

The Story of Naani Goo, Appellation of Naa Andani

Told by Abubakari Lunna, March 2 and 6, 2001

Edited by David Locke

[Continued from "The Story of Naybieyu, Appellation of Naa Abudu."]

AL

Naa Abudu did the fight with Bassari Kofi and the land became at peace. Naa Abudu was occupying the Yendi skin. The Dagombas left Bassari for the people living there.

Once in a year they would send to tax them. One year, when Naa Abudu sent to tax them, the Bassari people went to find people to come and help them. They went to Mali-- to ask the Mali people to help them. You know, Togo and Mali are in one border also.

DL

Yes. There were roads that passed that way and they did trading.

AL

Yes--trading together. So, the Chembas sent to Mali for help. By then Naa Abudu had become old so he called for his brother, Naa Andani. At that time, Naa Andani was Savelugu-naa. Naa Andani came. Naa Abudu told him the situation, "I have learned that the Bassari people went to Mali and have brought Zambaremas to come and fight us." Naa Andani said, "Brother, I will take over."

Now, I am going to tell you the reason Naa Andani said that there is nobody to trust.

Don't trust even your wife. Naa Andani went to his house. He called all his other brothers. There were many--Naa Yakubu's children. He called all of them, but he couldn't get support. Maybe they feared that if they went to war they would die. Naa Andani said, "I will go without you." He did get support from elders--the king servers--but the princes--he didn't get support from them. He called for his own two brothers--one mother-one father. They denied him and said, "Your brother is trying to kill you." Even his wives told him, "The war you are going--you are not going to come back. Your brother is going to kill you and die so that he can put his child to be Yaa Naa." Naa

Andani said, "If my brother kills me, what about his child? He is going to kill his child.

God will kill his child." Naa Andani went to Bassari. It was pretty, pretty hard.

DL

When lumsi tell this story do you go into details about how it was hard?

AL

You just sing the way you can make it nice for people to hear.

He killed them--the Zambarema people. He caught them to be slaves. Even today, we have them in Yendi. If you say that in Dagbon, people won't be happy because now their house is rich. But at first, Naa Andani killed their grandfathers, caught small children, and brought them back to be taking care of his horses. After Naa Andani defeated the Zambaremas--coming home--then the brother died. Naa Abudu died.

In my drumming knowledge, Naa Andani was not the second son after Naa Abudu. Four brothers followed Naa Abudu, but because Naa Andani became Yaa Naa after Naa

Abudu some drummers say, "Naa Abudu, first son of Naa Yakubu. Naa Andani, second son of Naa Yakubu." But to my research--what I am telling you is what my teachers told me. When you are going to count Naa Yakubu's children if you call Naa Abudu, you have to call Savelugu-naa Bukali Shelba. If you call Savelugu-naa Bukali Shelba, you have to call Kor-naa Mahami. If you call Kor-naa Mahami, you have to call--hai, hai [wracking brains]--if you call Kor-naa Mahami, then you have to call Tugu-lana Abudulai Sakarakara Chesanonga. You have to call Tugu-lana before Naa Andani.

So, Naa Andani was coming home when Naa Abudu died. Luckily, the kingmakers were present so they made him Yaa Naa.

DL

The drumming of Naani Goo--"Don't trust"--I don't see so much in the Naa Andani story that the people were not trustworthy for him or that he had a problem with people back passing him.

AL

When he was preparing to go to the Zambarema fight, he sent for so many people--they refused. That is the proverb. Those people who refused were his own brothers--yes--and those going with him were friends.

DL

Did he have a problem with his wives? Because the drums say, "Don't even trust your wife."

AL

No, it is just a proverb. I don't know that he had a problem with the wives.

When they made Naa Andani to be Yaa Naa, the first son of Naa Abudu took his position as chief of Savelugu. Naa Andani made the first son of Naa Abudu, Mahami, to be Savelugu-naa Mahami. Naa Andani and Naa Abudu had one father, Naa Yakubu.

Savelugu-naa Mahami would call Naa Andani "uncle" according to you people, but we

say "mbapira, junior father". After Mahami became Savelugu-naa, the Zambarema people came back to collect their children.

[AL stops tape recording because of the story's pertinence to ongoing disputes in Dagbon between the Abudu and Andani families. He resumes the recording after Savelugu-naa Mahami has fought a war against the Zambarema in Togo.]

After Savelugu-naa Mahami killed the Zambarema chief, he was coming back from the border. He was at Gushegu--people pass there to go to Togo and buy things. When he crossed back into Dagomba land he came down from horse and said, "I can no more go." According to my teachers, he said, "The gun will kill me, but it can't kill me today. People, can you kill me and go?" The brothers said "No. We won't." According to my teachers, they sat there for so many months because he couldn't stand up. He died. They buried him. Savelugu-naa Mahami's grave is here and the border is here [gestures on rug].

DL

It seems to me that Naa Andani treated Savelugu-naa Mahami the way Naa Abudu treated him. For example, people told Naa Andani, "Your bother is trying to kill you by sending you to the fight,"--do you think that Andani was also driving Savelugu-naa Mahami to his death?

AL

Some people--if they follow the story--know of it like that. Because of the death of Savelugu-naa Mahami, the Abudu-Andani matter is strong in Dagbon. Drummers don't want to be bringing it up too much. If we talk about this, the fight between Abudu-Andani will not die.

They came to inform Naa Andani. They made the funeral of Savelugu-naa Mahami.

Then, Naa Andani put his own brother, Kukara Dzee--Savelugu-naa Dahimani--he put him on the Savelugu skin. Instead of considering the suffering--the way Mahami and his brothers went and suffered in war against the Zambarema people--Naa Andani didn't give

Savelugu to any of them. He gave it to his own brother, the one we call Savelugu-naa

Dahimani Kukara Dzee.

END