

***A DRUMMER'S TESTAMENT:***  
**Detailed Chapter and Contents Outline**

**Acknowledgments**

**Guide to Pronunciation**

**Table of Contents and Expanded Table of Contents**

**INTRODUCTION:** topics covered

A) capsule geography and demography; descriptions of Tamale and Accra; descriptions of urban and rural landscapes; the situation of traditional societies in modern Ghana

B) Alhaji Ibrahim Abdulai and the genesis of the work; indigenous views of cultural relevance; assessment of the role of ethnography in contemporary anthropology; why the work was done in this manner; the nature of the collaboration; portraits of significant personnel; issues of method and substance; description of interviewing techniques and translation methods

C) advice on reading the text: the context and pacing of evening discussions in a village; style and idioms; the size of the text; relationship of drumming to the presentation of information

**VOLUME I: *THE WORK OF DRUMMING***

**Part 1: ALHAJI IBRAHIM'S INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK**

**Chapter 1: Why We Should Do the Work as a Group**

A story to stand for the work; Dagbamba folk stories and proverbs on friendship and knowledge; the importance of good character

**Chapter 2: The Dagbamba Way of Living in the Towns and Villages**

The attitude of modern children toward their tradition; how traditional values are taught in the villages; the character of villagers compared to town people

### **Chapter 3: The Sense of Dagbamba and Their Way of Living in the Olden Days**

The importance of knowing how one's parents and grandparents lived; recollections of precolonial and colonial life; types of work and the sense of Dagbamba

### **Chapter 4: Respect and the Dagbamba Way of Living Together**

Respect and how Dagbamba show respect on the part of: those who live in the same area, their families, their in-laws; examples: patience, temperance, not "showing oneself," gathering and eating with others, respect for strangers

### **Chapter 5: The Way of a Stranger and How a Stranger Should Live in Dagbon**

How Dagbamba behave toward strangers; being a stranger and traveling; the benefits of traveling; bad things that can happen to strangers; how a stranger should behave with the people

### **Chapter 6: Greetings and Respect in Dagbon**

Greetings and festivals; the importance of greetings; how Dagbamba greet; greetings and respect; greetings to different types of people: chiefs, rich people, maalams; gifts and gift-giving; messengers and greeting; greetings in the household; greetings to in-laws; greetings during the festival months; how Dagbamba greet their friends in different villages; how Dagbamba receive one another in greetings

### **Chapter 7: How Dagbamba Send Messengers**

How Dagbamba send messengers to greet others; types of people who are messengers; how a messenger uses sense

### **Chapter 8: The Debt of the Stomach**

Problems of working together as a team; practical problems of poverty and their relationship to commitment to long-term collaborative projects; issues of sharing potential benefits and maintaining continuity of the team

## **Chapter 9: Patience, Truth, and the Talks**

The nature of long talks; different types of lies; how to listen to the talks; patience and asking questions; instructions to John about “repairing” the talks

## **Part 2: DRUMMERS AND DRUMMING IN DAGBON**

### **Chapter 10: The Work of Drumming**

Alhaji Ibrahim’s family background and where he learned drumming; his respect as a drummer; an example of Baakobli and market-drumming: how Alhaji suffered and how he learned patience; the need to learn work well; learning both *gunḡoḡ* and *luḡa*; the difference between those who have traveled to the South and those who only know Dagbon

### **Chapter 11: The Respect of Drumming and How Drumming Started in Dagbon**

Drummers and chiefs; why chiefs need drummers; the family relationship of chiefs and commoners; the origin of drumming: Bizuḡ as the son of Naa Nyaysi; origins of Namo-Naa; original drumming of the land-priests in Dagbon: *ʒem* and *Bandamda*; the eldership of the *gunḡoḡ* and *yua* over the *luḡa*; the seniority of the *luḡa*; the respect of drummers and chiefs

### **Chapter 12: Drummers and the Other Musicians of Dagbon**

The strength of drummers with chiefs; *Punyiḡsili*: waking the chief; names people call drummers; drummers as women; begging the chief; if Namo-Naa and Yaa-Naa quarrel; the seniority of drummers to other musicians: the origins of *Akarima* and the *timpana*; *dalgu*; names in Dagbon; the origins of fiddles (*goonji*), solo string instruments (*mɔʏlo* and *jenjili*)

### **Chapter 13: How Drums are Made**

Craft aspects of drumming; how drums are carved; ritual obligations of drum-makers; how drums are sewn; types of skins used; varying quality of drums and skins; how drum-sticks are made; how *gunḡoḡs* are made and sewn

## **Chapter 14: How Drums are Played**

Technique and style; innovation and tradition; the right wrist and quickness; the right hand and the left hand in beating; talking on a drum and using the left hand; beating coolly and beating with strength; changing styles and steadiness; examples

## **PART 3: MUSIC AND DANCING IN COMMUNITY EVENTS**

### **Chapter 15: Proverbs, Praise-names and Dances**

Why Dagbamba like proverbs; what proverbs add to living; how to understand proverbs; how people use proverbs as names; proverbial names and “praising”; introduction to the family; how drummers beat praise-names on their drums; where and how drummers use praise-names; the role of praising at community gathering; introduction to praise-names and dance beats

### **Chapter 16: The Praise-Name Dances and the Benefits of Music**

The origins of dances in chieftaincy and the drum history; examples of dances based on praise-names of former chiefs; overview: how music helps in weddings, funerals, namings, festivals; happiness and music; happiness and dancing; music as something to give to the children

### **Chapter 17: How a Person Should Dance**

The relationship of dancing and drumming; differences in styles of dancing; differences between men’s and women’s dancing; how people learn dancing; aesthetics of good dancing

### **Chapter 18: Baamaaya, Jera, Yori, Bila and Other Dances of Dagbon**

Baamaaya; Jera; Yori; Bila; Nyindoyu and Dimbu; Gingaani; dances of the craft-guilds and other tribes; group dances compared to individual dances

### **Chapter 19: Takai and Tora**

The Takai and Tora dances; their importance in community events

## **Chapter 20: The Work of Drumming: Funerals**

Funerals as an example of the role of music in community events; the elder of the funeral house; how a dead body is bathed and buried; the stages of a funeral: three days, seven days, shaving the funeral children, “showing the thing,” sharing property; why Dagbamba like funerals; the importance of funerals; music and funerals

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

How Muslims are buried; stages of a Muslim funeral; how chiefs die; how chiefs are buried; the installation of the Regent; chiefs funerals and the work of drummers; example: Savelugu

## **PART 4: LEARNING AND MATURITY**

### **Chapter 22: How Children are Trained in Drumming**

Types of toy drums for children; first proverbs; how a child is taught to sing; discipline; children who are “born” with the drum; a child who was trained by dwarves; learning the chiefs; learning to sing; performing; how young drummers respect their teachers; obligations to teachers; teaching and learning

### **Chapter 23: Traveling and Learning the Dances of Other Tribes**

Why Dagbamba learn other tribes’ drumming; the difficulty of learning the Dagbani language; the drumming styles and dancing of: Mossis, Kotokolis and Hausas (Jebo, Gaabite Zamanduniya, Madadaazi, Adamboli), Bassaris and Chembas and Chilinsis, Dandawas, Wangaras, Gurumas, Konkombas, Frafras, Ashantis, Yorubas; differences in the drummers from different towns

### **Chapter 24: Drum Chieftaincies**

Drum chiefs and chieftaincy hierarchies; the different drum chieftaincies of the towns; how a drummer gets chieftaincy; how a chief drummer is buried

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

How drummers earn money at gatherings; example of Namo-Naa and his messengers; sharing money to elders; “covering the anus of Bizun”; how Alhaji Ibrahim divides drummers into groups and shares money; why drummers share money to old people and children; what drumming doesn’t want; the need for “one mouth”

## **VOLUME II: OLD TALKS: DRUMMERS, CHIEFS, HISTORY AND RELIGION**

### **Part 1: CHIEFTAINCY**

#### **Chapter 1: The Forbidden Talks of Drumming**

Scope of the historical chapters from origins through Samban' luja; different types of historical figures; taboos and sacrifices; the importance of the Samban' luja; fears of drummers regarding early history; Harold Blair (Yakubuzee) and other previous researchers in Dagbon

#### **Chapter 2: How Drummers Search for the Old Talks**

How to acquire historical erudition; provenance of information and unreliable information; tactics of approach; greetings and sacrifices; sources for the work

#### **Chapter 3: Old Talks: The Origins of Dagbon**

The Dagbamba invasion of Ghana, the conquest of the indigenous peoples: Nimbu, Zipopora, Kumtili, Naa Gbewaa, Naa 3irli

#### **Chapter 4: Naa Shitɔbu and Naa Nyaysi: The Founding of Dagbon**

The usurpation of the priests: Naa Shitɔbu, Naa Nyaysi; kin relationships to Mamprusi, Mossi, Nanumba, Talensi, Frafra, Dagara, Wala, Kusasi, Tapolensi, Zantansi, Kantonsi; inter-tribal relations with Hausa, Gonja, Ashanti, Bassari, Chemba, Kotokoli, Dandawa, Zambarima, Guruma, Kasena, Builsa, Sissala

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

The paramount chief: the Yaa-Naa of Yendi; how a Yaa-Naa dies and is buried; selection of a new Yaa-Naa; list of Yaa-Naas; types of elders; the work of elders; intermediaries for chiefs; Yendi area elders; origins of main elderships; castration of elders; ranking of elders; Kuyā-Naa; M’ba Duyu; the elder chieftaincies: Gushe-Naa, Tolon-Naa, Gukpe-Naa, Kumbun-Naa; the Kambonsi; the women chiefs

## **Chapter 6: The Organization of Chieftaincy**

The Yaa-Naa and the thirteen divisional chiefs; types of divisional chieftaincy; organization of the chieftaincy hierarchy; how the hierarchy shifts

## **Chapter 7: How Princes Get Chieftaincy and Go to Hold a Town**

The life of princes; relationship of the first-born son to the second-born son; how the hierarchy shifts to accommodate princes; conflict between princes and junior fathers; the chief’s elders: Kamo-Naa, Wulana, Lun-Naa, Maagaazia, etc.; how a new chief lives with his elders and townspeople; how the townspeople and elders greet the chief on Mondays and Fridays

## **Chapter 8: How Chiefs Judge Cases**

The chief’s court in pre-colonial times; the naazonima (chief’s friends); the role of the elders in cases; types of crime and the punishments; selling a bad person; witches and witchcraft cases; modern types of crime; comparison of chief’s courts and civil courts

## **Part 2: HISTORY**

### **Chapter 9: The Drum History (Samban’ luja)**

The social context of the drum history performance at the chief’s house; the format of the drum history; the chief’s responsibility for taboos and sacrifices; the nature of history; Dagbamba historiography; objectivity and divergent traditions in the Samban’ luja

## **Chapter 10: The First Gonja War: Naa Darizɛyɛ and Naa Luro**

Example of the Samban' luŋa: Gonja wars; the origins of the first war, the death of Naa Darizɛyɛ; Naa Luro's abuse; Naa Luro at Diari: the blacksmiths and the bridge; Naa Luro's victory over Kaluysi Dajia; Pakpɔŋ Kachayɛ and Lunlana Lunzɛyɛ: the origins of Baŋgumaŋa; the meaning and dancing of Baŋgumaŋa

## **Chapter 11: Naa Zanjina and the Coming of Islam**

The contributions of Naa Zanjina to Dagbamba custom; Naa Zanjina's youth and conversion to Islam; how Naa Zanjina got chieftaincy and his influence on chieftaincy custom; Naa Zanjina as the "light" of Dagbon

## **Chapter 12: The Second Gonja War: Naa Zanjina and Naa Siyɛli**

Continuation of the wars; Kumpatia and the conquest of western Dagbon; the death of Naa Zanjina and how Naa Siyɛli obtained chieftaincy; the Dagbamba war campaign; the defeat of Kumpatia

## **Chapter 13: The Cola and Slave Trades: Naa Garba and Naa Ziblim**

Dagbamba-Ashanti relations; the uses of cola; the cola and shea butter trade; Naa Garba and the Ashanti war; the capture and ransoming of Naa Garba; the slave trade in Dagbon; origin of the Kambonsi (soldiers); Ashanti influences under Naa Ziblim Bandamba

## **Chapter 14: The Pre-Colonial Era: Naa Andani and Naa Alhassan**

Naa Yakubu and civil war; Naa Abdulai and the Bassari war; Naa Andani: the German conquest and victory at Adibo; Tugulana Iddi, Karaga-Naa Bukari and civil war; Naa Alhassan: the coming of the British; colonial rule under the British

## **Chapter 15: Modern History and the Chieftaincy Crisis**

The unification of Dagbon under the British; the origins and escalation of the chieftaincy dispute under Naa Mahama Kpɛma and Naa Mahama Bila; Mionlana Andani and Naa Abilabila; Kwame Nkrumah and the Tolon-Naa; the role of educated Dagbamba in the crisis; the usurpation of Naa Mahammadu; possibilities for settlement



## **Part 3: FESTIVALS IN COMMUNITY LIFE AND THE WORK OF DRUMMERS**

### **Chapter 16: Festivals: The Fire Festival**

The traditional calendar; Buyim (Fire) Festival; the origins of the Fire Festival; historiographic resolution of pagans and Muslims aspects of the Fire Festival; Dambabilaa

### **Chapter 17: Festivals: The Damba Festival**

Origins of the Damba festival from Naa Zanjina; the Somo Damba; the Chiefs' Damba; how villagers celebrate the Damba Festival; the Damba Bielkushi; Namo-Naa's role in the Damba Festival

### **Chapter 18: Festivals: Kpini, Ramadan, and Chimsi**

The origins and celebration of the Kpini (Guinea Fowl) Festival; Ramadan/Konyuri Chuyu (Mouth-tying month); why Dagbamba fast; difficulties and techniques of fasting; drumming during Ramadan: Asem and Bandamda at the chief's house; the 26th day of the fast; the Iddi (Praying) Festival, the Samban' luŋa in the Iddi Festival; the respect of drumming during the Ramadan; example: a trip to Akosombo and how the drummers were respected; Chimsi (Sacrificing) Festival

## **Part 4: RELIGION AND MEDICINE**

### **Section 1: ISLAM**

#### **Chapter 19: The Dagbamba Belief in God**

Why Dagbamba believe in God; arguments for the existence of God; God's greatness; how Dagbamba remember God in their daily living

## **Chapter 20: Islam, Muslim Elders and the Strength of Islam**

Historical: Naa Zanjina and the introduction of Islam; Naa Bimbiɛyu and Savelugu-Naa Poosamli; cultural: the benefits of Islam; obligations of faith; prayer; the role of maalams; types of Muslims; origins of Muslim elders of Dagbon; classification of Muslim elders by tribal origins: Mossis, Hausas, Wangaras; areas of Muslim concentration in Dagbon; Christianity and the work of Christian missions in the villages

## **Chapter 21: The Pilgrimage to Mecca**

Dangers and benefits of the Hajj; preparations; Hajj agents; foreign exchange problems; arrival at Jidda; arrival at Mecca; Arafat; Mina; Mudzalifa; Medina; Alhaji Ibrahim's piety and his feelings of pity during the Hajj; return from Mecca; greetings

## **Section 2: TRADITIONAL RELIGION**

### **Chapter 22: Traditional Religion: Soothsayers and Diviners**

The inheritance of the soothsayers' bag; testing of soothsayers; the work of soothsaying; other types of diviners; the Jinwara cult; Jinwarba divination

### **Chapter 23: Traditional Religion: The Priests of the Earth**

Local gods and shrines; how tindanas inherit their chieftaincies; women tindanas; comparison of tindanas and chiefs; chiefs who are tindanas; the Dapkemas; tindanas and chiefs of Tamale; relations of tindanas and chiefs: drum history story of Mionlana Mahami and Tindaan' 3ee

### **Chapter 24: Traditional Religion: Gods and Shrines**

Yabyili, Naawuni, Pong Tamale, Chema, Jaagbo, Lansah, etc.

### **Chapter 25: Medicine**

How medicine works; types of medicine: liliga, vua, kabre, tahiŋga, etc.; maalams' medicines

### **Chapter 26: Drummer's Medicines**

Drummers and medicine: gandu, zambaŋa, teeli; jealousy among drummers; example of use of kabre at drum history; the Bukpahinima, an anti-witch cult

## **Chapter 27: Diseases and Medicine**

Major health problems of Dagbon; major diseases and how they are treated; other problems: guinea worms and parasites; Dagbamba ideas about medicine and health problems

## **Chapter 28: Madness**

Types of madness; treatment of madness; madness and craft-guilds

# **VOLUME III: *IN OUR LIVING***

## **Part 1: ECONOMIC LIFE**

### **Chapter 1: Farming in Dagbon**

The origins of farming in Dagbon; collective labor (market-day farming); farming and the family; the sweetness of farming work

### **Chapter 2: How Dagbamba Farm Yams**

How Dagbamba farm yams; other crops: corn, sorghum, millet beans; crop rotation and agricultural technology; farming rituals and sacrifices; uses of yams

### **Chapter 3: The Work of Guinea Corn**

Staple foods: uses of sorghum, millet, corn, beans; pito (local beer): ritual use and Dagbamba drinking habits

### **Chapter 4: Rice Farming**

Rice: origins of rice farming; uses of rice; problems of intensive agriculture; credit facilities and debt patterns; emergent stratification patterns; wage labor in the villages

## **Chapter 5: Groundnuts, Shea Butter, and Kpalgu**

How Dagbamba farm groundnuts; preparation and uses of shea butter and kpalgu (local seasoning); raising animals

## **Chapter 6: Markets**

The traditional market system; the daalana; chiefs and markets; schedule of markets; benefits of markets; festival markets; the contemporary market system

## **Chapter 7: Modern Types of Work and Problems of Economic Development**

Modern trends in work patterns; the Dagbamba resistance to education and “white man’s work” (clerical, soldiering, transport, etc.); guide to development of the region; water and dam maintenance; agriculture, extensive and intensive; infrastructure: sources of local labor, sources of local decision-making; bullock farming and group farming; health; potential local credit facilities

## **Part 2: FAMILY**

### **Chapter 8: Family and Lineage**

The Dagbamba extended family system; classificatory structures; sharing children in the family; why families are important

### **Chapter 9: How a Family Separates**

Origins of family; benefits of the extended family; how families spoil through marriage and inter-tribal mingling

### **Chapter 10: What Makes A Family Strong**

Funerals and family cohesion; property and inheritance; lineage guilds and family cohesion

## **Part 3: CHILDREN**

### **Chapter 11: The Benefits of Many Children**

Why Dagbamba value children; role of children in the family; Dagbamba resistance to family planning

### **Chapter 12: How a Child is Given Birth**

How a child is given birth; pregnancy and mid-wifery; bathing a newborn child; naming a child; the suuna ceremony; the child in the mother's family house; how a child grows in infancy

### **Chapter 13: Special Types of Children**

Difficulties of children; children and bad spirits; twins; orphans; relation to mother's house

### **Chapter 14: How Children Are Raised**

How children live with their parents; friends and peer groups; games and dances of children; how children are trained; formal education: Arabic and English schools; vocational training

### **Chapter 15: How Girls Grow Up in the Villages**

Girls' work in the villages: grinding, sheanuts, harvesting; household training; festival markets; early courtship patterns

### **Chapter 16: How Boys Grow Up in the Villages**

Boys' work in the villages: farming, gathering food for domestic animals; festival markets: early social patterns and courtship

## **Part 4: HOUSEHOLDING**

### **Chapter 17: How Dagbamba Marry**

Ways of getting a wife; the age at which Dagbamba marry; responsibilities toward in-laws; how traditional Dagbamba marry; how Muslims marry; how chiefs marry; the life of chief's wives

### **Chapter 18: Bachelors**

Problems of being a bachelor; why Dagbamba don't respect bachelors; how bachelors live; women who don't have husbands

### **Chapter 19: Why Dagbamba Marry Many Wives**

The reasons why Dagbamba marry many wives; the hierarchy of wives; how the chiefs live with their wives

### **Chapter 20: Home Economics**

How Dagbamba householders feed their wives and children; types of commoners; rotation of cooking among the wives; financial contributions of husband and wives

### **Chapter 21: Marriage and Love**

What a husband does for his wife; what a wife does for her husband

### **Chapter 22: The Life of Women**

Types of work women do in the house; the character of Dagbamba women; how women help each other

### **Chapter 23: Sex and Jealousy in the Polygamous Household**

Sexual patterns in the household; jealousy among wives; the use of medicine against each other; how a husband should live with wives who quarrel

### **Chapter 24: Divorce**

How Dagbamba divorce; causes of divorce; examples of three divorces

## **Part 5: OLD AGE**

### **Chapter 25: Widows**

Chiefs' widows: public bathing and beating; taboos of widows; customs regarding the remarriage of widows

### **Chapter 26: How Dagbamba Regard Old Age**

Old age and respect; status of old people; responsibilities of old age; the family head; how old people live

### **Chapter 27: The Life of Old People**

How old people live; types of old age; lives of three old people compared and contrasted

## **Part 6: CONCLUSION:**

### **Chapter 28: Alhaji Ibrahim's Reflection on the Work**

The history of our relationship; problems of the work; why he did the work; how he feels about it; final instructions to John

## **SUPPORTING MATERIALS**

### **Within the text:**

PHOTOGRAPHS

TABLES AND FIGURES as readers' aids for data-intensive chapters

### **End matter:**

GLOSSARY of Dagbani words used in the text

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY on Dagbon

INDEX 1: Persons, titles, towns, tribes in the text

INDEX 2: Proverbs, praise-names, dances mentioned in the text

INDEX 3: General content and subject index

MAP 1: Ghana: principal towns and tribes cited

MAP 2: Northern and Upper Regions of Ghana: major towns cited

MAP 3: Dagbon: all towns and villages cited

### **Supplementary:**

RECORDINGS of selected drumming and music to accompany the text