

**THE POWER OF THE COCONUT
AND THE YORUBA RELIGION
(A MANUAL FOR THE YORUBA RELIGION)**

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We are trying to help spread this religion to all fifty states. Therefore, we introduce in this book the first thing used in the Yoruba religion, the Coconut. THE POWER OF THE COCONUT IN THE YORUBA RELIGION will help you to better understand the oracle of the Obi (coconut) which is used to speak with the Orisha and spirits of the religion; and will show you what power the coconut has in the spiritual world.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a new awakening in the desire for spiritual life, and an alternative to the confusion of today's world. Many people have turned to the Yoruba religion, therefore, we offer this manual to give greater knowledge on which to rely for the initiated, and the uninitiated as well.

The Yoruba religion has become widespread throughout the western hemisphere as well as its native Afrika. The religion flourishes in the Carribean, and South America where it has been transplanted along with the peoples who followed this religious path, from Afrika. This is a very powerful and tremendously indepth philosophy which deals with man, the material, and the spiritual worlds. Giving insight, and understanding of the universe and the destiny of men in it.

The many beliefs, based on knowledge of the laws of the universe have been in existence since time immemorial. The belief, for example, in reincarnation is based on knowledge of the laws of the transmutation of the soul, allow for an understanding of the inner self to a very high degree. Western science is only now beginning to delve into the great regions attained by this knowledge, and they are finding that their conclusions are directly in alignment with those basic truths known for millions of years to the philosophies of the eastern hemisphere.

This ancient Afrikan religion came to America with the slaves who were brought here from the Afrikan continent. The slaves were first in the Carribean, Haiti, Cuba and Martinque. Then Brazil, and other South American countries, and finally to North America. When the slaves who were first brought to America practised their religion, the whites thought they were witchcraft practices. Consequently many Afrikans were killed because of their beliefs and practices. At the same time in Cuba, the treatment of the slaves was much different. They were allowed to practice their religion for many years, before there was an aggressive attempt to convert them, and the Afrikans were introduced to the Catholic beliefs of the Christian faith. The Spanish priests worked hard to convert the slaves and were fairly successful in getting many of them to adopt some of the Catholic beliefs. In this way, the Spanish priests would question the slaves about their religion, finding out much about the histories of the :Yoruba Gods. That is why the histories of the Catholic Saints and the Yoruba Gods are practically the same, it is believed. The secrets of the religion were passed on from father to son, and in this way it has been kept intact until this time.

When Fidel Castro gained control of Cuba, many of the Yoruba priests who no longer desired to live in Cuba, came to the United States. Most of them went to New York. This is the first city in the United States in which a person was initiated into the Yoruba religion. The second initiation took place in New Jersey, then Miami, Chicago, and Los Angeles. These are today the centers of this powerful religion in the United States.

FORWARD

Some forty years ago, history as it was known, dealt mostly with the facts, and data especially pertaining to the Europeans. This was almost the extent of "his-story" available to the American people. The study of their "so-called" advanced civilization, the refinement of their thinking their religious beliefs, mannerisms, and tastes, truly was his story. Based mainly on the fables and many rumors of the dark and middle ages.

With himself the only "civilized" creature on the planet, he clamored for his ideals to rule the world by any means available. Which resulted in the destruction of many nations, cultures, and peoples. He is now coming to realize what he thought was cultural, and technological advancement, is actually the opposite sense of reality of existence on this earth.

The mechanized society, based on empirical knowledge, and gathered by imperfect means; without factually understanding the laws of material, and spiritual existence on this planet has so severely imbalanced the earth, that we are all faced with the direst of circumstances. The degree to which they have encroached on the lands and peoples of other races has resulted in the almost constant conflict between the peoples of the earth, as they vie for the lands of others which contain the necessary raw materials needed to maintain their "advance" civilization, and lifestyle. The conflagrations they have started have resulted already in two wars which involved the entire planet and there is presently the threat of nuclear holocaust at any moment.

Presently, their confusing and often conflicting philosophies which seem to change every few years, can no longer support them. Their philosophies based on the partial knowledge obtained from other peoples' ancient doctrines, are failing them at present and their young turn from them in search of the origin of knowledge and existence on this planet.

Their scientists are now acknowledging the facts of the origins of man on the Afrikan continent. With their discovery of the Olduvad Gorge man's fossilized remains, they can no longer delude themselves, or others about the origins of life and knowledge. It being undoubtedly the Afrikan Continent. It should be known, and acknowledged that it is here that the "so-called" Great Thinkers were taught, and trained in the mysteries of life, the secrets of nature, and the philosophies and laws which actually govern the universe. Therefore, if you want true knowledge, you must go to where the beginning is to seek it out.

The many movements for economic, social or political improvement, do not benefit anyone because they are not aimed at the real problems of the people; which stems from a lack of our ancestral spirituality.

The spiritual needs and goals of the third world peoples are very different. That is why so many have such hard times existing in present society. It is very difficult to live in a society which advocates aggression, treachery, deceit, greed and unbridled lust, when you are by nature inclined towards a more gentler lifestyle, being more contemplative, and less aggressive in your sociological views. Having such drastically different characteristics, naturally the way in which we view our surroundings is affected. Similarly, the manner in which we approach, and worship the supreme living entity is also affected.

The ancestral Gods of the Afrikan peoples, have always been invoked by agile dancing, and melodious songs and through the spiritual process of hearing and repeating, or replying. This hearing and repeating, or singing worship, opens the doors between the Orishas, or demi-gods, and ourselves. And by our worship of the various Orishas, everything is provided for our lives. The necessary food to sustain our bodies, thanks to the worship of the Orisha –Oko. The knowledge of the purpose of our lives thanks to the worship of Ifa. This worship has been carried on for millenia before the advent of the western philosophies, and religions. Direct contact with the Orisha by a bonafide initiate of the Yoruba religion, gives knowledge of the order of things and informs us as to what must be done to keep balance with the earth, its destiny, and our own individual destinies. It is not that everyone has some book, and speaks his own conclusions about the nature of God and the Universe. This is not correct. This is trying to obtain knowledge through the ascending process, and it is not actual or true knowledge. Knowledge must come from a higher source, in this way there is no room for everyone to have so many different opinions. The Orisha are the servants of Olodumare, (God.) They receive their knowledge from the source of knowledge, and then it is passe don from the Orisha to man. This is the actual way of knowledge, that is, that it comes from a higher source down. It is impossible for example, for a man standing at the base of a tall mountain, with his vision obscured by trees, and other plants, to say that he can see the whole of the land, follow me. Unless he has been to the top of the mountain, and seen the layout of the surrounding land, the cliffs, dropoffs, and crevices to avoid that could lead to his destruction, he does not know which path to follow, nor can he lead anyone else. Similarly, knowledge to be guided by in our everyday lives, to avoid the pitfalls we may encounter must come from a higher source, or someone who has been there, and can show us the right path.

The Orisha are the intermediaries between us and Olodumare. By worship of the Orisha, we please Olodumare, and in turn are reciprocated by the Orisha for our efforts.

The principle of religion, such as cleanliness, mercy, truthfulness, and sacrifices are all but forgotten by western religious systems. Because they do not know these principles, they cannot follow them, neither can they teach them to anyone else in their society. The principles of religion are not the dogmas, or regulations of a certain faith. Such regulations may have to change according to time and

place concerned. You must see if there is some result obtained. Simply following the programs, dogmas and rites is useless without attaining to the real principles.

There has been much indifference shown to the needs of the third world psyche by proponents of the western religions. Because they do not know the principles of religion, they can not teach others and adherence to these principles are in great want in the western hemisphere today. Yet, until we stop patronizing the philosophies of the actual opponents of religion, we will continue to suffer in our lives unnecessarily. The principles they advocate such as aggression, greed, falsehood, and cheating and stealing should be given up, and we should make a sincere effort to return to the consciousness of our ancestral religions when experts performed sacrifices for the blessings of the Orishas, and the satisfaction of Olodumare.

J. K. Smith

HISTORY OF THE COCONUT

Olodumare saw in Obi (coconut), a just and humble person, therefore he placed him high in a coconut tree and made him white inside and out. He also gave him an immortal soul.

Elegba who was always a true and trusted servant of Olodumare is also at the service of Obi. That is why Elegba knows all the friends of Obi and Obi knows all the friends for Elegba, the poor, the rich, the clean, the dirty, the straight and the crooked.

One day, Obi had a feast for his birthday, and entrusted Elegba to invite all his friends. Elegba, seeing how pretentious and arrogant Obi had become, invited all the beggars, and dirty people of the town. When Obi arrived and saw in his house all the beggars, and dirty people in his house, he became very angry, and asked the beggars who had invited them there. They replied that it was Elegba who had invited them. At that Obi shouted, "Ah, so it was Elegba who invited you, was it. But not so dirty, and with those rags for clothes. Get out of here," he shouted, and with that all the embarrassed guests left, and with them went Elegba. Obi soon realized his error and called to Elegba, but Elegba did not listen, and kept walking.

One day, Olodumare asked Elegba to go to the house of Obi. However, Elegba refused and told him to send him anywhere else and he would go right away but to the house of Obi he would not and should not go. Olodumare pretending that he knew nothing of what had transpired, asked Elegba what he had against Obi. After hearing from Elegba the details of the incident at Obi's house, Olodumare transformed himself into the disguise of a beggar and went calling at the door of Obi. When Obi saw that who was calling was a beggar, he indignantly said, "Take a bath and get dressed before calling at my door, can you not see that you are dirty. Do you want to dirty my furniture too?" And with that, he slammed the door in the face of Olodumare. Olodumare took a few steps from Obi's house, and then with a strong voice called out to Obi: "Obe Maye Emi Ofo" which means Obi, see who I am. When Obi was made aware that it was Olodumare who had come calling at his door, he tried to excuse himself and beg forgiveness. But Olodumare said to him, "Obi, it is too late. I thought you were natural and unpretentious. That is why I placed you high in the coconut tree, making you white inside and out. But having been placed so high, you have become vain and have thrown the beggars from your house. Obi, those are my children too.

I am going to leave you in the coconut tree, so that you may realize that no matter how high you are placed, you can never be higher than myself, Olodumare, the creator God, or my divine laws. Therefore, for as long as the earth exists, you will roll on the ground, and be transformed to green and black on the outside, but to remain white on the inside for your immortal soul. The black to remind you of the offense you made to the beggars and the green for the

hope that someday you will be forgiven when you come to understand that all persons are my children. Meanwhile, you will predict the good and bad, and the death that will occur on earth." And with that, began the tradition of reading the Obi at the feet of Elegba, and the other Orisha.

SOME USES OF THE COCONUT

As stated before, Obi was charged by Olodumare to predict the events that were to take place on earth because of his offense to the beggars. But Obi has many other uses as well. Many of them are secret, and known only to the initiated Priest of the Yoruba religion. Here we give you some of the ways in which Obi can be used. These are just a few of the gifts Obi has to aid man in the Yoruba religion.

Orisha Priests use the water of Obi to cure DIURESIS.

The water of Obi is also good for anemic persons.

The green skin of Obi can be boiled and made into a tea which is good to tone and purify the blood.

The white meat can be eaten in the morning before you clean your mouth to remove worms from the stomach, especially for children.

Women use Obi to control their husbands and lovers.

The white meat strengthens the digestive tract, and makes digestion easier.

The water of Obi mixed with gin is a cure for LEUKORRHEA.

Pure coconut oil is a very good laxative, taken first thing in the morning before you clean your mouth.

Coconut oil is good to be rubbed on the chest of babies who have colds.

The coconut when brown, can be taken to the Godfather of someone aspiring to become an Orisha Priest, to be blessed and placed behind the door of your house, as a spiritual Elegba.

HOW TO THROW THE COCONUT TO THE ORISHA

The first thing to know in the Yoruba religion is the coconut, "Obi." You must undertake much study to fully understand the intricacies of reading Obi, however, here we give you the invocations and basics of reading Obi.

Take a fresh coconut, making sure it has milk in it by shaking it. Hold the coconut in the hand that you normally use, and break it open. Use some instrument like a hammer. Never break this coconut on the ground or floor. This would be an insult to the Obi, who in his own right is an Orisha too. After you have opened the coconut, you will be using only the inner meat of the coconut. Try to get four large pieces if you can without breaks or cracks. Now, prepare a small gourd (jicara) of fresh water. Sprinkle three libations at the feet of the Orisha to who you are throwing the coconuts for the reading while you pray:

Omi tutu, Ono tutu, Ile tutu, Tutu laroye
Olodumare ajuba o
Gbogbo iku tembelese igbaiye bayi tonu
Igbaiye bayi tonu to iya locha, to baba locha ebi mi iku
Kinkamase Babalocha, Kinkamase Iyalocha
Kinkamase gbogbo iworu i
Kinkamase gbogbo abofaka
Gbogbo iworu afose similenu
Kosi iku, kosi ano, kosi eyo, kosi ofo, ariku baba wa.

Now, take the four pieces of coconut in your hand, making sure there are no cracks or broken pieces.

From the edges of each piece, using your thumb nail, break off small pieces. These pieces should be of the same number as the Odun for the Orisha to whom you are throwing the coconut. For example, three for Elegba, five for Oshun, seven for Yemonja, etc. These small pieces should be tossed over the Orisha while saying; "Obi nu iku, obi nu ano, obi nu eyo, obi nu ofo." Now, change hands so that your right hand is free so that you can touch the floor with your fingertips, saying, "Ile mokuo, Ile mokuo, Ile mokuo." Again, change hands and with the tips of your fingers, touch the Orisha saying, "(name of Orisha) kueyomo, (name of Orisha) kueyomo, (name of Orisha) kueyomo." Everyone present should repeat "aku-e-ye" for each of the three times you touch the floor and the Orisha. Now, present the coconuts to the person to be read in this manner, first to the head, saying, "Ori," then behind the neck saying, "Ichu bamao," then to the heart, saying, "Okan," then the two hands or arms, saying "Elese kan," then to the two legs, saying, "Elese meyi." Then throw the coconut into the air, just a little and let them fall to the ground, noting how they fall. This is the beginning of the reading with the coconut. Each position in which the four pieces of coconut falls indicates a certain "letter" which when interpreted, gives you the message the Orisha wants to relay to you.

MEANING OF THE POSITIONS OF THE COCONUTS

ALAFIA	This means undecided, but good. Whatever you want to do is alright. You should pray, "Alafia, baba divine Egun." Throw again to confirm this letter.
ETAWA	Say, "Etawa Lari," with this letter the Orisha are saying that you are doing something wrong, or that something is missing. Take the coconut and pray "Etawa lori, lokuo lori." Now, throw again, if it falls the same way, it means Etawa Meji, good, yes.
EJIFE	Definitely yes, no need to ask further.
OKANRAN (okanasorde)	Pull both earlobes, and make sara ebo. This means no, and also speaks of evil. Sprinkle around your house the sara eco, and wash the coconuts in it. Then throw the coconuts, and the sara eco out your door. Get new coconuts for you to finish the reading with.
Oyeku (okanayeku)	This is a stronger letter with the same outlook as Okanran, only much more serious. You must find out what should be done to avoid trouble, and for whom this letter comes. The person being read, a relative of the person, or it may be for yourself.

THE ORISHA

There are many hundreds of Orishas, who are worshipped according to the different locale in which that Orisha manifests itself. There are also great spirits, who being different from the original Orisha are none the less very powerful. And many of them have been deified, and others are the great heroes of the Yoruba tradition, and some are personifications of natural forces.

In this book, we will concern ourselves mainly with the "Greater" Orisha, who are more widely served where traditional religion thrives.

An Orisha may have one designated name in one place, and another elsewhere. You may find sometimes disputes as to what Orisha performed what act or how he first appeared or how he became deified. However, careful scrutiny will show the unification of the major themes of these apparent contradictions.

There is more than enough factual proof accumulated through the eons of contact with the Orisha to give reason to believe in them, and to understand that many of them were either actual rulers of the various kingdoms which existed, or people of such great character and distinction that they were later deified. Between these personalities, are the spirits of the ancestors who although unseen, still have power and influence, in the behavior and fortunes of we who are still physically alive. The ancestor spirits, (Egun-gun) are worshiped, invoked, and appeased just as the Orisha are.

The Orisha are certainly responsive to the pleas, and prayers of humans, and are willing to intervene on our behalf. They have the same natures, and vanities as their less powerful human counterparts, raised to the Godly level. Yet because of their position, the way in which we perceive good, and bad, does not necessarily apply to the Orisha. They most definitely have the power to enhance human life. At any given time, the Orisha may be the depths of knowledge, at other times comforting, changeable, erratic, ridiculous, or obstinate to the extreme. When worshiped properly, the Orisha will help us in furthering our spiritual advancement.

ORIGIN OF THE YORUBA SAINTS

In Afrika, as elsewhere, the people have their beliefs, founded somewhat in mythology, and somewhat in the vast historical occurrences of that continent. It has been said among them since ancient times, that the creator God inhabited this earthly plane at a time when there were no trees, vegetation, or any of the life forms we now recognize now on earth; there were only rocks and flames for aeons.

Due to the burning of the rocks, there were vapors produced which rose into space.

The Creator God, Olodumare, desiring to end this period of existence, caused the fires to cease, and the earth to cool down. This cooling of the earth caused moisture to be produced among the less subtle vapors which surrounded the earth, and from this the Clouds were born. The moisture later began to fall to earth as rain.

As the fires were extinguished, you could perceive where they had burned hottest, leaving huge craters and gorges which today are the oceans and rivers on earth. The Yoruba understand that by the will of Olodumare, the flames that once burned on the surface of the planet, are still burning at the core of the earth.

At this time the Orisha were caused to be born by the will of Olodumare, who now inhabits a spiritual plane from which he governs all he has created, such as the Night and Moon, the Day and Sun. In ancient times, the Sun was respected all over, and worshiped in Afrika as Alagayu, who is known throughout Afrika.

From the oceans and rivers caused by the rains filling the deep craters, and gorges, were born the Yemanyas, and Oshuns.

After years and days, the ashes accumulated from the burning rocks, mixed with the rain and turned to mud. From this muddy earth was born the Orisha Oko, who works the earth according to the Yoruba belief. Also from this muddy soil was born sickness, disease, and epidemics; and the Orisha known as Babaluyaye.

Aeons passed and the earth was caused to produce herbs and plants, also was born the Orisha Osain.

The great rocks that did not burn in the flames formed the mountains which nothing can destroy. The crest of these mountains are called Oke, and from Oke, the Orisha Ogun was born.

From the hills, volcanoes were born from which flows hot lava. Here Alagayu Chola was born from the core of the earth. This Orisha is much respected in the Yoruba religion, even more so than Yemanya.

HOW ELEGBA WAS BORN

Elegba is one of the chief Orisha of the Yoruba religion, he carries the messages of destiny to all creatures. This is a story about him.

There was a region in Afrika which lived an Oba (king) whose name was Okugboro, and his wife Ona Gwi. They had a child whom they called Elegba.

He was a Prince, and since he was a prince, he was given an entourage of a personal servant, and bodyguards.

One day, the Prince went for a walk with his entourage. He walked to a crossroads, where he suddenly stood still, something had caught his eye. The Prince's entourage was wondering why they had stopped here. The Prince again began to walk, but he suddenly stopped again. After the third time he stopped, the Prince went to the corner of the crossroads and picked up what had attracted his attention. It was a light, as though two eyes looked up from the ground, and it frightened everyone present. When the Prince picked it up, he found the lights to be two coconuts whose effulgence had him. Now, the Prince was a very mischievous person. He wanted to know everything, and he would go to all places, good and bad. He was afraid of nothing and no one. This is true of Elegba even to the present time. One cause from being the Prince, he was very spoiled. That is why everyone was astonished to see that Elegba had shown some fear of the coconuts and had actually begun to praise them.

The Prince took the coconuts home to the palace. When he arrived there, he told his parents what had taken place. He then bowed to the coconut and placed them behind the door of his house. Everyday the Prince would bow to the coconuts and talk to them. This had his parents very intrigued, because of the drastic change which had come over the Prince. He who feared none, was bowing to a coconut.

At one time, there was a festival which took place in the kingdom and lasted for three days. Everyone present was also astonished to see the lights come from the coconuts and became fearful of what was taking place.

A few days after the festival, the Prince Elegba died, and all through the mourning period, the light from the coconuts shined brilliantly. Everybody feared and respected the coconuts.

Many years passed after the death of the Prince, when all the subjects were facing very hard times. The Akuo Obas (High Priests) came together to try to deliverate over the desperate condition of the citizens. They came to the conclusion that their troubles were because of their abandonment of the two coconuts left behind by the Prince, at his death. No one had bowed or talked to the coconuts since. Therefore, they approached the coconuts and when they came near, they saw with horror that the coconuts had begun to rot and were filled with maggots. Again the Akuo Obas came together to contemplate on how the coconuts which they knew to be eternal had gotten this condition. They decided to go to the Ota (rock). They washed the Ota with herbs and blessed it; and then they placed it behind the door where the coconut had been. And in this way, the Elegba stone was born, and it is said, "Iku lobi Oba" – from death is born the Orisha."

PRAYERS TO THE ORISHA SAINTS

To invoke the Orisha to whom you are going to throw the Obi, you must recite the appropriate prayers to that Orisha. These prayers are recited when you are throwing the Obi for a reading from the Orisha.

ELEGBA (Infant Jesus, St. Anthony, St. Micheal)

Yoruba:

Eshu akuo Onibode Baba mi
Dacomo omo, dacomo afefa
Okwede mefa, okwede ilu
Azoran yama cotiti cocori hiya

English:

Owner of the corners, God of all roads,
my Father take away all evil from my roads
so that I may walk in health. To keep away
sickness, death, and revolution from my house.
In the name of everyone who lives in this house,
I thank you my Father Elegba.

OGUN (St. Peter and St. Pablo)

Yoruba:

Ogun agabaniye baba alagbede cuelure le eche na kife,
lailai toni kini nitoai gbogbo ni laiye nitosi le unye Olodumare
ni na agbara ati ni gbogbo na kiche bawo chiche odara ati
buruki Baba Ogun molo bolomi.

English:

Oldest warrior of blood, warrior father, that your powers
can always do what you wish. Ogun warrior God of strength
and iron, may we always eat of any work we do, good or bad.
God of war, bless me always.

OCHOSI (St. Norbert)

Yoruba:

Oshosi olugba mi gbogbo na ode ati Orisha cheche Ode Mata
mi ati gbogbo omo n'ile fumu okan ona ire ati cuelure ofa
duro gbogbo fburuku ki wa nitosi mi odupe Baba mi.

English:

God of the hunters, Saint of Justice, Saint that will never

betray me or anyone on earth. Guide me, and show me the way.
And with your arrow, stop all evil coming my way. Thank you my Father.

ORISHA-OKO (St. Isadore)

Yoruba:

Orisha-Oko afele iku ofe eye uwe okorin ki chiche fun owuro dutudutu
cuelu na n'ile nibo gbogbo na wa, Orisha-Oko alabobo ile nitosi fu
agbara nitosi rigba si gbogbo awa bawo choncho nitosi chi remu unye
funi aleya Baba Orisha-Oko adupe.

English:

Saint of the country and of the soil, wind of the dead. Patron Saint
of the men who rise early to work the earth. To his home is where all
children of the earth find their last resting place. Protector of the
soil to give it strength. Father, Saint of country and earth, I thank you.

SHANGO (St. Barbara)

Yoruba:

Baba Shango, ikawo ilemu funi alaya tilanchani nitosi ki ko gbamu
ni re oro niglati wa ibinu ki kigbo ni na orin oti gbogbo omo nijin
gbogbo wi kuelu ku iku o beru nitosi dilowo ikawo kawo ile mi iwo
gbogbo Baba mi ki wa na ki e ni okan nitosi kunle ni iwayo ni re elese
ati wi Shango alamu Oba Layo ni na ile ogbo mi.

English:

My father, God of thunder. Control my house, give me salvation so that
I will not be punished when you are angry. Because of your thunder, all
your children respect you. Remember our father, we call from the heart to
kneel at your feet and pray, Mighty God of Thunder, protect me.

EBEJI (St. cosmos and St. Damian)

Yoruba:

Ebeji soro awa kekere sugbon aagba nitoriti otan kuelu na choro ti
Embe laiye yifa Ogun si na ebita ki ko yi ofe ri mayi ku eyo sugbon
Ba si kaide ati itawo meji na kekere ati agba na Ebeji wa ologo afele
Ebeji ko wa ile elewe w'ile ala kisa, gbogbo aiye nijin labi gbogbo chire
Adupe Ebeji.

English:

Ebeji says, we are small but wiser because we finished with the difficulties
there were on earth. We won the war with satan who did not want the two to

be reunited, but they did, and thus conquered to their glory. O almighty twin Gods, since you would rather visit the poor, then the rich, come to my home and bring me luck and happiness.

OBATALA (Blessed Mother, also Jesus Christ)

Yoruba:

Orishala, oinrin ati obinrin laiye eleda ni gbogbo na cheche Baba alai
Ye alabo mi ati mi gbogbo na ejun daradara Baba wa afin alano kekua Baba
Mi adupe.

English:

God of purity, oldest saint, Creator of everything pure and the Supreme Justice. Protect us from all evil, Father almighty, thank you.

OSHUN (Blessed Mother of Charity)

Yoruba:

Oshun yeye mi oga ni gbogbo ibu laiye nibo gbogbo omo Orisha lo uwe nitodi
gba ma abukon ni omi didun nitodi oni alafia ati ayo obinrin jue re ase wiwo
ati re maru ase gele nitosi yo Ayaba ewa ki ula rere iku iko Olofi adupe.

English:

Queen God of all rivers on earth. Where all Orisha Priests must be bathed to have happiness. Queen God who with her skirt of five colors, bring me wealth and happiness.

(Secret – You must be careful with this Orisha, because you never know when she is happy or mad. Oshun is a direct messenger of God.)

OSUN (The holy Head)

Yoruba:

Osun ni oduro ma dubile agogoro mate adena mi nitosi ki kuelure Ichaworo
kuani nitodi ki nigbati wa na ki ko gbamu mi ati titi re lona kuelu gbogbo
na buruki adupe.

English:

God who leads the heads of all humans, you who always stands upright. May you always be my guardian, and may you always warn me of danger with your bell so that when death is near, it may not find me; and may go on its way. Thank you my father Osun.

BABALUIAYE (St. Lazarus)

Yoruba:

Babaluaiye kika okin ati funi afiyedeno, awa no Onigbagbo ati omo iwo imo ki Orisha bawo iwo kosi kan Ologo ni owodowo agba bi tasa so kuono adupe.

English:

God of the epidemics and the sick. I pray to you now, have pity on us your children. Oh, glorious father, keep sickness away from my home, and protect your children from epidemics. Thank you my father.

ALGAYU (St. Christopher)

Yoruba:

Algayu Chola iye kini Oba Akara chola ogina Oba ni no oke gbina nisisiyi awa omo n'ile gbogbo teriba awa ofe ki ko de ma gbina ati na buruku Baba mi balomi.

English:

God of the volcanoes, my father, take care of the earth, that we will not see earth quakes. May your lava stay in your kingdom and do not get mad that your lava does not flow on the earth. And if it does, please carry away all diseases and infections. We thank you and pray that we may always receive your blessings.

YEMANYA (Blessed of Regla)

Yoruba:

Yenya Orisha obinrin dud ku eke ew maye Ayaba mi re oyu Ayaba ano rigba iki mi lya mayele oga nigbo okin yeye omo eya lojun oyina ni reta gbogbo okin nigbe iwo ni re elewo nitosi re omo teiba adupe lya mi.

English:

Queen God of all the oceans, known by the seven stripes on your face we pray to you Mother Queen of all the oceans. Daughter of the deep blue sea, where you have your riches, and your throne. I who am your obedient child share with me your fortune. Thank you my Mother.

INLE (St. Rafael)

Yoruba:

Inle fumi alaya iwo bawo Onisegun ati re eya gbaga ki sebo nitosi lay na omo

ni na ano kuelu re eya ki iwo gba ni na ati wo na ku Osalo na ilu ki iwo
otiwa nitosi se gbogbo odara dara, Adupe Baba Onisegun Inle ikawo mi.

English:

God of medicine, give me the salvation that you as a divine Medic can. You who sacrifice yourself to save your children from sickness, you who with your fish in your hand scared Death away from wherever you went. You stayed and healed the sick in every town you visited, thank you my father Inle. Protect me.

OBA (St. Catherine)

Yoruba:

Oba obinrin ni no oyu ewa ati ara aya ni Shango kue fumi abekin Ayaba mi.

English:

Queen God of Beauty, wife of Shango, I called to ask your blessings, my Queen.

OYA (St. Theresa)

Yoruba:

Oya yegbe Iya mesa oyo orun afele iku lelebi oke Ayaba gbogbo loya obinrin oga mi ano oga mi gbogbo Egun Orisha ni abaya oyu ewa o Yansan oyeri gekua Iya mi obinrin ni kiu kuo le fun Olugba mi Olofi nitosi wa Ayaba nikua adupe.

English:

Queen God of the Market Place, and last resting place. In the day, Mother of Heaven, Queen of the Winds of Death. Queen of all spirits, saint with beautiful face. Protect me from whirlwinds, and death, Queen of Death, so ordered by God. Give me your blessings.

ORUNMILA (St. Francis)

Yoruba:

Orunmila iran lowo kuelu re titanchani nitosi le ri na ki ore eyini omo tiwa ile ni iwo tohi ni gbogboni laiye odikiu aiki Baba wa.

English:

God diviner, Saint who has the last word in our religion, Saint messenger of God. May you always warn us of danger, may we always see our future. Our immortal thanks, Father almighty.

FURTHER MEANINGS OF THE LETTERS FROM THE ORISHA

It is understood that the positions in which the Obi fall are directly influenced by the Orisha, or Spirit, to whom they are thrown and invoked. When the Obi fall in either of the four different letters it forms, either one Orisha, or a combination of Orishas are speaking through this letter. You must ask to see who is speaking, so that you will know what must be done, and what the Orisha want you to understand.

Within each Odun, all the necessary knowledge is given to direct you back on your destiny when you have deviated, and they help keep you on your destiny at all times. Any of the Orisha may instruct you to go to a Babalawo, however, when the Orisha Ifa speaks, (Orunmila), you must go to a Babalawo to have an Ifa reading.

The exact length of time which you will be affected by an Odun can be ascertained by the Orisha.

You will find the meanings of the Yoruba, and Spanish words, in the glossary at the end of the book.

ALAFIA:

Speaking in this Odun – Ifa, Obatala, Olofi, Shango and Babaluaiye.

Interpretation: Good, but uncertainty, do not put too much trust there. When this Odun comes, pray, “Alafia Baba Divine Egun.” Always throw the Obi twice to confirm this letter. If the second throw is Ejife, everything will turn out good. If Okanran or Oyeku comes, all good things this Odun speaks of will turn bad.

Babaluaiye, Ebeji, Ifa and Obatala also speak together in this Odun. Babaluaiye (St. Lazarus) says; you are not supposed to put him at your front door. This is the time when you are to receive the Orisha, Elegba, Ogun Ochosi and Osun. Put behind your door Indian corn and dress your door with Palm oil (corojo). Take care, someone is going to prepare a trap for you/ Do not box, wrestle, or joke with anyone because of an energy present in your hands that may cause you to kill someone / Do not gamble, because you will only lose; gambling is not your road / When you become angry, you must restrain yourself that you do not lose foresight, and self-control resulting with you causing someone's death / In this Odun, the person likes to curse people / If a woman, her mate has another love; if a man, your mate is having an affair / This person likes to insult people / This person has headaches, kidney or stomach problems / This person should watch for high blood pressure / Do not eat white beans, hot peppers, eggs, pigeon, BBQ meats / When this Odun comes, the IWORO – Orisha Priest – should bless the head of the individual, and give a head cleaning with grated coconut, cocobutter, some honey and some Abre Camino (open the road) oil, light this lamp for six Thursdays to Obatala, then take a cow's tongue put inside it the names of all your enemies, and sew it with black and red thread. Pass the tongue over your naked body and place it on top of Ogun for three days. Each day burn a white candle to Ogun. After the three days, take the tongue and nail it to a very old tree using three large (ten penny) nails / This Odun says that if you do not have Eleke (the beads of the Orisha) then you must get them right away for your health and money / Wear white for sixteen days / You may have an operation on your stomach / You need to take iron tonics / Do not eat the internal organs of animals like liver, kidneys, etc. / Be careful with powerful enemies who are doing witchery against you / Do not drink strong liquors or wines / You must give an Egun – (spirit) – ceremony / You must be careful with the opposite sex, they will be falling in love with you / You must clean yourself everyday with different things such as meat, beans, candy, fruit, corn, etc.

Okanran (Okansorde)

Speaking in this Odun – Oya, Ogun, Yewa, Nana Buruku, Osain, and Oba.

Interpretation: When this Odun comes, you must be deliberate, and careful because death is after you./ Someone who is afraid of you is doing work in the graveyard to kill you, or put you in jail for a long time / You must go to a Babalawo for an Ifa reading to see what can be done to save your life / You must give something to Yemanya that way, she will help you / The Iworo must say to this person, you are not to be selfish, that is why you have so many problems / You must have an Egun ceremony because one of your spirits does not have enough light to help you, and that is why you feel so confused / You must receive the Orisha in your head immediately to save your life, and conquer your future / After you have the Egun ceremony, you must have a party for the Ebejis to bring money to you / You must give money to any beggar who asks, because this money will return to you one-hundred times / Do not tell your secrets, because there is too much jealousy around you / Elegba is going to prepare a trap for you, because you are not treating him right / Do not hit any children in the head, because an energy in your hands may cause you to kill someone / An Orisha Priest must work with Ochosi for you to keep out of jail / When you go to parties, do not get drunk because your enemies are waiting to kill you out of fear of you. Because of this, you must bless your head with two roosters / You have very bad luck, and if you have a weapon, gun or knife do not carry it for sixteen days so that if you have a fight you will not kill anyone and go to jail / You should not tell lies, because they will make trouble for you / You do not trust people, not even your own Godfather, that is why you have so few friends / You are prejudiced / You have good luck with gambling, but this luck left you six months ago, or within the past six months; make an Ebo – (sacrifice) – to Elegba to open your roads for you / Be careful of persons asking you to come to a party or dinner, they are planning to do you harm / Make an Ebo to Shango to clean your roads / You know some secret of someone, but be careful that this person does not send someone to kill you because of it / Do not try to prove your riches and comfortable life, because this will be your downfall / You should watch your stomach for problems / Do not help anyone lift any heavy objects that you do not get a hernia / You are going to suffer from pains in your back and feet / Do not wear stripped cloths / Wear white for ninety days at least / You should not hit women because your bad luck might come from this / For ninety days, you are not to go to the places you usually visit / You are supposed to travel a lot / You must take care that bad luck does not overtake you and you do not have money to pay your rent; make an Ebo immediately / Be careful of an accident in which you may be paralyzed from the waist down / You will get an inheritance from your ancestors / Someone will point a finger at you because you are doing something illegal / This Odun speaks of bad luck and problems / You should take care you are not bitten by a dog because you could die from this bite / You should have an exorcism because you have an evil spirit who wants to take you / Your Godfather

must do this Ebo for you; take sixteen hers of one of the Orisha, and prepare a bath, then take the bath, a black rooster, and the person into the woods. When you get to the woods ;you must find an old tree. Ask the tree with the Obi if this is a good place to perform the exorcism. If the answer is yes, then proceed with the exorcism. The ingredients or paraphernalia you will need for the exorcism. The bath you prepared with the sixteen herbs of the Orisha; four pieces of coconut (Obi); one bottle of rum; one black rooster; and some cascarilla, enough in which the outline of the person's body may be traced. PRECEEDING THE EXORCISM, MAKE SURE THAT YOU ARE WELL PROTECTED, THAT THE SPIRIT DOES NOT ATTACH ITSELF TO YOU. USE PALM OIL ON THE BOTTOM OF YOUR FEET AND PUT COTTON ON YOUR HEAD AND AT YOUR NAVEL. Now, lay the person down on one side of the tree, face up and mark the outline of the person's body with the cascarilla. The person should bring an extra set of clothes to put on after the ceremony. The person's head should be close to the tree. Cut the head from the rooster, giving the first blood to the tree, then cover the person's body with blood from head to foot. Next, sprinkle the person's body with water, then Holy water, saying the Lord's Prayer. Now, stand the person up and tear off all the old clothes. Wash the person with the sixteen herb bath and put on the person the new clothes. Now, bury the old clothes inside the outline of the person's body you have made with the cascarilla. The Ebo is finished when you have buried the old clothes. The sixteen herbs you use to wash the person may come from any of the Orisha. This mixture of herbs is called Omeiro. You may use any of the Omeriros of the following Orisha: Oya, Babaluiaye, Elegba, Shango, Obatala, Yemanya, Oshun.

Ejife:

Speaking in this Odun – Elegba, Shango, Ogun, Ochosi and Osun

Interpretation: When this Odun comes you are to receive the Orisha Elegba, Ogun, Ochosi and Osun. This means that you will have your roads opened for your money, luck, home and business, peace of mind; and that your health is protected, and your consciousness is broadened / You must be careful that you do not break one of your legs / You must prepare a mass for your family spirits because they do not have enough light / You are not to lend money to anyone because whoever you lend money to will become your enemy / If not at present then in the immediate future you will have to have an operation to save your life / You need to have your head fed with two pigeons / you are not to listen to gossip or follow tales, because you will be the only loser / This Odun says if you are living with someone, you are not to have affairs with others, because your partner may find out and cause your death / You need a ceramic white horse in your house / You must be careful with your neighbor who listens at your conversations / You are supposed to have a dog in your house / You have to pray to Obatala that you will never be in need of food, money or happiness / You should wear the Eleke of Obatala / You should always carry in your pocket a talisman of a Congo Spirit / You should save your money to receive the Orisha in your head; your head is made for the Orisha / When this Odun comes, you are to suffer from your stomach, if a woman from female organs, high blood pressure and pains in the legs.

ETEWA:

Speaking in this Odun – Elegba, Shango, Oshun, and Yemanya

Interpretation: In this Odun Shango says, you must carry a talisman made from a thunderstone of Shango / Shango also says that your head is very confused and that you must have your head blessed with the four herbs of Shango in order to overcome the problems in your head at present / You have to be careful with policemen / Someone may give you something to hold which is illegal for which you may be arrested / You need to receive Elegba, Ogun, Ochosi and Osun / After you have a head cleaning, if you play the numbers, you will win a luck / Do not do favors for anyone that this person does not turn to be your enemy / You must wear amber and onyx stones for luck / When this Odun comes, when you grow old, you are to live in the country and raise animals, especially geese for your prosperity / You must make a pillow of goosefeathers, and four hergs of Shango. Also gold, coral, silver and four other precious stones, diamond, ruby, sapphire, emerald / If a woman seems to be having trouble getting a husband, this woman should work with Oshun to conquer a man for marriage / You should not eat crabs, or any animal that walks backward, such as a shrimp, etc. / Be careful in your body with tumor have a check-up hurriedly, and every year, because you have the cancer germs, and do not know where they will manifest / You should not wear blue clothes / You should go to church every first Monday of the month / You have to receive the Ebejis / Every first Monday you should wash your head with blue water made from blue balls / You must put on your altar male and female lodestones / If this person is married, there will be a lot of discord in your home because of a spirit in your house that disrupts your marriage / If this person goes to a hospital, they should get a head cleaning after each visit to the hospital / Do not tell lies, because they will turn against you / You must hurry and do something because someone is trying to destroy your house / You are supposed to have a black cat in your house / You are not to drink alcohol / Do not allow everyone to touch your head / You have three powerful enemies who want to destroy you / You cause too much revolution where you are / If the person has small children, they must be careful of your friends, because some of them or someone has a sick mind and wants to have sex with one of them / Those who you think are your friends talk against you / Someone in your family will depart by death's hand soon / You must take care that you are not burned / This Odun speaks of indecision in your life, because you do not know what you want to do yet / You need to receive the Eleke of Babalwaiye / Your head is between Shango and Oshun / You must take care not to ride three in a car, because with three in a car you will have a very bad accident / Someone is watching you to steal everything from your house / If you have valuables you should lock them up in a bank vault / You must take care with policemen, this is a second and more serious warning./

OYEKU (Okanayeku)

Speaking in this Odun – Oya, Ogun, Iku, Algayu, Spirits, Yewa, Babaluiaye, and Death.

Interpretation: This Odun says you resolve the problem by telling the truth / You must hurry and do what the Obi says, because Death is close to you / Maybe someone in your family will die before the year's end / When this Odun comes, you must wash the Obi in water and then ask if this is the Egun, or if it is Death who is speaking, or just who it is. If Death is speaking, ask if it is death for you, or for the person you are reading. When the Death is for you, there are a lot of things you must do for yourself. First, bless your head with the ceremony of two coconuts for the head. Take four baby chicks, roasted corn, dried fish, dried racoon and one bottle of rum and feed the four corners where you live. Throw the Obi at each corner to see what letter comes. If you Ejife or Etawa, go ahead with the Ebo. If no, then you must ask the corner what else it wants for the Ebo. The most important thing here is the blood of the chicks. After you find out what the corner wants, then proceed with the Ebo. First pull the head off one of the chicks, and feed the blood to the corner, blow the rum three times to the corner, and then put there some dried fish, and some dried racoon / You are not to hold drugs in your house, because police are after you / The things you have started, you must finish / Control your bad temper / If the Death is for the person you are reading, you must take the Omiero of either Shango or Obatala and eight purple flowers along with the blood of a pigeon. Then, feed the head of the person with two roosters. After you have fed the person's head, the person must sleep on the floor of the Orisha room overnight. The next morning, wash the person with the Omiero and give another reading to see if you have averted the Death from the person / In this Odun, you should be careful with your kidneys and pain at your waist. Also illnesses involving your intestines / One woman you have left for another is doing work to destroy you / Be careful with the law / You must do an Ebo to Elegba to open your roads because your roads are closing around you / You have to make some decision about illegal business, or something you plan to do against the law / This person has too many enemies / This person is thinking about killing someone with a knife or gun / You are not supposed to go out for seven days because Death is after you / If a woman, take care because someone is working against your husband to cause strife and arguments in your home / You should have a horseshoe at your front door to keep away evil / Be careful, someone is preparing a trap for you / Someone will invite you to a party, but do not go because your death is there / You must go right away to a doctor for a check-up, something is wrong with your blood or stomach / When this Odun comes, you must take one pound of cow meat, rub plenty of palm oil on it, and pass it over your entire naked body, and then put it on Ogun, light a candle there and leave the meat on Ogun for three days. After the three days, throw the meat in the street in front of your house / You must go to a Catholic church and talk to a priest about having a singing mass for your ancestors, the Orisha priest must ask to see who this singing mass will be for / When the Odun comes, the Iworo –

(Orisha Priest) – must ask Ogun if this person needs Ebo Chure – everything the mouth eats. If Ogun gives you confirmation of the Ebo-Chure, you must next find out which Orisha wants this Ebo. One of the Orisha who speaks through the letter that confirms the Ebo Chure is the Orisha to whom the Ebo Chure is to be presented. An Ebo Chure consists of placing everything that the mouth eats on individual plates and presenting each plate to the Orisha. The foodstuffs may consist of rice, every kind of meat, vegetables, breads etc.

Here is an example of an Ebo Chure given to the Orisha Yemanya. The procedure outlined is the same for all the Orisha.

First, ask the Orisha where the Ebo Chure is to go and for how many days it is to be left in front of the Orisha. With each different foodstuff on separate plates, the plates may number seven, fourteen, or twenty-one, begin presenting the foodstuffs to the person who will benefit from the Ebo Chure. Beginning with the head, say Ori, the back of the neck, say Ichu Bakwao, the heart, say Okan, the two hands or arms and say, Telese Kan, the two legs and say Telese Meji. Each individual plate must be presented to the person in this manner, and then placed on the floor, or on a mat in front of the Orisha. After each plate has been presented to the Orisha, the person for whom the Ebo Chure is being performed must kneel in front of the Orisha, and the Iworo must say prayers for the Orisha over the person, in this case Yemanya. At the end of seven days, the Iworo must throw the coconut to see where to take the Ebo Chure.

First ask if the Ebo Chure should go to the ocean. Second ask her if the Ebo Chure is to go to the woods. Third, ask if the Ebo Chure is to go to the graveyard. Fourth ask if it is to go to the four corners of the street. Fifth ask if it is to go to the river. Sixth ask should it go to an old tree. Seventh ask if it is to go to the lake. Eighth ask should it go to the hill. Ninth, ask if the Ebo Chure should go to the fresh grave, or tomb, and the tenth place you ask should the Ebo Chure be buried. Each Orisha has a place that they frequent or reside. According to which Orisha you must give the Ebo Chure to, you must ask if it is to be taken first to where that Orisha resides. Here is a list of the places where the Orisha reside, or frequent.

WHERE TO TAKE THE EBO CHURE FOR THE ORISHA

<u>ORISHA</u>	<u>PLACE TO TAKE THE EBO</u>
Elegba	To the woods
Ogun	To the railroad tracks
Ochosi	To the jail
Obatala	To the hill
Oshun	To the lake
Yemanya	To the ocean
Olokun	To the ocean
Oya	To the graveyard or large market
Shango	To a coconut tree, palm tree, old tree
Babaluiaye	To the hospital

If the Orisha requesting the Ebo Chure is Orunmila, Ifa; then you must take this person to a Babalawo.

This Odun means tragedy, Death for yourself, or Death for someone in your family.

**ORISHA SONGS
(TO BE SUPPLIED LATER)**

SO THAT THE PEOPLE WILL KNOW WHAT TO FEED THE ORISHA AND WHAT ARE THEIR ROADS

ELEGBA

This is the Orisha to open and close the roads. He is the Orisha of gambling and he is a trickster. You do not know when he is happy or when he is mad. This Orisha always eats first when you are feeding any of the other Orisha in this religion. He is the messenger of all the Orisha. In the Catholic religion the same as St. Anthony, the Infant of Prague, and St. Micheal.

What to feed Elegba: A small male goat, young roosters just beginning to crow, for emergencies you may feed Elegba old roosters. Racoon, possum, and for emergency of death, feed Elegba a pig. In some roads, Elegba eats turtles, and in some he eats pigeons. Out of the one hundred and one roads of Elegba, only three roads eat pigeon.

Addimu: Prepare a cornmeal ball in this manner. Boil water with honey. When the water is boiled, put in corn meal with a little salt. When this is cooked, allow the water to evaporate, and cool. Now, cover your hands with palm oil and reciting the prayers to Elegba, make three little balls from the cooked cornmeal. After the balls have been made, put them before Elegba for three days with a white candle. At the end of the three days, ask Elegba where to take the balls, to the four corners, to the woods, etc. In this manner ask of seven places where the balls might be taken. You can give for addimu also wheat crackers spread with palm oil, green coconuts, popcorn, roasted corn, dried fish, dried racoon, dried possum, or black-eyed peas prepared in this fashion; soak the peas in water for about twenty-four hours, remove the skins, and mash the beans well. Add salt, palm oil, peppers and other spices, mix well. Make little balls, and fry them in oil until light brown in color. Ask Elegba how many days to leave them in front of him and then where to take them after the period of time has passed.

OGUN

This is the Orisha who is known as the warrior, he is the God of Iron and work, he works twenty-four hours and never sleeps. This is because Obatala punished him for having incest with his mother. He is the owner of the railroad tracks and he is the Orisha who opens the earth so that the dead may be buried. He is one of the strongest Orisha and a powerful enemy of Shango. Ogun is symbolized by St. Peter in the Catholic church.

What to feed Ogun: male goats, roosters, pigeons, racoons, possum, dogs, and all kins of male animals on the earth.

Addimu: Everything that Elegba eats.

OCHOSI

This Orisha is known as the hunter, and the Orisha of justice. He lives in the woods, and his close friends are Elegba and Ogun. It is difficult to find a child of this Orisha and there are only a few in the United States. Ochosi is symbolized by a bow and arrow made of iron. He is equated with St. Norbert in the Catholic Church.

What to feed Ochosi: Feed Ochosi goats, roosters, pigeons, guinea hens.

Addimu: Everything that Elegba eats.

ORISHA-OKO

This is the Orisha of the farmers, and those who live in the country. He is the owner of all the crops and everything to do with the earth and growing things. In the Catholic religion, he is equated with St. Isidro.

What Orisha-Oko is to be fed: Orisha-Oko eats white male goats, and all white animals, roosters, guinea hens, pigeons and small bulls.

Addimu: Everything that the earth produces boiled. Allow to cool before giving it to Orisha-Oko. Do not give anything to this Orisha hot.

INLE

This is the Orisha of medicine and fishermen. In Cuba, when the men go out to fish, they first ask Inle if they can be successful and if they will have a good day. This is also the Orisha of doctors, and medicine men. This Orisha is who you ask for health. He is equated to St. Raphael in the Catholic Church.

What to feed Inle: Lambs, pigeons, guinea hens and fish.

Addimu: Everything that Elegba eats, except green coconuts.

BABALUIAYE

Some people are afraid to call the name of this Orisha, out of fear of the diseases he might bring to them. In all the history of this Orisha, it is said that only one other Orisha has ever helped him, Shango. It was Shango who took him to Olofi and Olofi took the sicknesses from his body. After his health was returned, Shango took him to a land called Arara (Dahomey.) When Babuiaye was among

the Arara people, he cured many of them of various diseases, and caused them to become prosperous, so they made him a king. That is why when the Orisha priests have Shango initiations, they are also supposed to receive Babaluiaye at the same time. And when they receive the Orisha Babaluiaye, Shango is to eat also. He is identified with St. Lazarus in the Catholic Church.

What to feed Babaluiaye: All goats, pigeons, roosters, and guinea hens.

Addimu: Palm oil, oranges, pecans, peanuts, and all kinds of fruit. Also ecru aro (see glossary.)

ALGAYU

Algayu is the strongest and most violent of the Orisha. He was one of the first to be born along with Babaluiaye. He is symbolized by the sun, and he is the Orisha who holds up the planet earth. In Cuba, they do not give this Orisha to the head; instead they give either Shango or Oshun with a special ceremony for Algayu, who is given to the shoulder, because it is said that no one person can hold the weight of the world on their head. Although Algayu is not given to the head in Cuba, he is presented to the head in Nigeria, and it is there that you must go to receive the full secrets of this Orisha. In the Catholic Church, he is identified with St. Christopher.

What to feed Algayu: Castrated goats, small bulls, pigeons, guinea hens, white roosters when he says to give them, green bananas, boiled green bananas, beef ribs heavily seasoned, palm oil, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, lentil beans, rice and Eco, cornmeal with honey, water and witch herb boiled, and them steam cooked in foil.

EBEJIS

These twin Orisha are the sons of Yemanya. They are the children Shango prefers to play with and so do all the other Orisha. They are sometimes very mischievous like Elegba, and they are fond of candy. In the Catholic church, they are identified with St. Cosmos, and St. Damian.

What to feed the Ebejis: The Ebejis are not to eat the animals with four legs. Give them small chicks, about one and one-half pounds and pigeons.

Addimu: The same small chicks you feed them are to be cleaned and prepared with yellow rice, plus everything else that Elegba eats.

Obatala

He is the oldest of all the Orisha. He was sent by Olodumare to make man. He sent him with Oduduwa to make the earth, but while Obatala slept after having drunk palm wine, Oduduwa created the earth in his stead. To compensate him so there would be no war between them, Olodumare said that he could create men and would be in charge of all the problems they might have. His roads vary from a warrior, Ayaguna, to an old man who falls asleep very easily, Oshalofun. In the Catholic church, he is equated with the Virgin of Mercedes.

What to feed Obatala: Female white goats, white hens, white pigeons, and white guinea hens. In all the roads of Obatala, only Ayarguna La Aribo, and Osacriyan eat white roosters, and white male goats.

Addimu: Yam, meringue, white bread, white tapioca, sweet rice, white cake, almonds, milk, cocoa butter, cascarilla, red snapper fish prepared in this way – clean the fish and put it in the oven on a platter with cocoa butter. Sprinkle with cascarilla, allow it to cool, and then present it to Obatala with two white candles. Ask with the Obi whether to leave it there for four, eight, or sixteen days. Pears, apples – the yellow colored ones, goat milk, wheat, white rice and snails.

SHANGO

This Orisha is the king of fertility. In Nigerian history, he was the fourth king of Oyo. When he was king, he was very vain and ambitious, he wanted everything he came across. For these two faults, some of the subjects of his kingdom betrayed him. And when he was aware that his own people had betrayed him, he hung himself from the cieba tree. Shango is also a warrior, and the owner of the thunderstones. In the Catholic church, he is identified with St. Barbara.

What to feed Shango: Ram, young bulls, and red roosters, guinea hens, turtles and quails.

Addimu: Okra, palm oil, cornmeal cooked, hot peppers, E cru aro, Aguidi, Eco, Ochinchin, rice yam, sweet bananas.

OBA

This Orisha is the wife of Shango. Oshun made a trap for her telling her that Shango was having affairs with other women, and that the only way for her to win Shango back was to make a soup containing one of her ears to feed to Shango. Then Oshun told Shango that Oba had cut off her ear to make a magic potion to control him by. When Shango saw that Oba had cut off her ear, he left Oba to live with Oshun. This Orisha knows when the Orisha priest is going to die. She is equated in the Catholic church with St. Rita and St. Lucy.

What to feed to Oba: Castrated male goats, hens, pigeons, guinea hens, and in some houses you give a female goat.

Addimu: Everything that Oshun eats.

OSHUN

This is the Orisha of sweets and gold. She is the prettiest of the daughters of Olofi. She carries messages to Orunmila. She is the queen of the rivers and is the only Orisha that can make Shango happy. But you must be very careful with Oshun because you can not tell when she is happy or when she is angry. In the Catholic church she is equated with the Blessed Mother of Charity.

What to feed Oshun: Caastrated male goats, yellow hens, pigeons, guinea hens and deer.

Addimu: Olele (see glossary), palm oil, ochinchin – take watercress, mustard greens, or spinach, boil this, then put in a skillet with tomato sauce, olive oil and spices. Add dried shrimp, and cooked covered. Next, take five eggs and beat them, add these to the mixture in the skillet and allow the eggs to cook a little, then serve to Oshun. - Cooked cornmeal with salt or with sugar. Oguidi – cook cornmeal, and add vinegar. Let stand for three days. Next, put in foil and steam cook. When done, present to Oshun – boiled pumpkin covered with honey, eggs of any type preparation, fish, and honey.

OYA

This is the Orisha who owns the winds, and the sound of thunder. She resides near large supermarkets, and she is also the owner of the graveyard. Of the three wives of Shango, she is the preferred one. When Shango hanged himself, she cried and cried afterward. Shango took her from Ogun and at that time, Ogun made war with Shango, and Shango was assured of victory by Oya's help. After the war, Shango betrayed her to Yemanya, and that is the reason Oya does not eat lamb. She is a very powerful Orisha. She is equated to St. Theresa and the Candelaria in the Catholic Church.

What to feed Oya: Female goats. Black hens, dark pigeons, guinea hens.

Addimu: Olele – take black beans or black-eyed peas, soak overnight and then remove the skins and mash the peas. Fold the mashed peas in a piece of foil. Bring to a boil half a little pot of water and place a screen or some device over the pot so that you can put the foil over the boiling water to steam cook the peas. After the peas are done, and the foil has expanded, make a slit in the foil and

present them to Oya like this –cooked rice and beans rolled into a ball. Okra with cornmeal cooked.

YEMANYA

This Orisha is the Mother of the sixteen original Orisha, the Goddess of the oceans, and she lives in the foaming waters of the waterfalls. She is the Orisha of knowledge and study. She influences people to invent and she is also a great warrior Orisha. This Orisha is equated with the Virgin of Regla in the Catholic Church.

What to feed Yemanya: Lamb, roosters, duck (the only road of Yemany that does not eat duck is Ocute), guinea hens, turtles, and in some Orisha houses, pigeon is given to Yemanya.

Addimu: Ecu aro (the same as Olele, but do not remove the skin from the peas), Olele, fried pork, fried green bananas, fried beef, seven balls of cornmeal, seven balls of yam, seven balls of salted cornmeal with okra, molasses, popcorn, and brown coconuts.

DADA

This Orisha is the older sister of Shango, daughter of Obatala, and Yemanya. This is the Orisha who raised Shango and is a very powerful Orisha. In the Catholic church, she is equated to the Rosary.

What to feed Dada: Female goats, hens, pigeons, guinea hens.

Addimu: Everything that Shango eats.

YEWA

This Orisha is one who has a great many secrets. So many that not even fifteen Orisha priests together can recite or know them all. She was once the wife of Shango. This Orisha is received by the priest when they are very old because when you receive Yewa, you can not have any more sex life, parties, intoxication, or other frivolities. Yewa is equated to the Virgin of Mansurrat in the Catholic Church.

What to feed Yewa: Female goats, hens, pigeons, guinea hens.

Addimu: Everything that Oba eats, except castrated goats.

ODUDUWA

This is another Orisha who has many mysteries. The old Orisha priests say that when Oduduwa comes to earth, there will be total destruction. Oduduwa is equated in the Catholic Church to St. Manuel.

OLOKUN

He is the king of the deep seas. He lives in the seas, because he was punished by Olodumare for thinking that he was as powerful as Olodumare. After he lost a race to prove who was the most powerful, he was put under the sea to live, and he was chained to the bottom by both hands.

What Olokun eats: Ram, dog, roosters, pigeons, guinea hens.

Addimu: Everything the mouth eats.

ORUNMILA

This is the Orisha who divines in the religion. Along with Obatala, he is the only Orisha fully trusted by Olodumare. The only persons to receive this Orisha are Babalawo. This is the Orisha that Obatala buried up to his waist in the woods, because Obatala did not want any more children because of what Ogun had done; and Elegba fed him for twenty years. That is why Elegba and Orunmila are the best of friends and why Elegba receives the first messages of Orunmila. He is identified with St. Francis in the Catholic religion.

What Orunmila is to be fed: Black female goats, black hens, black pigeons, and guinea hens.

Addimu: Dates, E cru, Olele, Oguidi, Ochinchin, all types of ripe fruits, yellow rice, cakes, and everything that Oshun eats.

