

Master Fiddlers of Dagbon

Group Leader: Mahama Braimah

Recording and Notes: John M. Chernoff

More than half a million Dagbamba people live and farm in the lightly wooded savanna area of northern Ghana. Maps of Africa usually show their largest town, Tamale, and their traditional capital, Yendi. The Dagbamba are heirs to a rich tradition. Their traditional state, Dagbon, was one of the earliest centralized states consolidated in the medieval Volta River Basin. Dagbamba chiefs belong to one of the oldest existing dynasties in the world: the Dagbamba paramount chieftaincy has passed from fathers to sons within one lineage for more than six hundred years. As in many other African societies, the reputed knowledge of traditional history is vested in musicians.

In Dagbon, it is drummers who have dominated the musical repertoire. Drummers are descended from the early line of the Dagbamba chiefs, and they have their own system of chieftaincies as titled elders in major towns. They play an ensemble that includes an hourglass-shaped squeeze drum with two heads, called *lunga* (*luŋa*), sometimes known in Europe and America as a “talking drum,” along with a big bass tomtom, called *gungon* (*guŋɔŋ*). Rounder Records released two CDs of Dagbamba drumming, *Master Drummers of Dagbon*, volumes 1 and 2 (5016 and 5046). The selections on those releases, as well as many other recordings of Dagbamba music, can be found in the open-access web publication, *A Drummer's Testament: Dagbamba Society and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (www.adrummerstestament.com), as well as on this website. The fiddle recordings released on Rounder Records (5086 [2001]) and discussed below, as well as other recordings, along with further information about the fiddle tradition, are also available at www.adrummerstestament.com, particularly in Volume I, chapter 12.

Apart from drumming, there are many other types of music in Dagbon. There are other types of drums played by young people for recreational purposes. The Dagbamba musical repertoire also features several types of flutes, a musical bow called *jenjili* (*jenjili*) that is similar to a Brazilian *birimbao*, several types of horns, and several different plucked lutes, particularly *moglo* (*mɔɣlo*). However, apart

from the hourglass drum ensemble, the instrument that has attained the most popularity and visibility is a one-stringed bowed lute called *goonji*. Variants of the name *goonji* are widespread in related traditions: for example, the fiddle is called *goge* among the Hausa, *godji* among the Songhay.

Fiddles like the *goonji* are widespread in the sub-Saharan savanna cultures of Africa. In fact, fiddles are so widespread that I sometimes wonder why so little attention has been paid to their possible contribution to the soundscape of the African-American Diaspora. And indeed, as alien as the sound of *goonji* music may seem at first, the music is surprisingly easy to get with. There is no documentation of the one-stringed fiddle's origin in West Africa, but based on the various versions of the instruments' basic structure and their distribution among Muslim societies, one-stringed fiddles are generally presumed to have been disseminated from Arabic Muslim societies of North Africa and the Middle East. Trans-Saharan trade and cultural contact has been documented for more than a millennium, and the significant conversion of sub-Saharan Africans to Islam began in the tenth century.

Like most fiddles in West Africa, the Dagbamba *goonji* is held horizontally, often hung over the shoulder with a scarf. The resonator is made from half of a gourd calabash covered with the skin of a monitor lizard. The bow is semi-circular. The strings on the fiddle and the bow are made of hair from a horse's tail. The sound of the *goonji* may sound a bit scratchy at first to Westerners used to the sound of bowed instruments like the violin; nonetheless, the seemingly rough texture of the *goonji*'s sound is consistent with West African concepts of sound richness. The qualities of the sound are enhanced by the accompanying play of rattles called *zaabia*. The rattles are filled calabashes that are both shaken and also struck with the free hand. The words *goonji* and *zaabia* can be used to refer to the instrument itself or the musician who plays it. The rattles are played by children of either gender or by women, and it is worth noting that the Hausa word *zabiya* refers to a female praise-singer.

Goonji music occupies a position that is secondary to drumming in the Dagbamba musical tradition, mainly because the *goonji* is a recent introduction, at least in relative terms given Dagbon's lengthy existence. According to the drummers, the *goonji* was introduced in the early nineteenth century during the reign of Naa (Chief) Ziblim Kulunku. The ancestors of the Dagbamba *goonji*

players originally came from the Guruma traditional area in southeastern Burkina Faso. When some Gurumas moved from their original area to the south and west, Guruma goonji players settled in the Mamprusi traditional area to the north of Dagbon in northern Ghana. They intermarried and brought forth Mamprusi children who were playing the goonji. It was from the Mamprusi area that they went to Dagbon, where they also intermarried, and their descendants became Dagbamba. According to drummers, the goonji players' "starting was in Guruma and Mamprusi," and they "entered" Dagbon, and so the goonjis are "strangers in our midst." Today, despite the great popularity and ubiquitous presence of goonji music in Dagbon, some Dagbamba do not even consider the goonji to be a part of Dagbamba custom because the goonji was not there at the beginning of the chieftaincy tradition that Dagbamba consider the center of their culture. Some goonjis claim that their introduction into Dagbon occurred during the reign of Naa Andani Sigli (Andan' Siyli), in the early eighteenth century, that Naa Sigli brought the goonjis from the extreme north of Ghana, and that they stayed with Naa Sigli's son, Naa Saalana Ziblim, who was chief in the mid to late eighteenth century. Drummers would respond that they know more about people than the people themselves know. Whatever the case, it took many, many years for the roots of goonji playing to grow to the goonji's recent flowering in the late twentieth century.

In Dagbon's traditional capital, Yendi, the goonjis have a chief, a titled family elder called Yamba-Naa, but they do not have a relationship to the Dagbamba chieftaincy comparable to drummers, either as descendants or elders. They are not inside the drum history, and they do not have titles or chieftaincy hierarchies in the other towns of Dagbon. Drummers in Dagbon, along with several other occupational groups such as blacksmiths, butchers, barbers, and soothsayers, are "born" into their work. In modern times, the situation has loosened up a bit for cash-based work like blacksmithing and butchering, but within Dagbamba custom, only a child born into such a family can practice the vocation. According to custom, special symbolism is attached to the drum, the knife, the blade, the bellows, or the soothsayer's bag: each is an "old thing" that "follows" and "catches" people in the respective families. Although there is obvious family continuity in the perpetuation of goonji playing, the goonjis do not face the same types of sanctions as these other groups. The goonjis are nicknamed *vulunvuuna*, after a mud wasp. After a mud wasp gets a place to build its nest, it goes outside, kills insects and puts them inside the nest and leaves them there. I was told, "It

shows that the ones it has brought have become its children. How a goonji is, it is a goonji child who will shake the zaabia. A goonji player will be there, and his child will not be from anywhere: if he has no child, any child who wants to run and come and enter the playing of the zaabia, that child becomes his child and will grow up to play the goonji. If a goonji marries any woman, he will show the woman how to shake the rattle. And so a goonji player has no beginning; God can turn a child to become a goonji child. As for the goonji, you can go and learn it without following a family door. The goonji is like that.”

The logic behind this standard of seniority is grounded in the Dagbamba's sense of themselves as an ancient people. At first glance, Dagbamba society appears to be separated into two groups: nobility and commoners. Yet in a manner parallel to the continuous integrity of the chieftaincy lineage, Dagbamba also conceive of themselves as a single family. Not every son of a chief becomes a chief, and the descendants of those princes who do not attain chieftaincy are thus the people who become commoners. Every Dagbamba traces his or her ancestry to some point on the chieftaincy line, and in that sense, the history of Dagbon is understood in terms of the gradual evolution of an elaborately segmented descent group. The work of Dagbamba drummers involves keeping track of the genealogical relationships that operate within the political realm itself and also the genealogical relationships that link individuals to the chiefs. Drummers are therefore recognized for their knowledge of history and of their local communities, and this knowledge is expressed through their music.

At the center of the Dagbamba musical tradition is the history of the state. Twice a year, drummers in major towns gather outside the house of the chief to sing selected parts of Dagbamba history, a performance that begins in the evening and lasts until dawn. The chiefs have both their given names and also praise-names. These praise names are in the form of proverbs that refer to a chief's deeds, to a chief's ancestor, or to ideas a chief may have believed in strongly. Commoners also have praise-names that either refer to their ancestors in the chieftaincy line or to their own lives and thoughts. Dagbamba say that a person does not praise himself. Public praising is the work of the musicians, and praise-names that fit a person are often bestowed by drummers, who have a broader knowledge of proverbs and of a person's position in society. The praise names can be either sung or beaten on a drum. In recent years, the rhythms of praise-names have become the basis for social dances that are done at community gatherings

like weddings or funerals or the namings of newborn children. At such events, dance circles are formed, and drummers move from one person to another, praising the person and then inviting him or her to a brief solo dance or two performed inside the circle. The dancer's friends and relatives in the dance circle respond to this public display by entering the circle and giving money to the dancer, who allows the money to fall to the ground where it is picked up by children of the musicians.

The role of the goonji players at such gatherings duplicates that of the drummers. At a large funeral, there may be a number of dance circles, of which one or two will feature goonji music. But the extent of the goonjis' knowledge of families and chieftaincy does not reach that of the drummers. Although goonji songs have historical allusions, goonji players do not sing historical songs for the chiefs. When a chief comes out of his house for any type of procession or gathering, goonji players join drummers in walking with the chief and playing their instruments, but when the chief sits down, the goonjis also sit down, and it is drummers who will play and praise the chief. The goonjis pattern their singing after drummers, for their songs are generally a series of proverbs and praise-names, and such songs are what their Dagbamba audiences and patrons want to hear. Nonetheless, the family of the drummers “started” from inside chieftaincy, but the goonji families did not, and the goonjis would defer authority to the drummers.

The increasing popularity of goonji playing is quite recent, and I believe that the main reason for this development is simply that goonji music is so nice. With modern changes in the economic life of the region, many commoners have become well-to-do, and there are many more occasions for musicians to perform. All musicians in larger towns like Tamale have benefited. Now, almost everywhere drummers are, goonjis are also there. Goonjis also roam the markets playing and singing and collecting gifts of money. People like goonji music. Although one might think that drumming is the ideal music for dancing, to my mind, the popularity of goonji music is strongly rooted in its qualities for dancing.

I have experienced nothing quite like dancing to goonji music, and my advice for appreciating the music on this recording is to try to dance to it. Imagine yourself invited by goonjis to dance in the center of a Dagbamba dance circle. When you step into the circle to dance, the musicians surround you. Perhaps there

will be three or four goonjis and maybe two rattles. The leader of the goonjis sings and plays his fiddle while the other goonjis drive the music with responsive rhythms and harmonies. The rattles in particular pack a real punch. When the rattle players smack their rattles and accentuate their rhythms, the sound is sharp and penetrating. When all these musicians are playing, the music envelopes you and goes right into your body. The dance itself is typically a simple two-step movement, right right left-left, but sometimes the dancer steps to each beat and sometimes the dancer adds an intermediate step in syncopation. Male dancers may add a flourish by lifting a leg and rotating half-way to mark the beat; as they turn, their flared smocks bell out and swing. When you are dancing, as you feel the beat, the counterrhythms lift you and turn your body. Because of this palpable energy, as with the two Rounder recordings of Dagbamba drumming, I also recommend listening to the goonji music on headphones at high volume. In my previous liner notes, I wrote that in the actual context of a performance, the sound is more than quadraphonic, and we should appreciate the musical inspiration behind such a performance model as a kind of technological prescience. In the notes on the individual songs, I have also included the vernacular of the vocal responses for those who might wish to position themselves further into the music by singing along with the chorus.

Until you experience the music as something that surrounds you while you move, it is hard to believe that so much intensity and energy can come from an ensemble of fiddles. I used this recording as a pace-setter when I worked out aerobically on an exercise bicycle. Most of the songs start at a moderate pace between 80 and 110 beats a minute and then gradually speed up, typically reaching and sustaining a pulse between 120 to 140 beats a minute. I halved that tempo by pedalling on the first and third beats, an ideal for my standard on the apparatus I used. Next, I danced from one Nautilus contraption to another. I used this music for about six months and never got tired of it. Finally, I changed my music on general principles, trying other music from my vast collection, but I lost some of my power. I'm now back with the goonji music, which is still keeping me pumped up.

Although I have made a number of recordings of goonji music, I have chosen to include only selections from one recording session because the performance was just so hot. The group was led by the late Mahama Braimah of Tamale. I called Mahama Braimah my uncle. My drumming master, Alhaji

Ibrahim Abdulai of Tamale, who was the group leader on Rounder's releases of Dagbamba drumming, had been married for some time to Mahama's sister, Gurumpaya (literally, Guruma woman). Insofar as I took Alhaji Ibrahim to be my father in Dagbon, then his wife's brother was my uncle. I had known Mahama for years because we often saw each other at musical events and around the town. He and his brother Alhassan Braimah had made a lovely recording for me several years earlier, but when I asked him for another recording, he brought along two additional goonjis. We went to a quiet field outside of town, and the musicians made this recording in a single sitting.

With impressive musicianship, the ensemble of four goonjis and two zaabia performed a selection of goonji songs. In most goonji songs, the vocal phrasing of the chorus or responsive line is duplicated in the responsive parts of the fiddles. The songs generally begin with this phrasing maintained for enough time to establish the song and its rhythmic dynamic. The leader sings various stanzas against this response, and the song gradually builds in intensity as the tempo quickens and the goonjis take flights on their instruments. Sometimes the whole song takes a turn into a different responsive pattern. In this performance, Mahama's brilliant singing is anchored by the vocal chorus of the other three goonjis. The presence of four goonjis fortifies the responses; moreover, instead of playing their responses in unison as is often the case with other groups, the supporting fiddlers themselves employed sophisticated and tasteful counterrhythms and harmonies. Much of the rhythmic drive comes not from solo work but from the music's steady yet shifting pulsations. Goonji music offers a superb illustration of how one may attribute the notion of percussive attack to a fiddler's bowing technique. The rattles' complementary flourishes are broken by extended periods of straightforward yet energized time-keeping, and I cannot think of any other music in which that simple beat from the rattles would seem so stunning.

It is not surprising to find that the players in larger towns like Tamale seem more accomplished in terms of sheer musicianship: there are more people in the towns, and there are also more occasions for playing, more funerals, more weddings, and more money. As I stated earlier, most goonji songs are collections of proverbs that have become identified with people as praise-names, and people in Dagbon often identify themselves through the praise-names of their particular ancestors who were chiefs. By the mid-twentieth century, as more and more of the

common people acquired sufficient means to patronize musicians, it was not unusual for those who were not chiefs to have their own praise-names. Well-to-do commoners and householders, called “youngmen” even though they would typically be in their forties and fifties, could sponsor musical gatherings, and the type of music and dancing performed by drummers was called *taachi*, a word taken from the Hausa word *taake*, referring to a type of Hausa praise-drumming. Drummers sing most taachi songs either in Dagbani, the Dagbamba language, or in the local variant of Hausa. The goonji songs of today resemble taachi songs at least in the sense that they are often in Hausa or in a mixture of Hausa and Dagbani. Actually, although many Dagbamba are multilingual, many are not, and many do not understand what the goonjis are singing. Most people know when they themselves are being praised, but in fact, even some of the younger goonji musicians themselves may not know all the meanings of the songs in their repertoire. Like us, though, those Dagbamba who cannot understand the songs can still enjoy listening or moving to the music. It is a strange and beautiful circumstance that allows us perhaps to share an unmediated experience of music and to bridge some of the cultural differences that might normally separate us from them.

PERSONNEL: The group leader was Mahama Braimah of Tamale. Also playing goonji and singing were Alhassan Braimah, Alhassan Ibrahim and Yimusah Seidu. The zaabia players were Mashahudu Mahama and Issahaku Mahama.

RECORDING NOTES: This recording was made on TDK MA-XG tape using a Sony WM-D6C tape recorder and an ECM-939LT one-point stereo microphone, with Dolby C. The microphone was placed about two feet off the ground about six feet in front of the four goonji players, who were seated in a line, with the two zaabia placed standing about six feet behind them. In remastering, the zaabia were brought forward with paragraphic equalization of plus 2.5 to 2.8 on a narrow band centered at 7336. The recording was done on July 28, 1991, at Tamale, Ghana. The recording was remastered and resequenced at HeartSong Studios in Pittsburgh, PA. The engineer was Henry Yoder.

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Ibrahim Abubakari, working with Alhassan Braimah. Additional adjustments to Hausa transcriptions and translations were suggested by Beverly Mack.

Notes on the Songs:

Dogua Bayoyoyo (“Do Not Feel Sympathy for the Tallest Chief”)

Sung in Hausa, the song is for a chief, Kari-Naa Abukari, that is, Abukari, chief of the town of Karaga. While the chorus sings *Dogua Bayoyoyo*, Mahama sings proverbial praise-names: Among all the chiefs, he (Abukari) is the tallest. What is your message (concerning war)? When trouble is coming, you will try to prevent it so that it will not fall on you. God has given you chieftaincy; no one can compare (himself) with you. A gift is in the hands of God; if gifts were in the hands of people, they would refuse to give them. You whom God has given a gift, and you have not given it to somebody: use that gift to help us follow God. The lion is senior to the hyena and the leopard.

Wanda Ya Chi Magani Yaa Baata (“Someone Who Fears Wants to Use Juju (but it won't work)”)

Sung in Hausa, the song is for Kori-Naa Bukari, that is, Chief Bukari of the town of Korli. The rhythm resembles a popular dance drumming called Dam' Duu. The idea behind the chorus is that someone without courage may have medicine (juju) for protection against weapons but will still run from danger. The leader sings the choral line and adds other proverbial praises that refer to chieftaincy: If a crocodile catches someone, you can only help by shouting; if you enter the water, the crocodile will catch you, too. What God has done, nobody is angry with it except a fool. When the axehead comes out of the fire, no one will put it on his shoulder. If you used to cross a stream easily, water will come with more force in the rainy season. If there is a strange crocodile (a new chief) in the stream, you will be afraid to cross because you haven't seen that crocodile before.

Mai Karatu (“A Student”)

Mahama was so pleased with this song that he did not restrain a laugh at the end. Sung in Hausa, the chorus, *Yaaro baya sha giya*, says that “A boy should not drink alcohol.” The song is in praise of a Hausa maalam (Muslim scholar), known as Imam Imoro, who was from the town of Krachi in east-central Ghana, in the northern section of the Volta Region. The leader sings: When you hear of someone called a man, he should not drink alcohol. The one whom God has gifted, he should not drink alcohol. If you are someone who is capable, you do not need to consult many people. If God has given you riches, no matter how you spend it, more will come.

Mai Karfi (“A Strong Person”)

Sung in Hausa, the chorus is *Mai karfi zai che kawo fada*: “A strong man will call for a fight.” The section of a town where African foreigners (often Hausas) live is called a *zongo* in Hausa. This song is for the Hausa chief of the zongo in Yendi many years ago, named Labo. Mahama sings: The one who owns milk will keep it; if you are in need of it, go to the owner. If a flock of sheep gathers without a ram, they are useless. The fiddles and chorus entertain the words *Yaaro taaka* during a bridge: “Son (of chiefs), walk majestically.” Toward the end of the song, the chorus and leader alternate singing, “Go forward, father (of the retinue).”

Ka Mi Zuhiri Maanga (“I Have Invited Myself”)

Sung in Dagbani, the song is for Tugulana Yiri, that is, Chief Yiri of the town of Tugu. The goonjis' responsive line says: You have not invited me, but I have come. The idea of the chief inviting himself is that no rival contestant nor townsperson could prevent him from obtaining the chieftaincy. The singer calls the names of past chiefs in the chief's family and tells them: walk majestically. He adds: The one who is not invited has washed his hands before me. The one who is not invited has taken a ball of food before me. Before I put mine in my mouth he has already swallowed his. Then the singer calls the past chiefs again.

Ninsal' Ku Toi Ban O Dalirilana (“A Human Being Cannot Know His Benefactor”)

Sung in Dagbani, the song is for a turn-of-the-twentieth-century chief of Savelugu, Abukari Jia. The chorus first sings *Ban tee bora*: “They will remember their need” (for the chief, but they will not see him again). Later in the song, the chorus changes to sing “A human being cannot know his benefactor” (the one who will help him). Mahama also sings that main phrase as well as other proverbs: If you gather a hundred diamonds, they will never look like a piece of gold. You reap what you sow: if you plant lies, you will reap lies; if you plant good things, you will reap good things. The cat is eating and it pains the dog (he is jealous). Does the grinding mill belong to the dog? Does the river belong to the dog? A dog does not fetch water, nor does he grind anything.

Yaaro Yaa Sani Baba (“A Boy Knows the Father”)

Sung in Hausa, the song is for an elder, Mba Duyu Sheni, of the early twentieth century Yaa-Naa (Chief of Yendi), Naa Abudu. The chorus first sings *Chali ya magana*: “An excuse-maker is full of talk.” Later the chorus changes to *Yaaro yaa sani baba*. The leader sings: A boy knows the father. If you are looking for milk, you will go to the cow. If God has blessed somebody with something, but it hasn't come to you yet, don't be disturbed about it. The baobab tree is fat, but the bagarua tree is more useful than the baobab tree. (Its fruit is used to tan leather.) If God has made you a watchman over something, and someone takes something out of it, God will replace that thing. (If God has given you riches, no matter how you spend it, more money will come.)

Wariye Jelima Mai Makada (“The Prince Who Has Many Goonji Players”)

Sung in both Hausa and Dagbani, the song is for a turn-of-the-century chief of Savelugu, Savelugu-Naa Mahami. The first chorus is *Wariye jelima mai makada*: “The prince who has many goonji players.” Mahama sings a number of proverbial praises. If God gives something to someone, be patient; it is not your turn yet. Someone who destroys and someone who builds, they are never the same. Someone who gives and someone who is selfish, they are never the same. The life of a lizard ends at the bottom of a tree (that is, where it has left the safety of the

tree and is vulnerable to its enemies). The leader then sings: If you want to give us something, get it from a rich man, not a poor man. The chorus responds Jelima kama kwabo: “The prince should catch and collect the money for us.”

Ba Zai Karfi, Sai Allah Ya Yi Lafia (“No One Has Power Unless God Makes It So”)

Sung in Hausa, this song is for the early nineteenth century chief of Yendi, Naa Ziblim Kulunku. The idea in the chorus is that chieftaincy is given by God. The leader greets the chief: I've come to find out how you passed the night. Did you sleep well? The leader then calls the names of other chiefs and moves into proverbs: Somebody's father cannot be the same as your father. Somebody's mother cannot be the same as your mother. Somebody's village cannot be the same as your village. If the moonlight shines in your room, it cannot be the same as daylight. If you look at your face in the mirror, if the mirror could see as well as your eye, then a blind person could also have sight if he used the mirror. Porridge mixed with water cannot satisfy your hunger. The song shifts to call the places where Dagbamba have fought: Are we going to Konkomba land to fight? Are we going to Gonja land to fight? Are we going to Chekosi land to fight? Are we going to Nanumba land to fight? Are we going to Mamprusi land to fight? Are we going to Ashanti land to fight? At each question, the chorus answers, *Za mu yi*: “Yes chief, your wish (We will obey).”

Yelizolilana Layfu (“Layfu, Chief of Yelizoli”)

This song begins in Dagbani and changes to a mixture of Dagbani and Hausa. The long title, sung by the chorus, is *Gajere dan Yaamusa dan kane Salchi Yani*: “Short man, son of Yaamusa, nephew of the Chief of Yendi.” Yelizolilana is the title of the chief of the town of Yelizoli. *Layfu* is Dagbani for a cowrie shell, or money. (Cowrie shells were formerly used as money in the region.) Yelizolilana Layfu's real name was Yidantogma, but his name Layfu obviously refers to him as a rich man. The chorus refers to the uncommon circumstance that he obtained chieftaincy not through his father but through his mother. In Dagbon, some chieftaincies are held by women, and his mother was Kpatu-Naa Shetu, that is, Shetu, Chief of Kpatuya. Her brother was Naa Yakuba, Chief of Yendi in the

mid-nineteenth century. Yelizolilana Layfu occupied nine chieftaincies before taking over Yelizoli, a point alluded to when the goonjis count some of the towns and villages where he sat as chief. Yelizolilana Layfu is also known because Naa Yakuba became mad during his reign, and there was a war to take his chieftaincy from him; Yelizolilana Layfu was killed in that war.

Against the chorus line, the leader sings: The Chief of Yelizoli has money. The chief says he has money. Money has no fat, but people love money. Using the chief's name Yidantogma, the leader calls the chieftaincies Layfu held before he took Yelizoli, including Zabzugu (another name for Yelizoli), Gbungbaliga, Taginamo, and so on. Then the singer, in an allusion to the chief, refers to a group of diviners called *Jinwarba*; the proverb refers to the belief that when they are dancing, it is dangerous to knock your leg against one of their legs. He sings: When jinwarba are dancing, it is interesting to watch, but if you don't have juju (power) yourself, you can't come close; you have to hide or stand far off (to look at them). More proverbial praises follow: A man will not eat plenty of food before he is called a man. A man will not drink plenty of water before he is called a man. A man will not drink plenty of alcohol before he is called a man. Your deeds show you to be a man. When a camel comes with a load and dumps it, it is only a camel who can carry it again (that is, only the chief can deal with chieftaincy matters). Then the song changes to Hausa and Dagbani, and the leader sings: The stream at Sabali is not for you (chief), but you have used power to take it, and the chorus responds, *Ba ruwanka ba*: "The stream is not yours."

Also:

Extended goonji duo recordings: (Mahama Braimah, Alhassan Braimah)

Part 1: (47:46)

Part 2: (48:43)