chieftaincies. I’m not talking about Mba Duḃu alone. Mba Duḃu, Zalankolana, Zohi-Naa, Mba Malle, Mba Kpahigu: people like that, they don’t give birth, and we call them *namɔylinsi*. They were the ones who watched over the chief’s wives. We used to call them “*Be kpayi la be lana*,” that “they removed their testicles.” It was not because of anything. The chief wanted to show them that there is strength. A commoner could not do that, and it was only the ones the Yaa-Naa gave chieftaincy to who were *namɔylinsi*.

And so in the old days they used to give Duḃu to such people, and it is Mba Duḃu who becomes Gukpe-Naa if the Gukpe-Naa dies. But as for Gukpeogu, the *namɔyliṇṇa* the chief wants, he can eat it. When Malle gets it, he can eat. When Zalankolana gets it, he can eat it. Kpahigu can eat it. And Duḃu is the senior of the *namɔylinsi*, and he can eat it. And so from the starting of the Gukpe-Naa, he was a *namɔyliṇṇa*, and they removed his testicles. And in Naa Nyaysi’s time, Naa Nyaysi was removing the testicles of the elders. And so when Gukpeogu started, the Gukpe-Naa didn’t have testicles, and he came and stayed with the chief. And we called him Gukpe-Naa because he “ran and entered” the chief.

And so the removing of the testicles, that was how it was in our custom, but it is not there again. I think it was the time of Naa Abudu when the Yaa-Naa could not remove their testicles again, but the chieftaincies are still there. Today, none of them are *namɔylinsi*. If you want to see the removing of testicles in Ghana

today, it is only in the Asantehene's house; as for that, it's there today and tomorrow. And so it is olden days talks I am talking. Now how everybody is, nobody wants to show his way like that, but that was how the way was: they used to remove their testicles. Zohi-Naa started in Naa Nyayisi's time. Balo-Naa started in Naa Niŋmitooni's time. They are all namɔylinsi: they remove their testicles. Gukpe-Naa, Zohi-Naa, Balo-Naa, and Kumlana are like that. Mba Malle, Gulana, Mba Kpihigu, Zalankolana: they are namɔylinsi. But elders like Gomli and Kpatii-Naa are not. I told you that they are elders who help to catch the Yaa-Naa. If Gomli should die, his son can eat Gomli. So if you are in Yendi and you hear them call someone namɔyliŋŋa, if you follow him, you will see that they used to remove his grandfather's testicles. And it shows that if the namɔyliŋŋa had a nephew, then that was his child. If he is not there, it is his nephew they will put on the skins, and they will call his nephew his child. It resembles the tindana's way, because those who eat it are the sons of women. Truly, Dagbon has got a lot of things, and you cannot learn all.

And again, if it is on the part of the Yaa-Naa's elders, those elders who are on the part of the chief's horses are also there. Warichin-Naa, that is, the chief of horses, he is the leader of those who look after the chief's horses. Shirikari-Naa and his people are those who cut grass and put it in the chief's house and feed the horses. Binzaha-Naa is also one of the horse people. And Mancheri-Naa is also one of them.

There are others, too. Monkaha-Naa is the leader of the *kasiyirba*. He buries the Yaa-Naa and collects all the chief's things, and he stays in the same area with the chief. There are also elders who have their own villages near Yendi. Malizheri-Naa comes to sit with the chief on Yendi market day, and people will be coming to greet, "How is your market?" There is Galigulana. When any big chief dies, they knock and kill the chief's horse and the chief's dog, and Galigulana is the one who kills the dog. He calls, and any dog that runs and comes, whether it is the chief's dog or not, Galigulana takes a club and knocks and kills it. That is how his chieftaincy is. Kushegu-Naa is an elder of the chief, and when they call all the elders, they call Kushegu-Naa, too. And so all the elders who are near the Yaa-Naa, they call all of them, and I can't count all of them for you.

All these people I have called, they are the elders of Yendi. Anyone who is an elder, we call him Yidana. I have told you that in Dagbani, our names are many. Don't you see the Dakpema? They call him Yidana. Kamo-Naa: they call him Yidana. Limam: they call him Yidana. And so they all have their chieftaincies. That is how it is. I told you that Gushe-Naa, Gukpe-Naa, Tolon-Naa, and Kumbun-Naa are the strongest elders of the Yaa-Naa, but they are chiefs,

and their talks enter the talk of chieftaincy. And so the ones I have called are those who are inside Yendi and they have work on the part of our Yendi living. When the earth shakes, those they will look for are those I have called for you. And so it is the Gushe-Naa who adds himself to the Yendi elders when they are going to make a new Yaa-Naa. And those like the Savelugu-Naa and the Karaga-Naa, although they are big chiefs and they want Yendi, they don't do anything on the part of making the Yaa-Naa. It is only the funeral they go to perform. Their day of showing themselves is only the day of the funeral, when they are going to show the riches. It is the Gushe-Naa and the elders of Yendi I have called, they are the ones who are strong on the part of making the Yendi chieftaincy. Apart from them, too, there are many other elders in Yendi. The Muslims have many elders, but I will join their talk to the talk of the Islamic religion. The Kambonsi have their elders, but I will leave their talk until the talk of Naa Garba, because that was their starting. And so those I have counted are the elders of the Yaa-Naa.

And again, I have talked to you on the part of the drum chieftaincies. As for the Yendi Lun-Naa, he is the Namo-Naa, and he is called Nyab' Namɔɔyɔ, that is, My Grandfather Namɔɔyɔ. And in Yendi too there is a Sampahi-Naa and the others I have counted before. And the elders like Zɔhi-Naa and Kuɔya-Naa, they also have their chief drummers. As for the drummers, you already know that their starting is from the time of Naa Nyaysi, from Naa Nyaysi's child Bizuɔ. And even the Yaa-Naa calls Namo-Naa "Grandfather."

Apart from that, we have the nakɔhinima, the butchers. These butchers are princes, because their great-grandfather was a chief of Yendi. How the butchers started, Naa Zɔlgu gave birth to twins, and one of the twins was Naa Dimani. Naa Dimani's twin brother was called Yankana, and he said that he was going to be looking for money. Yankana went to the bush and catch a small bush cow, and he brought it and slaughtered it and shared the meat. If anyone asked him, "How much?", he just said, "Layfu, layfu." Do you know layfu? It is cowrie shells. In the olden days that was what we spent as money. And many people came to buy the meat until it finished. The next day, Yankana went to the bush again and caught a bigger cow, and he slaughtered it and sold the meat. If one of his housepeople asked him, "Why is it that you are always going to the bush to kill animals?", he said, "Yes. That is what I want. I only want to be killing animals." Then someone gave him the name of Naykura, "one who kills animals." When Naa Dimani died, Yankana said that he didn't want to be a chief, that killing animals was better than being a chief. And all his children he gave birth to, they also refused chieftaincy and turned to killing animals. And so all the butchers you see are princes, because their grandfather was a Yaa-Naa. That is how the

butchers started. And so everybody in Dagbon has the way he started and how he was living formerly.

And so as for the butchers, the butchers started from Naa Dimani, and so they are also from the line of the Yaa-Naa. The chief butcher in every town is the Nakɔhi-Naa, but Yendi has no Nakɔhi-Naa; in Yendi, they have Baba: Yidan' Baba. It is only Zɔhi that has a Nakɔhi-Naa. Taribabu is a butcher, and that is a butcher's chieftaincy. Yidan' Daambala is also a chief butcher for Yendi, but he is not staying in Yendi: he is at Nakpali, that is, at Korli. And Diri-Naa, that is, "eating chief," he is also a butcher. They are all Yaa-Naa's butchers.

Apart from the drummers and the butchers, Yidan' Gunu is there for the barbers. It was Naa Zanjina who came and we started circumcising, and so the barbers came during the time of Naa Zanjina. They were Hausas. Yidan' Gunu has children, but they don't have chieftaincies. But some of the children can be removed to become Naazonima, the chief's friends.

As for the blacksmiths, they are also there inside our chieftaincy. The chief of the blacksmiths is called the So-Naa, and this blacksmith chieftaincy started in the time of Naa Luro. There are also other chieftaincies for them. Yidan' Borgu is there. And Kotɔchi is also a blacksmith chieftaincy in Yendi. And Faamoro is a blacksmith chieftaincy. There are also blacksmith chieftaincies in other towns, but I don't know if they are in Yendi. Sayilɔyu is a blacksmith chieftaincy; I know the one eating it at Nanton. If there is any work and it needs iron, they will do it. They are all blacksmith chiefs. As for the blacksmith chiefs, they are just Dagbamba. They started in the time of Naa Luro. They were sitting at Gushie during the time of Naa Zɔlgu, and is Naa Luro not Naa Zɔlgu's son? And when Naa Luro wanted to go for war, he looked for them. They were Dagbamba, and as for us Dagbamba, we have many blacksmiths. They used to dig holes, make fire, and take stones and put them in the fire, and the stones would melt and make iron. And they would take the iron and be making things. And so they were getting their iron from inside stones. I don't know if someone taught them. We all got up and met it.

When Naa Luro was going to war to fight the Gonjas, he was going to a village called Koliŋ, and there was a flooded river there. And it was Naa Luro who called the blacksmiths and told them that they should build a bridge across the river so that he would go and fight the Gonjas. And Naa Luro called So-Naa Faamoro. Naa Luro told him that he should bring his followers and cut sticks and make the bridge, and make knives and make spears. When So-Naa came with his followers, So-Naa said, "We have come, but we don't have iron and we don't have charcoal, and we don't have anvils and hammers." On that day Naa Luro gave

them stones, and they took it and made iron; and he gave them a tree and they took it and made charcoal. And Naa Luro got goats and slaughtered them, and they cooked the meat and ate, and they took the skins to make bellows. And the blacksmiths made everything: old drummers say they made a hundred spears and a hundred knives and a hundred axes and a hundred cudgels, and no one could count the arrows; and they took all and gave it to Naa Luro. Naa Luro gave everything to his followers, and they cut wood and made the bridge across the river. And Naa Luro was able to go and defeat the Gonjas.

And so it was this So-Naa Faamoro who started the blacksmith chieftaincy, and it was in Naa Luro's time that we knew his names. And So-Naa is a blacksmith chief. And Faamoro is the name of a blacksmith chief. And in many towns, Zana-Naa is a blacksmith chief. This is what we drummers know about the blacksmiths. At the end of a year, Faamoro and So-Naa and Zana-Naa will make a hundred knives and a hundred spears and a hundred cudgels and give all of it to the Yaa-Naa. As there are no wars again, they don't give him arrows. As for the rest, because there are no wars, sometimes they won't give the Yaa-Naa the full hundred, but they will give him some number, just to give respect. This is how they respect the Yaa-Naa.

And who is there again? Gundo-Naa is also added to the elders. She is a woman, and she has her chieftaincy in a village called Gundogu that is near Yendi. If it is on the part of actual chieftaincy, the Gundo-Naa is a chief. But I can say that she is also an elder. On the part of custom in the Yaa-Naa's house, if a chief dies, Gundo-Naa will go and lie in the dead chief's room. And so Gundo-Naa is looking at the funeral. How Gundo-Naa is, she is the senior daughter of a Yaa-Naa, and it looks as if she is the elder of all the chief's daughters. There is an elder called Mba Naa who is for her, and he is her elder in the chief's house. He is a naazoo. Mba Naa is the one who bathes a dead chief's widows, and Gundo-Naa and Mba Naa are there on the part of funerals.

And so a Yaa-Naa's daughter eats Gundogu. Another chieftaincy which is eaten by daughters of a Yaa-Naa is Kpatu-Naa, and she is second to Gundo-Naa. If some talk happens and Gundo-Naa is not able to go, Kpatu-Naa will do it for her. And so Kpatuya: a Yaa-Naa's daughter eats that place. Kuyalɔyulana is added, and a Yaa-Naa's daughter can eat Kuyalɔyulana. If Kpatu-Naa cannot go to do something, Kuyalɔyulana will do it for her. And Saasiyli-Naa is also there. Shilin-Naa is also there: it in Yendi. If you listen to Naa Garba's talk, you will hear of Wolimbanilana Azima, but I don't know if that chieftaincy is still there. These women chiefs are inside or near Yendi. And there are three who add to them: Yimahigu and Nakpanzoo and Dodɔyulana. A Yaa-Naa's daughter can eat

there. Dodɔyɔ is behind Pisigu. As for these chieftaincies, a Yaa-Naa's daughter eats them, but I have not counted them because they mix: when a woman eats it and dies, it is a man who eats it; and when the man dies, it is a woman who eats it. And so it mixes. Fuyaa-Naa is also a princess chieftaincy around Karaga, but I have not asked to know how they eat it. These are the only chieftaincies for the Yaa-Naa's daughters. All these people have all got their towns. Three of them, Yimahi-Naa and Nakpanzoo-Naa and Dodɔyɔlana, when a man eats the chieftaincy and he dies, it is a woman who will come and eat it. And when a woman eats and she dies, it is a man who will come and eat. But Gundogu, Kpatuya, and Kuyalɔyɔ, and Saasiyɔli, and Shilin: it is only women who eat those places.

The reason why these women are eating chieftaincy like that is because they are the daughters of the Yaa-Naa, and because they are the children of the Yaa-Naa, it is not good they leave them like that. They have to give them some chieftaincy. If they don't give them chieftaincy like that, it would show that they are all equal to the other chiefs' daughters. And so in Dagbon here, when a woman is there, and she is a chief's daughter or she has a lot of money, and we quarrel with her and we want to abuse her, we say, "With all your money or with all your pride or with all your being a princess, can you become the chief of Gundogu?" She is not a daughter of the Yaa-Naa. And so the chieftaincies I have counted, it is the daughters of the Yaa-Naa who eat those places. But as these chieftaincies are for Yaa-Naa's daughters, it can happen that a granddaughter will eat. The towns I called where a woman eats and a man eats, they look like the way some of the tindanas eat: if a man eats and dies, a woman will come and eat; if the woman dies, then a man will come and eat. The Nakpanzoo chief who died, she was the daughter of Savelugu-Naa Kantampara Bukari. Her name was Zara. Savelugu-Naa Mahami, who went to Zambarima, he was the zuu of Naa Abilaaɔi Naybiɛyɔ. His daughter Fagimah ate two chieftaincies. The first place she went was Nakpanzoo, and then from Nakpanzoo, she went to Yimahigu. This Savelugu-Naa Mahami, too, one of his daughters ate Kuyalɔyɔ. She was called Samaata. And so I have seen this with my own eyes. They were all children of a Savelugu chief.

And so these women chiefs, they eat these chieftaincies because it is some respect they want to give to them. And as for them, they even wear the clothes we men wear. And they ride horses. And they also have their villages, and they give chieftaincy to some people. And they have their chief drummer, their Lun-Naa, and they have Sampahi-Naa, Taha-Naa, Yiwɔyɔ-Naa: they have all of them. And they have Limam, and Naayimi. Anything a Yaa-Naa's son has, they also have it.

They don't have wives because they are also women, but they have their sisters or their nieces or their granddaughters. And any man who comes from outside to enter there and look for a woman, he is not afraid, because it is not a man who is for the house. Do you know *yera*? When you are going to make a sacrifice, and you prepare food to share to children or people to eat: that is *yera*. And if you are somebody who eats such food, and you come to prepare that food for people to eat, it shows that you will eat it yourself because you are somebody who already has been eating that food. And so if a woman has a house, and there are women in the house, there is no quarreling again: you will not go there to search for a woman and there will be quarreling, because you know that the house is for women.

And truly, they marry. But when a woman comes to be the Gundo-Naa, she has no husband. I don't know how your town is, but I want to tell you that the women who are Yaa-Naa's daughters show their princesshood more than anyone. They are even more than their brothers who are princes. And so, if they marry a man and give birth, say, once or twice, they will not want to stay with a man again. Why they don't want to sit in the house of a man is because maybe the man's living is not up to her living, and he is not up to her standard. And if the man wants to use force on her, she will not agree. And so even the Yaa-Naa does not take his daughter to give to a man. It is only when he was not yet a chief that he will give his daughter to a man. But when he is made a Yaa-Naa, he will not give his daughters to men, because if he gives his daughters to men, it will not stand. As for the Yaa-Naa's daughters, they are showing their strength. This is how it is, and they eat chieftaincy, and they don't have husbands. And so Gundo-Naa, Kpatu-Naa, Kuyalɔyulana, Saasiyili-Naa, Shilin-Naa, Nakpanzoolana, Yimahi-Naa, Dodɔyulana, Fuyaa-Naa: all of them, they don't have husbands again.

And even no man would want to marry them. Sometimes they beat their husbands. In Dagbon here, a woman does not knock a man. If your father finds a woman for you, and you come to quarrel with this woman, and she knocks you, your father will drive the woman away. And your father will say, "If she comes to give birth to a child, the child will also beat you." But as for a chief's daughter, she does not mind to catch the neck of her husband and say, "Who are you?" And she will say, "Is it because of the penis? I don't care about a penis!" This is how it is. And they have medicine, too. And the princes fear them, and chiefs fear them, and even the Yaa-Naa himself fears them. This is how their living is.

The starting of the Gundo-Naa is from the time of Naa Gbewaa. When you want to beat the drum, you say, *Pakpɔŋ Kachayu, Gundoyulana, o nyeri Naa Gbewaa bia*, that is, Naa Gbewaa's child. Sometimes they call her Fatyayu. I

know of two daughters of Naa Gbewaa. Kachayu's sister was Yaantuuri, the one who roamed and married a Mossi prince and gave birth to the Mossis. And so Gundo-Naa Kachayu, you have to count Naa Gbewaa's children and come to her. She was the first daughter, but she was not the eldest child of Naa Gbewaa. It is because she was not the eldest that we don't call her name first. As they count the sons of the Yaa-Naas, if it is the Samban' luḡa you want to beat, you take "this one is senior and this one follows him." Even if that fellow didn't become a chief, you have to call his name if you are beating the Samban' luḡa. And so this is how the Samban' luḡa is beaten. This is how it is. And all the names of the children of Naa Gbewaa, if you want to count this Gundo-Naa Kachayu, there is no way for you to jump over the other names before you come to her name. It is good you start from the first and count until you come to Gundoyulana Kachayu. As a drummer, when you want to talk about one of them, it is not good for you just to call the fellow's name. It is good you know that some people were ahead and some people were following. And so some people were ahead of Gundo-Naa Kachayu before she had the chieftaincy. They were the people who were in front of her. And I can say again that inside drumming, if you are counting the children of a particular chief, if you don't know who is older, you have to call the zuu first, You don't talk about somebody before you bring the name of the Gbɔŋlana, the zuu. Even if the pakpɔŋ is older, you call the zuu first. Then if you call the zuu, the pakpɔŋ is next. If you do that and you say anything again, nobody will blame you. If you call the other children, and you don't know how to put them in order, you can mix them. It is there like that inside drumming.

This Pakpɔŋ Kachayu, how her chieftaincy started, some say that she was given chieftaincy by her father, and her brothers said that he should not give the chieftaincy to her. And she became annoyed and went to a kapok tree, that is, the silk-cotton tree, and she was hiding inside a hole in the kapok tree. And they were searching for her, and they came and found her there. And that is the chieftaincy they have given her. The kapok tree, we call it *guḡa*, and so she should look after the kapok tree and eat. That is Gundoyu-gbini, "under the silk-cotton tree," and that is the Gundo-Naa. And others also say that the time Ɔirli killed Fɔyɔ and they were quarreling, this Kachayu came and sat on the skins, and Ɔirli came to drive her away, and she ran from the town and hid herself in the kapok tree, and they went and looked for her and found her there. And they told her, "As you are running away, do you think we want to kill you?" And that is where they gave the Gundogu chieftaincy to her. And this is what others say.

And what I am saying: even inside our watching, Gundogu is standing somewhere different from Yendi. When you get to Yendi, and you are leaving

Yendi town, there is Gundogu ahead. And it is there they said that they should leave her, and they gave the kapok tree to her. And this kapok tree has got a lot of use in Dagbon here. We get cotton from it, and that is what we use for pillows, and we use the seeds in making the soup we call kanton. Apart from that, the day we are celebrating the Fire Festival, on the day of the Fire Festival, it is this woman who will send some cotton seeds to the chief's house. And this was how she was sitting until others also came to sit near her, and she also came to have people. This is how I have heard it.

The women chieftaincies, as I know it, there are some chieftaincies which are given to Yaa-Naa's daughters, and again, there are some on the part of the Yaa-Naa's wives, because some of them have titles. If you are someone who hears talks, you will know that some of these titles are the names of wives of the olden days' Yaa-Naas. Katini is the Yaa-Naa's second wife, and Katini was a wife of Naa Gbewaa. But if you are going to count the Yaa-Naa's wives, you have to start with Gbanzaliŋ. As I am not at Yendi, I didn't know this talk into details. Those who come from Yendi, they are the ones who are supposed to know it. And so we called Abukari Moro. He is a Yendi drummer, but he is sitting in this town. He is the son of Yendi Sampahi-Naa. He has got respect in drumming, and at the same time, you also know him very well. Truly, I know the titles of the chief's wives, but I know their names and that is all. It is good if you show how they follow one another, and call them in order. I wouldn't want to take it and come, and it would mix, and so we sat with him over this talk. If you write it, then those who read it will come to know that we have showed you well. Gbanzaliŋ is the senior wife of the Yaa-Naa, and so she is the Yaa-Naa's Paani. Paani is the title of every chief's senior wife, but the Yaa-Naa's Paani is called Gbanzaliŋ. She is somebody who was married to the Yaa-Naa before he became Yaa-Naa, and so she has no house in Yendi. When I say "house," I am not talking about a house that she stays in. I can tell you that among the wives of the Yaa-Naa, on the part of where she stays, Gbanzaliŋ has her own house where she stays in Yendi, and there is no other chief's wife who has an actual house where she stays in Yendi. But the time the Yaa-Naa married Gbanzaliŋ, maybe he was *Na-bi yɔŋ*, that is, a prince who has not yet eaten chieftaincy, and he becomes married. And when he became a chief, he is given wives by other chiefs. And the women the other chiefs give, they have titles, and so we say that they have houses. They don't stay in those houses: the houses are the houses in Yendi where the chiefs of those towns sleep when they come to Yendi. And so Gbanzaliŋ has no town because the Yaa-Naa was a young boy before he had a wife. That's why I say she has no house.

After Gbanzaliŋ, the next one is Katini. The one following is Kazee. After them, there is Galbaŋ, Kɔyibga, Gurgulana, Liitoɣu, Taayili, Galinyoo, Buyalana, Gulana, Yiwɔɣu, Gbungbandi, Gaanaa, Solɔɣu, Gasinaba, Doolana, Kayimewu, Nyukuzeei, Toonɔdon, Duhili. These are all wives of the Yaa-Naa, and they all have titles and standing places. And these other wives, they have their towns. If you hear Katini, she is for Gushie. Gurgulana: she is for Diari. Gbungbandi: she is for Nanton. Nyukuzeei: she is for Kumbungu. Toonɔdon: she is for Tijo. Solɔɣu: Sunson; Gasinaba: Balɔɣu; Duhili: Zɔhi. And all the names I have called, these are all the names of the women from the various towns, because when somebody is a Yaa-Naa, they give him women from many towns. And so all the women chieftaincies I have called, they are from different towns. And all the women come from the towns I have called, and they are called chiefs. And so these chieftaincies are just titles, and it shows their respect. That is the chieftaincy from the Yaa-Naa's wives. They have people, but they are not sitting as chiefs and holding people. They are the Yaa-Naa's wives, and they are only in the Yaa-Naa's house. They are not chiefs in the same way I talked about chieftaincy on the part of the Yaa-Naa's daughters. Their side is different. They are not holding the things of customs, but how the chief's wives stand, all the chiefs from the towns, and all the elders of the chiefs, they have their chief's wives who consult with them. If some trouble comes to a chief's wife, she has the elder she will go to. And if any talk or trouble comes on the part of a chief's elder, he can go to that chief's wife, and she will talk for him. And as I asked my brother, "As this elder is eating, which of the chief's wives is from his door, or is on his side?" And this is what he also showed me. If I didn't ask him and I talk it, and it comes to be by heart, it would mean that I haven't talked a clear talk to you. And we also want this talk because we want it to be very nice. And so this is the talk I have for you on the part of the Yendi chieftaincy. And I have talked long, and the talk is heavy. And so I will stop here, and tomorrow, if God agrees, we will continue with the talk about chieftaincy and start with the talk of our Dagbamba chiefs in the different towns.