

Tabi texts 2004-2a

Tabi Text 2004-2a.01

X: The way Toupéré was established, the way it<sup>1</sup> came. Toupéré, at the time when Mali (= Mali Empire) emerged. They came to Tindirma (a town). They left Tindirma. They came to Kayoume. Some say that it was not Kayoume where that they settled, rather (they say) on the mountain.

What they call Kan<sup>2</sup>, Kan-Go-Gounde, they left from there. They left from there and came to Diono. They left Diono, (they came to) Djime. They left Djime, then they settled in Toula. They left Toula, they came to Gomoudiwa,<sup>3</sup> a large group (of people). Well, now, they settled there for a long time, then they arose, they went westward.

Well, when they went west, their old man, they called him Manugongo, it happened that he could not walk. He took his people (along), they went up this mountain of Toupéré (= Tabi mountain), they didn't find anyone there

When he was there, he (M) met with the Ilo-na<sup>4</sup> man. The Ilo-na man (ILM) asked, when had he (M) come onto the mountain? He (M) said that had come what amounted to a week (ago). He (M) asked the Ilo-na person, when had he (ILM) come? He (ILM) said, he (ILM) had come what amounted to a month (ago).

Well, when they were staying there, the mountain was not good (= safe). The wild animals would take (= attack) people. Mountain wild animals would take their children, (so) they (= people) couldn't settle here.

The Ilo-na man said, they must settle (there), he would put (= use) something magical, he would implant (it); as soon as he had implanted (it), the mountain animals would no longer trouble them (= people); well, for them [focus] the Ilo-na man implanted it. They got together and settled.

At that time, only Ilo-na people were at Tabi (village). Tega (village) had not (yet) come. This country, it had not found anyone who could light a fire. Except in Loguro-doli<sup>5</sup>, they did not see (= get) any fire.

Well, they were there like that (= in that situation). Now, (in) this land, treachery, falling on the head (= attacking), taking away (other's property). That's what made them remain on the hill.

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<sup>1</sup> In such historical texts, the name of a village may denote either the (current) physical settlement, or the population that eventually settled it.

<sup>2</sup> Mountaintop village in Mande region.

<sup>3</sup> Partially forested area (*Anogeissus*, *Mitragyna*) 6 km from Toupéré, near a wet-season stream, now used for farming.

<sup>4</sup> An extended family, now in Tabi village.

<sup>5</sup> Old Dogon village near Gede, west of Boni.

When they settled there, at Sarinyere Mountain, they (= Tabi Mountain people) and it (= Sarinyere), they (could) perceive each other afterwards. Well, the horse (= cavalry), Sankara<sup>6</sup> horse, it was coming down. It went around looking at (= watching for) the people.

Well, when the horse (= cavalry) came down (= attacked), they (= horses) would first come out over by the people of Sarinyere Mountain. When it (= cavalry) continued on its way, they (= people of Sarinyere) went up to the mountaintop and held up fire for them (= Dogon on other mountains).

When they saw the fire, the next day, nobody would go down to the plains, because they knew, the horse (= cavalry) was coming. It was the fire [focus] that was their signal, they spoke (communicated) with each other by means of fire.

As soon as they saw the fire, well, nobody would accept (= risk) going out into the wilderness, lest they (= animals) catch their children. Well, they remained like that, until it had been many years.

Manougongo, his children, his family, they [focus] settled first in Toupéré. When they had settled, the Koreyba (a Dogon clan), they were at Tabi (village). They and the people of Tabi had a fight, they chased them (= Koreyba) away.

Well, when they (= Koreyba) were going, the people of Toupéré encountered them, and told them to come and settle, to come and settle together with them, (since) they too were able-bodied men (fit for fighting).

Well, that day (= era) was the era of warfare. A few people (= small village) could not exist. They settled there together. An armed band, whenever it came, they would drive it out.

Sékou Amadou<sup>7</sup>, his people (= Fulbe warriors) came to Toupéré. There was no water (down below), they would (climb up and) drink at Youmnou.<sup>8</sup> They (= Fulbe) told them (= local people) to come down and bring them water. They took out the water that they for their part had, and brought (it) to them.

They (= Fulbe) said, that water was little (= inadequate). They (= Fulbe) said they would let (their) horses drink too. They (= Dogon) for their part said that, as for their water, it was (up) on the mountaintop; their horses—, they themselves did not drink (= have enough to drink), they could not (easily) get water (for themselves), never mind talk of giving (water) to horses. They refused.

Then they (= Fulbe) struck their (= Dogon's) old(est) man. The one whom they (= Fulbe) had sent, when he struck their old(est) man, they (= Fulbe), they said (= chose), three of their (= Dogon's) men. They (= Dogon) gathered (together), the men of the mountain (= of Toupéré). The thirty (Fulbe) men, they engaged in a fight with them (= three Dogon).

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<sup>6</sup> A clan of Fulbe. "Horse" here is used loosely for 'horsemen'.

<sup>7</sup> Leader of the Fulbe Empire of the early Nineteenth Century, with capital in Hamdallaye near Mopti. Sékou spread orthodox Islam throughout the area he controlled. Fulbe troops often pillaged Dogon villages in the area.

<sup>8</sup> A year-round pool on Tabi Mountain, near the original villages on top of Tabi Mountain.

At that time, there were no rifles. Arrows, knives, stones—that [focus] was their weaponry, with that they (= Dogon) drove them (= Fulbe) away. Well, they (= Fulbe) were running (= fleeing). One of their people (= a Fulbe) fell down. When he had fallen down, he (= a Dogon) picked up a (large) rock, he threw it down on him and killed him. When he (= a Dogon) had thrown (it) on down him and killed him, then those people (= other Fulbe) went and told Sékou.

Well, Sékou summoned them. What they had done, they proceeded to speak (about) what they had done. Sékou said, the (= thirty Fulbe) people who had come, they did not have (= were not in) the right; if they (= Fulbe) had had the right, the three (Dogon) men would not have overpowered (= vanquished) the thirty (Fulbe) men; but the three men who overpowered thirty men, God must give their bodies courage. Sekou gave them (= Dogon) a blessing.

They were settled (there) many years. Then after that, in the **mountainous region**, Allay Mamoudou, Allay Mamoudou Ndoulli (AMN),<sup>9</sup> he and they (= Dogon) fought. They decided on (“tied”) a war, they (= Fulbe) came to Toupéré. Tega, Toupéré, and Tabi (villages), all of them (= Dogon villages) came and assembled in Toupéré. Well, then he (= AMN) came bringing his (Fulbe) men.

They caught that war (party). When they caught that war (party), they (= Fulbe) felled (= killed) one Toupéré man and two Tega men. The Toupéré people killed a (large) count of their (= Fulbe) people. They (= Dogon) drove them out. They (= Fulbe) ran (= fled), and came and encountered their leader (= AMN), at the foot (= bottom) of the mountain.

He (= AMN) said: they whom the mountain people (= Dogon) had driven out were worthless. He (= AMN) told them to go back up (the mountain) again. They said they would not go (back) up; if they were to go up, he (= AMN) must go in front of them, and they would follow. He refused. They drove them out. When they drove them out, they were (= remained) there. At that time, the whites had not (yet) come.

When the white (= French) came, the white asked them (= Dogon) for taxes. (The Dogon said:) they did not know (about) money. Then the white showed them metal coins,<sup>10</sup> saying that [focus] was taxes. (Dogon:) that (= cash) was not easily obtained; you-Sg would work for a month, you wouldn't get behind (= save more than) one riyal.

Well, now, the white said, in that case, they must pay the tax with (woven cotton) cloths. They agreed. They were paying the tax (like that), to the white. Eventually, at the end, they brought the cloths to the white, for (= as) taxes.

The white said, today, the cloths have gone out (= are no longer accepted). He showed money to them, which he said that he has put (= introduced); that is what they must come and pay; those cloth(s) that they had brought he (hereby) left with them.

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<sup>9</sup> Another Fulbe leader.

<sup>10</sup> Lit. ‘money of hard metal’. One term translated ‘money’ (bú:đi and variants) also denoted a French colonial coin).

At that point the chief said, this cloth that he (= white) left, he (= white) should accept (it) from him (= chief), because of (= for) next year's tax. The white said, all right, his (= chief's) talk (= proposal) was good, he (= white) must take it (= cloth) with him and go. In that way they paid the tax, until a long time had passed.

Now (cash) money came in. The good times (= peace and welfare) occurred in the land. Nobody was afraid, (nobody) feared that anyone (else) would catch (= attack) him. The whites brought that. That is what put (= brought) good times to the land. When the whites had not come (= before the whites came), there were no good times in the land. Well, when the good times came in (= began), since then it (= good times) has gone forward.

Well, after that, (there was) that battle of Tabi (Mountain). As for it, the people of Tabi (Mountain), the devil went into them. They fought against the whites. Because at the time when they were fighting against the whites, their people, the (Dogon) soldiers had gone (to the French colonial army) and had come back. Their children were in school.

There were some others, (still) in the military, nevertheless,<sup>11</sup> they informed on each other. The white said (= intended) that he (= white) would make war on Tabi, (and) that he would (first) go and look. He said (= decided) that he (= white army) would (= could) not go up (to the summit). Well, that was the first battle of (= between) them (= Dogon) and the white.

When they decided on ("tied") a war, the white arrived and sat (= stayed),<sup>12</sup> in the zone of Tabi Mountain, down below (on the plains). For a count (= number) of months they (= whites) negotiated (= offered peace to) with them (= Dogon); they (= Dogon) refused. The white called the chiefs of the land; he told them to negotiate (with the holdouts); they (= holdouts) refused. He assembled the religious leaders to negotiate with them (= holdouts); they (= holdouts) refused. The (other) mountain people negotiated with them (= holdouts); they (= holdouts) refused. (This continued), until the day when the white was about to go up Tabi Mountain.

He (= white) said (= decided), well, he (= white) would go up Tabi Mountain today (= that same day). They came and brought cannons. They (= Dogon) were not familiar with cannons, they were not familiar with hearing its sound. The white(s) shot at them with the cannon and frightened them until they were weary. They (= Dogon) knew then (= realized) that the whites were stronger than they were.

But all the people gathered, and when they had negotiated until they were weary (= for a long time), (they knew) because of that, they were going to die now.

Well, when the white (army) went up, the white killed them to the point that it (= village) was destroyed. It happened that the destruction of it was great. Then they (= French) went up and raised their flag. Now the white ceased shooting at them.

When the white went up (to the top), he found that sixteen men, that (number) had died; sixteen (other) men, they were the people who had been wounded. Among the whites, it (= casualty total) did not get beyond three persons.

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<sup>11</sup> Lit. "it didn't prevent."

<sup>12</sup> The French made camp in the plains below the mountain. The Dogon were still in villages on the top of the mountain, which was very difficult for the French to scale.

Well, now, that fight of Tabi (village), their trouble arrived at (= affected) Toupéré and Tega. At that point, they (= whites) rounded up the people of Tabi (village), and sent them off to the land of Hombori. They left them there, for (= at) the place (= village) that they call Koy-Koyra.

Then they came and made them return, and they rounded up (the people of) Toupéré and Tega. They delivered (the people of) Tega east of Hombori, Tandara (village) they call it. They delivered (the people of) Toupéré to the northwest of Hombori, Kourimi (village) they call it. They stayed there for twenty-seven years. Twenty-seven years they stayed there. Now they wanted (to return to) their place (= Tabi area).

Now, they spoke: now, their imprisonment had ended; they must get the official document. They got it and came back, to the (= their) place. From the day when they came back to the place until today, (it has been) fifty-seven years, that's what we are at as of today (= now).<sup>13</sup>

### Tabi Text 2004-2a.02

X: Well, we came (from Hombori) to Tabi. The people of Tega went back. They settled there at Douni.<sup>14</sup> The people of Tabi, some of them settled there at Goylel.<sup>15</sup> Others, (at) Dourgama,<sup>16</sup> they are (still) there even today, but we and they are one (= the same people).

### Tabi Text 2004-2a.03

X: They settled here. Famine.<sup>17</sup> They didn't do farming down below (= on the plains), (only) on (the summit of) the mountain did they farm. They did not get any millet. A famine, a famine was killing them, until Kitanga year.<sup>18</sup> Kitanga year came. (The people of) Toupéré died to the point of being devastated, to the point of being devastated.

The small remnant of people who remained (there), how they stayed alive: (leaves of) *luwo*,<sup>19</sup> (nests of) army ants,<sup>20</sup> baobab fruits, they knocked the seeds (of baobab fruits, with a stone), with (all) that they got food.

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<sup>13</sup> The return from Hombori to Tabi would took place around 1947.

<sup>14</sup> Village near Hombori.

<sup>15</sup> Village between Hombori and Boni.

<sup>16</sup> Area with a Fulbé camp near Simbi village.

<sup>17</sup> The famines described in this text occurred in the early Twentieth Century, and are known by oral tradition rather than by accounts of living eyewitnesses.

<sup>18</sup> Notorious famine year, c. 1913-14.

<sup>19</sup> Edible leaves of the vine *Leptadenia hastata* (kóngèy) and several trees/shrubs of the family Brassicaceae (ex-Capparaceae): *Maerua crassifolia* (bíbíši:), *Boscia salicifolia* (lùwò gùrú), *Crataeva adansonii* (ògò-lùwó), and *Cadaba farinosa* (lùwò-sínún). Leaves are cooked, mixed with a little millet, and eaten.

<sup>20</sup> *Messor* spp. These grain-eating black ants form large underground nests in fields that can be raided (for the grains) in time of famine.

Well, the way they had been able to live (on crisis foods), eventually the people of Tabi said none other than thus: may God let you-Sg spend the night(s) at Toupéré. At Toupéré, when people were (= had been) absent, God brought it about that afterwards it (= population) increased.

There was famine, we heard, (in) Yoro-Ali year, Kitanga year, (and) Mbouri year. (In) all those, a famine happened. Nothing made (= caused) that, (other than that)<sup>21</sup> the people did not know the land. The people did not go together down below (to farm in the plains). They made long expeditions (to buy millet). The men had to come together, and whatever one got, that is what they carried (on the head) and brought.

What (little) we carried on our heads and brought, one person would not live on it, never mind a household. In that way, they continued for a long time with the (occasional) famines, until it changed (= got better) for them. (Now) they became numerous, now the difficulty (= hardship) had gone away from them.<sup>22</sup> That is what they (= elders) said (to us).

Well, as for me, what I know in my head (= from my own experience): when we came down here,<sup>23</sup> we farmed. (One year) the rainy season did not turn out well. We came with (= endured) a famine. Now, because the land is cool (= peaceful), you-Sg can go anywhere to seek (work).

They (= we) had gotten donkeys. With them (= donkeys) they would load up on an expedition (to buy millet) and come (back). There were (livestock) animals. They would sell them (= animals), and (with the proceeds) go on expeditions (to buy millet). If you-Sg go on an expedition, wherever you go, you would get millet.

Well, in the second (famine) year, we grew millet. It (= rainy season) didn't turn out well at all. Then, again, we spent the growing season (in famine). When we had spent the growing season in famine, the (following) third year, we call it the year of the big rainy season. Then the millet ripened to the point that it went beyond (normal) bounds. The whole land got (millet). The hunger went away from behind (= around) us there.

After that, sometimes, food (= subsistence) is (= has been) slightly difficult. At (other) times, it is (= has been) abundant. The mountainous region is a dry place. (Years of) ripe millet do not follow each other (= are not consecutive). If you-Sg have gotten (millet) this year, if it's a lot, (then) as for next year, it may happen that it's just a little (millet) that you-Sg will get.

Well, in that way, some years, they wouldn't get any at all. Perhaps here in this place, at the bottom of the mountain, even the *Eragrostis* grass<sup>24</sup> might not have sprouted. But at Dungo,<sup>25</sup> they got a little supper.<sup>26</sup> All that happened before me (= before my time).

Beyond that, as for a nasty famine that kills people, ever since my eyes opened, I haven't seen a famine that killed people. What has remained, it causes fatigue (= hardship). But that a hunger kill people, as for us, in our time, it hasn't happened.

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<sup>21</sup> I.e., 'the only thing that caused that was ...'.

<sup>22</sup> Lit. "exited behind them."

<sup>23</sup> The villages formerly on the summit of Tabi mountain were rebuilt on the plains below during the colonial period, when it became safe to live there.

<sup>24</sup> *Eragrostis tremula*, a common grass in the sandy plains.

<sup>25</sup> Area with fields, some 6 km from Toupéré village, in the direction of Mondoro.

<sup>26</sup> I.e., having had nothing to eat during the day.

#### Tabi Text 2004-2a.04

X: When we settled in Tabi Mountain, we didn't have water. There wasn't any water. On the mountain, the digging (excavation) for the pond on the mountain, (people of) Toupéré would drink at Logouro (pond). (People of) Tega would drink at Titage.<sup>27</sup> (People of) Tabi (village), on the mountaintop, as for them, they have water, it (= pond) is called Youmno. It is far from the ones of Toupéré and Tega.

Drawing water at Youmno, when the hot season has come, the ponds are finished (= dry up) since (= after) four months of the year (= after the rainy season). (After that) we draw water at Youmno, until the (next) rainy season comes. When the rainy season has come, now we will cease drawing water at Youmno.

Our elders, in that (= using that practice) is how we found them. We too, that's how we work. We have found that that it is very tiring (= hard work).

We say we will try ("look at") a solution. Down below (= on the plains), in that barren flat place (called) Bariya, we have tried excavating a hole. In the belly (= middle) of Bariya we excavated first. We have found that it keeps water.<sup>28</sup> Well, it keeps water, (but) the place is too confined.

Then we went out beyond the pond(s). We tried to excavate in the barren flat place. We found that it keeps water. Well, we entered (= engaged) in excavating it thoroughly. We are excavating. Previously the water finished (= dried up) in four months of the year, (but) now the water finishes in six months of the year.

When the water finishes in the six months of the year, sometimes, Bebi, the wells of the Fulbé are there, we go there to ask (for some water) to drink. If we don't get (any) there, we have been known to (go and) get water as far away as Boni. We have (at times) been known to do all those things.

Well, since we have been excavating, we have been excavating until now it has become wide, to the point that if the rain falls and it fills up, we drink water until another (= the next) rainy season comes back.

All of that emerged (= came) from hard work. Even nowadays, we have (still) not ceased excavating. Then when the rain falls abundantly, thinking of (= worrying about) water now doesn't seize (= afflict) (us).

Well, about ("on") that, a project has come here, (to make) a pump<sup>29</sup> for us. They cranked out and put a pump for us. If the artificial ponds are finished (= dried up), we assemble at the pump. That is how we drink.

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<sup>27</sup> Name of the partially excavated areas on the top of Tabi Mountain where water was collected by people of the respective villages.

<sup>28</sup> Well before our first visit (2004), various extended families had excavated large pits (yógódó:ǰi) just outside Toupéré to collect rainy-season water. Until these artificial rainwater ponds dry up (around December or January), the women of each family collect water in buckets from the ponds and carry them home.

<sup>29</sup> I.e., a modern closed well with a pump (rather than an open well into which ropes with waterskins are lowered).

(As for) the water, furthermore, it definitely isn't good water drinking (= getting enough water to drink), because it's (just) one single pump.<sup>30</sup> It isn't enough for the whole village. Some people will go and get two buckets full (of water). Others will get one single bucket full.

But before that (= before the ponds dry up), they have spent the night hungry (= thirsty) at night, nor have they been hungry (= thirsty) during the daytime. Praise to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, thanks to God, that too, it is gotten.

### Tabi Text 2004-2a.05

X: Between (people of) Sarinyere (Mountain)<sup>31</sup> and us, a (relationship through) marriage<sup>32</sup> exists, because our grandmothers (= ancestresses) went to Sarinyere. Having gone to Sarinyere, praise Allah, they multiplied around there. When they had multiplied, then (there was) kinship.<sup>33</sup> The mountain people (= Dogon) say (= call it) kinship. (As for) our kinship, there is nobody at Tabi Mountain whose kin at Sarinyere do not exist.

(People of) Tabi Mountain left and went to Sarinyere, and (people of) Sarinyere left and came here. All (of us) are one kin group (through marriage). Even today, the women of Sarinyere, we take them (as wives). They (= men of Sarinyere) take our children (= daughters, as wives). Between Sarinyere and us, even now there is a (relationship through) marriage.

There is a (relationship through) marriage between Sarinyere and us, and there is a (relationship through) marriage between Piringa<sup>34</sup> and us. But between those other villages and us, a (relationship through) marriage is not common. The old people (= male ancestors) didn't do it (= marry into the other villages). We ourselves ("on our head"), likewise, we haven't done it up to now.

Those who remain (= are left), a man who has not gotten (= a wife, in this way), occasionally ("one by one") he takes (a wife). If it isn't (those), Sarinyere, Tabi Mountain, (and) Piringa, it's we [focus] who take (= marry) each other thoroughly (= regularly). Everywhere (= in all those villages), each person, his people (= kin) are there. Each person, his people are there, everywhere.

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<sup>30</sup> At the time of the recording (2004), it took four strong men to work the pump. A new pump well was being constructed by 2006 but seemed to have been mothballed by 2008.

<sup>31</sup> Sarinyere Mountain and Tabi Mountain are the two largest (and most widely separated) mountains in the core TS-speaking area. "We" here refers to people of the villages at Tabi Mountain (Tabi, Toupéré, Têga).

<sup>32</sup> Lit., 'getting together and sitting'.

<sup>33</sup> Lit., "mother-house" (i.e. kinship through women).

<sup>34</sup> Village near the highway between Boni and Hombori, said to speak the Tabi-Sarinyere language. There is a nearby Fulfulde-speaking village Wouronguérrou.

### Tabi Text 2004-2a.06

X: Millet-farming, that is our work. The whole essence (“head”) of our our work is millet-farming. Millet-farming also. Millet, sorghum, roselle, cow-peas, and sesame, (and also) peanuts, all (those) we farm.

(In) the hot season we—, we do the sowing (= planting). As soon as seven months (= the seventh month) of the year has begun, we plant the seeds in the dry soil, (and wait) until the rainy season comes. (As for) the seeds, we slash the earth with the pick-hoe and sow (the seeds).

Dry-sowing. Some other people, nowadays, they dig holes in the barren flat land, they put (in it) some manure, and sow (the seeds). A person who cannot do that, he puts some manure in his field (and) he sow (the seeds).

When the rain falls, now we sow (the seeds) (in) wet earth. Men, women, and children all do the sowing together. The pick-hoe slashers, they slash (the soil) with the pick-hoe (to turn it over). The seed sowers, they hold the millet spike, they continuously remove (some seeds), they put (= drop) (the seeds) in the opening (“mouth) of that hole and then bury (them) (= tamp the earth down with their feet).<sup>35</sup>

When we have planted and it (= millet) has sprouted, now, (we) having gone to the blacksmiths’ place, they forge a daba (hoe). Having forged the daba (blade), and having inserted it into the wooden handle, now everyone does farm work<sup>36</sup> in his field, by hand. By hand he keeps doing farm work until a long time has passed.

Now, they have come and gotten plows.<sup>37</sup> Owners of donkeys tie them (to the plow), they rip up (= plow) the planted area, then they fix up (the millet seedlings) by hand. Owners of camels rip up (= plow) the planted area, they farm (= remove weeds) and fix up (the millet seedlings) by hand.

Some (other) people, if there is a place where the grass (= weeds) have grown (“been made”), they do not sow (by slashing with a pick-hoe). Having worked the earth (= turned it over with the daba), he tamps down (the soil and the seeds, with his foot). When the tamped-in seeds have sprouted, if grass (= weeds) grow (“are made”) and come back again, they do the farm work that we call *sawra* (second round of weeding etc.) again.

When they have done farm work on it again, well, (in) the rainy season, when the millet has sprouted (= grown), they have finished the farm work (weeding etc.), and the millet has begun to bear (grains), (then) sometimes beetles appear (“are made”) in the field, called *boruborude*. It damages the field(s), but we catch them (= beetles), we put smoke (around them), until they leave our fields.

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<sup>35</sup> One person slashes the earth with the pick-hoe at intervals forming rows, the other following behind, breaking off seeds from a (previous year’s) millet grain spike and dropping them into the turned-over earth, then tamping the earth down with the feet.

<sup>36</sup> There are two rounds (cycles) of farm work between planting and harvesting (*la première culture, la deuxième culture*). The work involves thinning out, removing weeds, and restoring ridges and mounds in the field. This main tool is the daba, a hoe with a short handle and a wide blade that the farmer pulls in toward himself.

<sup>37</sup> The plows are pulled by oxen, donkeys, etc. Plowing obviates the need for sowing with the pick-ax, and reduces the need for weeding.

(When) the millet ripens, now we first take out (= harvest) the early millet.<sup>38</sup> We take out the early millet, and we keep eating the early millet, until the (regular) millet (grain) has ripened and has dried (= hardened).

When the millet has dried, now the month of harvesting will begin. Now they will do the harvesting. (While) harvesting, a harvesting knife, each person has his harvesting knife. The women have goatskin grain sacks, the men (have) baskets. We will cut off (= harvest) the millet (spikes).

We cut (millet spikes) off, we put them together in small piles, we gather up the small piles, we place them (vertically) in baskets, they go and put them together at the place for the large harvest heap. Having put that millet into baskets, when (= each time) you-Sg have filled nine basketfuls, we take out (= reserve) the tenth one as charity, until all the millet that you-Sg have gotten is finished.

If it's sorghum, you-Sg do that (same) way. Cow-peas, that we don't get very much of it, because we don't grow much of it. Roselle, we don't get much of that either, they (only) grow a little of it.

After the millet grain spikes were harvested, they were gathered together in the large heaping area. Now, (we) gather them, store them inside a granary, sort them (with) the lower-quality millet (spikes) separated from the higher-quality millet (spikes), and we take out (from the granary) the lower-quality millet first.<sup>39</sup>

We keep taking it out, (until) it has finished. Now we go into (= start eating) the higher-quality millet. We keep eating that, until the (next) rainy season comes.

(In) a year when we have gotten it (= had a good harvest), praise God, we will eat (from the previous harvest) until the new millet comes out. If it (= millet) has not finished (= run out), there is no hardship. Because now, this (= any given) year, praise God, nobody is hungry.

That is what we work (= do) in millet farming. When we have farmed it, when the millet farming is finished, (and) the work of (= in) the field is finished, the young people go looking for (seasonal) work. Some (young) people go to (places) inside Mali, others go to Côte d'Ivoire.

When they have gone (there), some of them come back, before we have reached the farming (season).<sup>40</sup> Others spend (even) the rainy season out of town.<sup>41</sup> When they have gone away, the good young people, (when) they bring something (back), they bring bicycles, (or) they bring plows, (or) they bring push-carts.

Or money, money is what some (other) people bring. When (they) bring that money, and they give it to the oldest man of the household, well, the whole household works with that (money). This—, this way [focus] is how the work of growing millet is done.

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<sup>38</sup> A type of millet that ripens quickly. It is harvested early and consumed rather than being stocked long-term in granaries.

<sup>39</sup> The head of the household takes out some millet each morning for the day's food. The better-quality millet is reserved for the next year's growing period and for seedstock. The very lowest-quality millet may be left in the field for poor villagers to harvest.

<sup>40</sup> Lit. "since (the time when) we have not reached ..."

<sup>41</sup> Lit. "in the bush." Frequent sense in the context of working.

The millet, if they have gotten it, we definitely do not waste it. We do not waste (it), because we are poor. If a poor person wastes millet, it will not turn out well for him. When someone has gotten lots (of millet), he sells the millet, he buys a goat, for raising; (or) they buy a donkey, for raising.

Someone who has gotten a lot, he buys a male calf, and places it among (= entrust it to) the Fulbe. When it grows up, he will sell it, and he will buy some small livestock (sheep & goats). We do all that (= all those things).

### Tabi Text 2004-2a.07

X: Native medicine,<sup>42</sup> we have that too. Black people's medicines, (and) medicines of (= against) evil spirits (djinn). If we speak of evil spirits, medicine of (= against) evil spirits is what we dig up. (Roots of) *dewo* tree, and red *senga* tree<sup>43</sup>. We put them (= roots) together, we chop them up, we soak them (in calabashes), they wash the person who is possessed by the genie<sup>44</sup>.

Yes, likewise, for genital disease,<sup>45</sup> whether (it's) a man or a woman, if there is anyone whom genital disease has afflicted, we dig up (roots of) *orobari* tree, *sasariya* tree, *araosondorokori* vine, *bosuwa* tree on a termitary, and *luwosinung* shrub on a termitary.<sup>46</sup> Evil spirits—. As for the (medicines for) genital disease, they are innumerable.<sup>47</sup> We chop those up and combine them, we cook (it) with some meat, and make a porridge, (and) they drink it. Maybe, the (sick) fellow, he will get his health (back).

Hey, likewise, for head ailments,<sup>48</sup> that too, we drink a medicine. What we drink for a head ailment is “elephant-shoes” (a plant).<sup>49</sup> (Whether it's) an old person or a child, we cook it, he drinks that.

Yes, again (= also), for intestinal ailments,<sup>50</sup> what we drink (is), we drink (medicine from) *sorey* tree,<sup>51</sup> its leaves. Some people drink (medicine from) its bottom (= roots). But as for its bottom, it betrays (= disappoints). Because of that, drinking (medicine from) its bottom is not common.

<sup>42</sup> Lit. “mountain medicine.”

<sup>43</sup> *dèwó Acacia ehrenbergiana* (now rare in zone) *sèṅà bār<sup>n</sup>ú Acacia seyal*, form with red coating on the otherwise greenish-white outer bark.

<sup>44</sup> Signs include uncontrolled trembling.

<sup>45</sup> *kúy<sup>n</sup>ó* ‘(itchy) genital disease’. May include bilharzia (schistosomiasis), French *bilharziöse*, a parasitic-worm disease (blood in urine). Several of the plants listed just below have known vermifugal properties.

<sup>46</sup> *ḡṅṅ<sup>r</sup>ḡbà<sup>r</sup><sup>n</sup>í*: *Ximenia americana*, *sásà<sup>r</sup><sup>n</sup>íy<sup>n</sup>à Phyllanthus reticulatus*, *àrà ósón dḡrḡ kḡn<sup>í</sup>*: *Asparagus flagellaris*, *bósù<sup>w</sup><sup>n</sup>á Commiphora africana*, *lùwḡ-sínúṅ Cadaba farinosa*.

<sup>47</sup> Lit. ‘the count of ... does not end’.

<sup>48</sup> Especially fever, but may include headaches and colds.

<sup>49</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>50</sup> Lit. ‘dirtiness of intestines’.

<sup>51</sup> *só:rḡy Grewia lasiodiscus*. Now rare at Tabi Mountain.

Furthermore, to make the stomach run,<sup>52</sup> (for) that too we drink a medicine, for making the stomach run. Some people puncture *diw* bush,<sup>53</sup> they combine it (= its latex) together with cow-pea flour, and then they let it dry, they grind it (with stones), they make a little weak (= diluted) porridge, they drink a little with the *diw*.

Some (other) people break off (branches of) *balbalewa* bush,<sup>54</sup> they cook it, they strain its liquid (filtering out impurities), and drink it. As for that, it does not make the stomach run very much, but for some people it makes the stomach run.

Well, (if) the stomach has run (= diarrhoea), medicine for diarrhoea, so that we take down (= reduce) the diarrhoea, for that too we eat— (or rather) we drink a medicine. That medicine, as for it, (for) each person, (there is) his (favorite) medicine: the bottom (= roots) of *guy* tree, the base of jujube tree, mountain fig tree, the bark of *tagato* tree, the bark of *waru* tree<sup>55</sup>.

We gather them together, cook them, and they drink them for diarrhoea. (In) some (cases of) diarrhoea, it runs until it makes blood in the excrement. When it has made blood in the excrement, now, putting (= using) all those other medicines, we drink them. That is (the treatment) for diarrhoea.

Furthermore, now, the medicines that we have other (than those) now, their count (= number) has no end. As for native medicines, only (the ones) that you-Sg know, they have no limit. They don't end (= they go on and on).

For head ailment (= fever and colds), (for) it too, we have no other medicine, for head ailment, unless it's (= other than) sneezing. As for sneezing medicine now, (it's) leaves of *caïlcédrat* tree.<sup>56</sup> We crush them (= leaves) and sniff them (like snuff). The fellow (= sick person), his sneezing, it (= medicine) makes the head ailment better.

The bottom (= roots) of *funafuna* bush,<sup>57</sup> that too we crush, we sniff it. You-Sg are sneezing, until it (= medicine) makes the head ailment better. These (medicines) belong to head ailment.

Furthermore, medicine for stiffness.<sup>58</sup> We have medicine for stiffness too. We call it medicine for stiffness. The trailing vines<sup>59</sup> spread out (on the ground) and they lay down fruits (“eggs”). We dig up its fruits, we set them out (in the sun) to dry, we crush it, we boil it (like porridge) (in) a an earthenware water-jar shard, together with crushed baobab leaves.

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<sup>52</sup> I.e. as a purgative or laxative.

<sup>53</sup> *Euphorbia paganorum*, a thorny succulent bush (similar to cactus) with very caustic latex (also used as a poison).

<sup>54</sup> *bál-báléwà* (and synonyms) is *Cassia* (= *Senna*) *italica*.

<sup>55</sup> *gǔy*<sup>n</sup> *Combretum micranthum*, *òrùbú* *Ziziphus mauritiana* (jujube), *cícìr*<sup>m</sup> *Ficus cordata* subsp. *lecardii*, *tàkàtó* *Mitragyna inermis*, *wàrú* *Anogeissus leiocarpus*.

<sup>56</sup> *pèrèrè* *Khaya senegalensis* (*caïlcédrat* tree).

<sup>57</sup> *Pergularia tomentosa*. Term *fúnàfúnà* may be from Humburi Senni (Songhay).

<sup>58</sup> Literally “tree” (*tìw*<sup>n</sup>á), also extended as *tìw*<sup>n</sup>à·ná: Involves stiff and swollen joints, often spreading to multiple parts of the body. Rheumatism, arthritis, and perhaps diabetes.

<sup>59</sup> Term denotes non-aquatic trailing vines of the family Convolvulaceae. Included are at least *I. coscinosperma*, *I. coptica*, *I. dichroa*, and *I. vagans*, and *Jacquemontia tamnifolia*. Excluded are (semi-)aquatic *I. aquatica* and *I. asarifolia*.

And then (to) the foot or neck, (or) to the (= whatever) place the swelling is in, we boil it (like porridge), (when) it is moderately hot (= warm), we apply it there (to the stiff body part). When we have applied it until it has dried, it (= medicine) treats stiffness. That—, that is our medicine for stiffness.

Wounds (cuts), for wounds, we do not know any other medicine. But we wash it (= wound), we apply a medication (= salve), the bottom (= roots) of “fire-mother.”<sup>60</sup> We crush it (with stones), we put (it) on it (= wound), we tie (it on). If there is aloe plant,<sup>61</sup> we open up its leaf,<sup>62</sup> and when when we have washed and cleaned the wound well, we put it (= leaf) on it (= wound) and we tie (it on).

If we have gotten a wound that doesn’t heal, (it’s) red metal, we pound it until it becomes lightweight (= flexible). Ant then, that (metal), when we have washed and cleaned it (= wound) well, we tie it as a covering (= bandage) on it. That too makes it better.

Furthermore, likewise, even the medication that—, a wound that does not heal, if they have failed to cure it over a long time,<sup>63</sup> some people, this cow horn or goat horn that sticks way out of the ground, we take it, we burn it (into) a black medication, they put in on top of the wound. It heals. For stomach ailments, it’s the same medication for genital disease, we drink it.

And likewise, ailments of the lower back. “Locking up” (diseases), as for them now, we do (medical) bleeding.<sup>64</sup> (For) a bleeding now, we cut off a small piece of cowhorn (with a small hatchet),<sup>65</sup> we make a hole (in the horn), and then at that time, we implant (the point of the horn) in the spot that hurts, and then we will suck out (some blood).

When we have drawn it out, the horn— we close up the hole (in the horn), it (= blood) will stay inside the horn. It stays in it until a long time (e.g. 10 minutes) has passed. We reopen it (= hole in horn) and remove (the blood), and we—. We will remove (the blood) (from) the horn.

And then we take a razor blade and we cut it where—, we cut (make incisions in) the head, (in) the middle. We keep making cuts. We will put it (= horn) (in the cuts) and draw out (blood) again. When we have drawn (it) out, (as for) the horn, the blood will go into its head (= thick part).

The blood goes into it until it (= horn) is chock full. Dark black blood comes out. Two or three times, the blood comes out like this, we pour it. Eventually we implant it there, (and) we pour it (= blood) out. When we have done thus, if that is kidney (= blood) disease, it goes away. That [focus] is what we do for blood disease.

Furthermore, nausea also. For nausea also, we drink a medication. Because vomiting, for vomiting, there is a medication that they drink. But, (as for) what I know, *bibi* bush,<sup>66</sup> we cook *bibi* and drink it for vomiting. Well, that is what I know, (that is) what we drink for vomiting.

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<sup>60</sup> Descriptive term for the tall herb *Waltheria indica*.

<sup>61</sup> *Aloe buettneri*.

<sup>62</sup> The leaf of aloe folds onto itself.

<sup>63</sup> Lit. “fail get tired.”

<sup>64</sup> A traditional medical bleeding (cupping), drawing the blood into a cowhorn.

<sup>65</sup> The cut-off piece includes the sharp point of the horn.

<sup>66</sup> *Abutilon pannosum*, a bush of the same family (Malvaceae) as *Hibiscus* spp.

### Tabi Text 2004-2a.08

X: At that time, if an old man or an old woman died, they would have a ceremony (with tomtoms). (For) the ceremony, moreover, all (the people of) Tabi Mountain would assemble, and (as for) a fresh-corpse ceremony, (they) would come to perform (it).

Tomtom-beaters would beat (tomtoms), *gani*<sup>67</sup> dancers would dance. Men and women, everybody would dance. And then, likewise, the belly-wrappers would wrap (“tie”) their bellies (with cloths).<sup>68</sup> They would stay up at night singing songs.

(As for) the dead person too, when they were going to take it (= corpse), if a death had occurred, they would speak (= announce it) with rifles. They would shoot rifles, and then they would beat tomtoms.

Whenever they beat the tomtoms, if it (= corpse) was a man, they would beat (the rhythm for) the *gani* (men’s dance). Then if (even) a person who was far away heard it, (he would know from the tomtom rhythm that) it a man was dead.

If it was a woman, (it would be the rhythm for) the woman’s dance. Then likewise they would know that a woman was dead. They would assemble, perform the (funeral) ceremony, and disperse.

They would disperse, and (when) a rainy season had begun (the following year), again, they would recommence (the funeral rites). At that point, even the mountain (= Dogon) people who were far away (e.g. from Sarinyere) would come. (For) two nights, they stay up at night celebrating. Then the celebration goes away (= is finished) and breaks up. That is the ceremony for a death.

Now, after that, (we’ll discuss) marriage. They do the marriage ceremony. As for the marriage ceremony, we did not find (= inherit) it, but it was made (= instituted) in front of us, because the people of Toro-polo (near Boni),<sup>69</sup> as for them, it was with tomtoms [focus] that they would get married.

Well, (as for) us now, as for us, we would leave it in the hands of women, as for the marriage (ceremony). When they did the marriage (ceremony) all night (until morning), if there were many visitors, the young people would make a ceremony (song and dance). They would assemble, and when they had spent the day dancing, in the (late) afternoon each person would go (back) to his village.

As for us, we did not find (= inherit from our elders) the marriage ceremony. But (rather) it was made (= initiated) on our heads (= during our lifetime).

(The customs of) the people of Toro-polo, as for them, since they came out, as for them, their marriage ceremony is standing (= is still performed). It’s with tomtoms [focus] that they take (= wed) a woman. It’s with tomtoms [focus] that they celebrate, they perform their marriage (ceremony) over two or even three days.

As for us (at Tabi Mountain), (it was) just one single night, the marriage (ceremony). When we had spent the night doing the marriage, we would disperse. (If) the young people did the celebration, then they would spend the day doing the ceremony, in the afternoon they would disperse. The marriage ceremony, that too, they would do that.

<sup>67</sup> A dance performed by men.

<sup>68</sup> A dance performed by two dancers.

<sup>69</sup> *tóró pòlò* denotes the area around Boni to Ella, i.e. the area defined by the inselbergs (mountains) near the main highway at Boni (not including Tabi or Sarinyere). The term *tóró gònò* denotes the larger area defined by the inselbergs of the zone from Simbi through Tabi and Boni to Sarinyere.