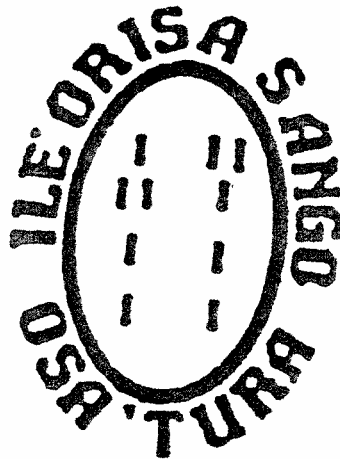


OLORISHA MANUAL



House of the Orisha Shango

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Introduction

This manual has been prepared to help the olorisha achieve the understanding, followed by practical experience needed to command change. In your continuing understanding and mastery of the secrets of our forefathers you will often find the need to be given direction. This direction will be provided by the wisdom of an elder, or the voice of the oracle. You cannot sacrifice without divination, you cannot interpret dreams without divination, you cannot create a talisman nor make Ifa medicine without divination. These facts must be understood and accepted before you attempt to go any further.

This manual and its contents are to be considered awo (secret); from the aspect that this information is a form of empowerment and restricted only to those authorized within our lineage to have this knowledge and to use it.

AWO

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In my earliest contact with our tradition, I first ventured into Santeria and later, rather briefly, with Lucumi. I was truly amazed at how well the vestiges of an ancient religion was preserved. What I also discovered, amazes me until this day. I discovered that (1) there were no lineage's, (2) everything was "secret", (3) even with making "ocha", I would be powerless, (4) there was no "corporate" discipline, (5) beside Wippler-Gonzales books on Santeria and Lydia Cabrera's writing on the religion in Cuba, there was no expressed history of Santeria. Further that Wippler was not even initiated, and that she wrote from information given to her by others, (6) every priest performed their acts of "magic" their own way - sometimes it worked, most times it did not, (7) the "religion" that I was being exposed to was based on "fear of orisha, fear of madrina, fear of padrino, fear of the unknown".

They spoke to me of a "libretta", which was a book of all of the secrets that were to be passed onto me by my padrino. I later found that this did not exist. Later, when I met Oluwo Afolabi Epega, I asked him for some written guide that will help me through the fields of spiritual understanding and ritual performance. He told me that **experience** will be my guide. He said no such book existed, though there was a need for one. He said I must eventually study *Ifa*, as was prophesized in my *Ita*, and I will have all of the answers.

Years later, I tasked two of my senior godchildren to put together such a document. I knew it was a difficult task, but I had information that I could share

with them, that I felt could make the task somewhat easier. Two years later, thanks to the hard work and effort of Iyalorisha Ogunbanké, the information was produced. It was rough, it was incomplete, but it was the beginning of this Manual for Olorisha. I wish to acknowledge Ogunbanké's efforts in pulling together all of the notes, information from seminars, and general information that was given to her over the years. Like myself, her two mentors were members of the Epega family and the Agbede family of Ode Remo and Ejigbo, Nigeria.

This manual does not have answers, rather, it gives directions. It provides an attitude that one must assume and accept. It lays some groundwork and you are required to build on that groundwork. I guess the most important thing for me is that such a manual never existed before, and now one does.

I wish to thank Ogunbanké, her ancestors and her spiritual family for giving her the fortitude to tread on ground that was never walked on before. I continue to thank my ancestors and all of those who have taught me orisha and Ifa, which allows me to walk on ground that was never walked before, allowing me to pass on to the faithful others, a standard for sacrifice and ritual. ***Mo dupé O.***

Oluwo Ifayomi Odulana

Concept of Priesthood

Many olorisha look forward to priesthood as a final accomplishment of their spiritual path. For some, this may be the case, for others, it is just the beginning of an extended spiritual journey. The second part of their journey brings them closer to communicating and understanding the spirit world. During this journey, you learn the true power of your asé. You learn how to handle the asé of your ancestors and of orisa. It is a journey full of amazement, for instance when your divination's become so accurate that the client believes that someone has spoken to you about them; or when the ebo that you performed for someone comes to past, exactly as you had petitioned it to manifest. This is the point in your spiritual career that makes you seek further knowledge of what you you can do to help yourself, your family and your community.

Being recognized as a priest or priestess by the community is their recognition of you as an asset. You become their link between man and god. Whether they call you priest, healer, prophet or root person, you are associated with having the power to change something that is "not good" to something that is "good".

With that in mind, I will expose you to the ***Oath of Priesthood***. Examine it carefully, for one day in the near future, it will be administered to you and you must swear by Ogun's oath-taking, to uphold these principles.

Oath of Priesthood

I, (Orisha name), do solemnly swear to uphold the customs and traditions of our lineage. I will practice our belief system and use my empowerment to help my family and my community. I will not perform any unauthorized rites or ritual. I will not discuss secrets with those who are not empowered to hear them. I will not deceive those who have reposed confidence and faith in me. I will continue my studies and seek to understand the mysteries of Orisa and Ifa. I will in no way use my empowerment to perform harmful deeds or acts on anyone. I promise to abide by the rules and protocol practiced by Ilé Orisa Sango. I accept the duties and responsibilities vested in me as an ordained minister of the Yoruba Religion. So help me God. (kiss your knife) Asé, asé, asé.

PROTOCOL

1. Purpose and Orientation

The purpose of this section is to provide members of Ilé Orisha Shango with necessary information concerning accepted protocol and etiquette, which should be followed by members of the house.

A. How this house functions

The house functions as a nuclear family, although in reality, it is an extended family unit. All of the ilés within the Yoruba community are related. This relationship can even be extended to *Orisha* and the *Lucumi* and *Santería* communities who claim African roots. Our house has established African lineage and African roots. As such, utmost respect and consideration for each other should be maintained as it is within African culture. This is especially important in times of stress and anxiety. It is important at times of interaction and in forms of communication. How family members relate to each other on a formal basis, is predicated primarily on the level of initiation by the members to various rites and tenets of *Ifá* tradition and customs that have been established for thousands of years. *Ifá* tradition is based on hierarchical natural concepts with roots strongly embedded in the system of family. *Ifá* promulgates not just the concept of the nuclear family, but that of an extended family, or a tightly knitted fabric of

years. Ifá tradition is based on hierarchical natural concepts with roots strongly embedded in the system of family. Ifá promulgates not just the concept of the nuclear family, but that of an extended family, or a tightly knitted fabric of community. One of the beliefs of Ifá is that if the life of one family member is improved, then so is the rest of the lives within the community.

B. Lineage

Many of the houses and practitioners of our religion cannot trace their lineage. This does not weaken their knowledge or **asé**, but it questions the **authority** to perform certain rites. It also adds to confusion and misdirection in precepts of the religion, since what is being practiced cannot be traced to its source. The lineage name for this ilé is **Epega (Ee-pay-gah)**. It was Oluwo Afolabi A. Epega who introduced and initiated Awo Ifayomi to the Yoruba religion. Hence, by Yoruba tradition, Awo Ifayomi was adopted into the lineage of Epega and the members of this ilé who are initiated into the religion become members of the Epega lineage. Our home is **Ode Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria**.

Oluwo 'Fayomi received his rite of passage to Ifá from **Chief Araba Malomo Agbede (Ag-bay-day)** of **Ejigbo** and his lineage thus is both Epega and Agbede, two powerful spiritual families. However, for those who become **babalawo** through our house, the lineage is Epega, since it is Oluwo Epega who taught Ifá to this house.

C. Relationships

There are three levels of functioning relationships within the house. The senior level is the **Awo** level. This level is comprised of the babalawo of the house. The intermediate level is the **Olorisha**, comprised of persons who have received their orisha. Within the Olorisha level, we have three sub-levels. (1) **Babalorisha, Iyalorisha** are certified priests and priestesses of the house. (2) **Olorisha** have received their orisha for at least a period of a year, but have not as yet been certified as a priest or priestess and (3) **Iyawo** have received their orisha, but it has been for a period of less than one year. The last tier and the largest tier is that of the **Devotee**. These are members who may have received several orisha, but they have not as yet received their governing orisha.

As in all families, there is a "pecking" order or some system that relates to seniority. We have ours, and our system is to be taken seriously. Our order is babalawo, babalorisha and iyalorisha, olorisha, devotees. Age set will always override our pecking order. **We must always honor and respect our elders.** Generically, when we speak of elders, we speak of those older than ourselves.

"Elders of the house" prior to April 1, 1996 referred to all Awo and Olorisha. It has been revised to denote Awo and Olorisha who actively contribute to the welfare of the house. It is a title that will be earned by deed rather than by level of initiation.

Perhaps the most critical difference that we hold sacred within this ilé is that respect is not a right that is ***demande***d, but rather a value that is

commanded. Respect must be given to those whom are more knowledgeable and exhibit good behavior; to those who give more than they receive; to those who you can place trust and confidence in; to those who exhibit leadership traits by setting example. One cannot lead if they cannot follow. One cannot command the asé to make change if they themselves are not compatible to change. If they walk tall, exhibit good character and apply their wisdom, they will command respect.

2. Greetings and Salutations

As in the case of the nuclear biological family, members of the house relate to each other on the basis of father, mother, brother and sister. The basic greeting that is used in our house is "**Alafia**" (**Ah-lah-fee-ah**), which means "peace". We cross arms and touch right shoulder to right shoulder, then left shoulder to left shoulder. Within our house, we embrace, as members of a family should. The following are greetings or salutations given to individuals:

A. Oba. An Oba is a king. He has received his title through a divine lineage, that is in someway related to **Oduduwa**, progenitor of the Yoruba people. The relationship and lineage began at least one thousand years ago. As such he is accorded the respect of **foribalé** (**foh-ree-bah-lay**), which is a sign of respect, worship or adoration. In our house, this is done by kneeling before him on the right knee, while your right hand touches the floor. While in this position, you say to him, "**Alafia Kabiyesi**" (**kah-bee-yeh-see**). This literally means

"Peace unto you, Chief" You should remain in the kneeling posture until the Oba gives you recognition and gestures you to stand, or says "**Didé**" (**dee-day**).

B. Babalawo/ Iyanifa. A babalawo or an Iyanifa are high priests of Ifá. They have been initiated into the disciplines and mysteries of Orunmila. The word babalawo means father of mysteries (or secrets). Iyanifa means wife of Ifa. They are greeted in the same posture as the Oba, but the verbal greeting is "**A boru, a boyé**" (**Ee bo-ruh, ee-bo-yay**). This is a shortened form of a greeting that means, "may your divination's, prayers and sacrifices always be accurate and accepted." You should remain in the same posture until the babalawo gives you his blessings and gestures you to get up. It is considered impolite to rise before he gestures you to stand. You can respond by saying **Mo dupé, baba**" (**moh-du-peh**), which means "thank you or I thank you".

C. Babalorisha and Iyalorisha. A babalorisha is a male that has been initiated into the mysteries of the Orisha that controls his head (governing orisha). He has also been trained in divination, ritual, sacrifice, herbs and medicine, making of amulets and he has been given the **authority** to communicate and to give sacrifice to other orisha, deities and ancestors. Babalorisha means Father of Orisha, orisha is taken in its plural form. An Iyalorisha is a female that has been initiated into the mysteries of her governing orisha. Iyalorisha means Mother of Orisha. Both Iyalorisha and Babalorisha have been conferred with the authority by an elder of the house and that authority gives them the proper power or asé to make transformation.

It is customary to greet a babalorisha or lyalorisha by dipping or bending your right knee, touching the floor with your right hand, then crossing your arms over your chest and saying "**Alafia (Orisha name)**". You then will touch shoulders, starting with the right shoulder and then the left shoulder. This greeting is a sign of respect for the authority that has been granted to them. Babalorisha and lyalorisha are sanctioned by the elders of the house to participate in Orisha rites and rituals, not only for this house, but for the general community.

4. Olorisha. An Olorisha (male or female) is a devotee that has received his or her governing orisha for at least one year. In our house, they are identified by their orisha name. It is the name given to them by their orisha. We greet or salute Olorisha by touching our right hand to the ground, (you do not kneel) then crossing arms and touch right shoulder to right shoulder, then left shoulder to left shoulder, as we embrace. You can greet them with "**Alafia (Orisha name)**".

5. Iyawo. The term Iyawo identifies an initiate during his or her first year. The word Iyawo, we interpret to mean wife of Orisha. But the word Iyawo is also evolutionary in its nature because it denotes the period upon which the initiate begins to learn the secrets and mysteries of the orisha. Within our house, we have a special greeting that we give to the Iyawo at his or her reception. It is our belief that both the asé of the orisha and the presence of the orisha is very fresh and strong on that third day. You may greet the Iyawo, fresh from the **Igbodu (ig-bo-dew)** as you would greet or salute an orisha. You should present yourself to the Iyawo with the correct foribale, or in the manner you would greet a

babalawo; either is acceptable. While in the posture of your choice, you may say "I greet you Iyawo (Orisha name). May the Orisha and your ancestors hear my petition and grant you...(at this point you express your blessings to the Iyawo in your own words)". After you have expressed your blessings, you end with "**asé, asé, asé**". At this point you will ask for blessings from the Iyawo (and his/her Orisha) with "May I have your blessings?"

Thereafter you will greet the Iyawo as you would other Olorisha.

Do's and Don'ts of the Etiquette of Greetings vary, but a few don'ts are:

Do not foribale in public places or in the street.

Do not touch an Iyawo if you are menstruating.

Do not salute an elder while he or she is:

- a) eating
- b) performing ebo
- c) performing prayers or petition
- d) in conversation with another elder
- e) obviously engaged in work or assignment.

Do not stand and converse with an elder if they are seated. It is considered disrespectful. You should kneel, squat or seat yourself at their feet if you wish to engage them in conversation.

Do not greet an elder with colloquial expressions. Neither Yoruba, nor English are acceptable. It is considered disrespectful.

*****Always be mindful of the African concept of respect for elders, for we know through the cycle of life and rebirth, that their next rite of passage is that of honored and revered ancestor.**

3. Authority

Within our religion and tradition, **authority**, is the signature of the transference of asé and/or ascending power. Authority must be given to you by one who holds that authority. It cannot be self-assumed or self-initiated. Without this authority, **one's asé is limited**. To perform ritual without the authority is fraudulent and can seriously encumber one's spiritual growth. Any ritual performed by an unauthorized person is invalid and has no force.

4. Celebration

We celebrate our relationship with ancestors and orisha through adimu, ebo, song and dance. In practicing our religion in America, we use the word **bembé**, to define this song and dance celebration. Since the Diaspora, and the outgrowth of Lucumi practices, the word bembé has been associated with the Yoruba festivals to their divinities. Bembes therefore are to be associated with

our orisha and ancestors and we cannot forget the spiritual aspect(s) that are amalgamated into this celebration.

We also have celebrations for members of the house for special occasions. Celebrations may be held annually; held to commemorate the date that one received their orisha. Celebrations may be held if one desires to celebrate their birthday (**E ku Odun**). Celebrations may be held simply to give thanks to orisha and or ancestors for a special blessings or for an answered petition that was urgent or for the blessings of extreme good fortune. These celebrations of devotion and thanks are often mistakenly called bembés.

A. Feast of Orisha

There are three parts to our feasts. The Iba or Oro, Song and Dance, Finale.

1) **Iba**. The feast can officially open with the Iba. It is usually chanted by the senior priest or priestess. In some instances we have an **Oro**. The feast can officially begins with the **Oro (O-row)**, with or without the Iba. Our orisha celebration follows a specific ritual format. It begins with participants paying homage to the orisha upon arrival (we stress that you should plan to arrive one to one-half hour before the start of the bembé in order to have sufficient time to present yourself to orisha before the start of the **Oro**, which is the ritual musical salute to the egun and to the orisha. This is the way of inviting the orisha and the ancestors to join us for the celebration and to ask their blessings in making the feast meaningful and successful. We especially ask Eshu to open the way for us and for the free exchange or flow of asé between the feast participants and the

orisha and ancestors. This salute can take from twenty minutes to one hour, depending on the loquaciousness of the musicians. Once the Oro is finished and the egun and orisha have been invited to partake in the festivities, the food could be blessed and the festivities may start. Food is first served to the ancestors and orisha, then to babalawo. Once this has been accomplished, the rest of the participants may be served.

2) Song and Dance. The rest of the bembé will consist of song and dance to the ancestors and orisha. Participants are encouraged to dance with, and for, the ancestors and orisha. You should make the effort to dance and sing while the song for your orisha mother or father is being played. It is customary to make an offering of money to the musicians at least once during the celebration while a song for your orisha mother and father is played. It is also a sign of appreciation and respect to the musicians who are working hard to promote a spiritual milieu so that the spirits may descend.

3) Finale. The celebration is usually brought to a close by ceremoniously eradicating all negative influences that may be around us. The ritual is achieved by performing a short dance with cleansing water and throwing it outside of the vicinity of the gathering. The vessel is returned, emptied of negativity that it might have gathered, and placed on the ground in front of the drummers, for all to see. The participants can then leave the celebration full of blessings, asé, communal harmony and free from negative influences.

B. The Foribale.

You start the process of homage when you enter the shrine of the orisha by performing foribale in front of the orisha. You should remove your shoes before entering the shrine. It is appropriate for females to present themselves to the orisha with a dress or skirt and their head tied. Foribale is required every time you enter a shrine or Igboodu (sacred grove). If you do not know whom your governing orisha is, males will perform foribale to orisha by laying on their stomachs, with their hands at their side, before the orisha. Females perform foribale to the orisha by laying before the orisha first on their left side with their right hand on their right hip and then laying on their right side with their left hand on their left hip.

If your governing orisha is a male deity, regardless of your sex, you will salute as a male. If your governing orisha is a female deity, regardless of your sex, you will salute as a female.

Females who are experiencing their menses are prohibited from entering the shrine or Igboodu and from preparing Asé food. They should not touch any object considered sacred. They may salute from the periphery and participate in other aspects of the celebration.

Upon completion of the foribale, you praise the deity or orisha by saying "Iba'sé (Ee-bah-shay) (the name of the orisha or deity three times)". Iba'sé means "I pay homage to or give praise to". At this point you may say an **oriki (o-ree-kee)** which is a traditional Yoruba prayer or praise to the orisha or deity, or

finished with your prayer, you may make your offering to the orisha. Offerings consist of food, flowers, gifts of artifacts attributable to the specific orisha or deity, and with the exception of Obatala, spirits (gin or rum preferably). Once you have completed making your offering, you can petition the orisha on behalf of yourself, your relatives, your spiritual family and for the extended family of man. You can be as specific or as general as you want with your petitions, however, be very specific with urgent matters where a specific outcome is necessary. I would strongly suggest ingesting guinea peppers before the petition is made, if it really urgent. Males take nine, females take seven.

5. General Information Regarding Conduct

The following is a list of relevant factors, that for the purpose of this publication are pertinent to Traditional etiquette, ritual and ethics and that should be observed.

A. Punctuality: Within this house, punctuality is a sign of self-discipline and respect for others. Most meetings, feasts, etc. follow a format that call for blessings, salutations and greetings at the start of the occasion. Hence, notwithstanding any mitigating circumstances, all members of the house are expected to be present before the scheduled start of any affair. In the context of the bembe, this will permit you time to make your offerings and petitions to orisha and to prepare for the bembe. You should arrive for the Oro, if at all possible.

B. Attire: Traditional attire is recommended and desirable for members of this house, but is not mandated. Attire should be neat and appropriate as a sign of respect to the orisha. ~~Women should not wear pants and should cover their heads by wearing a head piece~~ *women should not wear head piece* when approaching a shrine or orisha. No footwear is to be worn inside the house or in the shrine, if the shrine should reside outside the house.

C. Alcohol and drugs: Excessive use of alcohol is forbidden. This mandate is enacted to preserve the integrity and the spirituality of our bembes. We should maintain our spirit and mind in an unaltered state when we engage our ancestors and orisa. Hence we must use alcohol with temperance and with respect to our spiritual objectives and to our ancestors and orisha.

C. Possession: Possession is the process whereby an individual's state of consciousness is altered or supplanted by a divine spirit or ancestor spirit. At our bembes, possession is primarily the manifestation of orisha. There are various degrees of possession that are possible, from full possession, (where orisha actually engage in talk, divination, blessings and healing), to mild trances and strikingly beautiful dances and strongly enforced dance. You will recognize possession as the possessed person seems to be in a trance and will usually talk, walk, dance and act differently than their own personality. When possessed by orisha, they will most often than not assume the attributes and personality of the orisha. How you react to a possessed person is very important. We try not to interrupt the manifestation of the orisha in the person, unless their actions, movements or dancing becomes frenetic and to the point when an individual may

cause harm or damage to others or to their immediate surroundings. In all instances, you are to follow instructions of an elder in matters of all possessions.

6. Orisha Festival Observance

February	Oya
April	Oshun
May	Gelede
June	Elegba, Ogun and Oshosi
July	Lost Orisha (Igbo Shango)
September	Yemoja
October	Obatala and Orunmila
November	Egungun
December	Shango

Ilé Orisha Shango celebrates orisha feast days in accordance with the New World Calendar. It is considered the utmost proper actions for members of the ilé to be in attendance, especially if the celebration is held in honor of the member's governing orisha or the ilé's patron deity Shango. Those who are olorisha to the orisha celebrated, should take part in the life force offering. The actual dates of the feasts will be announced within two to three weeks prior to their occurrence.

February. The house holds a bembé to celebrate the orisha Oya, the Goddess of the Wind. The color for Oya is purple. Oya is especially helpful for bringing about positive and quick change and for personal protection against negative forces.

March. The house holds a celebration to celebrate Baba 'Fayomi **E ku Odun**, which is celebrated in tribute to the Egun and the house's patron orisha and Baba 'Fayomi's father Shango, the God of Thunder. The color is red. We can petition Shango for anything, but he is especially helpful in matters of social justice, strength, courage and eradicating or being triumphant over conflict.

April. The house celebrates the orisha Oshun during the month of April. Oshun is especially helpful in matters of love, marriage, fertility, money and health matters that deal with the stomach and the respiratory system.

May. The house celebrates Gelede this month. Gelede is a ritual of the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria. It is our way of paying tribute and deriving benefit from female mystical power. We ask for **gbogbo ire** for all women of the ilé through oriki and drama, song and dance,

June. The house celebrates "the warriors", Eshu, Ogun and Oshosi. Green is an excellent color to wear but you may also choose to wear red/black, green/black or white/black. We should petition Eshu for protection against negative forces. He is also the conduit for sending and receiving asé, and for opening the way for all sincere endeavors. Ogun is especially helpful for protection against negative forces, for clearing your path of impediments and obstacles. Ogun is also associated with strength and work. Oshosi is especially helpful for showing one the correct way, for spiritual information and developing good character. Oshosi is often petitioned to in cases involving legal and criminal adjudication.

July. July is the month that we celebrate all of the orisha and historic ancestors. The celebration is held at Igbo Orisha Shango where shrines of

deities, orisha and ancestors dwell. Traditional dress is desirable. It is a family day, and a day for us to remember our heritage.

September. The house honors Yemoja/Olokun, goddesses of the sea. Yemoja/Olokun is especially helpful in assistance in matters of motherhood, fertility, pregnancy, the family and finances. Oshun is especially helpful in matters of love, marriage, fertility, money and health matters that deal with the stomach and the respiratory system. A special ceremony is performed at the sea the morning of the day of the feast. The elders call down the orisha and greet them, asking for special blessings for those assembled. All members of the house are encouraged to be present for the ceremony. The color for the morning ceremony is white. Later we re-assemble for a bembe, the colors are yellow or blue.

October. The ilé holds a bembe ⁱⁿ honor of Obatala and Orunmila. Obatala is especially helpful for matters dealing with the head, e.g. peace, tranquillity, patience, wisdom, creativity, focus, clarity, and leadership. Orunmila is petitioned to for a good destiny, to promote success and happiness. The color is white. No alcohol is to be served or consumed at this celebration without express permission of the senior priest of the house.

November. November is our month to honor our ancestors in song and dance. Ancestors may be petitioned for all matters, especially those that deal with family welfare and matters of honorable commitments and ethics.

December. December is the month that we celebrate our patron orisha Shango. The color of dress is red. Shango will hear all petitions from members of this ilé.

Notes on Offerings

The Yoruba understand that there is a divine principle of "give and take"; reciprocity or "*quid pro quo*". *Quid pro quo* can be translated to mean "I give you something, You will give me something" or extending it a bit further, *quid pro quo* means "I must pay for something that I receive". It means.. "the equivalent."

This divine principle is the foundation for our rituals of giving offerings and sacrifices. For when we petition our ancestors or our divinities and ask for change, we must give them something in return, no matter how simple that offering may appear to be.

Food is usually prepared as an offering to orisha, ancestor or **ori** ; we call it **adimu**. Adimu as a word by itself, means giving or offering. Sometimes the adimu is giving alms to the poor, giving clothing or food, or shelter to the homeless. Adimu can be any act of charity, though we generally tend to render an adimu directly to the orisha and this adimu may be food, money, flowers, artifacts, or spirits. In the case of food, unlike the intention of preparing food for personal consumption, the preparation of adimu is of sacred value and has sacred overtones. Most devotees consider it a pre- or post- payment to the supernatural forces for granting a wish or petition.

Remember, the whole process of elevation relates to the state of ones mind and character rather than to social position or how many orisha pots one

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has attained. You give and contribute because that is our way of life. It's an investment in *iwa pele*. You receive blessings in return. Your family receives blessings in return. Your investment will be returned manifold. Asé

Entering a Shrine or Igbody

A shrine or Igbody is the dwelling place of spirits, our ancestors or orisa. There is a ritual greeting that is voiced and our body language is observed by the orisha or spirit as we enter their home. First and foremost take off your shoes! Women of course, should not enter any sacred dwelling place or grove when they are menstruating. As a practice and general rule both male and female should have their heads covered. As the shrine is entered a salute called *Juba* is required. Within our lineage it is as follows:

- 1) Perform foribale as required of your ruling orisha
- 2) Voice the following salutation: ***Mo Juba***

Mo juba Olodumare

Mo juba Olodumare

Mo juba Olodumare

Mo juba gbogbo orisha

Mo juba gbogbo orisha

Mo juba gbogbo orisha

Mo juba gbogbo egun, nbelese Olodumare

Mo juba gbogbo egun, nbelese Olodumare

Mo juba gbogbo egun, nbelese Olodumare

a) If the shrine is a dedicated shrine (dedicated to a particular orisha or egun or spirit) then you must give a specific **Mo juba** to that entity:

Mo juba Shango

Mo juba Shango

Mo juba Shango

b) You should add any praise names that you are knowledgeable of:

Shango, Oba Koso

Shango, Kaiwo Kabiyesi

etc.

c) You can end your salutation with **asé, asé, asé.**

3. Body language or position of reverence is important in cases where you wish to continue your communication. In some cases, for males that have received their orisha, you are allowed to kneel with your hands outstretched and continue to communicate. Females are expected to do likewise. Babalawo foribale by kneeling and having their forehead and palms of their hands touch the ground or floor of the shrine. They are expected to voice a similar **Mo juba**. In Yorubaland, if you are a devotee and you are not initiated you enter the shrine backwards and leave backwards.

RITUAL USE OF EWE

Each orisa within the Yoruba pantheon holds claim to certain herbs. Ewe is the Yoruba word for fresh green herbs. A full understanding of how these basic herbs are used is essential for the priest and priestess for without this knowledge, orisa ritual in all phases would be incomplete.

The Yoruba believe that fresh botanicals used for ritual or medicinal purposes contain certain specific ase or life-force, that is activated by prayer and incantation. Therefore the leaves of all ewe used for ritual must be strong, fresh, and green. Leaves that appear to be ripped, torn, damaged or yellow should be discarded. Stems of plants are not used.

Some use of ewe for orisa ritual include:

- a. Orisa baths without sacrifice. (Divination calls for the client to bathe in specified herbs of a particular orisa).
- b. Orisa bath with sacrifice. (Divination calls for the client to bathe in the eje of the sacrifice. In this instance, a portion of the sacrifice will be collected in a bowl containing regular omiero).
- c. Omiero: Which is a combination of herbs and other ingredients, contained in a base of water, that has been empowered by incantation to yield strong ase.

Some Uses of Omiero

- a. Cleansing of elekes, ides, talisman, sacred items, bathing and food.

- b. Consecration of elekes, ides, talisman, and sacred items.
- c. As the medium of liquid nourishment for ota. In most instances, it is poured over the ota before sacrifice. In some instances it is added after the sacrifice to temper or cool down the ota after sacrifice.

Special note: Obatala omiero is made separately from other omiero which contains epo and oti. Both of these ingredients are taboo for Obatala. Obatala omiero contains the ewe prodigioso, efun, shea butter or cocoa butter and oyin.

Ewe of the Orisha

Every orisha accepts

Prodigioso

ESHU

Mango

Guayaba *Gunua*

Guapo *(Sugar cane Rind)*

Amansa

Espartillo

OGUN

Albaca *or basil*

Yerba Mora

Siempre Viva

Maravilla

SHANGO

Alamo

SHANGO (cont'd)

Platinilla de Cuba < BANANA LEAF >

Hovo

Rompe Zaraguay < BREAK CURSE >

OBATALA

Prodigioso

OYA

Cordovan

Flamboyant

Cucuracha

YEMOJA/OLOKUN

Verbena < LEMON GRASS >

Maravilla

Albaca

Helecho

OSHUN

Helecho

Malva Te

Maravilla

AGANJU

Alamo

Hovo

Platinillo de Cuba

Rompe Zaraguay

ORUNMILA

Guanena

Making Omiero

1. Add a head of fresh prodigioso leaves (not ripped or torn) to a clean container.
2. **Add sufficient spring water to cover leaves.**
3. Begin tearing the leaves into shreds while singing Osanyin's orin.
4. Squeeze leaves to extract juices.
5. Add spring water to fill container.

Osanyin's Orin

O yigi, yigi, Ota mi o-o
O yigi, yigi, Ota mi
O yigi, yigi, Ota mi- o
O yigi, yigi, Ota mi
O yigi, yigi, Ota mi-o
O yigi, yigi, Ota mi
A wan to yigi, yigi, a cum-o
O yigi, yigi, Ota-mi

Added ingredients:

- a). Add one teaspoon of palm oil. (ola-wealth, protection)
- b). Add 1/4 teaspoonful of Shea butter or shred cocoa butter. (ori tutu)
- c). Add 2 tablespoons oyin. (honey). (sweeten life)

- d). 1 half-pint oti. (protection, harmony, potency)
- e). Drops of Florida water. (fragrance)
- f). One tablespoon efun. (ori tutu, purification)
- g). 1/2 gallon rain water. (purification, natural element)
- h). 1 pint salt water. (combats negative elements)

5. After all of the ingredients have been added, continue stirring and invoke Osanyin three times.

6. Ask Osanyin to activate the asé of the omiero so that it may be used for healing, cleansing, food and a nutritious and nurturing environment for the orisha.

You must say the incantation that gives authority or empowerment to the omiero.

consecration
of the water
stir with
middle
finger

Closing incantation

Ogbe Meji O

Ogbe Meji O

Ogbe Meji O

Ofun Meji

Ofun Meji

Ofun Meji

The incantation for the omiero can be sealed with "To!" (toe)

Igbodu Omiero

Igbodu omiero is the sacred elixir used during ritual initiations. The process thus will vary somewhat from the regular procedure. All orisa that the initiate has and will receive will be present at that time. Omiero must be prepared for all orisa present. The following procedure represents the method followed by our lineage for making Igbodu omiero.

1. The specific ewe needed to prepare omiero for each of the orisa present will be issued to individuals who have been assigned to Igbodu to prepare.
2. Included with the specific ewe will be prodigioso ewe. Only the strong fresh leaves should be chosen. The orin to Osanyin should begin at this time.
3. Fresh spring water or pre-made "basic" omiero should be poured into the bowl or container to cover the leaves.
4. Leaves are then shredded, while the orin continues.
5. After the leaves are shredded, you now begin to squeeze the leaves to extract the juice.
6. Add spring water or omiero to fill the bowl or container.
7. Note: When there is ample time available, a "basic" or pre-made omiero could be made the night before. All that would have to be done then, is to add the specific ewe of the orisa to it, and empower the omiero.

8. Once the omiero is finished, you will now invoke the Orisa that it is intended for. Ask that they empower the omiero with their ase. Close this incantation with "ase, ase, ase". Then give the omiero authority: (Ogbe Meji three times then-Ofun Meji three times).

9. Note: If you have started the mixture using spring water, you must add the necessary ingredients to the mixture. Once the ingredients have been added. You can then empower the omiero using the same procedure as above.

OBATALA OMIERO

1. An even number of prodigioso ewe will be placed in a bowl or container and covered with spring water.
2. Ewe will be torn while singing the Osanyin orin.
3. The leaves will then be squeezed, so that the juice from the ewe is released.
4. After the leaves are torn, the remaining water will be poured into the bowl or container to bring water to desired content level.
5. Osanyin is invoked. Ask Osanyin to allow the ase from the prodigioso to flow into the water.
6. Ingredients that are added to Obatala's omiero are efun, cocoa butter and oyin. Prior to adding the ingredients, each item needs to be activated by calling the item by name and announcing it's attributes. Each item is added separately

the mixture. After you empower each item, the orin will be continued while thoroughly stirring the added ingredients.

7. At this time Obatala will be invoked and asked to transfer his ase and attributes to the omiero. ex;

Obatala, Obatala, Obatala, (state your name) I ask that you empower this omiero with your ase. Baba Obatala we petition for peace of mind, focus, clarity and good health. Ase, ase, ase,

Ogbe Meji three times 3-Ofun Meji three times.

A Note On Our Sacred Odu

New World Africans by and large are not aware that an ancient code of behavior existed for our ancestors. Few if any would identify or compare this ancient moral code with anything that has sacred value today. As a colonized people most will speak of the bible as our moral and spiritual guidebook. New World Africanists are searching archives and finding that ancient black civilizations existed with advanced knowledge of the sciences and arts, medicine and commerce. African civilizations, many born from warrior nations, created magnificent states of the highest intellectual and moral order over a thousand years ago. Today, as a means of self-expression, we, as a scattered people, are now trying to recreate a link with our African past. We are trying to recreate an atmosphere of brotherhood and unity through Afrocentricity. We are trying to recreate an atmosphere that was intrinsic to a value system that our forefathers knew since the beginning of time, and that still exists among the Yoruba of West Africa.

Annually, international leaders who follow the "orisha tradition" meet and discuss similarities and differences of their practices. One of the major items that surfaces at these conferences is the role of *Ifá* or the role of the ancient wisdom of the old world as it is known and applied today. It is that ancient wisdom that still provides the ethical and moral guide for the Yoruba people. The basis of this information was provided through the recitations from our *Odu Corpus* or *Odu Ifá*. The Odu Ifa is our religious point of reference, based on human experiences

of acceptable and unacceptable behavior. The stories found in the Odu Ifa are similar to the psalms of David, but these odus are more than our psalms, they provide guidance to a way of life. Each of the 256 odus have many verses. These odus and their verses (some say 1,560) have been memorized and handed down from one generation to another by Ifa priests (babalawo) since the Yoruba existed as a people.

Today, as in our past history, when practitioners consult a babalawo, that practitioner usually goes to him with a problem. It is the diviners skill that interprets both the underlying cause of the problem and the solution to the problem. This is derived from information given in the odu that has been cast for the individual. Besides having a name, it also represents the character of a divinity. The verses, or stories that follow are episodes in human experiences that belong to that divinity. The clients problem and solution to the problems lies within these verses.

Each odu is generally identified by a specific configuration of vertical single and double lines. Without going into the metaphysics of the configurations, each one is considered an energy pattern; and this energy pattern is the **asé** (power) found within the odu. As mentioned before, there is a name associated with each of the 256 configurations and for each one of the 256 configurations, there are several poetic verses, each one telling a story of some human experience that happened hundreds of years ago.

We, the priests of the Tradition, will continually refer to such terms as "alignment" and "balance" in Ifa. This "balance" is expanded to the message given in each verse of the odu. There is always a negative and a positive side to the odu; there is a male side and a female side to the odu, which the diviner must interpret and tell the client how to balance his or her life or how to realign oneself to eliminate the problem and generate harmony.

I must remind you that we are investigating a religion that is thousands of years old. The information that we have today has been handed down orally by our forefathers from generation to generation. Therefore, we will always find some variation as we examine more than one source of information. The information on the odus comes from several sources, in different geographic locations. This may add greater variation than one may find in one particular geographic area in Southwestern Nigeria.

The word "odu" has several meanings. Among the meanings, odu means pot or container, Odu means deity. Odu is the name given to a wife of Orunmila. Odu is also a contraction of the name of our Supreme Being. Odu means large. All of these meanings have significance and can be taken figuratively or literally. Let us for the sake of our present topic, associate the word odu with divinity.

Each odu should be thought of as a supernatural being and regarded as a divinity in its own right. These are the divinities that Orunmila promised to send from heaven to help perform some of the functions that he was performing while he was on earth. There were sixteen chief divinities and 240 minor divinities in

heaven. The sixteen major divinities were said to be sons of Orunmila. The 16 chief divinities were called **Olodus**, or **Oju Odu**. Today, they are more commonly referred to as the **major odus**. The 240 subordinate divinities were known simply as **odu**, or **Omo odu** or **Amulu odu**. Today, they are more commonly referred to as **minor odus**. Each of the chief divinities were noted for some major accomplishment they achieved in heaven, and they were also known for some noteworthy performances on earth. It is important to remember that when these divinities came to earth, they maintained all of the attributes of man. Both their fortunes and misfortunes could readily be related to the human experiences that we endure today as human beings.

As I speak of each one of the major odus, I will introduce them in the order of seniority that is accepted and practiced in my village of Ejigbo in Lagos State, and is in keeping with the teaching of my lineage. There is some geographic variation in the order of seniority of the odus. Even though there is variation, this variation is **consistent** and lends itself to an orderly and disciplined approach to the practice of the art. Through this consistency, the orisha of the odu will speak to the diviner in the system that he uses. Two underlying factors in divination for getting the truth is the skill and the integrity of the diviner. In the practice of divination, the order of seniority plays a paramount role in determining the answer to a specific problem or question when a diviner is formulating the resolution to the problem.

In heaven, **Ofun Meji** was the most senior, and leader of the chief divinities. When the divinities left heaven for earth and reached the frontier gate

separating heaven from earth, they reversed their order to allow the most junior of the sixteen chiefs to enter first and prepare the way for the more senior divinities that would follow; and of course, the most senior would be the last. The most junior divinity was **Eji Ogbe**, he was then followed by the 15th odu **Oyeku Meji**, who in turn was followed by the 14th odu, **Iwori Meji**, and so on, until **Ofun Meji** came last.

As **Eji Ogbe** entered the frontier gate and descended to earth, the large gathering of expectant people saw him and immediately hailed him as number one, the King of the Odus. In this way, the ranking of the sixteen major odus was completely reversed, giving a new order of seniority to the odus which has remained to this day. This reversal of order caused considerable consternation among the odus and we will see as we read of their lives on earth, how it affected them. **Eji Ogbe** is regarded as the most senior odu, but whenever Ifa priests cast **Ofun Meji**, they hail him as king (HEPA ODU!)

The information given in the verses of the odus are not considered secret. There is but one warning that I will pass on to the uninitiated. The single and double lines that are drawn for each odu are different. They are presented to you as a means of identification of one odu from another. **DO NOT WRITE AND CHANT THE ODUS SIMULTANEOUSLY.** You may unwittingly evoke the asé or energy of the odu and it can act in a productive or destructive manner. As you know, energy, once created, cannot be destroyed, it can only be transformed.

Hence, for the uninitiated or poorly initiated, this energy could be hazardous to your welfare.

One of the requirements that is demanded of you, is to know the sequence of the 16 major odus. Another is to be familiar with the general meaning of each of the sixteen major odus. Lastly, you should familiarize yourself with which orisha the odu belongs to.

SIXTEEN MAJOR ODUS

EJIOGBE

Ejogbe speaks of general well-being, success and blessings. The potential for prosperity and peace of mind. Patience, is the virtue that is stressed. Ejogbe will give victory over enemies. The client is seeking peace and prosperity. Sacrifice is necessary. The odu belongs to **OBATALA**, Shango, Ori.

OYEKU MEJI

Oyeku Meji speaks of preventing death, sickness, unhappiness and general darkness that may be in one's path. Sacrifice to Eshu and feeding the head is

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recommended routinely. The Odu is governed by **ESHU** and **EGUNGUN**, Oya and Yemoja.

IWORI MEJI

Iwori Meji speaks of the spiritual world and the need for connection with the spiritual world. Need to involve oneself with religion and spiritual growth. Clients whom this odu falls for are advised to worship Ifa. They will get all of the blessings. They must honor their elders and ancestors. The odu belongs to **EGUNGUN** and Ifa.

IDI MEJI

Idi Meji warns of secret enemies. There is a lot of stress involved with this odu and appeasement of Ifa is the solution. This odu is associated with motherhood and the birth of a child. The odu brings good fortune and long life. Both Orunmila and the ori must be propitiated. This odu belongs to **OSHUN**, Yemoja, Eshu.

IROSU MEJI

Irosu Meji speaks of the need to overcome emotional and financial hardships. There is a need to monitor one's mental health by feeding the head. There is a

need to maintain a certain positive energy and a good destiny by propitiating one's ori. This odu is owned by **OSHUN**, Ifa, and Shango.

OWONRIN MEJI

Owonrin Meji speaks of moderation; moderation in everything. Sacrifice will bring money and a wife. Adimu to the less fortunate is also a requisite for success and happiness. This odu is owned by **ESHU**, Ori and Oya.

OBARA MEJ

Obara Meji speaks of being unsure, indecisive, and uncertain. It speaks of enemies waiting in ambush. It speaks of emotional imbalance and acting on impulse. Sacrifice is required to solve his problems. This odu is owned by **OBATALA**, Shango and Eshu.

OKANRAN MEJI

Okanran Meji also speaks of hardship through court cases and other problems. It is the odu of a strong-willed person, who often creates problems for self. Health is an important aspect and must always be monitored. To regain the good things in life sacrifice is required. The odu belongs to **SHANGO** and Yemoja.

OGUNDA MEJI

Ogunda meji warns of a hostile social environment. It warns of betrayal by someone who confidence is reposed in. For resolution of financial problems and to conquer opposition from enemies, sacrifice to Ogun. This odu is owned by **OGUN**, Egungun and Ori.

OSA MEJI

Osa Meji denotes a lack of courage and running away from something considered distasteful. Osa Meji is related to the Mothers and to witchcraft. The client does not sleep well, has bad dreams and has trouble maintaining focus and clarity. The client has trouble concentrating. The ori must be fed often. Sacrifices to Shango, the witches and Eshu may be required to rectify the condition. This odu belongs to **OYA**, Oshun and Yemoja.

IKA MEJI

Ika Meji signifies that the immediate environment is out of control. There is lack of support from family and friends. Client is surrounded by negativity. People delight in inflicting pain and suffering on others. Success comes only from personal endeavors. Sacrifice to Ifa and Ogun will overcome the feeling of being

overwhelmed. One must feed the ori to make the best choices. This odu belongs to **ESHU**, Ogun.

OTURUPON MEJI

OLOGBON MEJI

Oturupon Meji speaks of children and endurance. When this odu is cast it can speak of the birth of a child or the upbringing of children. It can also speak of stubbornness and a super endurance to put up with distress and pain. It is a necessity to honor the ancestors, Obatala and feed the head often. This odu belongs to **OSHUN**, Obatala, Shango.

OTURA MEJI

Otura Meji speaks of peace of mind and the need for patience. Success in business and personal endeavors are coming. There is a need for frequent sacrifice to Eshu. The head must be attended to often and children of this odu must not overtax themselves, resting as often as possible. When this odu is cast for a client, the client is often thoughtless, poor, without wife and without strong family ties. Sacrifices to Ogun, Yemoja and Ifa will rectify all of his problems,

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bringing them under control. This odu belongs to **OBATALA**, Shango, Yemoja and Ogun.

IRETE MEJI

Irete Meji is the odu dedicated to Orunmila, in that children of this odu should dedicate their life to Ifa, if they wish to reach their greatest potential. This odu speaks of humility as the key to success. This odu speaks of all of the blessings when one honors Ifa. This odu belongs to **ORUNMILA**, Eshu and Yemoja.

OSE MEJI

Ose Meji implies victory over enemies and control over difficulties. Sacrifices to Shango and Orunmila will conquer the enemies. For love, money and success, appropriate sacrifices must be given to Oshun. This odu belongs to **SHANGO**, Oshun and Ogun

OFUN MEJI
ORANGUN MEJI

Ofun Meji is an odu that speaks of financial success. It also signifies pregnancy when cast for a woman. This odu calls for patience and compromise. The odu is owned by **YEMOJA**, Obatala, and Ajé.

ODUS AND RELATED ORISHA (IFA SYSTEM)

OGBE	OBATALA, Shango, Ori
OYEKU	ESHU, EGUNGUN, OYA, Yemoja
IWORI	EGUNGUN, IFA
IDI	OSHUN, Yemoja, Eshu
IROSUN	OSHUN, IFA, Shango
OWONRIN	ESHU, ORI, Oya
OBARA	OBATALA, SHANGO, Eshu

OKANRAN	SHANGO, Yemoja
OGUNDA	OGUN, Egungun, Ori
OSA	OYA, OSHUN, Yemoja
IKA	ESHU, Ogun
OTURUPON	OSUN, Obatala, (Shango)
OTURA	OBATALA, Shango, Yemoja (Ogun)
IRETE	IFA, Eshu, Yemoja
OSE	SHANGO, Oshun, (Ogun)
OFUN	YEMOJA, OBATALA, Ajé

Relationship of Characters of Obi Divination to Orisha

OGBE	Obatala
OYEKU	Eshu
ILERA	Obatala, Ogun
AJE	Yemoja
EJIRE	Obatala, Yemoja
AKORAN	Shango, Eshu
ERO	Oshun

AKITA

Ogun

OBITA

Oshun

Sacrifice

The Meaning of Sacrifice

The Yoruba believe in the ritual sacrifice (ebo), for without sacrifice, we would not experience positive change in our lives. Sacrifices are usually performed to obtain blessings (ire) and to ward off misfortune (ibi); to offer thanks, or as a payment for a covenant made with orisa or egun.

Divination provides the indicator as to which spiritual realm will bring forth the positive changes: ori, egun or orisa. Therefore we stress the importance for the olorisa to become proficient in understanding the art of divination. It is through divination that we know whom to sacrifice to and what sacrifice is required.

We believe and accept the following spiritual concepts of ritual sacrifice; that our prayer(s) and petition(s) are given to the spirit of the animal that is being sacrificed. As the animals' life is ended, the spirit of the animal captures our request(s) and takes it to the ori, egun, or orisa as directed in the invocation before the sacrifice. We believe that the blood of the sacrifice has energy or fuel, which the ori, egun, or orisa uses to make such a change. When sacrifice is made to an orisha, the blood of the sacrifice is usually given to the otas of that orisa. When the blood is given to egun, we share it with the symbol of reverence for male or female ancestor (either the right or left big toe).

Procedure for the Performance of Sacrifice

Being of calm mind and body is the essential first, for performing ritual sacrifice. If you feel overwhelmed or full of anxiety, or it is close to your time of the month, it may not be advisable to perform ebo for yourself or another person. Take time to regain composure so that you can focus on what the sacrifice means.

Prior to the ritual, establish a designated area for the ritual to be performed. The area may be a consecrated shrine, or an area in someone's home that has been cleansed for the sacrifice to take place. Be mindful that ritual clothing should be white, and if the ritual will be performed in a shrine, you must first salute the orisa(s) present.

Have all of the necessary items pertaining to the sacrifice(s) ready. There will be no time for second guessing once the ritual is in progress. Be sure that you and the others have taken ataare (Guinea pepper); nine (9) for men or seven (7) for women. Be sure that your knowledge is clear regarding the type of fowl required by the orisa, ori or egun.

It is important to note that in most sacrifices to orisha that are not warriors, omiero is used in the orisha's pot. Eje (blood) is not served directly to their ota, but to the omiero which the ota are resting in. Also, through divination, the orisha may request that a bath with some of the blood of the sacrifice should take place. In this instance, a bowl of omiero should be placed among the items needed for the ritual, and a prescribed quantity of blood from the sacrifice is

5 pints
of water

allowed to mix with the omiero in the bowl. The blood and omiero is later mixed with tepid water and a bath is then given.

General Items and Fowls of Sacrifice

Eshu:	-roosters, epo, oti, oyin
Ogun:	-roosters, epo, oti, oyin
Ochosi:	-roosters, epo, oti, oyin
Osanyin:	-roosters, epo, oti, oyin
Sango:	-roosters, epo, oti, oyin, ram
Obatala:	-hens, pigeons, Obatala omiero, omi
Orunmila:	-hens, pigeons, epo, oti, oyin, pig
Oshun:	-hens, pigeons, omiero, oti, oyin
Yemoja:	-hens, guinea hens, omiero, molasses
Olokun:	-pigeons, guinea hens, omiero, molasses
Oya:	-hens, omiero
Ori:	-pigeons, hens
Egun:	-roosters, hens

RITUAL SACRIFICE TO ORISA

Note: One of the traditions of Ile orisa Shango, allows the Olorisa upon completion of their training, to be presented with a knife, symbolizing their understanding and knowledge of ritual. The knife also means that you can perform ritual sacrifice. You should use this knife for this purpose and this purpose only.

Olorisa of this house are expected to understand the ritual of sacrifice for the ori, for orisa, and to egun including prayers and oriki in Yoruba.

Returning to the designated area where the ebo will take place, all of the items for the ritual should be in place including the fowl. A protective covering like a newspaper should be placed on the floor first and particulars should be arranged.

Procedure:

1. Take each fowl that is to be used for sacrifice and present it to forehead three times (you are saluting the ori and requesting permission)
2. Invoke Elegba to witness the ritual and carry prayers, petitions and asé of the sacrifice to whomever it is intended. The Yoruba invocation is ***Osé 'tura:***

Ose Tura O! Watiti Wa

Ose Tura O! Wa titiWa

Ose Tura O! Wa titiWa

Ko ba ti wa ebo a (name of person ebo is intended)

Fun wa ni ire; ire aiyeku, ire owo, ire omo, ire aya ,ire isegun lori ota, ire alafia.

Ase,Ase,Ase.

3. Invoke Orisa that the sacrifice is intended for:

Shango mo pe o

Shango mo pe o

Shango mo pe o

Baba Shango I am Babalorisa Kayodele, I am calling you on behalf of Kathy Simpson. Ifa has said that you (Baba Shango) will remove the ibi, "ofu" that is with her. Ifa said that you ask for two roosters as sacrifice. Baba Shango remove "ofu" from Kathy's life so that she may move forward. Shango hear our petition and accept our sacrifice to you.

Ase, Ase, Ase.

4. Make the sacrificial cut. While the cut is being made say the sacrificial incantation :

Shango re de kun

ele kunjé (This incantation is repeated three times) Then:

Ogun, shoro, shoro

Ejé b'alé kara oro (This incantation is repeated three times)

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5. While the incantations are being voiced, the following sequence should be followed:

- a) Allow eje to flow on the Orisa,
- b) Allow eje to flow into the bowl with omiero (if bath is prescribed),
- c) Share the eje with the Ori (Use the middle finger of your right hand; touching the center of the head and running your finger with the blood toward the back of the head. You are sharing the sacrifice with the ori).
- d) Invoke the Ori: Call to the ori in the name of the person for whom the sacrifice is being made, and ask for the five blessings (ire) you may also add the blessings for which the sacrifice is being made.

RITUAL SACRIFICE TO ORI

Ori in Yoruba means "head". From both ritual and spiritual aspects we as learned ones of the religion must know that there are two oris. The first ori, called the **ori** inu is in fact our soul. It is our ancestral soul, and is associated with our destiny. The other ori, refers to our emotions and passion. There are many among us that are required to "feed their heads" monthly. We are primarily speaking of the ori that sustains our emotions and we feed it monthly to maintain focus, clear vision, control of our emotions and alignment.

Animals of sacrifice to either of the two oris do not differ, but one must go through the process of divination to determine which ori the Oracle wants us to

feed. Sacrificial animals to Ori include pigeons and hens. If the sacrifice is to Orunmila, without a doubt it is for your *Ori inu*, and it is to correct a flawed or troublesome future. If the sacrifice is to Obatala, it is for emotional control and to have focus.

Procedure for Ori Sacrifice

1. Prepare the area where the sacrifice is to take place. Have all of the necessary items present.
2. If the sacrifice is for Obatala, make sure you have covered his ota with his omiero and one that is void of alcohol and palm oil. You should also have some cold water available. If the sacrifice is for Orunmila, your ikin will receive the blood directly. Make sure you have palm oil, gin or rum and honey.
3. Foribale to your ori by touching the forehead three times with the fowl(s) that is (are) to be sacrificed.
4. Invoke Eshu to carry prayers and sacrifice.
5. Invoke either Obatala or Orunmila.
6. Sacrifice fowls while reciting sacrificial incantations.
7. Using your middle finger, place blood on crown of head, where the Ori is located, (this should be done three times) and repeat request for ire (ori prayer). Also petition the ori specifically for the intention of the sacrifice.

ORI PRAYER

*Ori, Ori, Ori,
I call upon the Ori of (persons name ebo is for)
We (I) ask for clarity, focus and peace of mind (Obatala)
We (I) ask for a good destiny (Orunmila) filled with ire;
Ire aiku, ire owo, ire omo, ire aya, ire isegun lori ota, ire alafia.
Ase,Ase,Ase.*

EGUN RITUAL SACRIFICE

We sacrifice generally to Ori, Egun and Orisha for change. There are times when our Egun may require sacrifice for the change(s) that we are requesting. This can only be determined through divination. Divination will tell you whether it is for the male ancestors, female ancestors or both. Divination will also tell you how many fowl. Male egun require roosters, female egun require hens. During the ritual sacrifice, ~~after sharing the blood of the sacrifice with the~~ the blood of the sacrifice will be placed on the right big toe to signify homage paid to male egun, on the left big toe symbolizes homage to the female egun.

Procedure for Egun Sacrifice

1. You should collect all of the items needed for the Egun sacrificial ritual before you start. Basically you will need omiero, water, a white altar candle, a small bell,

ota of the ancestor(s), two white bowls, knife, fowl(s), and the list of names of egun to be summoned for the ritual.

2. Place a protective covering of newspaper down in the designated area for ritual to take place.

3. If you do not have an ota dedicated to egun, then place omiero in a white bowl. This bowl will receive the blood of the sacrifice. Fill a second white bowl with spring water. It is in this water that the egun will stand after they have been invoked.

4. Have all of the required items at hand.

5. Note: Egun ritual clothing is always white.

6. Light the candle. It is now time for the libation and invocation to the egun. Take some water from the white bowl and sprinkle some of the water over the area where the sacrifice will take place.

Egun libation and Invocation

Omi tutu

Ona tutu

Ile tutu

Tutu Laroye

Tutu Egun

Ko si 'ku

Ko si arun

Ko si ejo

Ko si ofo

Ko si idina

Ko si akoba

Ko si fitibo

Ariku Baba wa

Mo Juba

Mo juba Olodumare

Mo juba gbogbo Orisa

Mo juba gbogbo Egun nblese Olodumare

(From the list of names you have assembled, you will call them by Mo juba)

Mo juba Mary Smith

Mo juba Mary Smith

Mo Juba Mary Smith

(You may softly ring the bell as you are calling them to descend)

7. When you have finished calling them. State who you are and why you are calling egun. If you are calling them on behalf of someone other than yourself, name that person, and explain that Ifa has requested that this sacrifice be done, state for what reasons.

8. Take the fowl and touch it to the forehead (three times) of person the ritual is being performed for.

9. Begin sacrifice using same procedure as other sacrificial rituals. Call Ose Tura to witness sacrifice.

10. Sacrifice fowl and begin with sacrifice incantation.

11. Blood will be allowed to flow either on ota of egun or into bowl with omiero.

12. The same middle finger will be taken to place some eje on the ~~middle~~ the corresponding toe(s) according to what the Oracle requested.

13. Egun at this point are thanked for coming to receive sacrifice and asked to return (ascend).

ring the bell in returning

IGBODU

Concept of Igbodu

An Igbodu is a sacred place where ritual rites of passage or worship takes place. This sacred grove or shrine is a consecrated place that may be dedicated to orisa, egun, or spirit. Ritual rites of passage that occur in Igbodu may be associated with orisa or Ifa.

When an initiate enters into Igbodu, it signifies a rite of passage, which is some form of rebirth. The initiate enters the sacred grove as an "omo" with aspirations of a new spiritual life and a "surer" path toward the fulfillment of their destiny. Adequate preparations should have been made for mind and spirit. As the initiate steps across the threshold of Igbodu, a pigeon is sacrificed to insure blessings and the safe return of the omo to Igbodu. Maybe more symbolically, the blood from the pigeon is related to the union of the egg and sperm and the creation of a new life.

*Do pigeon before candidate
comes in put blood of pigeon
of the door*

Entering Igbodu therefore can be compared to the journey that the fetus takes during its stay in the mothers' womb. Sacrifices are made to all of the orisha present, asking for blessings for the "about-to-be-born" baby. The birth process has begun as the initiate exits Igbodu to be bathed in the sacred omiero, which consists of the blood of the sacrifice and ewe of their governing orisa. It is

at this time that the initiate's head is shaven, and he or she, carefully dressed in white, to return to Igbodu. Old clothing is buried, and the head is shaven to indicate the removal of the past. A new beginning, without adult vanity, to meet ones orisa.

The new initiate returns to Igbodu to become wedded to orisa.

When we speak of the initiate wedded to his or her orisa, what we mean is that the governing orisa is summoned and the ase of that orisa is passed and fused into the head of the initiate to become united. Afterwards, the Iyawo emerges (bride of orisa).

Spirit of Transformation

1. The initiate enters Igbodu as **omo**. The spiritual process of Rebirth occurs.
2. The initiate leaves igbodu (transformed) as **Iyawo** (bride of Orisa).

Important Note:

There is a great probability that if the initiate becomes possessed at any time during the ritual, that the ritual will be invalid. Care must be taken to try to avoid prolonged possession. No further sequence of the ritual should be attempted until the person's personality become unaltered.

There should be no substitution of sacrifice to an orisha in Igbodu. Once orisha has asked for a specific animal or fowl, or a given number of fowl, do not try to substitute without divination otherwise the sacrifice is invalid and the rite of passage cannot continue.

Working in Igboodu / Protocol

1. One must be in alignment if one is to work in Igboodu. Whatever personal problems or conflicts that may surface, they should be resolved and left behind **before entering Igboodu.**
2. The Oluwo and Ifa decides who will work Igboodu.
3. Olorisha are seldom permitted to work Igboodu if they have left Igboodu six months or less.

Staging the Igboodu

1. Igboodu clothing is white.
2. Cleanse Igboodu by smudging or by using obi abata water.
3. Make fresh omiero. There should be fresh omiero available for each orisa present. Each orisas omiero **must** be labeled. The largest portion of omiero should be made for the governing orisa.
4. All materials that are to be used should be in place. Also, the orisa that will be needed for the initiation, Esu, Ogun, Osanyin, and any other orisa that the initiate may have or will receive. Other items needed include elekes, dilogun, and any other items.

5. Make sure all fowl for the initiation are accounted for and are in place.
6. Before the initiate enters igbodu, warriors and all items needed for the sacrifice should be set up.

Responsibilities:

1. Igbodu workers should be prepared to bring animals that are used for sacrifice into Igbodu. They should be prepared to hold the animal (s) of the sacrifice.
2. Igbodu workers should be familiar with the incantations of sacrifice.
3. Igbodu workers are responsible for the removal of sacrifice out of igbodu for ase preparation.
4. Igbodu workers should label ase, since the iyawo (s) must eat the fowl sacrificed to their governing orisa. If there is a multiple initiation, each initiate's ase must be separated and kept track of.
5. Igbodu workers must clean the sacrifice area of blood after each sacrifice.
6. The senior Igbodu worker is usually chosen to shave the head of the initiate and to give the ritual bath. The person giving the bath should have Knowledge of the prayers said during the bath.
7. Note: The bath area must be cleaned immediately after the bath.

8. Note: The clothes of the initiate are to be put in a bag along with the cut hair to be discarded.

9. Note: Workers in Igboodu must be prepared to clean and prepare ase; feed and take care of Iyawo's needs and see to it that all participants are fed and cared for.

10. When the Iyawo returns to Igboodu, and orisa is placed on his or her head, workers are expected to give blessings, and upon receipt of the governing orisa to congratulate.

HOW TO PERFORM IGBODU

Performance in Igboodu

1. The Oluwo will open Igboodu with the "Iba ". The response is "***Kiba wa se O***".

2. The initiate , with head covered is brought to the door of Igboodu by his or her sponsor and asks permission to enter.

3. Permission is granted and initiate (jumps) over the doorway.

4. The initiate's feet are cleansed with a white pigeon. A prayer is said for iré, and a successful re-birth.

5. The Initiate is seated, and the cover is removed.

6. Warrior orisa are then fed:

Note: Each orisa present has his or her separate omiero prepared with their ewe. The omiero will be placed with each orisa before sacrifice takes place.

a. Blood is given to each orisha

b. Blood is then shared with the Ori.

c. Afterwards the ori is bathed with the omiero of that specific orisa.

7. When all of the orisha have been fed or brought down. A second rooster is given to Esu to clear the way for the four legged sacrifice. The four legged offering is brought into Igbody.

8. The four legged animal is placed on the mat in front of the initiate and oriki to the governing orisa will be said over the four legged sacrifice on behalf of the initiate.

9. The initiate kneels and petitions into both ears of the sacrifice (this should be said out loud so that the ase response can be added at the end of each wish.

10. Four legged sacrifice is performed and blood is offered in this format:

A. Blood to the head of initiate

B. Blood to the orisa pot

C. Blood to the omiero of orisa (for bath)

11. Initiate then tastes blood (from the head of the sacrifice).

12. If divination called for other fowls, these sacrifices are now made, using the same procedure.

13. Initiate is led from Igbodù for;

a. Bath with omiero

b. Bath with black soap

c. Hair to be cut and shaved.

d. White ritual attire.

14. Initiate re-enters Igbodù and is seated.

15. Shaved head is painted with efun and irosun by all present.

16. Pot of orisha is placed on head, oriki is said for orisa to descend to head.

17. Blessings (Ire) are given to the initiate from olorisa and priests, while pot is on head.

18. Ori prayer is said by Oluwo for ori to except the transformation/fusion and to acknowledge all of the ire from well-wishers and from other orisha during the initiation and to be granted a good destiny.

19. The ori orin is sung.

Ori Orin

edála yanmo

Ori loni se, adala yema

Ori loni se, ori loni se

Ori loni se ~~adala~~ yema-o
edala yanmo

Ori loni se ~~adala~~ yema
edala yanmo

Ori loni se, ori loni se

Ori loni se ~~adala~~ yema-o
edala yanmo

Ori loni se ~~adala~~ yema
edala yanmo

Ori loni se, ori loni se

Ori loni se adala yema-o

edala yanmo

~~Adala~~ yema-o,

Adala yema-o

Adala yema-o

Ah, ori loni se, ori loni se

Ori loni se ~~adala~~ yema-o
edala yanmo

is the owner
~~knows~~ yours destiny

Ori ~~is~~

Ori is the essence

20. Orin for orisa is played (lyawo's orisa) and the lyawo dances to music of their orisa.

21. When the initiate stops dancing, they will then be asked to kneel. They are given the pot at this time. The pot is offered to their soul (the forehead, *ori inu*) to the chest, *emi*, and then the iyawo grounds the pot by placing the pot on the mat, in front of them.

22. This ends the ceremony. Congratulations are in order!!!!.

PREPARATION OF ASE

Traditionally, the head, feet, one wing and the heart of the fowl is presented to the orisha when a life force offering is given. The meat of all of the fowls sacrificed to that orisha is considered sacred and is considered **asé** as it is prepared for consumption by the devotee(s).

All **female** devotees must learn to prepare asé. Each must de-feather the fowl, clean and cook the fowl according to a traditional recipe. This can be done voluntarily, or during their assignment to the food committee. One cannot handle asé during menses. The person appointed to supervise the preparation of food is responsible for the menu and preparation of all food that will be offered or consumed by the devotees and guests at the affair. There is a sacred part to this responsibility which pertains to the asé. The supervisor must arrange for the pick-up and oversee the preparation of the fowl or four-legged animal that will be served as asé.

All **male** devotees must learn to prepare asé of four-legged sacrifices. Each must skin and quarter the animal and eventually cut its meat for consumption.

If an olorisha considers priesthood, they should know preparation of asé for fowl and four-legged, regardless of their gender.

POSSESSION

There are instances when you will observe a person going through what we commonly call "possession". We have defined possession in the protocol section as a process whereby an individual's state of consciousness is altered or supplanted by a divine spirit or ancestor spirit. We may sometimes see the presence of an alien spirit, that is neither divine nor ancestral. When drumming is sacred and dancing is performed as part of worship, possession is primarily the manifestation of orisha, especially if possession is among olorisha. We repeat again that there are various degrees of possession, from full possession, (where orisha actually engages in talk, divination, blessings and healing), to mild trances and strikingly beautiful dances and strongly reinforced dance. There are also possession by egun that may vary from a mild dance state to guttural sounds that cannot be readily identified. Whatever is the case, you by now should be able to recognize one who is possessed and know how to deal with the person. We try not to interrupt the manifestation of the orisha in the person, unless their actions, movements or dancing becomes frenetic and to the point when an individual may cause harm or damage to others or to the immediate surroundings. If this is the case, you should try to lead the person to a chair and give them air; give them water to drink, and or water to their forehead. Stay with them until the possession passes.

In some instances, the person will pass out, falling to the ground or floor. We can only try to lift them and place them in a sitting position and again, give them air and water. Do not become overwrought if you cannot move them. We are talking about dead weight in most instances. If you cannot lift them, leave them on the ground, but give them air and water, if they so respond. If they do not respond, you can only keep an eye on them.

If the possession was somewhat aggressive in nature, you may have to try to restrain the individual. If you are by yourself and the spirit is overly aggressive, **leave it (them) alone!!**

Chances are great that if music is still playing, (even though the individual has just recovered from a bout), the individual will fall to the beat of the drum and once again become possessed. This is a matter between the individual's spirit and the orisha or egun; and you personally, have nothing to do with preventing it. All that you can do is monitor it's actions.

If the spirit or orisha that possesses the person is of a highly evolved level, the spirit may speak and ask for items or articles, such as omi, efun, ori, palm oil, oti, oyin or even a white red, or black piece of cloth. If it is available, or a closely acceptable substitute is available, by all means give it to them. If the spirit is slightly agitated, try to restrain it without undue force. If it is highly agitated and or aggressive, then **leave it alone!**

There may be an instance when you may feel that someone else, either more qualified or experienced should handle the possession. If such is the case, then call for that person's help, but under no circumstances should you ignore the person who is possessed.

Try to avoid possession during ritual. If you notice that they are going "under", keep talking to the person or offer them water. The ritual should not continue as long as the persons personality is altered.

INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS

To discuss the subject of dreams, we must first establish a baseline that everyone understands. We will speak of the mind which in its simplest form can be defined as "the owner of all conscious and unconscious mental process and activities of the body". We will go further now and speak of two "minds"; the awaking or conscious mind, and we will speak of the "dream" mind, which is the subconscious or asleep mind. We will discuss the process of dreaming, which will be defined and we will go into various strata of dreams. We will not attempt to interpret dreams during this session, but each of you should be able to (1) classify your dream(s), (2) know if the dream foretells of a "good" omen or a "bad" omen, and (3) be able to tell if the dream is coming from your ori, ancestors or orisha.

When you go to sleep, your conscious mind will cease activity. The subconscious mind then takes control. While you sleep your subconscious mind talks to you, and that is what we call dreaming.

Since all dreams are not the same, we must separate dreams into phases and types. There are two recognizable phases of which we will refer to as the "profane" and the "sacred". The profane phase is a state where the subconscious mind engages the brain and the dream is influenced by past and

present information that is stored within the brain. The sacred phase on the other hand is where the brain is by-passed and the human will is passive or suspended. The dream then is directly influenced by spiritual intelligence. This intelligence belongs to the soul or ori, and we believe the soul knows your destiny. Hence, this type of dreaming foretells the future and should be considered a form of divination. The concept of "seeing" the future through a dream is not an unreasonable event, but rather coincides with spiritual law.

Categories of dreams

There are three categories of dreams that we will examine: subjective, physical and spiritual.

Subjective dreams relate primarily to the past. It can be prophetic (it can prophesize an event) and it can offer warnings that are usually masked in symbolism and allegory. This is due to a mental picture falling upon the conscious mind of the dreamer. Thus, he or she is back at the old home and finds his mother pale or aged, or healthy and spry; and the lawn withered or green. The ill or good fortune of such a dream is according to the aspect of the picture assumed. If the picture assumed is positive, then the dream is a "good" dream or good omen. If the picture is negative, like someone being sick, then it is a "bad" dream or bad omen. The "quality" of the dream is subject to the condition of the object that is dreamt about.

Physical dreams are usually dreams about the present and are considered unimportant. They are usually strongly influenced by the anxious waking mind, and when this is so, they possess no prophetic significance. These dreams are often referred to as a fulfillment of unfulfilled desires in awoken life.

Spiritual dreams are dreams of the future. They come through a "higher" self or being, penetrating the realm of the soul, and reflecting upon the waking mind, these types of dreams prophesize and tell of approaching events. When we put our mind and soul in harmony with our higher self, we become united with it. It is through this phenomena that the ori inu can manifest itself through flesh. It is through this phenomena that ancestors can visit us and give us messages. It is through this phenomena that orisha can visit us and give us messages. It is through this phenomena that we can have out-of-body experiences. This is considered the realm of spiritual law.

The dream mind is often influenced by the waking mind. When the waking mind dwells upon any subject, the dream mind is influenced enough by it, that it often assists the waking mind in solving difficult problems. One's personal future; one's destiny, may also affect the dream mind, producing premonitions of death, accidents and misfortune.

To understand this better, one must try and reason that the objective mind either laments or rejoices over the aspects of the past and present. The spiritual

mind on the other hand, has access through the ori to future events, and hence, laments or rejoices over future events. One is the barometer of the past, the other is the barometer of the future.

We try to recall the spiritual dream when we awake and we try to decipher that dream and find out what the message was. This is done usually by rationalizing "cause and effect" and the process now belongs to material law, rather than spiritual law. If one studies spiritual impressions that are left upon the dream mind and they are interpreted correctly, we would be able to shape our future according to spiritual law. We now have a harmonious interaction where earthly events will contribute to our spiritual development and in turn, our spiritual knowledge will contribute to our earthly welfare. This becomes a point where man can create and control influences, rather than being created and controlled by them (as the majority of us are experiencing this present day).

Very few people who have interpreted dreams have given the depth or significance to spiritual dreams. As a priest or priestess you can use your obis to expand the knowledge of the type of dream (spiritual) and pursue it further to find what the message is and who the message is coming from. The procedure is as follows:

1. Divine to see if the dream is significant.
2. If the answer is "no", go no further, for it is not spiritual.

3. If the answer is "yes", you should find out if the message comes from the ori, orisha or egun.

4. You then ask if the dream is a good omen or bad omen.

5. You can ask if adimu or ebo is necessary.

This is the extent of your authority with the obis.

IFA MEDICINE

Ifa medicine is spiritual medicine, made only by one who is empowered to make it. Its ingredients are dormant until its' asé is authorized by a specific incantation. Ifa medicine can be used by uninitiated who utilize the prescribed incantations to conjure up spiritual forces that dwell in a prepared medicine. The use of incantations are called *afose*. Before using the incantation, take guinea peppers.

There are five common types of medicine used in Ifa; pounded medicine called *agunmu*, burnt medicine called *etu*, infusion (squeezing of vegetables or leaves into water) called *agbo*, cooked items that would make a soup (ingredients are oil, pepper, cooked melon seed, or cooked locust seed) called *ose*, and medicinal food called *aseje*.

These medicinal preparations are composed of ewe (herbs), barks, roots leaves, and other spiritual items. The items may be used singly or compounded together. The incantation activates the vital ase of the medicine. Incantations are often similes describing the components of the medicinal preparation and the desired effect of the medicine. Incantation may involve a play on words regarding the active effect of the medicine.

Ex. *Ooyo aje* ewe chase away for us the disease out of the flank
Awusu leaf heal the flank disease so that it might go away
Agbe feather carry that flank disease away

Aluko feather pick away the disease out of that flank.

There are two types of incantations. **Ayajo** refers to incantations that do not inflict harm upon anyone. **Asan** are incantations designed to foster harm upon a person such as death, sickness, confusion, loss of memory etc. In relationship to Ifa medicine ayajo is the only type that we will use or refer to.

Ifa medicine can be used by itself, or in conjunction with western medicine. This factor is determined through divination. Needless to say, individuals who deal with Ifa medicine have to engage in serious study to understand the depths of this ancient concept.

Charms, Talisman, Protection

The Yoruba people believe in the protective properties of amulets, talisman and aware. We believe that objects, once given the spiritual asé of an orisha or egun, can bring good fortune protection from death, injury, insult, and sickness. These objects can also dispel negativity. Many people feel that they need a talisman because of insecurity or fear. In some instances, it would almost appear to be beneficial to give someone a charm or talisman if for no other reason then to grant them peace of mind. But this is not the case! If divination says that this person does not need a talisman, then you must tell them so. If

they are insistent, then go back to lfa and find out what spirit force will grant such protection that is asked for.

A talisman is usually a natural object (pebble, stone) or a manufactured object, in most cases a piece of jewelry. It must be consecrated to contain the asé of a particular orisa, or the spirit of an odu. It is given its power by the use of *afose*. The talisman is to be worn or carried specifically by the person whom it was made for.

Procedure for consecrating a talisman

Divination, as we previously mentioned, will reveal if a talisman is needed. You would then proceed to inquire which orisa would claim the talisman. After name of the orisa has been disclosed, you must inquire what fowl and how many are required for the consecration. You would then proceed to obtain the object that will be consecrated, the fowl required for the sacrifice, and a bowl of omiero which you will place the object.

1. Place the jewelry or chosen object in a small bowl of omiero
2. Collect the fowl to be used in sacrifice
3. Invoke Ose Tura.
4. Sacrifice the fowl using a sacrificial prayer to the Orisa that has sanctioned the talisman.
5. After the sacrifice is performed, invoke the Orisa whose ase is to be carried in the talisman while stirring the ase mixture with the middle finger of your right hand. ex.

Ogun mo pe o

Ogun mo pe o

Ogun mo pe o

I am Iyalorisa Osunfunmike. Ifa has requested that I carry a talisman with your protection. Empower this ring with your powerful ase. Give protection to Osunfumike (Mary Banks Faina). This is said three times in a loud, explicit voice, while still circling the object in the mixture with your middle finger. Close consecration with **ogbe meji** three times, then **Ofun Meji** three times. The consecration is complete. It must remain in the omiero with the blood for three days. After three days pour off the mixture and clean the object with fresh omiero. The talisman is now charged, and should be handled with caution. The talisman should not be on the body during sex, or touched directly after sex or during ones menstrual cycle, less the ase will be spoiled and the talisman ineffective.

Preparing Warriors

Receipt of the Warriors in the New World is one option of initiation into the Yoruba religion. This initiation involves the receipt of several male orisha *Eshu*, *Ogun*, *Oshosi* and *Osanyin*. In Yorubaland we refer to this initiation as *Ibora*. Upon receiving the authority of priest or priestess you will have the authority to give the Warriors.

There are two objects Eshu may dwell in. The first object is man-made. It is made of cement and charged. The other object would be an ota (smooth round stone). However otas are only selected and given by Ifa priests not by Babalorishas or Iyalorishas.

Items Needed to Prepare Warriors

1. Eshu head (complete with cowries)
2. Ogun pot with tools including Ochosi.
3. Osanyin's Osun.

4. Powered Efun.
5. Iyerosun.
6. Irosun. (cambrat)
7. Dry cement.
8. Colored corn.
9. Rolled cotton.
10. Two 8" terracotta plates.
11. Eshu eleke.
12. Ogun eleke.
13. Oshosi eleke.

Additionally you will need:

14. Two spoons (one teaspoon, one tablespoon).
15. One small glass.

16. One small glass with water.

Procedure For Charging Eshu

1. Have a designated clean area, set up to work.
2. Take the Eshu head, place it upside down in one of the small glasses. The center hole in the bottom should be facing up.
3. Add two teaspoons of jutia covering the bottom of the Eshu head.
4. Add four teaspoons of irosun.
5. Add four teaspoons of efun. The efun must be packed to the top of the opening. Tamp this mixture.
6. Take one of the terra cotta saucers and spread two teaspoons of iyerusun in an area large enough to write Odu.
7. Invoke Ose Tura three times.
8. Write the Odu Ose Tura in the iyerusun, (Ose Tura is the 248th Odu and is the Odu that incarnates Eshu) asking Eshu to dwell in the cement head. End with Ase, Ase, Ase.

9. Place three heaping tablespoons of cement in the second terra-cotta saucer and sift it.

10. Add the iyerosun with the Odu written on it to the cement.

11. Prepare the iyerosun-cement mix gradually, by adding the water and mixing.

12. Seal the bottom of the head with the cement mixture.

13. The head is now charged.

Ogun basically is ready. Preparation may involve removing the plastic covering from Ochosi and the tools. Make sure all of the tools and Ochosi are present. Ogun tools include, anvil, rake, shovel, sledge hammer, hoe, pick, nail, knife and the Ochosi bow and arrow. You may place an eleke for Ogun and Ochosi in the iron cauldron.

Procedure for Charging Osanyin

1. Place the items needed for charging Osanyin together in your work area. You will need the Osun, mixed corn, efun, irosun, and cotton.

2. Take Osun and carefully hold the bird and unscrew the top of the osun off.

3. Take two tablespoons of mixed corn and place inside of osun container.

4. Take four tablespoons of efun and add to the container.

5. Take four tablespoons of Irosun and fill container to the top.

6. Take a piece of cotton, stretch it lengthwise so that it doesn't tear. Place it completely over the top of the cup, over the center screw.

7. Put the center cover back on, screw the bird back on top. The Osun is now charged

Procedure for Consecrating Warriors

1. Fowl required for the Warriors are; two roosters and one white pigeon. One rooster for Eshu, one rooster for Ogun and Ochosi, and one white pigeon for Osanyin.

2. Gather all of the items needed for the sacrifice, including the warriors and elekes in the designated area for the ritual sacrifice to take place. The Eshu

head will be placed in a terra-cotta saucer. The Osun for Osanyin will be placed in the other terra-cotta saucer (only to hold the sacrifice).

3. The first sacrifice and consecration to take place will be for Eshu. Put newspapers down as a protective covering in area where the sacrifice will take place. The Eshu head will be placed on the covered area along with palm oil, oti and honey.

a. Take One rooster, touch the forehead of the initiate with the rooster three times. (acknowledgment to the ori to accept the sacrifice.) Invoke Ose tura three times to witness the sacrifice, using the sacrifice prayer.

b. Invoke Eshu three times:

Eshu mo pe O

Eshu mo pe O

Eshu mo pe O

Eshu pele O

Eshu pele O

Eshu pele O

Eshu, I am Babalorisha Shangodele

Eshu, I ask that you dwell in this cement object, that is charged and made for Lee Jones.

I ask Eshu, that you hear Lee Jones when he calls you .

I ask for all of your blessings for Lee Jones.

I ask Eshu, that a bond be established between you and Lee Jones.

The Orisha Eshu is called to descend.

Eshu Ro !

Eshu Ro !

Eshu Ro !

e. The sacrificial cut is now made, while reciting the sacrificial incantation, over Eshu.

f. As the eje is flowing onto the Orisa, take the middle finger of your right hand to place some eje onto the ori of the initiate.

g. Palm oil, gin, and honey will be offered in that sequence to Eshu. Announce that you are giving Eshu each item as offered, and end with ase, ase, ase.

h. The ceremony for Eshu is completed.

The protective ground covering (newspaper) will be removed, the sacrificial knife washed, and a new covering placed down in the ritual area.

4. The next Orisha that will be consecrated and sacrificed to and asked to descend will be Ogun and Ochosi.

- a. A new covering will be put down, and the sacrificial knife cleaned. The Ogun pot will be placed, with elekes inside, along with palm oil, gin and honey.
- b. Take one rooster. Touch the forehead of the initiate with the rooster three times (acknowledgment to ori to accept the sacrifice)
- c. Holding the fowl over the Ogun pot, invoke Ose Tura three times to witness the sacrifice.
- d. Invoke Ogun and Ochosi three times.

Ogunda Meji

Ogunda Meji

Ogunda Meji

Ochosi Mo pe O

Ochosi Mo pe O

Ochosi Mo pe O

*Baba Ogun and Baba Ochosi I am Babalorisa Shangodele,
I ask that you both will dwell in this cauldron for Lee
Jones. I ask that you hear Lee Jones when he calls upon you
Ogun and Ochosi. I also ask for all of your blessings for Lee*

*Jones. I ask that a bond be established between you and
Lee Jones Ogun and Ochosi. Ase, Ase, Ase.*

The Orisa Ogun and Ochosi are now invoked to descend:

Ogun Ro !

Ogun Ro !

Ogun Ro !

Ochosi Ro !

Ochosi Ro !

Ochosi Ro !

- e. The sacrificial cut is now made with the knife, the blood flows into the cauldron of Ogun and Ochosi, while reciting the sacrificial incantation.
- f. While the blood is flowing to the Orisa the middle finger is used to place some of the eje on the Ori.
- g. After the sacrifice is finished, palm oil, gin and honey will be given in that order to Ogun and Ochosi. Announce to both Ogun and Ochosi what you are offering them, ending with ase, ase, ase, after each item has been offered.

The ceremony for Ogun and Ochosi is completed, remove the fowl, and covering. Wash the knife, and prepare area with new protective covering.

5. Osanyin will be the next sacrifice. The Osun now should be placed in the area. One white pigeon will be needed for Osanyin. Place the Osun in a terra-cotta saucer for the sacrifice.

- a. Take the pigeon and place it to the forehead (ori) of the initiate three times.
- b. Invoke Ose Tura three times to witness the sacrifice.
- c. Invoke Osanyin three times:

Osanyin mo pe O

Osanyin mo pe O

Osanyin mo pe O

Osanyin pele O

Osanyin pele O

Osanyin pele O

Osanyin, I am Babalorisa Shangodele, I am asking you to dwell in this Osun for Lee Jones. I ask that whenever Lee Jones calls you that you hear him. I ask that you offer all of your blessings to him; blessings of good health, protection

**from harm and nightmares. I also ask that a bond be formed
between you and Lee Jones. Ase, ase, ase.**

The Orisa Osanyin is invoked to descend:

Osanyin Ro !

Osanyin Ro !

Osanyin Ro !

d. The wings of the pigeon are gathered around it's feet and the neck is rung off. The eje is guided to flow directly onto the Osun, while reciting the sacrificial incantation.

e. The eje is applied to the Ori using the same procedure.

f. After the sacrifice, palm oil, gin and honey must be offered again using the same procedure. The ceremony for Osanyin is complete.

g. The warriors must remain for three days before cleaning and presenting them to the initiate.

Note: Elekes should be removed first , wiped clean of excess residue and placed in omiero.

CANDLES THEIR USE AND UNDERSTANDING

Since the Dark Ages, after use of the torch, candles evolved as the vehicle for giving light. Beside illumination, candles also give off heat. We make use of these combined energies when we burn a candle and dedicate it to orisha and egun. In Yoruba religious concept, candles are used primarily to elevate prayers and petitions. Once a candle is lit and we summon and address a force, offering a prayer or petition, our *afose* combines with the energy emitted from the candle. Therefore, for all intents and purposes, with our voice we have made a piece of wax, with a wick, into a sacred messenger to the gods. Amazing!

When we petition, we ask for blessings; we ask for things to change; we ask for things to come. The candle that has been lit and spoken to is considered charged. It has been dedicated to orisha or egun, and the way the candle burns, gives us a return message, just as the obis give us a message, and we must interpret what the message is saying.

1. When a candle burns clear, the petition has been heard and is being worked on.

2. When a clear candle burns swiftly (let us say in less than seven days), the petition is being worked on swiftly.

3. When a clear candle burns slowly (more than seven days), the petition that you've made will take a longer period of time to manifest.

4. When a candle begins by burning dark for the first few days and then gradually clears up, it means that there were problems in the beginning, but the problem(s) has been overcome and your petition will be answered.

5. When a candle begins burning clear and then develops darkness, it means that there are problems or obstacles that have to be cleared.

6. When a candle burns cloudy, it means that what you have petitioned may not be understood or is incomplete. It is dubious.

7. When a candle burns black, there is a serious problem. In this case, it may not be with the request, but could refer to the environment, the adimu, the petition, etc. In most cases, divination is required.

New World influence associates candles with colors, corresponding oils, and/or incenses. Some believe that these additives further enhance and intensify the quality of the wish, prayer or petition. The notion is fairly common and can be considered, acceptable practices.

It is commonly accepted that the color of the candle has a significant effect on the energy that is created:

White -To contact ancestors; for purification and cleansing.

Red - To foster love; for sex and health. Used to conquer fears and protection from witchcraft.

Pink - To achieve success and affection.

Yellow - To dream and to make dreams and desires come true.

Orange - To make one attractive to others.

Black - Used primarily for destroying enemies.

Blue - Used to create peace and harmony in the home.

Brown - Used in time of financial difficulties; to attract money, happiness and success.

Green - To attract money, work and matrimony.

Purple - To break up jinxed conditions; for power and control over people.

Gold - To bring money, luck and financial success.

Grey - To remove evil and understandable influences.

All of the above references may hold some validity, however, it would behoove you to still maintain the use of colored candles according to our lineage. Once you know the attributes of the orisha, you can petition for change.

Egun - white

Obatala - white

Orunmila - white

Eshu - white

Ogun - green

Shango - red

Oshun - yellow

Yemoja - blue

Oya - purple

Osanyin - white

Oshosi - white

Use of Ataare

Ataare (guinea peppers) is used ritually by the Yoruba to heighten the energy of their prayers, petitions and sacrifices. Males should ingest nine (9), females ingest seven (7).

Guinea peppers should be consumed before serious or emergency communication with *Ori*, *egun* or *orisha*. They are a must and required before any sacrifice.

RITUAL OF ELEKES

The recipient of the elekes must be of good character. He or she must first be washed with black soap to remove any negativity from them. They must wear ceremonial dress (white), and their head is covered with a white towel or cloth before entering the Igbodu.

The Sponsor knocks on the door of Igbodu.

(Call): **Who is it?**

(Response): It is I, Iya Ogunbanke!

(Call): **What do you want?**

(Response): I have someone with me who wishes to enter the Igbodu!

(Call): **Who is 'someone'?**

(Response): Her name is Marcia Nicholas.

(Call): **I do not know any Marcia Nicholas. What does she want?**

(Response): She wishes to bond with the orishas.

(Call): **Why?**

(Response): Marcia wishes spiritual elevation.

(Call): **Has she been bathed and prepared to enter the sacred grove?**

(Response): She is clean, and has been prepared.

(Call): **Ago Igbodu!**

(Response): Mo dupe.

Petitioner is led blind-folded to a chair in Igbodu.

(Call): **You say your name is Marcia Nicholas?**

(Response): Yes Baba.

(Call): **What do you want in this sacred grove?**

(Response): I wish to receive the elekes of the orishas.

(Call): **Why do you want these elekes?**

(Response): To further my consciousness and spiritual growth.

(Call): **How can elekes raise your consciousness and further your spiritual growth?**

(Response): Because the elekes become my personal bond with each orisha.

(Call): **Bani!**

The cover or blind-fold is then removed. The petitioner is shown each of the elekes and must recite the attributes of that orisha; their color; their number. The elekes are presented to the petitioner one by one. When they are all presented the priest blesses the petitioner 's Ori and congratulates them.

PROTECTION AND CLEANSING

Concept

The use of incantations, baths and animal sacrifice are necessary rituals performed in helping others rid themselves of negative energy, curses, spells and witchcraft. As we venture into the realm of the elementals and other malevolent forces, we too need protection from such energies.

If divination reveals that a person's destiny has been altered by a malevolent force, we must further divine to find the source and how the misfortune can be corrected. You are now traveling on an uncharted course, because each venture into this area of the supernatural is unique and different. Once you have divined the sacrificial information, you must find out if a bath is necessary.

Let us say for example, that the oracle dictates two roosters to Eshu and a bath in the blood of the sacrifice to rid the person of this ibi. You would proceed with the sacrificial ritual by invoking Eshu and explaining to him the occasion for the sacrifice. Ask that the energy of the curse or ibi be transferred to the first rooster, which will be used to cleanse the individual.

This cleansing is performed after the ori is saluted. The person stands in front of you with their arms outstretched to the east and to the west. You will take the rooster with both hands and command the energy or force to leave the body of the person in question. With a quick pass, move the rooster around the person's head (the fowl must make contact with the skin).

Move the bird up and down the chest, from neck to waist several times. Proceed to the abdominal area and then down and up the right leg, the crotch; then up and down the left leg.

Go to the outstretched arms and move the fowl topside and then to the underside of each arm.

The person is then asked to turn around and you repeat the passes to the back of the head, neck, back, buttocks, up and down the legs; the topside and underside of the arms.

The person is then asked to kneel and hold the fowl while it is sacrificed to Eshu. A small amount of blood will be spilled into omiero, with which the person

will be bathed. The second rooster is sacrificed in the usual manner to Eshu, but a larger quantity of blood is spilled into the omiero. The omiero is now **doubly charged !!!** Do not forget to share the sacrifice with the ori.

Follow ritual procedure to finish the ritual.

In preparing the bath, recite the purpose for the bath, while mixing the charged omiero with warm bath water.

Before, or during the bath, you can recite the following incantation: Invoke Otura Eguntan three times.

*This is the incantation
just for spiritual
bath*

My adversaries did much evil to me,

Yet, I am untarnished.

They cannot overcome me.

They curse, they swear, they lie,

They wish me evil.

Otura Eguntan said that I should not be afraid,

Nor shall I fear them.

Otura Eguntan promised to help me mend my ways,

So that I may lead a better life.

He said my life would be prosperous.

It is Otura Eguntan that washed my head for me,

In order to destroy the curse, imprecations, charms, spells or obeah,

They cannot effect me.

roots

Note: A christian passage from the 21st psalm can be added if you feel it appropriate:

Yea, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death,

I shall fear no evil,

For thou art with me,

They rod and thy staff, comfort me.

Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

And my spirit will dwell in the house of my ancestors forever.

Asé, Asé, Asé.

After any ritual that involves exorcisms or cleansing, I would strongly advise you to wash with black soap. There are incantations that you can recite before the ritual and/or after the ritual that also protects you.

Akindudu oruko ti aa pe Ifa;

Akatamaba oruko ti aa pe Esu;

Igi-soro-soro-ti-i-pode e-bo-ko,

Oruko ti aa pe Songo;

A-fi-run-aya-ka-ka-ka-yi-rapa-esi-ka,

Oruko ti aa pe Soponna;

Se bi layiwonmole nii se Onibode lono orun.

Layiwonmole nii se Onibode lono orun;

*Oso ile to ngebele perii mi;
Layiwonmole, yi won mole fun mi;
Aje ti o nperiti mi nini
Layiwonmole, yi won mole fun mi.*

*Akindudu is the name we call Ifa;
Akatamaba is the name we call Eshu;
“Long-pointed-stick-that-kills-a-hunter-from-the-farm”,
Is what we call Shango.
“He-who-has-sparse-hair-on-his-chest-and-goes-'round last-year's
abandoned-farm”,
Is what we call Soponna.
It is “He-that-rolls-them-on-the-ground” (Onibode) that is heaven's
gate-keeper.
“He-that-rolls-them-on-the-ground”, roll them on the ground for me;
The socerers that wish me evil,
“He-who-rolls-them-on-the-ground”, roll them on the ground for me;
The witches that wish me evil,
“He-who-rolls-them-on-the-ground”, roll them on the ground for me.*

There are numerous incantations for luck, success, and protection that you can use. As this manual is being prepared, they are not available, but supplementary notes will be presented to you as they become available.

Orunmila boru, Orunmila boye, Orunmila boisise.

Oluwo Ifayomi Odulana