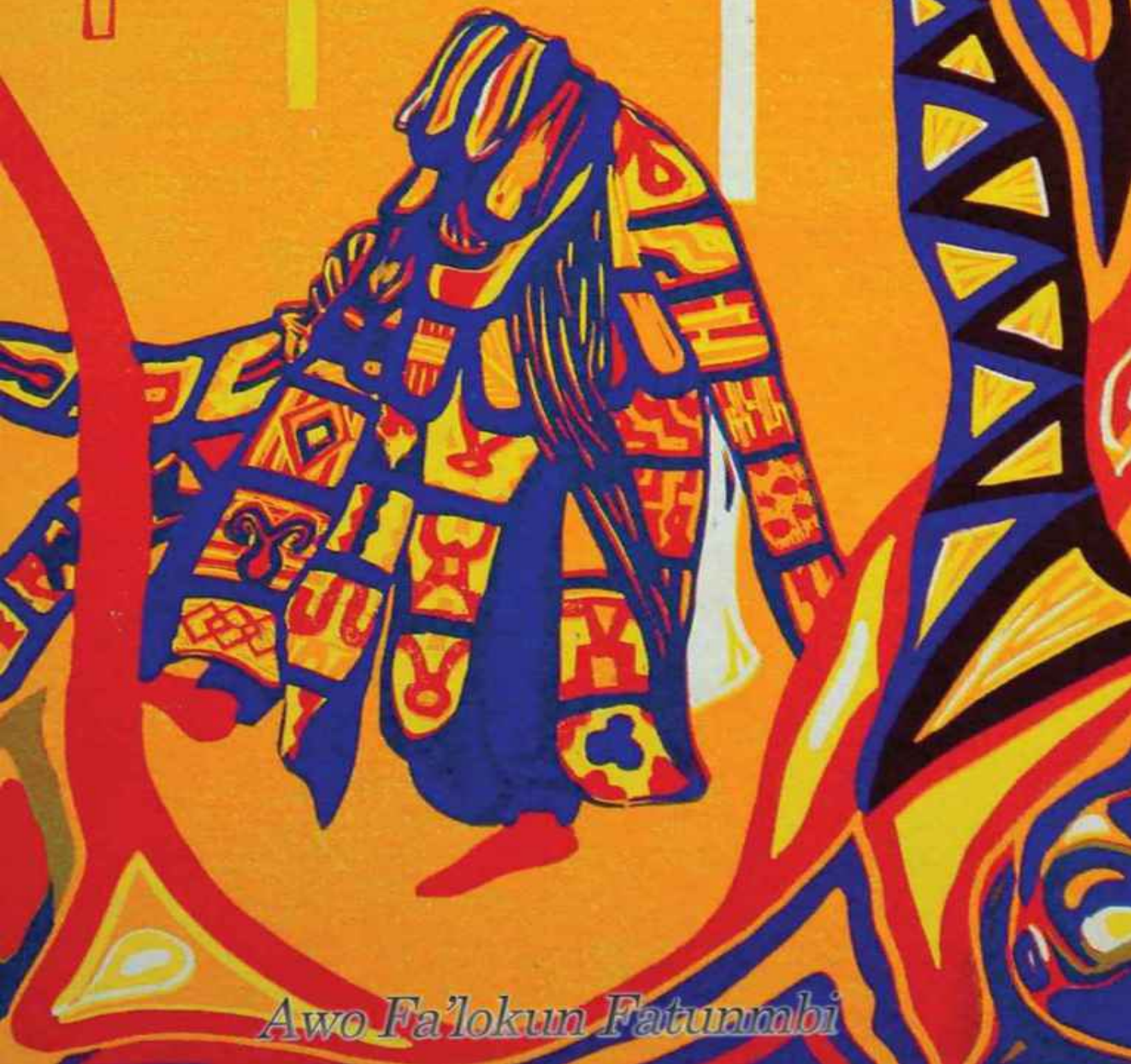


# Egun



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# *Egun*

## **The *Ifa* Concept of Ancestor Reverence**

by **Awo Falokun Fatunmbi**

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## **Introduction**

According to oral tradition, *ori* is the seat of consciousness and the receptacle for spiritual influences emanating from the Ancestral Realm (*Orun*). *Ori* functions in polarity with the physical heart called *Okan* in Yoruba. The *okan* is the seat of emotions called *egbe*. *Ifa* teaches that spiritual growth is the integration of thought and emotion; it is an ongoing process of stabilizing the tension between the head and the heart. When *ori* and *egbe* are in alignment, the individual experiences *ire* meaning good fortune. When *ori* and *egbe* are out of alignment, the individual experiences *ibi* meaning misfortune. *Ifa* is the preservation of the ancestral wisdom that gives guidance on how to maintain balance between the head and the heart. *Ifa* is not a doctrine of belief; it is a way of looking at the world.

*Ori-inu* is the inner self, the seat of perception and the unknowable knower. The inner self becomes known to consciousness (*ori*) as the head and heart stabilize their alignment. Access to *oriinu* facilitates altered states of consciousness described in *Ifa* as Spirit communication. Traditional Yoruba culture integrates Spirit communication into the discipline of personal development and uses it as a tool to support spiritual growth. Messages from Spirit can include a vision of the higher self (*iponri*). The perception of *iponri* is a vision of human potential or destiny (*ayanmo*). *Ifa* teaches that destiny is based on a personal manifestation of *iwa-pele* meaning good character. According to *Ifa* cosmology, we are born good and blessed children (*omo rere*) and choose a destiny prior to incarnation that reflects our essential goodness. Finding destiny is a quest to do the right thing, from an ethical perspective, in any

given moment

*Ifa* is a spiritual legacy that predates recorded history, coming from a time when the veil between human consciousness and the voice of Spirit was extremely thin. In the words of *Ifa* oral scripture, Yoruba cosmology developed at a time when both humans and Spirit walked the Earth. It is my personal belief that our ancient African ancestors had clear access to inter-dimensional beings (*Orisa* and *Egun*) who gave them clear and effective instruction on how to place the head and the heart in alignment and from that place of alignment taught them how to live in harmony with the natural environment.

A Yoruba proverb says we become who we are by standing on the shoulders of those who come before us. From the perspective of traditional Yoruba culture, remembering those who came before us is a sacred obligation. Each generation takes responsibility for preserving the wisdom of the ancestors. In most earth-centered cultures, meaning those cultures that make an effort to live in harmony with nature, dissemination of ancestral wisdom is the foundation of the methodology used to guide consciousness along the path leading from childhood to maturity and self-actualization. In psychological terms, modeling heroic ancestral behavior initiates the journey towards self-discovery and individualization. The effective completion of this journey carries the potential for making each one of us a revered ancestor in the collective memory of our descendants. This potential is rooted in the bond of affection between grandparents and grandchildren. In Yoruba culture, this bond is called *ife*, which is commonly translated to mean love. I suspect the word has a broader connotation related to the word *Ifa*. If *Ifa* means the wisdom inherent in Nature, the word *ife* suggests the expression of that wisdom in everyday life. As elders we have a responsibility to teach our children and our grandchildren they are essentially good so this message continues to inform future generations.

*Ifa* says we come to earth to make it a better place for those who follow

us (*ire aye*). Based on the Yoruba belief in *atunwa* (reincarnation), future generations include our own return to the Earth we have previously helped shape. This cyclical process is the foundation for both *Ifa* ethics and the *Ifa* view of history. The cycles of birth and rebirth on a personal level are reflected in the movement between creative expansion and destructive contraction that characterizes the traditional African cyclical view of history.

Prior to the emergence of colonialism, historical accounts of past events were expressed in mythic terms. Myth views history as a cycle of reoccurring events based on universal principles that forever appear, disappear and re-appear. Myth teaches transcendent spiritual principles that can be applied to the unique challenges of each succeeding generation. Earth-centered myth is based on the belief that all of humanity is interconnected and inter-related. It expresses the metaphysical idea that living in harmony with Nature results in benefit for the individual, the community, the global village and the environment.

Post-colonial myth is rooted in the idea of linear progression and is deeply influenced by the Darwinian concept of “survival of the fittest”. In this world-view, history is a sequential progression of events leading to greater degrees of “progress”. The idea of progress is defined as the increased ability to use technology to “control” nature. Those who create the most effective technology for exploiting natural resources are considered the “fittest” from the Darwinian perspective. According to this world-view, the fittest are entitled to “privilege” to ensure the continued linear progression of history. Myth based on this perspective supports the notion that some people are “better” than others. Consequently there is little attention given to the idea of personal growth and development. History written from a linear perspective places emphasis on “Divine justification” for acts of greed, exploitation, and conquest. In Western academia, the Darwinian approach to history is described as “objective” because it tends to exclude references to God

while remaining rooted in the concept of Divine justification. In simple terms, this contradiction is hypocritical and hypocrisy always creates psychic dissonance. This dissonance can lead to mental illness and instability often smothered by addictive behavior. The re-occurring message of Divine justification becomes an unspoken assumption in academia and remains fixed in the consciousness of Western culture as long as it remains effectively unchallenged. As a result, spiritual problems directly related to a contradictory world view are ignored.

In 1912, the major European colonial powers met in Berlin to create virtually all the boundaries now recognized as sovereign states on the continent of Africa. The purpose for creating these boundaries was to establish spheres of influence for the exploitation of natural resources. Frequently the newly created borders cut across long established culturally identified geographical boundaries. In order to sanction the largest expropriation of land since the rise of the Roman Empire, European historians needed to justify their political conquest. The Western academic version of this period of history is based on the premise that European industrial nations brought “progress” and “civilization” to a “backward”, “underdeveloped” region that was otherwise devoid of the “intelligence” needed to develop technological resources. Because this world-view has no basis in fact, it was necessary to stifle and destroy opposing points of view. The indigenous history of Africa is both written and oral. The written history was brutalized by deliberately distorting translations of Egyptian hieroglyphics and the oral history was deliberately destroyed by systematic genocide against those elders who were the keepers of traditional ancestral wisdom. From the perspective of *Ifa* in the Diaspora, the distortion of history makes it difficult to effectively stand on the shoulders of those who have come before us. There is evidence in Africa of an extremely sophisticated culture dating back 150,000 years that created the foundation for all the major sciences in existence today. This ancient culture appears to have been challenged by a series of natural disasters but evidence of creativity and insight remains clearly visible for anyone who takes the time to look.

The process of reclaiming the African cyclical view of history can begin with a careful examination of the mythic story from *Ifa* oral scripture that gives birth to the tradition of ancestor reverence. In the holy *Odu Osa Meji* collected by Pierre Verger in Oyo state Nigeria, the early development of the sacred technology associated with communication with the ancestors reflects a shift in the balance of power between men and women in the culture. The verse also gives guidance on how to maintain a healthy balance between genders as part of the stability of the extended family. *Osa Meji* includes symbolic reference to the essential elements used in traditional Yoruba ancestor reverence. The text of the verse is presented in the next chapter as a basis for study, examination and contemplation. My interpretation is just one of many possible contributions to what I hope becomes an ongoing dialogue.

## **Good Character and Reincarnation**

### *The Iwa Concepts of Iwa-pele and Atunwa*

*Ifa* teaches the idea that you cannot know who you are if you cannot call the name of your ancestors going back seven generations. The ability to call the names of your ancestors is believed to make it possible to seat your *ori* (consciousness) in the world. This is a uniquely African world view related to both the Yoruba concept of good character (*iwa-pele*) and the Yoruba concept of reincarnation (*atunwa*).

In an earlier book, I translated *iwa-pele* to mean good character. The phrase has that connotation. Yoruba sacred words are often shortened versions of longer phrases. The phrase *iwa ope ile* that forms the elision *iwa-pele* means “I come to greet the Earth.” In Yoruba culture, you greet an elder, and an elder is by tradition a teacher. Having good character means having the ability to learn from the Earth and by implication to learn to live in harmony with the Earth.

The need to live in harmony with the Earth is rooted in the Yoruba



concept of *atunwa* meaning character is born again. *Ifa* cosmology includes a belief in reincarnation. According to *Ifa* oral tradition, humans reincarnate within their own family lineage, meaning we are the ancestors of our own future incarnations. These fundamental concepts have tremendous impact on Yoruba home training and ethics. We come to greet the Earth and live in harmony with the natural environment so we can make the Earth a better place to live and so we will have a comfortable home when we return from the land of the ancestors in a future reincarnation. To be remembered for seven generations is a way to acknowledge personal growth during a particular lifetime and a way to remember the past accomplishments of a new born baby. Humans tend to forget previous lives. If the family and the culture preserve that information, it is an effective tool for the guidance of children who are building on the lessons learned in an earlier incarnation.

*Atunwa* and *iwa-pele* form the theological foundation of *Ifa* ancestor reverence. It is the ancestors who give us guidance in our quest to live in harmony with the Earth and it is the ancestors who give us guidance in the process of developing good character. These ideas are so fundamental to Yoruba culture that whenever someone is asked a question no personal opinion is given until there has been a quote from the wisdom of the ancestors in the form of a proverb and a segment of *Ifa* oral scripture. Personal opinions have little or no value in *Ifa* except as commentary on the ideas of those who have completed an earlier life cycle.

Calling the name of your ancestors going back seven generations means you will be able to identify your own previous reincarnation. Most children in a traditional Yoruba family have a naming ceremony (*esentaye*) within a week after their birth. The ritual includes divination used to identify the former existence of the child and to identify if the child comes from the mother or the father's lineage. This identification gives the developing child solid information on the previous lessons learned. In this way spiritual growth becomes an ongoing process that does not have to begin anew with each incarnation. According to *Ifa*, this

benefits not only the individual but also the entire community. If we are able to build on the lessons learned in a previous life, we can move on to new lessons that will benefit both self and world. Within the eternal cycle of life, death, transformation and rebirth there is expansion of consciousness. The expansion of consciousness is symbolized in *Ifa* by the snail shell a spiral of circular forms gradually increasing in diameter.

To support this on going quest for spiritual elevation *Ifa* honors the spirit of *Egun*. Most books on Yoruba culture translate *Egun* to mean ancestor, which is only partially correct. *Egun* is more accurately defined as the collective consciousness of all those ancestors who are waiting for the opportunity to return to earth. *Egun* as a spiritual phenomenon is bigger and more inclusive than any specific ancestor spirit. The Yoruba phrase for an individual ancestor would be *Ara Orun* meaning body or person living in the Ancestral Realm.

In order to maintain the connection with the collective Spirit of the Ancestors, most traditional Yoruba extended families designate at least one person every generation to be the medium for the family *Egun*. The mediums are called either *Egungun* or *Isegun*. *Egungun* from the elision *e ogun oogun* meaning I am the medicine of the bones. *Isegun* from the elision *I ase ogun* meaning I am the power of the bones or I work the power of the bones. In both instances bones are a symbolic reference to those spirits who have separated from their physical body and returned to the land of the Ancestors (*Orun*).

In traditional Yoruba culture honoring the ancestors is both a daily discipline and part of the annual ritual calendar. Feeling connected to the ancestors is the glue that holds together the transcendent structure of the extended family while new faces pass through these structures with each new generation. The extended family is transcendent because it functions as a training school for both the development of consciousness and instruction in the specific attributes of good character. The school is set up so that the ten year olds teach the eight year olds; the twelve year olds

teach the ten year olds and so on through parenting and the age of becoming grandparents. As you progress through the natural cycles of growth and maturity your position within the family changes, your responsibilities increase, as does the expectation of development of good character.

When was initially brought to the Diaspora through the horrendous denigration of forced exile, the transcendent structure of the African extended family was deliberately destroyed. This destruction was designed to sustain negative conditioning associating human bondage with the Will of God. The destructive effects of this shameful dogmatic association continues to plague social dynamics in the West and makes the establishment of the extended family as *Ifa* training school an ongoing challenge.

I am of the opinion that the establishment of Yoruba *Egun* ritual in the Diaspora has been a fundamental step in reclaiming the traditional structure of the *Ifa* extended family. If we take the verse of *Osa Meji* and examine it closely we find a rich source of information that can be used to inform the practice of *Ifa* as it finds expression in the Diaspora. *Ifa* oral scripture is used as the basic text for divination. In Yoruba culture, divination is used as a problem solving tool and as a system for preserving the wisdom of the ancestors. The organization of the oracle is based on sixteen fundamental principles called a leg of *Ifa*.

The principle of *Osa* that is the basis for the verses found in *Osa Meji* is the principle of radical change caused by extreme forces in Nature. It is the metaphysical idea that Nature is constantly in a state of flux and that transformation occurs through what is known symbolically and literally as the Winds of Change. Hunters in the Nigerian rain forest say that Spirit moves through the trees on a gust of wind. Whenever a sudden breeze comes through the forest, all the animals in every direction stop and go dead silent. Everything in the forest is adjusting to the shift in spiritual energy moving across the surface of the earth.

In the pre-colonial kingdom of Dahomey, *Osa* was known as the Spirit of Run-away because it is believed to be the metaphysical source of human restlessness. *Osa* is similar to the Tower card in the Tarot Deck because it includes an element of random chaos within the self-regulated flow of any natural environment. The chaos caused by earthquakes, floods, and volcanic eruptions insures a certain level of humility in the relationship between humans and the systems that regulate life on earth. Cataclysmic change may seem harsh and arbitrary to human consciousness, but as an expression of *Osa*, drastic shifts in ecology are the misunderstood rumblings of a planet looking for stasis and balance. Certain kinds of environmental turbulence are reactions to ecological abuse. The Earth goes through periods of upheaval as a way of wiping the slate clean, to eliminate toxins in the process of maintaining fertility and to preserve the productive balance between earth, air, fire and water.

IIIIIIIIII

### ***OSA MEJI***

*(Iyáàmi and the Creation of the Egun Cloth)*

*Osa Meji is a rich, powerful cosmic scream. Ringing bells arrive from the vaults of The Ancestral Realm. Ifa was consulted for Odu on the day Odu was making the journey from Heaven to Earth in the company of Ogun and Obarisa. Odu was the only woman among them. She asked Olodumare what would happen when we arrive in the world? Olodumare said the world would be good. Olodumare said everything they will want to accomplish would be done because he will give them the power. It will be good.*

To say is a cosmic scream is to identify the principle of *Osa* as a fundamental Force in Nature. According to *Ifa*, the fundamental Forces in Nature reoccur at different levels of evolution. The primal winds at the moment of Creation, evolve into the solar winds that send elements into the universe, forming planets with ecological systems affected by earthly

winds, giving birth to people with an affinity with the Spirit of the Wind. In *Ifa* metaphysics those who have an affinity to the wind are sometimes referred to as *Aje*. The word *Aje* is sometimes translated to mean “witch,” and in some literature on *Ifa* it has a negative connotation. *Aje* is a person born with the power of the word, the ability to affect Nature through the expression of prayer and incantations. *Osa Meji* says women are born with this power and the verse identifies the power as a potential force for good.

## Lesson 1

### *Building an Ancestor Shrine*

In traditional culture, everyone is believed to have the ability, and the obligation to communicate with the ancestors on a daily basis. According to *Ifa* oral tradition, communication with your ancestors is a birthright and requires no special sanction. At times this communication can simply involve remembering a revered ancestor and making use of the memory as a basis for making an important decision. In many ways ancestor communication is an extension of the training and wisdom we receive from our parents and grandparents. In Yoruba culture, it is common for the uninitiated to make direct contact with ancestor spirits. The most prevalent method of communication is through dreams. Information also comes through participation in annual ancestor festivals. Because such festivals are not common in this country, *Ifa* worshippers in the Diaspora have created several viable alternatives. Throughout the Caribbean islands the various expressions of carnival celebrations are retentions of the African forms of communal ancestor reverence. It is also common to build a small ancestral shrine within the home to be used as a focal point for prayer and meditation.

There are a number of traditional Yoruba methods for building ancestor shrines; some of which are very complex and require direct personal training. For those who do not have access to lineage elders, I recommend

the ancestor shrine be constructed with minimal elements. Once the basic elements are in place, the ancestors can be consulted directly for guidance on further additions and modifications to the shrine. Once the shrine is built and once you establish a link with the ancestors, they will communicate to you directly either through divination, visions or altered states of consciousness.

When the altar is finished, it should stay as clean as possible. *Ifa* teaches that dirt, clutter and disorder can attract unwanted and undesirable spiritual forces. This may seem simplistic, but in my experience it is a very important consideration. Our external environment reflects our internal state of being and either supports or blocks the process of growth.

Find a place in your home or apartment that can be used for prayer and meditation. Clean the area so that it is free from dust. In Native American traditions, sacred space is cleansed through the use of smoke. I find this practice to be effective and consistent with many cultural earth centered traditions. It is common practice in Native American and Pagan traditions to place leaves in either a large seashell or clay pot. Any aromatic leaf can be effective, with cedar and sage being popular choices. Light the leaves and fan the flames until you generate a steady plume of smoke. Walk through the entire house making sure smoke gets in every corner of every room. As you fan the smoke say a prayer asking that all negative influences be removed from your home. The container selected for this purpose should be kept near the ancestor shrine and only used for spiritual purposes. A Yoruba prayer may be used to bless the leaves used to create the smoke. This prayer is a dispelling invocation and you may add the kinds of negativity you want removed from the sacred space.

***Iba se Egun.*** I pay homage to the Spirit of the Ancestors.

***Emi*** (Your Name) ***Omo*** (list your lineage starting with your parents and working backwards)

I am (your name) child of (lineage)

***Iba se Ori Ewe.***

I pay homage to the Spirit of the Leaves. ***Ko si 'ku.***

Send away the Spirit of Death.

***Ko si arun.***

Send away illness

***Ko si wahala***

Send away all gossip.

***Ase***

May it be so.

The prayer is spoken directly over the leaves. When the prayer is completed, breathe on the leaves and say the word *to* pronounced “toe”. The word means “enough,” and is used to indicate the invocation or prayer is completed. This is known as placing your *ase* or spiritual power on the prayer. The word “*to*” functions as a seal locking the prayer on to the object that is being consecrated or blessed. The word is also used to indicate the invocation is over so that words spoken after the end of the prayer are not heard by Spirit as part of the prayer.

As you walk through the space fanning the smoke, keep your conscious thoughts focused on the intention of the cleansing. The smoke will magnify whatever thoughts you are projecting into the room so make sure your thoughts support your intention.

Traditionally, smoke has the effect of clearing away all spiritual influences from a room both positive and negative. When starting the practice of regular communication with the ancestors, it is helpful to begin with a neutral environment so that you consciously invite specific ancestors to the shrine and know who is making their presence known. *Ifa* teaches that emotions have substance and that emotional energy lingers in a room long after it has been discharged. This is especially true of intense emotions like anger, hate disappointment and jealousy. If these emotions build up around an ancestor shrine for a prolonged period of time, they

can have the effect of invoking ancestors who indulged in negative emotions. For this reason, periodic cleaning with smoke after the initial cleansing should be part of the ancestral reverence discipline.

After the space is cleansed with the smoke, use the same process to cleanse your physical body. Start with the front of your body moving the smoke from your feet to the top of your head and down your back. Each pass should be in the same direction. Do not move the smoke from front to back then from back to front because this would be returning the influences to the place where they were removed.

In *Ifa* once an area has been cleansed, it is traditional to seal the space with water and herbs. *Ifa* makes use of a wide range of herbs for the purpose of locking in the positive effect of prayer and invocation. The simplest seal for the uninitiated is clear water mixed with either *efun* or *cascaria*. *Efun* is white chalk made from fossilized sea shells and *cascaria* is an *efun* substitute made from egg shells. If these materials are not available, it is traditional to add either perfume or cologne to the water. Make sure your choice of fragrance is something you periodically wear. In addition, add a small amount of body fluid to the water, either saliva or urine. By doing this you are placing your own essences in the seal. This becomes a statement to the Spirit realm that they are entering your shrine area and indicates they need your invitation to enter.

A traditional *Ifa* prayer may be used to enhance the power of the water to function as a seal. This is an enhancement prayer so you may add any of the things you want to manifest as a result of ancestral intervention.

***Iba se omi tutu.*** I pay homage to the Spirit of Water.

***Emi*** (your name) ***Omo*** (list your lineage starting with your parents and working backwards).

I am (your name) child of (lineage) ***Fun mi***, Bring me, ***Ire alafia***, the



good fortune of peace, *Ire l'era*, the good fortune of a stable home, *ire omo*, good fortune to my children *ire owo*, the good fortune of abundance *ire agbo ato*, the good fortune of long life

*ire iwa-pele* the good fortune of good character *ire igbodu Egun* the good fortune of an ancestor shrine *ire l'ona iponri atiwo Orun*

the good fortune of the blessing brought by my higher self from the Realm of the Ancestors

*Ase*

May it be so.

The prayer should be spoken directly into the water followed by the word “to.” Sprinkle the water over the places that were cleansed by the smoke. Conscious attention should be placed on the matter of claiming the area as sacred space. Most of us have some ancestors who would not be welcome at the altar because of a lack of character development. It is necessary to exclude these ancestors and to make it clear no communication with them is desired. In particular it is important to exclude ancestors who suffered from addictive behavior and those who exhibited violent or sexually abusive behavior. The presence of these kinds of ancestor spirits can unconsciously trigger similar influences. They are identified in *Ifa* as Spirits who carry a family curse. The seal may include the names of those ancestors who are welcome to communicate at the shrine.

In some instances, there are those who do not know their ancestors. Do not let this hinder the process. Simply identify the types of problems you will not allow within your alter space and identify the types of Spirits who are welcome. In time, as your communication with Spirit develops, you will be able to use this skill to begin the process of identifying unknown ancestors.

Construction of the Ancestor Shrine can start after the cleansing process is finished. The shrine is a place to remember; it is a memorial for those who have gone before us. It is a place to consider the wisdom of our lineage and to ponder the ways in which that wisdom can inform and guide us through current problems.

In the beginning, keep the construction simple. Place a box or a table in the spot selected for the shrine. Cover the box or table with a white cloth. Place a glass of water and a candle on the cloth. At this point, you have the basic elements that create human beings; you have earth, air, fire and water. Use the walls behind the shrine to mount pictures of your relatives. This is a place to remember, simply seeing a picture of a revered ancestor might remind us of the way they may have handled a particular crisis. Remembering can lead to inspiration and inspiration can lead to determination and determination can lead to resolution. Pictures of our ancestors can serve as a subliminal reminder of the contributions they have made.

Many of us come from mixed ancestry. Within the spectrum of our lineage there might be a wide range of religious and spiritual influences. You might want to represent some of these influences on the table through the use of a Bible, the Koran, Buddhist Sutras or a copy of the I Ching. All that is required to integrate this into an *Ifa* world view is an understanding of the universal nature of spiritual principles that have been expressed time and again in variety of cultural expressions.

To use the shrine stand in front of it and light the candle. The first statement that should be made to the ancestors is a commitment to regular use of the shrine for meditation and prayer. I call this type of agreement self-regulated discipline. It does not matter how often you agree to make use of the shrine; what is important is that you live up to your agreement to make use of it on a regular basis. In my experience it is better to commit to one day a week and keep the commitment than to commit to every day and break the agreement. You are establishing a

connection with the ancestors and telling them when you will be available for communication enhances the connections. The white cloth, candle, water and pictures can be thought of as an electron magnet that draws Spirit to the shrine. The current that drives the magnet are the prayers directed towards the white table. If you only turn to your shrine in moments of crisis, the current will be weak. If you charge the batteries on a regular basis, the spiritual connection will remain dynamic and accessible.

At this point, you may spend time remembering those relatives who have served as role models considering how they might have dealt with any of the circumstances causing problems in your own life.

## **The Power of the Word**

### *The Ia Concept of Iyaami*

In traditional Yoruba culture, the extended family is a training school for the family trade which is supported by learning the sacred technology associated with the trade. For example, woodcarvers worship *Sango*, the Spirit of Lightning; blacksmiths worship *Ogun*, the Spirit of Iron; cloth makers worship *Osun*, the Spirit of the River; herbalists worship *Osanyin*, the Spirit of Plants; and diviners worship *Orunmila*, the Spirit of Destiny.

During a child's naming ceremony, if it is determined they need to learn a trade other than the family trade, the child goes to live with the family that teaches the trade associated with their destiny. This is a similar concept as boarding school.

When a person becomes a grandparent, they have literally graduated from the family school and may become members of the council of elders called *Ogboni*. The word *Ogboni* means "Wisdom speaks." The elders of *Ogboni* have what would be known in the West as judicial responsibilities. Collectively they settle disputes, enforce traditional

laws, monitor religious training and give advice to the King of the village. There are essentially three positions on an *Ogboni* council. Usually, the men and women of *Egbe Obatala* have the communal responsibility of developing and maintaining good character (*iwa-pele*). In the verse *Osa Meji* describing the Creation of *Egun* cloth *Egbe Obatala* is described by the praise name *Obarisa*. Enforcement of communal taboo is the responsibility of *Egbe Ogun*, whose members function as blacksmiths, hunters and guardians of the village. A sub group within *Egbe Ogun* called *Oro* has a responsibility to make sure human spirits do not become earth bound at funerals and they have responsibilities associated with the implementation of capital punishment. The council of female elders is called *Iyaami* literally meaning “my mothers.” In the verse *Osa Meji* describing the Creation of *Egun* cloth, the council of elder mothers is referred to as *Odu*. In the continuation of the verse, *Olodumare* is the Source of everything that becomes manifest in the physical world.

*Ogun walked in front. When Ogun walked in front, Obarisa followed and behind Obarisa came Odu. She asked Olodumare about the world. She said Ogun has the power to fight. He has the gun he has the weapons necessary for victory. She said Obarisa has power, the power of Obarisa makes anything he wants manifest. She said she is the only woman among them and wanted to know her power.*

The Spirit of *Ogun* is associated with the process of transforming the forest into cities, and the process of linking cities through the creation of roads. To say *Obarisa* has the power to make things manifest is to say the Spirit of Light brings us the vision of how people should function within the cities and homes created by *Ogun*. Building a village, a town and a city is more than the random construction of houses. The social organization that is supported by the infrastructure determines the nature of productivity within a culture and the vision of social organization is under the sphere of influence of the Spirit known in *Ifa* as *Obarisa*.

In simple terms, the polarity between *Ogun* and *Obarisa* is the polarity

between the practical and the political. Until recent times, this polarity was dominated by men in traditional Yoruba culture. On a metaphysical level, *Ogun* and *Obarisa* are both manifestations of the Spirit of Fire. *Ogun* is the fire of the blacksmith's forge, and *Obarisa* is the fire of illumination associated with the sun. Fire is traditionally identified as a masculine Spirit - expansive and transforming. Female Spirit is associated with water, which infers it is contracting and nurturing. At this point in the verse, *Ifa* scripture is asking the question what is the relationship between fire and water and how is that relationship reflected in social organization? In the relationship between *Ogun* and *Obarisa* the addition of fire to fire simple produces more fire. The relationship between fire and water creates a new element called steam making the interaction fundamentally creative.

*Olodumare said for all of time you will be called Mother. He said you were the only one who traveled to Earth and returned to Heaven. Only the women among them returned. He said you will up hold the world, Olodumare will give you that power. He said I will give you the power in the form of a bird. Olodumare said it is good.*

According to *Ifa* cosmology, women have the ability to communicate directly with Spirit through their ability to use the bird to transcend the boundaries of time and space. The bird is the symbol of elemental spirits used by women to trigger astral projection, sometimes referred to as out-of-body experience. Astral projection allows human consciousness to visit the Realm of the Ancestors and return to earthly consciousness. This bifurcated perspective gives *ori* a glimpse of the dual nature of reality.

*Olodumare asked Odu if she knew how to use the bird in the calabash. Olodumare said you will know how to use it. Odu received the bird from Olodumare and received the power to use it.*

*Odu* is the Yoruba word for womb and is also the word used to describe sacred space. Women understand the dynamics of inter-dimensional

travel on a biological level because the womb is a portal between the Earth (*ile aye*) and the Realm of the Ancestors (*ile Orun*). According to *Ifa* cosmology, at the moment of conception the fetus is infused with the Spirit of a lineage ancestor. This Spirit comes through the physical portal of *Odu*. When Spirit becomes manifest at a sacred shrine, the shrine is called *Igbodu* from elision *igbo odu* meaning womb of the forest.

*Odu departed. As she was leaving Olodumare asked her to return. He said come back. He said you Odu when you arrive on earth how are you going to use the power of the bird, the power I have given you?*

*Odu said she would fight with the people who would not listen. She said those who do not listen to the will of Olodumare she will fight with them. She said those who would ask for wealth she would give it to them. She said those who wanted children she would give them children. She said if someone receives wealth and becomes impertinent she will take it away. She said if someone gives birth to a child and they become impertinent she will take it away. She said anything she did for a person if they became impertinent she would take it away.*

In traditional Yoruba culture, there is a rather strict division of labor based on gender. Men are farmers, women process food, men protect the village from physical threats, and women protect the village from spiritual threats. In the traditional Yoruba extended family, the responsibility for maintaining the internal stability of the family is in the hands of the eldest wife.

*Olodumare said this is good but you must use this power with calm and for the good.*

*If you use it for bad things and cause violence, I will reclaim this power. All the men who follow you, I have made you their mother, anything they wish to do they must speak to you first.*

To the casual observer, traditional Yoruba culture appears to be patriarchal. In Ode Remo where I was initiated into *Ifa*, the women of *Ogboni* must give their blessing to any initiation of a man into *Ifa*. The women also have key roles in the *Ifa* initiation and without their participation the ritual cannot be completed.

*It is from this very ancient time that Olodumare has given the power to woman because it was she who received the power of Odu. He gave women the power of the word*

*Man alone is unable to do anything. Odu arrived in the world. When they all gathered in the world they saw the forest of the dead and it was woman who entered the forest. It was the forest of Oro that woman entered. During this time there was no prohibition against woman entering the forest of Oro. At this time women worshiped all the Orisa. They had full knowledge of all the inner mysteries.*

In Yoruba funeral practice *Oro* is a Spirit of the forest invoked through the use of a bullroar. At traditional Yoruba funerals, the men of *Oro* spin their bullroars to announce to the spirit of the recently deceased they have made a transition and need to begin the journey to the Ancestor Realm. In ancient times the *Oro* society was the providence of women and at some point in the history of *Ifa* spiritual practice the mystery of *Oro* was given to men. The men of *Oro* are members of the communal council of elders called *Ogboni*.

*Women acted in disgrace and Odu consulted Ifa. The elders said Odu you must act in calm; you must have patience, you must not be imprudent. Odu said why? They said because of the power that Olodumare has given you, the people will not know the reason it has been given to you. Odu said she does not know the reason it was given to her. She said she alone was called before Olodumare. She received the power from Olodumare after the others arrived on earth. They said Odu must make offerings to Spirit. She said she would not make offerings to Spirit because the*

*offerings were already made. The offering for women to receive power was made in the presence of Olodumare. They said she must not become overconfident in joy because she is capable of using these powers for a very long time. The world will not be able to destroy that which she has in her hands. The world will not know the root of her power. Odu refused to make the offering.*

When oral scripture says someone refuses to make an offering, the implication is that they have become stuck in the arrogant belief they do not need support from the Spirit Realm. According to *Ifa* cosmology, arrogance can lead to the loss of spiritual power (*ase*).

## **Calling the Ancestors**

*the Ifa Concept of OrikiEgun*

*Oriki* is the Yoruba word for invocation, literally translated it means praise the head, or praise the consciousness of a particular Spirit. In the context of *Ifa* ritual you need to invite specific Spirits to participate in any ceremonial process. Ritual in *Ifa* tends to follow a set sequence; invite Spirit to the sacred space, make an offering to Spirit to acknowledge the acceptance of the invitation, ask Spirit for guidance, close the ritual and return to the mundane world.

Some of the *Ifa* rituals for Forces in Nature (*Orisa*) are very formal and stylized requiring a strict adherence to structure, form and content. These rituals have been passed down through generations and the preservation of a set formula helps draw the Spirit being invoked due to a familiar resonance with the invitation. The situation is different with the invocation of ancestors. Not everyone involved in *Ifa* worship has ancestors who are familiar with traditional Yoruba invocations. This means there is no “correct” way to call the ancestors of your lineage. There are only effective and ineffective methods of communication. We can use the traditional Yoruba style of invocation as a guideline to



discover what works for our personal ancestors. The invocations in this volume are for use with a personal ancestor shrine and may be used for public performance of rituals involving *Egungun* Masquerade.

The invocations for the ancestors are traditionally followed by a recitation of the ancestral lineage of the person who is saying the invocation. The name of the ancestor is preceded by the phrase *Iba se* followed by the name of the ancestor. In traditional *Ifa* ancestor invocations, the name of the ancestor is followed by a short poetic phrase describing the significant accomplishments of the person named. For anyone who is new to the tradition and who has no family *oriki*, the task of writing short poetic descriptions of their ancestors can be challenging and rewarding. It is challenging because it may involve extensive research and rewarding because it can become a part of the family oral tradition passed on to future generations.

It is appropriate to recite the family history portion of the invocation in the language most familiar to the ancestors. Because many of us have limited information on family history, it has become traditional in the Diaspora to recite the ways in which you imagine your ancestors may have crossed over as a way of remembering the unknown ancestors.

Some *Ifa/Orisa* communities in the Diaspora have developed their own traditions associated with ancestor reverence and these should be honored and maintained by members of those extended families who have preserved a particular legacy. The *oriki* in this book are traditional invocations that may be used in supplement to lineage traditions or to reclaim forms of ancestor reverence commonly found in traditional Yoruba communities.

While reciting invocations to the ancestors, it is traditional to pour libation. The libation may be either water or some type of alcohol. In Africa it is common to pour alcohol into the cap of the bottle then use a finger to dribble small amounts on the floor. In the Diaspora it is

common to take a drink then spray the alcohol on the shrine.

Following the initial invocation, it is traditional to call the name of our known ancestors. It is also traditional in some areas for men to begin the recitation of ancestors by starting with the lineage of their father working backwards before reciting the lineage of their mother. Women would start with the lineage of their mother and work backwards before starting with the lineage of the father. This is not a strict rule, simply common practice. The name of the ancestor is traditionally preceded by the words *Iba se* from the elision *I ba ase* meaning I praise the power of (name of ancestor). I prefer listing the names from the most recently departed to the most distant departed. Some lineages work from the most distant known ancestor to the most recently departed. Again there is no “correct” way only personal preference.

There are two reasons for calling the ancestors; the first is to invite them to be present at the ancestor shrine and the second is to preserve their memory. In Yoruba culture, the *oriki* of a particular family is an important oral record of family history and of the accomplishments of specific ancestors. Our task as elders and ancestors of future generations is to preserve that information. The information we gather and incorporate into our ancestor invocation will be remembered and passed on to our children as a way of preserving the memory of lineage accomplishments. In Yoruba culture, *Ifa* teaches the idea that no one can know who they are if they cannot call their ancestors going back seven generations. *Ifa* also teaches that anyone who is remembered for seven generations into the future has reached immortality.

After saying the *oriki* listed above I start by calling my paternal grandfather Adelburt Fenyés. I say, “*Iba se* Dr. Adelburt Fenyés, the man who studied medicine in Vienna, lived in Cairo and moved to Pasadena where he opened a doctor’s office with the city’s first X-Ray machine”. In this way I call his name, remembered some of his accomplishments and preserve the memory for my children. Writing an ancestor *oriki*

should involve some thought, some study, some research and some inspiration from the ancestors. As we learn more about our ancestors we can add to the *oriki*,; they are not etched in stone. Developing the ability to communicate with the ancestors will generate new information and a new understanding of their accomplishments. Information generated by the ancestors can and should be incorporated into the invocation process.

Every family has their share of uninspiring ancestors. If you know a particular ancestor suffered from substance abuse, and or extremely destructive behavior, their names do not need to be included in the invocation process. The ancestors we invoke will influence our behavior. We do not need the influence of child molesters, drug dealers and sociopathic criminals.

Following the recitation of known ancestors, it is traditional to list the unknown ancestors by praising the ways in which you imagine some of them may have crossed over. For example;

***Iba se*** all those who passed in the middle crossing.

***Iba se*** all those who died in childbirth. ***Iba se*** all those who died in war.  
***Iba se*** all those who died of illness.

At this point in the invocation process, it is traditional to include a song. The songs may be traditional Yoruba ancestor songs, or they may be religious songs familiar to your ancestors, such as hymns, spirituals, singing portions of the Koran, or singing portions of the Torah. While singing, you might feel the impulse to dance. The traditional Yoruba ancestor dance step involves turning the right foot to the right, then moving the left heel towards the instep of the right foot. When dancing for the ancestors the legs never cross. The body is generally tilted forward and the arms swing freely. Dance movement in *Ifa* are similar in purpose to postures used in yoga, the dance step is designed to make the person receptive to the *ase* that is being invoked.

Once the invocation process is completed, it is traditional to leave an offering. Traditionally the offering would be a portion of the meal prepared for the living family on the day you speak to the ancestors. This can be placed on the altar or on the floor in front of the altar.

At this point in the ritual you are ready to speak to the ancestors. The first words might be to ask for their blessing. In Yoruba, you could say, *ire omo, ire owo, ire agbo ato* meaning good fortune to my children, good fortune of abundance, and the good fortune of a long healthy life. I find that talking to the ancestors is more effective if you ask a single question and sit quietly waiting for an answer. It is not necessary to experience strange phenomena, or even go into an altered state of consciousness to communicate with the ancestors even though these things sometimes happen. When you have a problem and you present it to the ancestors and ask for their assistance, the solution may come in many forms. The simplest form of communication with the ancestors is remembering how a particular ancestor may have resolved a particular problem. After the problem has been presented to the shrine, the answer may come from the ancestors in unexpected ways in the course of the days that follow. If you ask the ancestors to help find you a job and you get a phone call from a friend the next day offering you a job, it is not a coincidence; it is a message from the ancestors, an answer to your prayer. The ancestors may communicate to you in dreams. The interpretation of dreams is not difficult; they mean what you think they mean, trust your instincts. When I am writing and get stuck and need to find a particular reference, I can go to the library and the ancestors will literally knock a book off the shelf as I am walking down the aisle. Once the request has been spoken, the answer will come. It is up to us to be vigilant so we can recognize the answer in whatever forms it takes. The prayer portion of ancestor ritual comes after the *oriki* and is called *aladura* from the elision *ala dudu ra* meaning bring light to darkness, or *ala odu ra* meaning the light from the darkness (womb) spreads. Both of these translations have the same basic meaning.

May the ancestors continue to bring us light, *ase*.

***EGÚN JE WA MEMU*** (Pouring Libation to the Ancestors)

Call: ***Omi tútù, Ona tútù, Ilé tútù, Olójó 'ni mo júbà.***

Cool Water, Cool Road, Cool House, it Response:

Call:

Response:

Call:

Response:

Call:

Response:

Call:

Response: is the Owner of the Day we respect.

***Ìbà àse.***

We give praise.

***Ìlà Oòrun mo júbà.***

It is the Spirits of the East I respect.

***Ìbà àse.***

We give praise.

***Ìwò Oòrun mo júbà.***

It is the Spirits of the West I respect.

***Ìbà àse.***

We give praise.

***Aríwa mo júbà.***

It is the Spirits of the North I respect.

***Ìbà àse.***

We give praise.  
***Gúúsù mo júbà.***

It is the Spirits of the South I respect.  
***Ìbà àse.***

We give praise. Call: ***Akoda mo júbà.*** It is the diviner Akoda I respect.  
Response: ***Ìbà àse.*** We give praise. Call: ***Asèda mo júbà.*** It is the diviner  
Asèda I respect. Response: ***Ìbà àse.*** We give praise. Call: ***Ilè mo júbà.*** It  
is the Spirit of the Earth I respect. Response: ***Ìbà àse.*** We give praise.  
Call: ***Èsù Òdàrà mo tutu.***

It is the Spirit of the Divine Messenger of Transformation we respect.  
(call the  
names of all roads of *Èsù* represented at the ceremony)

Response: ***Ìbà àse.***

Call: ***juba.***

We give praise.  
***Awon Iku Orún mo***  
Response:

All It is the Spirit of  
those who live in the Realm of the  
Ancestors I respect.

***Ìbà àse.***

We give praise.  
***Ajúbà o, Ajúbà o!***

I give respect, I give respect. ***Ase.*** May it be so.

\* This is an ancestral prayer used when pouring libation in a public ceremony using a call and response format. The offering of *oti* may be poured on the ground from the bottle, or sprinkled on the ground with the

finger. The actual pouring of the oti occurs when saying the words: *Omi tutu, Ona tutu, Ilé tutu.*

## **ORÍKÌ EGÚN**

(Praising the Ancestors, invocation for consecration of Ancestor shrine and *Aso Egún*)

***Egúngún kiki egúngún.*** Praise to the mediums of the Ancestors.

***Egún ikú ranran fe awo ku opipi.*** Ancestors who have preserved the mystery of featherless flight. ***O da so bo fun le wo.***

You create the words of reverence and power.

***Egún ikú bata bango egún de.***

The drums of the Ancestors announce the arrival of the Ancestors.

***Bi aba f'atori na le egún ase de. Ase.***

On the strong mat you spread your power, the Ancestors are here. May it be so.

\* This is an effective invocation for possession by ancestor spirits. It is also used for the consecration of an ancestor shrine.

***OFO ASE EGÚNGÚN*** (Invocation for Ancestors to Mount the Mediums)  
***Ìbà a se Oyeku Meji ati Oyeku Meji, mo juba.***

I respect the Holy Scripture that honors the Ancestors and I give it praise

***Ìbà a se Egún, mo juba.***

I respect the Spirit of the

Ancestors and I give them praise. ***Ìbà a se Arúku, mo juba.***

I respect the Spirits that

transform our Ancestors and I give them praise.

***Ìbà a se Eluku, mo juba,***

I respect the Spirits that elevate our Ancestors and I give them praise.

***A dupe gbogbo egún embelese Olodumare.***

I thank the spirit of those  
ancestors who honor the Spirit of Creation.

***Ini (name) omo (name of spiritual parents).***

I am (name) child of (name spiritual parents).

***Egún pèlé o. Egún pèlé o. Egún pèlé o.***

Ancestors I greet you. Ancestors I greet you. Ancestors I greet you. ***Egún mo pé o. Egún mo pé o. Egún mo pé o. Ni igba meta.***

Ancestors I call you. Ancestors I call you. Ancestors I call you. I call you three times.

***Egún ikú ranran fe awo ku opipi. O da so bo fun le'wo.***

Ancestors who have preserved the mystery of featherless flight. You create the words of reverence and power.

***Egún wo'le wa. Yana wa neni. Egún wo'le wa. Yana wa neni. Egún wo'le wa. Yana wa neni.***

Ancestors you are welcome at this house. Please call today.

Ancestors you are welcome at this house. Please call today.

Ancestors you are welcome at this house.

***Je wa adimu pa. Ti won ba nje lajule Òrun ba won je. Bi ekolo ba juba ile ile a lanu.***

Come and accept our offering. Whatever good things are eaten in the Realm of the Ancestors please partake. If the earthworm pays homage to



the Earth, the Earth shares Her abundance.

***Omode ki Ijuba ki iba pa a. Ma ja kiki won Òrun, a dupe.***

If the child honors their parent they never suffer from neglect. All respect to the powers of the Realm of the Ancestors.

***Ìbà Baba. Ìbà Yeye. Ìbà Baba. Ìbà Yeye. Ìbà Baba. Ìbà Yeye.***

Praise to the Fathers. Praise to the Mothers. Praise to the Fathers. Praise to the Mothers. Praise to the Fathers. Praise to the Mothers.

We respect the Fathers and the Mothers.

***Mo juba*** (name of ancestor) I praise (name of ancestor)

\* (Include all those ancestors you wish to remember preceded by the words; mo Juba).

***Egún fun me lo mo, a dupe. Egún fun me la l'afia, a dupe.***

Ancestors we ask for your help and give you thanks. Ancestors we ask for good health and we give you thanks.

***Egún Oro ti ase fun Òrun ni awon, a dupe.***

Ancestors we ask for the power of transformation from the Realm of the Ancestors and we give you thanks.

***Ìbà Oluwo*** (name of chief priest). ***Ìbà Iyàgba*** (name of chief priestess) I respect (name of chief priest.) I respect (name of chief priestess) ***Ìbà Ojugbona a ko ni li - 'fá, a ko ni li Òrìsà.***

I respect all those teachers who have taught me the ways of *Ifá* and *Òrìsà*.

***Ki kan mase*** (name of elder).

I ask for the support of (name of elder)

\* (Name each elder you want to acknowledge preceded by the phrase ***Ki kan mase***)

***Egún e nle o o rami o o. Èmí o mona kan eyi ti nba gba Orí Egún. Ase.***

Ancestors, I am greeting you my friends. When I do not know which road to follow I will turn to the wisdom of the Ancestors. May it be so.



This invocation can be used for greeting *Egungun* dancers in a public ceremony.

## **Ancestor Masquerade**

### The *Ifa* Concept of *Egungun*

The word *Egungun* refers to the family members who have the sacred responsibility to function as mediums for the lineage Ancestral Guardian Spirit (*Egun*). In traditional Yoruba ancestor reverence, the mediums wear protective clothing called *Aso Egun*. This protective cloth covers the medium's body completely and keeps them safe while in an altered state of consciousness. Inside the cloth there is an assortment of charms (*awure*) to both enhance the ability of the medium to access ancestral Spirits and to protect the medium from unwanted spiritual influences. In traditional Yoruba culture, it is taboo to identify the person who functions as the medium, even when the identity is common knowledge within the community.

*Odu departed without making ebo. She brought the cloth of Egun outside.*

*She brought Oro outside. Obarisa came and said it is the one to whom Olodumare confided, the energetic woman has come to take the world, to take the inner sanctum of Egun and the inner sanctum of Oro and the shrines of all the Orisa. Obarisa would not dare to enter any of these places.*

*Obarisa consulted Ifa. It was Orunmila who cast Ifa for Obarisa. Orunmila said the message from Olodumare is this you will take the world in your hands. The world will not be spoiled. No one person will take the world in their hands.*

*Orunmila is the Spirit of Destiny sacred to those members of the community who train as diviners. This section of the verse speaks of a gender conflict in the history of Yoruba culture over the question of who would be the keepers of certain mysteries, men or women. This issue has shifted throughout history and continues to shift into modern times.*

*How then will Obarisa be victorious. He consulted Ifa and was told to make an offering to Spirit. Ifa said he must be patient. He must sacrifice snails, a whip-like stick, and cowries. Obarisa made the offering. When Obarisa made the offering Orunmila consulted Ifa. Orunmila said that the world would belong to Obarisa, but you must have patience. He said worship will become yours. He said that which carries the power of woman will be exaggerated. When it is overdone she will become your servant. Obarisa understood and said he would have patience.*

*Ifa is based on the notion of a balance of power between male and female principles. At times this balance is disrupted by an over emphasis on one side or the other as social situations cause tension and an ebb and flow in the balance of power.*

*All of the customs, those that are good and those that are bad, brought to earth by Odu with the power given to her by Olodumare include the taboo against looking at her material form. If the taboo is violated she will*

*make the person blind. If she says the gaze of someone is evil, if she says a person is going to have a headache, they will have a headache, if she says they will have stomach pain, they will have stomach pain. All things said by Odu will come to pass.*

In traditional Yoruba culture it is taboo for anyone to see the sacred ritual objects that are used by a specific religious society unless the person is initiated into that society. Here the verse is indicating the consequences of violating the taboo.

*When the time came, Odu said Obarisa we have come to earth together. She said come they had come to the same place. She said if we are in the same place she would allow Obarisa see anything she wanted to do.*

This is a reference to a historical time when men learned *awo* (sacred technology) from women.

*She said because Obarisa and Ogun fell from the sky together they chose Ogun to be a warrior. Those who wanted to make war would not be victorious against Ogun.*

*She and Obarisa needed to live together in one place. At the place where they came together they must stay. The snail offered by Obarisa was used to praise his head at the place where he lived. The liquid from the snail was used to drink. Obarisa did not want to drink the water from the snail. Odu drank the water from the snail and her stomach became calm. She told Obarisa that because of him she had discovered something delicious to eat. She said the snail water is sweet and the snail itself is sweet. When she finished eating she said it was good. She said no one has ever given me anything as good to eat as a snail. She said a snail is what one must give me to eat.*

Snail blood called *omiero* is used by those who worship *Obarisa* to clean their heads and is used by worshippers of *Odu* as ingested medicine.

*She said the same snail that is given to you must be given to me.*

In *Ifa* cosmology the snail has a cooling effect and coolness is believed to be the key to cooperation, especially cooperation between the genders.

*Obarisa said he would give her snails. He said the power you do not give me bothers me. He asked her to show him the things she possessed. She said when he comes to live with her in one place he must not hide anything from her. She said she would not hide anything from him. She said he will see all of her works and procedures. She said we will live in one place. Obarisa said this was not bad.*

*Odu brought the things needed to worship Egun into the inner sanctum of Egun. She said Obarisa should follow. He said he was afraid. She said follow her and he followed her. When Obarisa followed her he entered the forest of Egun. They worshipped Egun together. But she did not show him how to make the sound of Egun.*

This is a reference to a time when men wanted to learn the mysteries women brought from the Realm of the Ancestors to Earth as a result of their ability to astral travel. The refusal by women to show men how to make the sound of *Egun* is a refusal to show men the secret of how to become a medium. .

*She did not know how to make the voice of Egun. She did know how to speak with the Immortals in Heaven. When they worshipped Egun Odu took the cloth she covered herself and gave thanks for her nourishment. When she finished her propitiations she left. The time had come for her and Obarisa to go to their dwelling place. Obarisa went to the place of the cloth. The cloth of Egun did not have cloth streamers. He added the streamers. The streamers allowed Egun to see. When women made Egun the cloth was simple and the made the face in a way that did not allow Egun to see. When Obarisa arrived he added the streamers. Before they reached their home Obarisa went to the rear court of Egun. He took the*

*cloth of Egun and cut the face opening and placed streamers in the opening. When this was done he covered himself with the cloth. He took a whip into his hands but he did not say goodbye to Odu. He said he was going to the rear court of Egun, the place where Egun came out. Obarisa spoke with the voice of Egun and they did not recognize his voice. He said his prayers and Egun said Hen. He said Ha. One who wished to praise Egun says Hen and he said Ha. He said the Egun he praises is infallible. He said when he came from Heaven to Earth one of the people from Heaven came to earth with him. He took the whip and dragged it on the ground. At his home he spoke with the voice of Egun and Odu became frightened. When she brought the cloth she did not know this way of speaking She asked who has entered this cloth, who speaks so quickly and with such a voice? With insight men take power.*

Egun mediums were originally women and at some point men took over the Egun dance. The male mediums who are initiated into the mystery of Egungun speak in a high pitched falsetto voice when they are in possession with the Spirit of Egun. In some regions of traditional Yoruba culture in Nigeria, the mediums for the ancestors are exclusively men, and in other regions both men and women serve in a ritual capacity as mediums for the ancestors.

## **Ancestor Offering**

Following the opening invocation to the ancestors you may make a food offering to the shrine. The Yoruba term for this type of offering is *adimu egun*. The idea behind making an offering is reciprocity. If we ask the ancestors for their guidance we need to give them something in return. Offering food is not meant to literally feed a Spirit; it is meant as a gesture of honoring the memory of those who once ate with us.

In Africa the most common offering to the ancestors is a small portion of every meal placed on the edge of the eating mat. Because Western culture generally eats meals at a table, the offering to the ancestors may be

placed on a small plate that is set on the floor in front of the *Egun* altar or it may be placed on the altar directly. It is traditional in the Diaspora to use a plate with a crack. The broken plate is symbolic of the body that is discarded when the human soul (*emi*) is elevated.

In addition to food, it is traditional to offer something to drink. A cup of coffee, tea, or alcohol may be placed next to the plate. If you are pouring libation hold the bottle with the left hand and cover the spout with your thumb and sprinkle a few drops on the floor. Flowers can also be used as an offering and they can be placed directly on the altar. It is common practice in the Diaspora to use cigars as offerings to the ancestors. The smoke is used as a method of cleansing similar to smudge. Once you are in communication with the ancestors they will make specific requests for the kinds of offerings they want. You should make every effort to comply with the request, because in my experience it will enhance the quality of the communication.

After making the offering, thank the ancestors for all the blessings you have already received. You may express your thanks in your own words or you may use the following Yoruba *oriki* (praise poem)

***E nle oo rami o.*** I am greeting you my friends.  
***Be ekolo ba juba ile a lanu.***

If the earth worm pays homage to the earth, the earth always gives it access.

***Omode ki ijuba ki iba pa a.***  
A child who pays homage never suffers the consequences.  
***Egun mo ki e o.***

Ancestors I greet you. ***Egun mo ki e o ike eye.***  
Ancestors I greet you with respect. ***Ohun ti wo ba njhe lajule Orun.***

Whatever good things are being eaten in the realm of the ancestors,

*No mo ba won je.*

Eat my offering with them.

*J'epo a t'ayie sola n'igbale.*

Eat richly from the earth.

*Omo a t'ayie sola n-igbale.*

The children of the earth are grateful for your blessing.

*Ori Egun, mo dupe.*

I thank the wisdom of the ancestors.

*Ase.*

May it be so.

Feeding the ancestors should be done on a regular basis to keep them close to your shrine. The frequency of the feeding is part of the agreement you make with your ancestors. In Africa, some elders make an offering to *Egun* at every meal and before they drink any liquids. In the Diaspora, it is more common to make an offering once a week to the shrine. It is acceptable to feed the ancestors less frequently as long as you keep to your schedule and your agreement.

For those who have not been initiated, having an ancestor shrine will give them a place to use the system of four cowries for divination and will provide access to ancestor spirits who will speak through divination. In all the systems of divination based on *Dafa (Odu Ifa)*, the divination is directed towards a specific Spirit. That Spirit may bring messages from a number of sources, but the invocations to open divination are always directed to either a particular *Egun* or *Orisa*.

***The Elemental Spirit of the Birds***

*The Ila Concept of Eiyele*



When the British colonial empire invaded Nigeria and took control of the country to exploit the natural resources, they made a very precise study of *Ifa* culture. As a result of their study, they determined that the easiest way to disrupt the traditional Yoruba political structure was to outlaw *Ogboni*. When they disbanded the elders council the British were able to select Yoruba Kings and Queens and to place them in positions of power without fear they would be deposed through the traditional judicial process.

In an effort to maintain economic control after relinquishing political control, the British sponsored a Christian Crusade in the early 1950's for the purpose of systematically burning the remnants of the traditional Yoruba women's secret societies. The sacred icon of these societies was the Spirit of a bird. As a result of this denigration, the women became understandably secretive about their relationship to the Spirit of the bird.

*Olodumare first gave the wisdom to women and he gave the power of the birds to women. When Odu saw that Egun had a whip in hand she ran away. Obarisa carried the Egun and entered the town. Odu saw the cloth was her own. She asked is that Obarisa? She remained in her house and sent her bird on a mission. She said the wing must rest on the shoulder of Egun. They must go together. Everything that Egun says will be activated by the power of the bird perched on his shoulder. When everything he says has become manifest he will return to the rear court of Egun.*

There is a common notion in the Diaspora that *Egungun* ritual is the sole providence of men. This segment of the verse is saying the power of the male *Egun* society is supported by the power of the women's society. Before the men go out in public to dance with the *Egun* cloth, the women who worship the Spirit of the bird place the men in possession by calling the Guardian Spirit of the Ancestors. The women's contribution to the process is done in secret inside the Ancestor Shrine.

*Obarisa undressed on the ground. He placed his whip on the ground. He*

*dressed himself. He left. The bird went to its owner. When Obarisa came home he was greeted by Odu. She said welcome. She said where did you come from? Obarisa said he came from outside. Odu said that is good you are welcome.*

It is taboo to know the identity of *Egun* mediums. This is a subtle reference to the taboo because the woman is pretending she does not know the identity of the medium.

*Obarisa dumped all of his things on the ground and Odu said this was good. She said it is the Egun cloth that you have taken outside. Obarisa said yes. Odu said it is good. She said you have shown me what I must do. She said people behold Egun. She dragged the whip over the ground and said the honor is for you. She said today I will leave. She said I concede Egun to man. She said because of me no woman will every dare to enter into the Egun cloth she said she has given the Egun to men. She said he must go outside with Egun because she has the power that Egun utilizes. She said Egun is compatible with the birds. At the place where Egun manifests, there also the birds appear. All the power used by Egun comes from the birds. Odu said no woman will ever enter the Egun cloth, but she will be able to dance, to meet Egun and dance in front of Egun if Egun is outside. She said Egun departs today and it is man who will guide Egun.*

Again, to the uninitiated, it would appear that *Egun* worship is male dominated. This verse is saying that *Egun* is supported by the power of women both prior to taking *Egungun* out into the public and while the *Egungun* is in public.

*She said all things the people wish to do are aided by women. That is why men are unable to do anything on Earth, if they do not obtain the hand of woman.*

*They chanted, on the fifth day they celebrated the week. They said all the incantations they would chant would come from the holy Odu of Ifa called*

*Osa Meji.*

The power of women in *Osa Meji* is the gateway to the land of the ancestors. The traditional Yoruba calendar is based on a four day week which is called a five day week because the fifth day and the first day are counted together. The verse is saying that the power of the ancestors is invoked every four days to maintain the connection with *Egun* whether or not the *Egungun* dancer comes out in public.

*They said they will praise the women, they said if they praise the women the Earth will be tranquil.*

*They chanted:*

*Prostrate, prostrate for the women.*

*Woman has placed you in the World, thus you are humanity.*

*Woman is the intelligence of the Earth, prostrate for woman.*

*Woman has placed you in the World, thus you are humanity.*

In *Ile Ife*, the sacred city of Yoruba, the traditional *Egungun* dancers who wear the Ancestral cloth includes the initiation of women. This represents a return to the early traditions where women originated the dance.

## **Ancestor Staff**

The next step in making effective use of an ancestor shrine is to make an ancestor staff. In Yoruba, the staff is called *igi egun*. The process for making *igi egun* in the Diaspora is to take seven pieces of fruit to a wooded area. Wrap the fruit in a white cloth. You are looking for a stick and you are bringing an offering to the forest to ask for guidance in locating the stick. Before starting on your quest stand at the edge of the forest and identify yourself, and then state the purpose of your visit. At

this point you ask permission from the spirit of the forest to enter their domain. A sample prayer in Yoruba is as follows.

***Iba se Ori Igbo*** I pay homage to the Spirits of the forest.  
***Emi*** (your name)

I am (your name)  
***Gbogbo ewe mo dupe***

I give thanks for the many plants of the forest.

***Igbo fun mi igi egun, ase.***

Forest, bring me the stick of my ancestors, may it be so.

Remove the fruit from the white cloth and place the fruit at the base of a large tree. The fruit will either be eaten by wild life or decompose into the soil. Your offering is being given in exchange for permission to remove a stick from the grove. Conclude the prayer by saying,

***Igbo a dupe, ase.*** Forest I thank you may it be so.

Following this prayer you are ready to look for a stick that can be used in the process of invoking ancestors. Once the offering has been made, you will feel drawn to a particular spot. You are looking for a branch that has fallen to the ground and not one that needs to be cut or broken from a tree. When you find the right stick, you will know it. When leaving the area, once again thank the forest. The stick functions as a magnet for *ase* (spiritual energy). If you have found the right stick, *ase* will move from the stick into your arm and through your body. You will be able to feel the movement of *ase* and if you feel it the stick will be effective for its intended purpose.

***Igbo a dupe, ase.***  
Forest I thank you may it be so.

When you return home, place the stick in front of the ancestor shrine and

wash it. In *Ifa*, the stick would be washed with a tar based black soap called *ose dudu*. If sacred soap is not available use a scented soap. After the stick is washed, smudge it and seal it using the techniques described for smudging and sealing the area around the altar. I prefer using a plain piece of wood, but in some lineages it is traditional to decorate the stick with strips of torn cloth, bells, shells and ornaments associated with your ancestors. The cloth should be torn from pieces of old clothing, If possible, known ancestors of your family lineage should have worn the clothing. In some regions of Africa, the ancestor staff has a carved serpentine pattern. Some elders in the Diaspora will want to make an offering to the staff based on the customs of their lineage.

After the ancestor staff has been decorated, take it to the ancestor shrine, light a candle and freshen the water. The staff can now be used as part of the invocation process. Invocation means you are inviting the ancestors to join you at the shrine in some form of direct communication. There are many ways to invoke the ancestors and many languages they will respond to depending on your family history. I am including a traditional invocation that is used by my religious family. I encourage the use of prayers that make use of the spiritual and cultural heritage of the ancestors who are being invoked. This may require some research, but in my experience, every culture has some form of ancestor reverence. Use your ancestor stick to tap the floor while you are saying the invocation. The stick is both a musical instrument and a vehicle for channeling energy from spirit. When possession occurs it is common for the ancestor to move towards the medium through the stick. Because it is an instrument of invocation, the stick should only be used in a ritual context.

In *Ifa* those mediums that are possessed by ancestor spirits are called *Egungun*. It is not necessary to go into possession to communicate with the ancestors. If you are working alone, possession is undesirable because the spirit will have no one to speak with and the medium will have no one to guide them back to normal consciousness.

It is possible through mediation to hear the voice of *Egun* and it is possible to see the image of an ancestor. At times the communication may simply be an intuitive feeling that has no visual or audible source. The type of communication is not important. The focus should be on the quality of the information received.

I have found in working with my students that a simple set of questions can initiate dialogue with *Egun*. After you have done the invocation and have made an offering, start by asking if there is anyone who wishes to speak. The answer does not have to be clear at first; just go with your intuition. If you feel that someone wants to speak, assume that it is so. It may take several sessions, but when there is an affirmative answer, the next step should be to ask for a name. If the ancestor refuses to respond, discontinue the process, clean yourself with water and extinguish your candle. The reason for this is because you are in control of the ritual and you must maintain control. Any ancestor who can be of assistance to you will give their name clearly. Do not worry if you do not recognize the name. At times ancestral spirits will respond who have no immediate relationship to your family lineage so do not worry about making a direct lineage connection.

Once a name has been given, ask the ancestors if they want anything placed on the shrine. If possible make an effort to accommodate the request before continuing with the dialogue. If the request is not immediately available, make a promise to provide what they have asked for within a specific time frame. During your next session of meditation in front of your shrine, include the name of the ancestor who has spoken to you in your opening prayer. If you want further communication with a specific ancestor make sure you have included the offering they requested.

After contact has been made with an ancestor, ask for guidance around unresolved personal issues. Start by dealing with one area of concern each time you approach your shrine. The best way to develop skill in this

form of communication is to start by asking questions that can be answered with a simple yes or no response. When your meditation is over, make a record of the information that was received. Test the quality of the information by acting on the advice that was given, and then take some time to make an objective analysis of the results. This is a subjective area and it takes honest self-evaluation to determine both the accuracy of your perception of the information and to judge the value of the information received. Not all ancestors are sufficiently evolved to offer good advice. When this occurs; thank the ancestor and begin to search for more enlightened guidance. It is a fundamental tenet of *Ifa* that all Spirits respond to the power of the word (*ofo ase*). Use that power to control the quality of your ancestor communication. Whatever is spoken with sufficient intention will manifest. The key to developing high intention is to work through any fear that may arise while working with *Egun*. If this becomes difficult, simply use the shrine as a place for introspection and contemplation and avoid direct invocation.

In my experience, the only danger that can come through this process occurs when someone has unconsciously attracted un-evolved ancestors to their shrine. This can occur as a result of alcohol and drug abuse. Certain drugs and excessive use of alcohol can open the channels of intuition that stimulate contact with the ancestors. If the person who is abusing either substance is not aware of what is going on, the results can be disruptive. I have also known individuals who were the victims of childhood sexual abuse and physical violence that have unconsciously attracted ancestors who were responsible for those kinds of behavior. When a child is subjected to extreme trauma, they can astral travel as a form of protection. Astral travel (*oso*) is the ability to separate the conscious mind from the physical body. This state can attract ancestors, some of whom can be very benevolent. The problem that generally occurs is that because the connection was made at an early age, there is no clear understanding of what has taken place. This phenomenon can cause some confusion for those who have suffered from abuse and then attempt to contact *Egun* as an adult. The problem is literally that as an adult a person

will go into possession in response to threatening situations and will not realize what has happened. They will simply have no memory of blocks of time. Anyone in this situation should use their altar as a place of meditation.

Victims of both substance abuse and physical abuse should focus on asking the ancestors for guidance in finding responsible elders who can guide them to a state of health. In my experience some of the most profound advice from the ancestors comes as a result of remembering how a departed relative handled a particular problem.



## **Grounding and Cleansing Following *Egun* ritual**

Each time you sit in front of the ancestor shrine there should be fresh water on the cloth and there should be a lit candle in the room. The candle and the water added with the ground under the floor and the air we breathe, means the ritual is taking place in the presence of earth, air, fire and water. These are the fundamental elements of Creation and they are the forces that are represented by the first four *Odu* (sacred scripture) used in *Dafa* (*ifa* divination). *Ifa* teaches that the interaction between these four elements generates the variety of life forms that arises through evolution. They are seeds of all that exists in the visible world.

Once you have established contact with a particular ancestor, you will want to place a large bowl of water in front of the altar at those times you are planning to engage in dialogue. It is traditional in many *Orisa* communities in the Diaspora to add flower petals to the water. Clean yourself with the water from the bowl before starting the invocation process and do not use the water you have placed in a glass on the altar. When you are finished with the ritual, cleanse yourself with the same water by taking a few drops and covering your body from head to foot. The movement of your hands effects the cleansing so it is not necessary to immerse yourself in water. When the cleansing is completed, end the ritual by saying,

***Iba se Ori Egun*** (repeat 3x's) I pay homage to the wisdom of the ancestors.

***Ase.***

May it be so.

The phrase is repeated three times because the number three symbolizes the mystery of that which is hidden. It is common for *Ifa* prayers to repeat certain sections three times as symbolic acknowledgement of the mystery within the ceremony. When the closing prayer is finished, extinguish the flame on the candle by snuffing with your fingers or by

using a candlesnuffer. Do not blow the flame out with your mouth. Breath on the altar can pull the ancestors back towards the shrine and this is the opposite effect of what you are trying to accomplish. When you are fully grounded, throw the water outside, someplace away from your front door. You want to throw it where no one is likely to walk through it until the water evaporates and the energy from the ritual has been grounded.

*Awo Falokun Fatunmbi Olori Ile Iwa-pele*

## *Appendix 1*

### *ObiAbata*

When we speak of *Ifá*, the word has two meanings. *Ifá* is the Yoruba word for the Wisdom of Nature. So anything you can learn about yourself or the world from a Yoruba language perspective, even in Africa, is *Ifá*. When you talk to a traditional Yoruba elder, and you say something about Western science, psychology, or cars, or anything that involves knowledge of the world, that is considered *Ifá*, even if the inventor of the airplane was not an *Ifá* priest, his invention would be considered *Ifá*.

The word also refers to a religious tradition that emerged out of a West African city called Ile Ife. It is *Ifá* as the wisdom of Nature that is the basis for the religious belief of traditional Yoruba culture. Yoruba culture is a limited concept because the word *Yoruba* was invented by the Jesuits. It was a way to identify a certain group of people who spoke a particular language, from a common root. This language group was identified so the Bible could be translated into what is now known as the Yoruba language. The translators arbitrarily decided the Yoruba of Oyo was the standard and based their translations on this particular dialect. No real effort has ever been made to create a dictionary of liturgical Yoruba meaning a compilation of terms used in traditional Yoruba sacred scripture.

Within there is a complex system for identifying Forces in Nature. The

system is based on the belief that everything in Nature has consciousness. So if everything has consciousness, then potentially we can communicate with everything. In a sense, the Forces in Nature are limitless. But it's also *Ifá's* belief that different levels of Creation, from the Big Bang to fish in the ocean, to people on the surface of the earth, make use of similar principles of organizing consciousness. There is the consciousness of fire that is at the center of the earth, the consciousness of fire that creates the sun, the consciousness of fire that created the big bang at the beginning of time, and the consciousness of fire is also described as the passion for social justice. So you can be a person who has a physical body with a consciousness that is structured by a particular energy that we could call the principle of fire or the Spirit of Fire, or *Sango*. This is the *Ifá* view of the multi-level patterns of consciousness in Nature.

Divination is the manipulation of religious symbols as a problem solving process. Most divinations systems use transcendent symbols or metaphysical images, in one form or another. These symbols are manipulated to give illumination to a problem or a certain set of circumstances. It is usually believed that the manipulation of the oracle is somehow influenced by Spirit.

In Africa there are two generic systems of divination, one involves the manipulation of shells, nuts or rocks. The other is to mark symbols on the earth and then either set animals loose to walk across them, or to wait for an animal to spontaneously travel the course. This is a generalization, but these are the two most common methods of divination.

As an issue of faith, when divination is used, *Ifá* teaches that divination is effective because the selection process is inspired and guided by Spirit. Divination is the manipulation of metaphysical symbols and it is considered a form of direct communication with Forces of Nature.

Carl Jung did a study of divination systems and he invented the word

synchronicity to explain why divination works. Jung defined synchronicity to describe seemingly unrelated events having an underlying meaning. His basis for creating the word synchronicity was the idea that the whole Universe is inter-related, which is consistent with *Ifá* belief. It is the idea that nothing can happen unconnected to anything else. So if you're walking down the street and you say; "Well, should I go right or left? I stubbed my left toe, I should go to the left." You are creating your own communication with the Universe. That's synchronicity. That's the psychological model.

Another model, the Para psychological view is that divination works because the unconscious mind is able to manipulate matter. That is called telekinesis.

There are three different views about what's going on with divination, excluding of course the negative views that it is anything from foolishness to the work of the "Devil".

The belief is that it is a form of direct communication with Spiritual Forces. In the religion of *Ifá*, there are traditionally four ways of communicating with Spirit; divination, possession, dream interpretation and reading signs in Nature. For example; a sudden shift in the weather, and the appearance of something like an epidemic would be considered messages directly from Spirit and they are interpreted as such. Reading signs is sometimes difficult for those of us who live in the city, but it is a significant part of *Ifá* as it is practiced in Africa. Reading signs would include the movement of animals, the movement of birds, following the course of a contagious illness, sudden changes in the weather and so on.

In *Ifá* there is a system of notation used as mandalas, which are symbols of energy patterns. The symbols are based on two figures; a single line I, and a double line II. The anthropologists tend to translate the meaning of this as masculine and feminine. That is way too superficial of an analysis. The single line represents the force for expansion in the Universe, and the

double line represents the force for contraction in the Universe. It is really understood in Africa as phenomena that predates the emergence of gender. So we have a symbol of expansion and a symbol of contraction that manifest in the physical universe as light (I) and darkness (II). There is no connotation of one being better than the other. It is the issue of balancing these two forces that is at the foundation of the spiritual quest.

These marks are grouped together in two pairs of quadragrams, or two pairs of four marks. For example;

I I I I I I

I I

I I I

If you have eight possible marks and two possible marks for each position, you have 256 possible combinations. In other words, each place in the eight positions can be either one or two marks. If you count up all the possible combinations it comes to 256.

Each of these markings is called *Odu*. The word *Odu* in Yoruba means *Womb*. So each one of these 256 symbols is believed to be a fundamental energy pattern that sustains Creation on all the different levels of Being. These marks are considered a map of the way that energy manifests in the world. They are two dimensional images of a three dimensional reality. This is not just a circle on a piece of paper. It represents a sphere. These are lines of influence formed by powers of expansion and contraction. So if you have a sphere, a gyroscope, and you have forces pulling and pushing, then that is the basic diagram for atomic structure. So somebody in Ile Ife a long time ago figured that out, and we're still working with that map. Of course the person who is given credit for working this out is the Prophet *Orunmila*.

*Ifá* has 256 *Odu* and each of those *Odu* represent a particular way that consciousness organizes itself in the Universe. Modern psychology has

sixteen character types, based on the polarity between introversion and extroversion. *Ifá* has 256 character types times 12, because each *Odu* can be modified in at least 12 different ways. This means *Ifá* has identified 3072 character types based on this simple scheme.

When these marks are made, in addition to being a mandala or a blueprint of energy patterns in the Universe, it is also a system for organizing data. It's very similar to a computer program. Computers work on the principle of two quadragrams with on off switches. It's exactly the same mathematical formation. If each one of these images represents a particular organization of consciousness, then what was done initially was to go through and create scripture that speaks symbolically and poetically about the inner essence of a particular pattern.

If you're learning *Ifá* as a young person in Africa, you first go through the 256 marks and you learn the scripture. For example; "Bit by bit we eat the head of the rat, bit by bit we eat the head of the fish, *Ifá* says it is slowly that we progress towards spiritual elevation." This is the first verse of *Ifá*. So you go through and learn the poetic verse. But if you then decide you want to specialize in farming, you go through and relearn all 256 adding the information within your community about farming that relates to each *Odu*. If you were a warrior you would learn the information for each *Odu* that relates to martial arts. *Ifá* has its own marital art called *Aki*. If you were to learn herbal medicine, you would go through and study the verses as they related to herbs. For architecture, or organizing government and so on and so on, it becomes very much like a computer program in the sense that you can have different subjects that plug into the windows on the screen.

Because the information is passed orally, it becomes a way of both making sure that you've learned everything because you work your way through the entire system. Also it becomes a way of adding new information to any particular subject in the spectrum of the whole system. And it also becomes the basis for written language within the

culture. The anthropologists say that Africans didn't have a written language. Now if you take this:

IIIIIIIIII

Mark the on a piece of calabash with a piece of charcoal and send it along with a small piece of cloth. This says; "Mother had a baby," and the piece of cloth represents which family she is in. This is written language. You show that to anybody in Yoruba culture and they would read it the same way.

In addition to being a system for organizing the wisdom of the culture, it is a system of communication. It is also a system of invocation, because when you put the mark on the tray and say the prayers that relate to the mark, you bring the Spiritual Forces represented by the pattern to the place where you are doing the divination.

This system is incredibly complex and not something that you learn overnight. The elders of the village determine who has the aptitude for memorizing certain aspects of the oracle. The selected students usually start their training at seven years old. By the time they are fourteen, they have it. This is at least a seven year process starting at seven and coming to maturity at fourteen. You keep learning for the rest of your life after you've established this solid foundation.

I've described what I consider the foundation of the divination system within *Ifá/Orisa* worship. But there are several systems that emerge out of the parent system. Most of them are much simpler; to make sure that everyone has access to some form of divination or communication with Spirit. Not everyone who worships *Ifá* is going to be able to spend seven years memorizing scripture. For this reason there are simpler systems, all of which are rooted in *Ifá*.

I will start with a simply system and show how it becomes gradually

more and more complex. *Ifá's* teaches that divination is communication with Spirit. *Ifá's* teaches that Spirit will communicate with you using any system you are using, as long as you remain consistent within that system. You can start off learning the system with just a few elements. That would be the same thing as using a Ouija board with only eight letters. You would be limited in the number of words you could use. As you introduced more letters into the system the vocabulary would increase.

In the beginning we work with a system that gives us a yes/no answer to direct questions. Essentially we are working with two words, yes or no. As we develop skill in that system it can give you insights into deeper esoteric levels. But communication with Spirit through divination is not just automatic because you have the cola nuts. The link between the diviner and the Spirit is a consequence of his or her own internal process. In other words you could be an initiated elder and a wise person and have a bad day and you're not making the connection. So there are a number of things that are done to insure the link between the diviner and the Spirit is established.

One of the ways this is done is by casting the oracle in sacred space. By sacred space, I mean an area designated, consecrated and only used for the purpose of divination. The way space is consecrated for divination in *Ifá* is through the use of a mat. The mat is weaved together; the weave of the mat symbolizes the inter-relatedness of all things in Creation. The mat in *Ifá* represents sacred space.

We want to bring the elements of earth, air, fire and water to the sacred space because those are the fundamental elements of Creation. We use a candle, and a glass of water. The earth is there. That may not be literally true if you are sitting on the second floor of an apartment building. But symbolically you are always sitting on the earth. It is considered bad form not to sit on the mat because you want your body touching the earth. You take the candle, the glass of water, the earth and the air we breathe.



Now candles are rare and expensive items in Africa. They use palm oil lamps with wool wicks. Sometimes water isn't as accessible, so these are not hard and fast rules.

In this country, I would suggest that beginning divination be done with four cowries. In Africa they generally use obi kola among many other things. So there is nothing inherently significant about the cowries other than it was used as money and represents abundance. In Africa four cowries are used less than obi. In the Diaspora gluing cowries on pieces of coconut has become popular and this system of divination is generally known in the West as *Obi Abata*.

Once we have earth, air, fire and water on the mat, we want to put our self in alignment with Spirit. We do that through what's called *oriki*. That literally translates to “praising the head,” which suggests it is the Yoruba word for invocation. We want to invoke that which we are speaking too, or more specifically we want to invite Spirit to the mat. We don't want to just randomly toss the cowries at anything. The reason for that, if you think about it, depending on the question, depending on who you are speaking too, you're going to get a different answer for very legitimate reasons. It is our belief, and I think out of respect for the ancient history of *Ifá* we should honor the idea, that we only speak to that which were are sanctioned to invoke.

In Africa everyone has sanction to speak to their ancestors. How could you not have that? It is impossible for me to give you that right, and it is impossible for anybody to give you that right. It is a birthright, the ability to speak to your ancestors.

The important consideration in speaking to the ancestors is the *Ifá* belief that we become who we are by standing on the shoulders of those who come before us. In other words, every generation does not have to reinvent the wheel. We turn to our ancestors for guidance and we can turn to different ancestors for different issues. Fundamentally we turn to our

ancestors for spiritual enlightenment, physical and emotional healing, protection, and issues of physical survival. If you have a relative who was a good auto mechanic and your car broke down, you invoke the spirit of that ancestor for guidance. If you are physically ill and you had a relative who was a doctor or a nurse, you might want to talk to them. If you have a relative who was a master at *Aki*, which is *Ogun's* martial art, you may want to invoke that ancestor for protection. If you have questions of how to proceed with what I would call questions of spiritual and ethical concern, it is the grandparents who set a good example we call on.

Now is based on the belief that we are all related, so it does not have to be a blood relative that you are speaking too. We may have what I call affinity Spirits. Anybody who is a historical figure who has inspired you in any arena is somebody who can inspire you.

When you use the mat it is placed on the floor. In Africa it's usually placed on the floor of what is called *Igbodu* meaning "Sacred Grove". Literally it's a contraction of *igbo* for forest, and *Odu* for Womb. Anyplace you put a pot, or a shrine or something that represents a Force in Nature is called *Igbodu*. It is also a word that is sometimes used to refer to initiation.

The Yoruba word for shrine is *Ojubo* which means "eye your offering," or in better English "face your offering." The anthropologists say that the Africans are worshipping fetishes. The elders say the shrine is a place you face when you're saying your prayers. There is no misconception that the rock or the statue is the Spirit. The rock is a receptacle for your prayers which then becomes a magnet for Forces in Nature that are greater than the rock. The reason I say rock is because most shrines contain a rock in one form or another.

In *Ifá* the elders say when you invoke for divination the *Ifá* diviner returns to the time when *Orunmila* walked the earth. That is a poetic phrase that refers to a certain alternate form of consciousness in which

you are in touch with Spirit, but you are also there in the room, able to speak with the person who is with you. In the south they call this being *two headed*. It's not full possession, but it's definitely an alternate state of consciousness. It's not something you can just turn on one day and say; "Well time to divine, I guess I'll have to be two headed, I'll flip my two headed switch."

The way you develop spiritual sensitivity is through spiritual discipline. Yoruba culture is based on a four day week and every four days you say prayers to those spirits that you are particularly close to, or that you have been initiated for. In addition to the prayers, you develop what I call your alignment with Spirit. When you are called on to divine, you have been doing the ongoing work of developing a relationship with Spirit every four days. There is a particular sensation that occurs when you are in touch with Spirit. The feeling is very distinct, so you can tell when it's there. When you do invocations every four days, when you're starting out you sit there and pray until you feel that. The thing you feel is the thing you felt when you were initiated, so you know what you're looking for. When I was initiated I felt a certain way, four days later I want to feel that same way and I want to keep praying until I feel that. What you feel is good about yourself. *Ifa* says we are all good and blessed people, we all have the birth right of long life, abundance and good family relationships or children. When you integrate all the various parts of your consciousness, the mind and the body, you do not think negative thoughts about yourself. What comes up is that I am a good and blessed person. When you invoke that, it has a certain feeling, tone, and sensation in your body which then becomes a magnet for the Spirits you are calling. As you are starting out sometimes it takes hours of prayer to get to that point. As you progress sometimes you can do it very quickly.

Be clear, none of the *oriki* are etched in stone. There are certain formats that are used to cover certain metaphysical areas that we want to deal with. I want to give you the kind of structure that we deal with because we do not all speak Yoruba. When you are starting out, it's all right to

Speak English or whatever language you are comfortable using. Once you see the structure of *oriki* you can effectively use your own language to begin to communicate with the Forces that you are addressing. The following is an example of an *oriki* to *Egun* (ancestor spirits) that may be used as an opening invocation for divination with four cowries:

## ORÍKÌ EGÚN

*Egúngún kiki egúngún.* Praise to the mediums of the Ancestors.

*Egún ikú ranran fe awo ku opipi.* Ancestors who have preserved the mystery of featherless flight.

*O da so bo fun le wo .* You create the words of reverence and power.

*Egún ikú bata bango egún de.*

The drums of the Ancestors announce the arrival of the Ancestors.

*Bi aba f'atori na le egún a se de.*

On the strong mat you spread your power, the Ancestors are here.

*Ase.*

May it be so.

Let's say you've done *oriki* and you don't feel connected, you don't feel two headed. What do you do next? You have some different options. One of things you may want to do is *Iba se* your ancestors. *Iba se* means *I soul power*. Sometimes Yoruba doesn't translate easily into English. *I soul power* means I bond, or I connect my spirit to the power of spirit then you call the name of the ancestor. For example; *Iba se* grandfather Fenyes, or in better Yoruba *Iba se Babagba* Fenyes. But you can also say "*Mo juba Babagba* Fenyes, which means I respect grandfather Fenyes, or if you want to be more formal you can say *Iba se Babagba* Fenyes *mo juba*, or you could say *Iba se Awon Iku emblese Orun Ile* Fenyes *mo juba*, which means I praise those members of the Fenyes family who sit at the feet of the Immortals and give them respect. You want to be colorful and

descriptive when you are saying invocations and you want to put some feeling into it.

When you are praising your ancestors, you want to *Iba se* your own personal lineage. You start, if you are a woman, with your maternal grandmother and work back. If you are a man, you start with your paternal grandfather and work back and then call the other side. You might also want to consider giving a brief description of the person. For example, when I praise the memory of grandfather Fenyés, I say *Iba se Babagba* Fenyés the Doctor from Arad who moved to Egypt before coming to America.

Then it is traditional to praise the unknown ancestors by calling the different ways they may have crossed over. For example, those who died in childbirth, those who died in war, those who died in the middle crossing, those who died on a journey, those who died of old age, those who died of illness and so on and so on. What you're doing is remembering the unknown ancestors as another form of connection to spirit. In this process we are beginning to create some structure. We've got *ofó ase* (words of power) in the *oriki*, we are calling the names of the ancestors, then the next thing we do is ask for the support of our elders who are still alive. We do that by saying *kikan mase* which means *I am praising the heart that gave me power*. Then you call the name of those living elders who have given you some inspiration in life. They don't have to be just members of the *Ifa* and *Orisa* community. You can *kikan mase* elders from your own cultural background, or any mentors and people who inspire you in their own way.

At this point, if you still don't feel connected, you can sing. For example, *A iba se, iba se o, iba baba, iba yeye iba se o*. It's all right to sing at this point. It's all right to tell the ancestors what it is you are doing, why you are calling them. We do that by identifying our self. In Yoruba, I am is *emi*. I would say *Emi Awo Fa'lokun Fatunmbi fun mi ire* meaning I am Awo Fa'lokun Fatunmbi asking for your blessing. If you are just starting

it is all right to speak in English and say *Ancestors I am Awo Fa'lokun, I am here asking for your blessing*. Sit quietly and ask the ancestors questions as if you are talking to a living person. Allow yourself to feel the response. When you get an impression check the impression with divination; at that point all you want is a yes/no answer. Keep it simple, four shells up and two shells up are yes answers, everything else is a no. As you become adept at this process, some of the no answers become a maybe. At this point the maybe answers should be considered a no. You want to develop an understanding of when the ancestors are speaking with you and by keeping the divination process simple you can concentrate on your main objective.

To move beyond the yes no answers of divination requires an understanding of mandalas. A mandala is a map of consciousness. Every spiritual tradition I am aware of has some form of mandala art. The Navajo sand paintings, and the Hindu and Tibetan Buddhism have a rich collection of mandalas in their temple art. A mandala is any symbolic picture sectioned into four quadrants. Each quadrant represents a different aspect of consciousness. The mandala usually becomes the focal point of meditation. Mandala art is also the basis for most sacred architecture. The Egyptians made use of the mandala idea as the basis for building their temples. The entire ascetic of Islam religious art is rooted in this concept. Islam does not make representations of the physical features of prophetic leaders, so all the artwork on the side of their Mosques is geometric expressions of metaphysical concepts making extensive use of mandala patterns.

In *Ifá* we have the image of the endless weave. This pattern is sown into the clothing of *Ifá* diviners. When you see someone in Africa with this design on their robe or on their hat, you know they are a diviner. The symbolic meaning of the endless weave suggests everything is interconnected.

There are a number of implements that are used for divination. Coconut

is used throughout the Diaspora. I prefer using cowry shells. The shells have one side that looks like a mouth and another side that has a hump on it. When these shells are used for divination the hump is poked out. This reveals a little bar that runs across the inside of the shell. This side is called the stomach. Every shell used in divination has a mouth and a stomach. The mouth represents the force of expansion and the stomach represents the force of contraction. Words expand by going out of the mouth and into the universe. Food is contracted and reconstituted within the stomach. When you contract something it eventually reduces to darkness, the idea of the black hole. When you expand something it creates electromagnetic radiation which is the source of light. So we have two polarities light and dark. Neither one is good nor bad, there is no pejorative connotation of one being better than the other. Whenever you have a polarity it always means that the two components are equal.

*Ifá* diviners many years ago figured out that light comes out of darkness and darkness comes out of light. When Einstein figured that out about seventy years ago the Western World gave him a Nobel Prize.

The concept of darkness and the concept of light are related to two principles of consciousness. Light is related to the concept of *ori ire*. *Ori* is the Yoruba word for consciousness or inner spirit. The word is sometimes used to mean head, but the inference is always consciousness. In *Ifá*, consciousness includes all the neurological, psychic and unconsciousness input that forms individual identity. *Ori ire* means consciousness of good fortune.

*Ifá* teaches reincarnation so it is our belief that everybody has a destiny they have chosen before coming to this life time. If you are living the destiny you have chosen you will receive the blessings of abundance, long life and family. When you are in alignment with your destiny you are said to be moving along the path of light, you are in pursuit of *ori ire*. In this context, *ori ire* would mean wisdom.

*Ori ibi* is the consciousness of darkness or contraction. Again this is not bad. The word *ibi* in Yoruba means afterbirth. When a baby is born the placenta was the source of life of the baby in the womb. Once the baby comes out of the womb the umbilical cord must be cut or the baby will die. *Ori ibi* suggests that in order to move along your path of destiny something needs to be discarded. The obvious example would be insecurity. The person who applies for a job by saying; "I think I can do it, but I'm not sure." This person needs to let go of the sense of self-doubt. The self-doubt becomes a form of symbolic afterbirth, something that needs to be discarded.

When you are doing divination, if there is an issue of *ibi*, it means that there is something that needs to be let go of. In the example I have given, the *ibi* would be insecurity. The question then becomes, how do we determine what is in alignment with our destiny and what needs to be let go of? That is the fundamental issue of any form of *Ifá* divination. When you understand the metaphysical foundation of the yes/no divination process there is a wealth of information at your disposal.

What I want to suggest is that this system is like an unfolding flower with layers and layers of profound depth to it. You can become as sophisticated and as probing and as studious with regard to exploring the potential for communication with Spirit as you want. You could spend a life time studying the use of four cowries and still have more to learn.

Not everyone is going to become an expert in divination. But it is my belief that if you say the invocations and if your heart is in a good place, Spirit will speak to you at the level of the oracle you are using. If all you can do is speak in terms of yes and no, then Spirit will speak to you on that basis. If you have more options, Spirit will speak to you taking advantage of other options. They will do this to fine tune the clarity of the message.

The mandala used in *Ifá* is a circle with an equal armed cross. This image



is a map of *ori*. We have the cross marking the four directions of the compass. The left side of the horizontal line of the cross represents the past. The right side of the horizontal line of the cross represents the future. The top portion of the vertical line of the cross represents spiritual influences. The bottom portion of the vertical line of the cross represents survival influences.

In brief terms, the spirits who preserve the past are ancestors or *Egun*. The spirits who bring in the future are called *Ibamole* which means “Spirits of the House of Light.” These spirits are sometimes called *Igbamole* which means “Spirits of the Calabash of Light.” These are variations in dialect, but they both have the same function to bring in the future. Spiritual influences come from *Orisa*. Survival influences come from *Ogboni* and *Irunmole*. *Ogboni* means *Wisdom of the Earth*. *Irunmole* means *House of Light in the Earth*.

It is belief that if we are on our path of destiny our consciousness is perfectly balanced in all four of these quadrants. The state of being in alignment with destiny involves discovering the inner self, which is symbolized by the center point of the cross on the tray, the place where the two lines intersect. It is our belief and my experience, that if you balance all of these factors, if you are sitting quietly you can find the inner self. If you are sitting quietly and all of those things are balanced, you should experience joy because we believe life is benevolent. If you experience anything other than joy it is an indicator that something is out of balance. It is a real simple test. It is a test in every earth centered tradition I am aware of. People judge the wisdom of the elders by how quietly they can sit.

What happens is we get off center and think we are in the center. There are lots of ways that we do this. I will give a few examples of the most obvious ways that we get off center in each of the quadrants. There are people who get stuck in the past. Somebody has a problem in their childhood and everything that happens to them every day is colored by

that event. People who are stuck in the future believe their life will be better just as soon as they get a promotion at work. Survival issues, people who are obsessed with the need for physical and financial security. They need to make sure the rent is paid on time. People stuck in the spiritual quadrant have what I call the "holier than thou syndrome." They believe everything they do is in alignment with the will of God. In Yoruba culture this is known as arrogance.

If we take the idea that we have four cowries shells and we drop them on a mat, each shell will fall somewhere in these four quadrants. The location of the shells within a particular quadrant can be read as commentary on the fundamental yes/no response. If a shell is mouth up in a particular quadrant, it means the person is in alignment with their destiny in that particular arena. If the shell is face down in a particular quadrant it means that something needs to be let go of in that particular arena. There are no strict rules for evaluating this information. The evaluation must always be done in the context of the overall question. What happens when you start using this process is that the mandala has a triggering effect. That means seeing the issue represented on a two - dimensional plain can stimulate mental associations that reveal deeper levels of perception. The development of this skill comes with practice so in the beginning stages it is important to trust the information that comes up. Make a note of it, then in the future make a very objective evaluation of its accuracy.

## ***AWÉOBÌÀBÀTÀ***

(Segments of the kola nut used in ddivination)

*Obì àbàtà* is a kolanut (*cola acuminata sterculiaceare*) used in African forms of *Ifá/Òrìsà* worship as an implement for divination. In some regions of Nigeria it is referred to as *obì gidi*. It is a small red nut with two to four segments called *awé*. The segments generally have two distinct shapes identified as masculine (*okunrin*) and feminine (*obinrin*).

Masculine segments are narrow and appear phallic. Feminine segments are wider and appear uterine. Each segment has a top and a bottom. The top is the section closest to the stem of the nut. For purposes of identification the top is the section furthest away from the seed pod.

### ***OBÌ ÀBÀTÀ AWÉ ENU ATI INÙ* (The mouth and stomach of the kola nut segments)**

Each segment of *obì àbàtà* has a mouth and a stomach. The mouth is the side of the segment that is exposed when it is open and the stomach is the side of the segment that is exposed when it is closed.

### ***OBÌ ÀBÀTÀ AWÉ MÉJÌ* (Kola nut divination using two segments)**

Using a nut with two segments the combinations of throws are as follows:

1. One male segment mouth up = *Ìlera* = yes with a blessing of stability.
2. One female segment mouth up = *Ajé* = yes with a blessing of wealth.
3. One male segment up, one female segment up = *Alàáfia* = yes with a blessing of an open road.
4. Both segments with the mouth down = *Oyekú* = no.

This system is most often used during the course of an elaborate ritual when food offerings (*adimu*) are made. *Obí àbàtà* is a common form of food offering that is accepted by most *Òrìsà* as an *adimu*.

### ***ADIMU ISOTÉLÈ* (Food as segments of Divination)**

Whenever a food such as yam or apples is given as *adimu* it is possible to cut slices of these foods so that they have a mouth and a stomach. The mouth is the internal surface and the stomach is the external surface.

When this is done the process may involve the use of two implements that have no masculine or feminine characteristics. In this instance the combinations of throws are as follows:

1. One mouth up = *Ejire* = yes with a blessing from Spirit.
2. Two mouths up = *Alàáfia* = yes with a blessing of an open road.
3. Two mouths down = *oyeku* = no

## ***OBÌ ÀBÀTÀ AWÉ MERIN* (Kola nut divination using four segments)**

The most common form of divination in African forms of *Ifá/Òrìsà* worship is the use of *obí àbàtà* with four segments. This type of divination is used both to check on the progress of a ritual and as a form of direct communication with the Spirits in a particular shrine. This system is multidimensional and can be approached in a number of different ways. The most direct method involves yes no answers to a formulated question. The questions should be simple and direct. They should be formulated in such a way that the desired result comes with a yes answer. The combinations of yes/no answers using four segments of *obí àbàtà* are as follows:

1. One male segment mouth up = *Ìlera* = yes with a blessing of stability or a blessing of triumph over difficulty depending on the nature of the question.
2. One female segment mouth up = *Ajé* = yes with a blessing of abundance or wealth depending on the nature of the question. (In *Odù Ifá* abundance refers to wealth, long life and children.)
3. One male segment mouth up and one female segment mouth up = *Ejire* = yes with a blessing from Spirit. (It represents balance and this suggests coolness or friendliness depending on the nature of the question.)

4. Two male segments mouth up = *Akonran* = no with a struggle of hardship or quarrel depending on the nature of the question.
5. Two female segments mouth up = *Ero* = yes with a blessing of calmness, or rest after struggle depending on the nature of the question.
6. Two male segments mouth up and one female segment mouth up = *Akita* = yes with a blessing of success after some difficulty. (This combination suggests a need for will and determination to gain the desired result which means the outcome may be in doubt.)
7. Two female segments mouth up and one male segment mouth up = *Obita* = yes with a blessing of manifestation with little or no effort, a blessing of peace and an end to quarrel depending on the nature of the question.
8. Two male segments mouth up and two female segments mouth up = *Alàáfia* = yes with a blessing of an open road.
9. All segments mouth down = *Oyekú* = no.

## ***OBÌ ÀBÀTÀ ODÙ* (Translation of kola nut divination into *Odù*)**

The system of *obí àbàtá* may be used in a simple yes/no context or it may be used as a reference to *Odù*. There are several systems for making reference to *Odù*. Each system is based on a regional variation of the process and no system is inherently better than another. It is the task of the diviner to decide which system will be used and then to use that system consistently. Spirit will speak to the diviner using whatever system is in place. If the diviner changes systems in hopes of getting a more favorable answer the result is confusion.

The most common method of transferring *obí àbàtá* into *Odù* is to read

the pieces from the top of the tray down and to translate each segment into either a single line (I) or a Double line (II). The side of the kola nut with a skin on it is read as a double line and the inner surface of the kola nut is read as a single line.

When asking a yes/no question the *Odù* that is formed by the segments can be used as commentary on the yes/no response. A single throw forms 1/2 a leg of *Odù ifá*. The patterns of *Odù Ifá* are made up of two quadragrams that form a single octogram. Each quadragram is called a leg of *Ifá* and two quadragrams form a complete *Odù*. In order to read four segments of *obì àbàtà* as *Odù Ifá*, the quadragram is doubled so that both legs of the pattern are identical. There are 16 *Odù* in the *Ifá* system that have identical legs on both sides of the octogram. These *Odù* are called *méjì* which means *twice* in Yoruba. The 16 *méjì Odù* are called *Olodù* which means *Spirit of the Odù*. The *Olodù* appear as follows:

I  
I  
I  
I

Ogbe

II  
II  
II  
II

Oyeku

II  
I  
I  
II

Iwori

I  
II  
II  
I

Odi

I  
I  
II  
II

Irosun

II  
II  
I  
I

Owonrin

I  
II  
II  
II

Obara

II  
II  
II  
I

Okanran

I  
I  
I  
II

Ogunda

II  
I  
I  
I

Osa

II  
I  
II  
II

Ika

II  
II  
I  
II

Oturopon

I  
II  
I  
I

Otura

I  
I  
II  
I

Irete

I  
II  
I  
II

Ose

II  
I  
II  
I

Ofun

When the transposition from quadragram to octogram is made the verses and the metaphysical principles related to each of the *méjì Odù* may be considered as part of the response to the question. For those diviners who know *Mérìndinlogun* (16 cowries), the *Méjì* may be transposed into *Odù Mérìndinlogun* as follows:

**1. Ogbe Méjì = Eji Ogbe**

2. *Oyeku Méjì = Eji Òko*
3. *Iwori Méjì = Ejila Seborá*
4. *Odi Méjì = Odi*
5. *Irosun Méjì = Irosun*
6. *Owonrin Méjì = Owonrin*
7. *Obara Méjì = Obara*
8. *Okanran Méjì = Okanran*
9. *Ogunda Méjì = Ogunda*
10. *Osa Méjì = Osa*
11. *Ika Méjì = Ika*
12. *Oturupon Méjì = Oturupon*
13. *Otura Méjì = Ofun Kanran*
14. *Irete Méjì = Irete*
15. *Ose Méjì = Ose* 16. *Ofun Méjì = Ofun*

Those diviners who are familiar with *Mérìndinlogun* may use *obì àbàtà* instead of 16 cowries as tools of divination. Instead of asking a yes/no question, the diviner simply asks for an *Odù* that will illuminate a particular problem. The advantage of being able to use 16 cowries and *obì àbàtà* is that it is possible to throw *obì àbàtà* without the obligation to make *ebo* (offerings). Using *obì àbàtà* would then be used to clarify simple matters while *Mérìndinlogun* would be used to address spiritual matters that require personal transformation.

Those diviners who are familiar with *Ifá* may use *obì àbàtà* instead of *opele* or *ikin* as tools of divination. Instead of asking a yes/no question, the diviner again simply asks for an *Odù* that will illuminate a particular problem. When using *obì àbàtà* for *Ifá* divination, the diviner may either throw once to receive an *Odù Méjì* or throw twice to receive any of the 256 *Odù* in the complete corpus of *Odù*. When two throws are used to get two different legs (quadrgrams) of *Ifá*, the first throw is the right leg and the second throw is the left leg.



## ***IRE/IBI (Determining orientation of the Odù)***

The system of divination based on *obì àbàtà* has several methods for the determination of the orientation of the *Odù*. Orientation means the *Odù* comes with *ire* which means *good fortune* or *ibi* which means *obstacles to good fortune*. In the systems of *Mérìndinlogun* and *Ifá* the method for determining orientation involves additional throws of the tools of divination. To determine orientation with *obì àbàtà* does not require an additional throw. Instead it requires an examination of the kola segments. Each segment has both a top and a bottom. The top of the segment is the section closest to the stem. The top is also the section furthest away from the seed pod.

The orientation of the *Odù* is determined either by using the segment closest to the top of the tray or by using the segment with the mouth up that is closest to the top of the tray. Either method may be used as long as it is consistent. In both systems the orientation is as follows:

1. Male segment top facing the top of the tray = *ire*.
2. Male segment top facing the bottom of the tray = *ibi*.
3. Female segment top facing the top of the tray = *ibi*.
4. Female segment top facing the bottom of the tray = *ire*.

I recommend that the student who is new to divination begin the study process with just the yes/no elements then add levels as each new component is fully understood.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Yoruba Pronunciation**

There are twenty-five letters in the Yoruba language, seven vowels and eighteen consonants.

The vowels are A E E I O O U. The marks under the letters E and O create

different sounds from the letters E and O, without the marks. Any mark under a Yoruba means you add an H sound to the letter. Marks are found under E, O and S.

The Yoruba alphabet with English words that have the same sound or intonations.

A (ah) Sounds like the A in Ark B (bee) Sounds like the B in Bee D (dee) Sounds like the D in Deal E (ay) Sounds like the E in Eight E (eh) Sounds like the E in Egg F (fee) Sounds like the F in Feel G (gi) Sounds like the G in Give GB No English equivalent H (hee) Sounds like the H in Hill I (ee) Sounds like the I in Bee J (gee) Sounds like the J in Jeep K (kee) Sounds like the K in Keep L (lee) Sounds like the L in Leaf M (mee) Sounds like the M in Milk N (nee) Sounds like the N in Nil O (aw) Sounds like the O in Odd O (oh) Sounds like the O in Oh P (pi) Sounds like the P in Pit R (ree) Sounds like the R in Read S (cee) Sounds like the S in Sea S (Sh) Sounds like the S in Sheep T (tee) Sounds like the T in Tea U (oo) Sounds like the U in You W (we) Sounds like the W in We Y (yee) Sounds like the Y in Yield

Yoruba language is tonal meaning the relative pitch of letters effects the meaning of the word. There are three basic tones used in Yoruba that be described as *do re mi* or the first three notes of the tempered scale. Normal speaking voice would be *re* an accent slanting from left to right would be *mi* and an accent slanting from right to left is *do*.

## **Appendix 3**

### Odu and the Ifa Concept of History

A Yoruba proverb says we become who we are by standing on the shoulders of those who come before us. From the perspective of traditional Yoruba culture, remembering those who come before us is a sacred obligation. Each generation takes responsibility for passing

foreword the wisdom of the past. In most earth-centered cultures, meaning those cultures that make an effort to live in harmony with nature, dissemination of ancestral wisdom is the foundation of the methodology used to guide children along the path leading to maturity and self-understanding. In psychological terms, modeling heroic behavior initiates the journey towards self-discovery and individualization. The effective completion of this journey carries the possibility of making each one of us a revered ancestor in the collective memory of our descendants. This potential is reflected in the bond of between grandparents and grandchildren. In Yoruba this bond is called *ife*, which is commonly translated to mean love. I suspect the word has a broader connotation related to the word *Ifa*. If *Ifa* means the wisdom inherent in Nature, the word *ife* suggests the expression of that wisdom in everyday life. *Ifa* teaches that everyone is born a good and blessed person (*omo rere*). As elders we make sure our dependents internalize this message so it continues to inform future generations.

*Ifa* says we come to earth to make it a better place for those who follow us (*ire aye*). Based on the Yoruba belief in *atunwa* (reincarnation), future generations include our own return to the earth we have previously helped shape. This cyclical process is the foundation for both *Ifa* ethics and the *Ifa* view of history. The cycles of birth and rebirth on a personal level are reflected in the movement between creative expansion and destructive contraction that characterizes the traditional African view of history.

Prior to the emergence of colonialism, historical accounts of past events were expressed in mythic terms. Myth views history as a cycle of reoccurring events based on universal principles that forever appear, disappear and reappear. Myth teaches transcendent spiritual principles that can be applied to the unique challenges of each succeeding generation. Earth-centered myth is based on the belief that all of humanity is interconnected and inter-related. It expresses the metaphysical idea that living in harmony with Nature results in benefit for the individual, the community, the global village and the

environment.

Post-colonial myth is rooted in the idea of linear progression and is deeply influenced by the Darwinian concept of "survival of the fittest". In this world-view history is a sequential progression of events leading to greater degrees of "progress". The idea of progress is defined as the increased ability to use technology to "control" nature. Those who create the most effective technology for exploiting natural resources are considered the "fittest" from the Darwinian perspective. According to this worldview the fittest are entitled to "privilege" to ensure the continued linear progression of history. Myth based on this perspective supports the notion that some people are "better" than others. Consequently, there is little attention given to the idea of personal growth and development. History written from a linear perspective places emphasis on "Divine justification" for acts of greed, exploitation, and conquest. In Western academia, the Darwinian approach to history is described as "objective" because it tends to exclude references to God. The re-occurring message of Divine justification becomes an unspoken assumption and remains fixed in the consciousness of Western culture as long as it remains effectively unchallenged.

In 1912 the major European colonial powers met in Berlin to create virtually all the boundaries now recognized as sovereign states on the continent of Africa. The purpose for creating these boundaries was to establish spheres of influence for the exploitation of natural resources. Frequently the newly created borders cut across long established culturally identified geographical boundaries. In order to sanction the largest expropriation of land since the rise of the Roman Empire, European historians needed to justify their political conquest. The Western academic version of this period of history is based on the premise that European industrial nations brought "progress" and "civilization" to a "backward", "underdeveloped" region that was otherwise devoid of the intelligence needed to develop technological resources. Because this world-view has no basis in fact it was necessary

to stifle and destroy opposing points of view. The indigenous history of Africa is both written and oral. The written history was brutalized by deliberately distorting translations of Egyptian hieroglyphics and the oral history was destroyed by systematic genocide against those elders who were the keepers of cultural history. From an Ifa perspective the distortion of history makes it difficult if not impossible to stand on the shoulders of those who have come before us.

Credo Mutwa is one of two remaining keepers of the oral history of the Zulu Nation in South Africa. In an interview with David Icke, Credo Mutwa ([www.davidicke.com](http://www.davidicke.com)) speaks passionately about the systematic genocide committed against his elders by the British in a deliberate attempt to destroy any record of Zulu history. The occupant British administration passed laws making it illegal to claim Africans lived in South Africa prior to European immigration. These laws remained in effect until Apartheid was abolished through the efforts of Nelson Mandela and the ANC. Mutwa states very clearly that similar acts of suppression occurred across the continent during the early stages of colonial conquest.

The colonialization of Africa was based on a deliberate four-step process of convert, corrupt, conquer and control. The vanguard of European imperialism was the Christian missionary movement. Explorers like Dr. Livingston and the Jesuits mapped remote regions of the African continent setting up trading ports and churches along their route. The task of these early clerics was to study the language and beliefs of previously unknown cultures. This was followed by the creation of dictionaries used to translate the Bible into local dialects. These dictionaries typically took indigenous earth-centered cyclical words and replaced them with linear, control-centered Christian based definitions. For example the Yoruba dictionary created by the International Bible society includes the word *Ifayabale*. In traditional Yoruba culture, *Ifayabale* describes an Ifa ritual used for settling disputes. It comes from the elision *ifa iya baba ile* meaning the wisdom of the fathers and mothers of the earth. It is

translated in the Bible society dictionary to mean the ascension of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. Because Ifa is clearly many thousands of years older than Christianity, the definition is either deliberately manipulated or profoundly uniformed.

During the early period of European exploration, Africans who showed interest in learning Western forms of religion were given positions of responsibility at the trading posts and given training leading towards ordination. If there was no interest in conversion, harsher methods were employed. Malidoma Some, in his book, *Of Water and Spirit*, tells of being taken against his will from his village in Burkina Faso when he was four years old and forced to attend seminary. After constant physical abuse and sexual assault from the priests, Malidoma escaped and walked two hundred miles to his home having forgotten his indigenous language and only remembering he was born somewhere in the east. The reason for his harsh treatment was the inability of the Church to convert members of his culture to Catholicism.

Once a significant number of conversions occurred in a given area and interest was generated in foreign trade, the colonialists would accuse the traditional leaders of "corruption" based on their failure to conform to Western values. The allegations of corruption were used as justification for military incursions. Once troops were in place new leaders were chosen from among those who converted to Christianity. Typically, a certain amount of blending of tradition and imperialism was allowed to facilitate the process. For example, in Nigeria, the early missionaries realized that the elders of *Ogboni* and *Iyaami* enforced traditional Yoruba moral values and had the power to depose the regional kings (*Oba*). The British colonial administration allowed the Yoruba's to continue their earth-centered religious traditions (*Orisa*) while outlawing *Ogboni* and *Iyaami*. This was an essential step in the process of replacing elders with traditional beliefs with elders who embraced Western notions of progress. Once this council of elders was removed, Yoruba culture could maintain the appearance of tradition while being easily manipulated. The British

then went on to accuse traditional Yoruba culture of extreme immorality after they banished the guardians of ethical behavior. The insidiousness of the campaign against Yoruba elders was too precise and effective to have been anything other than deliberate and well informed.

Following World War II the European trained political leaders of Africa demanded independence. With multi-national corporations firmly in place exploiting the natural resources on the continent, the colonial powers made a show of removing political power while maintaining economic control. The example of what occurred in Nigeria demonstrates the pattern. The primary economic force in Nigeria is British Petroleum. Executives of the British oil industry are members of a secret fraternity called the Skull and Crossbones. Membership in the fraternity is an unspoken requirement for participation in Nigerian politics. Membership in the fraternity is contingent on support of British economic policies. Generally unknown in the West is the fact that Nigeria has the highest grade of oil on the earth. The price of oil on the global market keys off of the price of oil from Nigeria. Under a democratic government Nigeria historically reduces the price of oil to increase production and stimulate the domestic economy. This has the effect of depressing the price of oil in the rest of the world markets. Whenever the price drops too low there is a military coup and the price goes back up. Successful coupes in Nigeria are always supported by covert operations from British oil interests who exploit traditional ethnic rivalries. The security forces attached to the British controlled oil fields in Nigeria are staffed by former British SAS personnel and are better equipped than any standing army on the continent. Rather than report the true story about Nigerian oil, Western media promotes the lie that Africans are unable to self-govern. Because there are no environmental controls on oil production in Nigeria, the pollution has reached the point where wide spread birth defects are the demonstrable effect of irresponsible drilling methods. In a country where all the divergent cultures have a long history of living in harmony with the environment the effects of "progress" have become fatal.

One of the most blatant examples of political manipulation in Africa occurred in Rwanda. When the Belgians first arrived in the area they were dismayed to discover the entire country was populated by a single culture, making it impossible to implement a policy of divide and conquer. The Belgians issued identity cards designating everyone who lived in the city as Tutsi and everyone who lived in the country as Hutu. These arbitrary designations were solidified and exploited leading to the horrendous genocide that has decimated the country. South African journalist Mr. Dishengo has described this conflict based on interview with Rwandans in his article *Rwanda: The True Forces Behind Genocide in Africa*. (<http://www.davidicke.com/icke/index1c.html>)

*"These are the same people who are funding the genocide in Rwanda for their own selfish and demonic ends. What is interesting is that these same people now turn around and write and broadcast in the media, which they control worldwide, that the genocide that is taking place in Rwanda is "tribalism between the Hutu and the Tutsi." Well, the Hutu and the Tutsi say the war in Rwanda has got nothing to do with them. This is what they told other Africans in the United States."*

*They say the war in Rwanda is political; it is between Belgium and France. They are either fighting for the turf or are deliberately arming the two sides to create instability so they can go on exploiting the region's resources. The western countries' industries and economics are based on raw materials from Africa. For instance, Belgium exports heavy machinery but there is not even a single mine in Belgium. Where do they get raw materials to manufacture the heavy machinery they are exporting? From Africa. Jesse Helms wrote in 1978 that the United States industry would halt without South African minerals. Zbigniew Brzezinski's 1978 National Security Council Memorandum (NSCM-46) also mentions U.S. dependence on African mineral wealth and also calls on the FBI and CIA to make sure that "radical" African Nationalist Movements do not get together with Black Nationalist Movements in the United States of America.*



According to a transcript of Network 23 Program in Los Angeles, Henry Kissinger's National Security Memorandum 200 ("NSM 200") which was quietly declassified in 1990 says among other things that:

*"The U.S. economy will require large and increasing amounts of minerals from abroad, especially from less-developed countries. That fact gives the U.S. enhanced interests in the political, economic and social stability of the supplying countries. Wherever a lessening of population can increase the prospects for such stability, population policy becomes relevant to resources, supplies and to the "economic interests of the United States." Of course, we know that the "economic interests of the United States" means the interest of U.S. corporations and Multinationals. NSM 200 is available at the U.S. National Archives.[and here at [www.davidicke.com](http://www.davidicke.com) - National Security Study Memorandum 200 - Report for Global Control]*

The reason for some of the atrocities in Central Africa is the desire to control the diamond industry. The wars in Liberia and the Congo are pointless conflicts fueled by massive amounts of drugs smuggled into Africa from Europe. The chaos created by unrelenting violence allows for the uncontrolled exploitation of the raw diamonds with no benefit given to the people who live in the areas where the diamonds are mined. One of the main diamond exporters in the region funds a major Christian Broadcast network. His involvement in the economics of the region is a seldom-reported glimpse into the African missionary movement.

It is clear to me that African history has been systematically denigrated for purposes of political control. Even the most cursory examination of recent African history should make the existence of propaganda posing as history painfully apparent. What is not as easily discernable is the fact that African history is being deliberately distorted to suppress a spiritual secret that if revealed would change the way the entire planet perceives human history and alter the way we relate to our physical environment. It would also provide the foundation for creating alternative energy sources that have the potential for reversing the mass destruction of the natural

resources that threatens human extinction. For example the ancient Egyptians knew how to extract electricity directly from the earth through the use of metal coils. This source of energy was used to electro-plate gold onto stone statues. The coffin of King Tut is clearly electro-plated and yet the guardians of the Western historical worldview consistently ignore the obvious.

An examination of the Yoruba Creation Myth is a key to understanding traditional African sacred technology and a key to understanding why such effort has been directed towards denigrating African history. According to Ifa oral scripture the earth was once covered with water. *Obatala* descended from *Orun* on a long chain carrying with him a snail, a hen and palm nuts. He sprinkled the sand on the water and dropped the hen on the sand to scratch the dirt and create land on earth. The chain was not long enough for *Obatala* to reach the ground so he dropped a palm nut into the sand that grew into a palm tree. While waiting for the tree to grow *Obatala* got drunk and the task of completing reation is given to *Yemo*.

This part of the Creation story is well known in the Diaspora. Less well known is the continuation of the story. *Obatala* is able to reach the top of the tree and arrives on earth to create humans from mud who are given the breath of life by *Olodumare*. *Obatala* carries a silver sword to complete the task of shaping life on earth. His sword proves to be too soft and ineffective. At this point the process of completing Creation is given to *Ogun* who initiates the use of iron as a tool to facilitate farming and the construction of cities. Eventually *Ogun's* tool's become used as instruments of war and the planet is again covered with water due to the inability of humans to live in harmony with the natural environment. In response *Orunmila* repeats *Obatala's* journey from *Orun* to earth without getting drunk. *Orunmila* organizes the people of earth around the principle of developing good character and sustains a period of peace and fertility. This period of abundance and harmony is disrupted by the arrogance of his *Orunmila's* children and *Orunmila* returns to *Orun* while

the earth suffers from feminine, infertility, chaos and war. The children of *Orunmila* plead with him to return and he tells them he will not leave *Orun*. He does feel compassion for the condition of the people of the earth and tells them they can communicate with him by using the *ikin* (sacred palm nuts) for divination.

This seemingly simple story alludes to a wealth of information that only becomes clear in light of some understanding of African history and the inner workings of Ifa ritual. Unfortunately there are very few written histories of Yoruba culture. The limited sources that exist were primarily written by Yoruba's after converting to Christianity and seem to miss the deeper metaphysical implications of traditional Yoruba spiritual tradition. All the written accounts of Yoruba history take a narrow view that the genesis of Yoruba culture dates back to a migration from east Africa that occurred approximately fifteen hundred years ago. Just one example of why this is unlikely is the Obelisk of *Oranmiyan* in Ile Ife. There is the image of a trident made from iron spikes on the obelisk. The iron in the spikes has never rusted. The only other place where you can find iron that does not rust is in temples located in northern India. These temples are dated as being 9,000 years old. The kindest thing that can be said about the academic attempt at dating Yoruba culture is that it is sadly myopic.

A closer look at the Creation myth gives us clues for dating Yoruba culture and gives us a glimpse of the sacred secret that has caused so much deception in the chronicles of Western historians. The word *Obatala* is an elision of the phrase *Oba ita ala* meaning King of White Light. Translating the phrase as an expression of natural phenomena the name King of the White Light can be understood as a symbolic reference to the Source of White Light. The word *Oba* is typically translated to mean King but it is actually an elision of *o* meaning spirit and *ba* meaning male energy or in metaphysical terms expansive energy. Ancient Africans as well as modern scientist both recognize the relationship between sunlight and matter. First generation stars are essentially

hydrogen furnaces. At some point in the life of every star the supply of hydrogen diminishes to the point where the star collapses in on itself. The implosion causes a fusion reaction creating a supernova sending second-generation elements across huge distances of empty space. When forces of gravity trap these elements they form a sphere. The sphere may become either a second-generation star or a planet. This is a reoccurring phenomena based on universal principles carried by sub-atomic particles that create light. *Ifa* refers to this invisible organizing principle as *Ori* and teaches that everything in Nature has *Ori*.

A literal translation of *Ori* is head, but the inference of the word is consciousness, suggesting everything in Nature has some form of awareness. The entire science of quantum physics is based on the same belief. Observation of sub-atomic particles indicates they do not behave in a mechanistic manner. Instead they respond to stimuli along a range of reactions that science refers to as a probability curve. The unspoken inference of the existence of a probability curve is that sub-atomic particles are capable of making choices, which is reflected in their range of response. The ability to make choices is the classic definition of consciousness using the scientific model.

To say *Obatala* spread sand on the surface of the earth is to describe the cooling process of light particles formed into a sphere by gravity. The cooling of particles fused together during the explosion of a super-nova creates what we call the "material" world or "*aye*" in Yoruba. The earth is not a rare isolated phenomenon; planets are the result of the inherent potential found in light throughout the universe. *Obatala* as a Spiritual Force in Nature casts sands upon the water in every corner of every galaxy in the material world. This cooling process is called *ori tutu* in Yoruba and is a fundamental concept in *Ifa* cosmology.

Placing a hen on the earth to spread land is a symbolic reference to the spiritual power (*ase*) of *Osun*. The hen used in the Creation Myth has five toes; five is the sacred number of *Osun* the Yoruba Goddess of love,

fertility and abundance. In the early stages of evolution diversity is created on the surface of the earth through the interaction, combination and re-creation of the basic elements. This diversity is an expression of the fertility and abundance manifested through the power of *Osun*. In primal terms *Osun* is the allure of the erotic, which can be understood as the power of attraction leading to procreation, a power that exists in both organic and inorganic matter. Without this component life becomes stagnant leading to quick extinction.

Planting a tree is a reference to the emergence of the cycle of life, death, transformation and rebirth that comes into being with the Creation of time and space. The eternal essence of Creation is called *Odu* in Yoruba and *Odu* exists outside the boundaries of time and space. In Western science the concept expressed by the word *Odu* is called zero point energy. If you look at a chart showing wave and frequency used to measure sound and light, the zero point represents the absence of both wave and frequency. There is an asterisk on these charts with a footnote indicating the mathematics associated with zero point energy is classified by the United States Government for purposes of national security. Accessing the zero point or accessing *Odu* is the ability to access raw energy (*ase*) as it passes from the invisible to the visible realm of Creation. Anyone who has this ability can shape physical reality. In Africa *Odu* is invoked every ninety-one days to insure fertility and abundance, or in simply terms to shape physical reality. The ability to shape physical reality on the planet is the great African spiritual secret (*awo*) suppressed by Western academia. (In the next installment of this series I will trace the history of the suppression of the technical data associated with this secret.)

The image of *Obatala* bringing form and substance to the earth is an expression of the Ifa concept of the descent of *ase* through *Odu* where it becomes manifest in multiple arenas of Creation. In sampler terms the structure of light has an eternal foundation referred to as *Odu Iwori*. The manifestation of *Iwori* from *Odu* leaves the eternal realm (*Orun*) and

enters the temporal realm (aye) where it expresses itself as sunlight, the fire at the core of the earth, lightning, fire in the stove, and the fire of passion in the heart of a person pushing them towards internal transformation. This is one phenomenon from one source expressing itself in different dimensions of Creation. The ability to invoke *Odu* is the ability to bring the power of a particular force in Nature to play in the resolution of a particular problem. This ability is not encouraged in any political system that depends on manipulation and control to support the privilege of the few over the many.

To say *Obatala* got drunk during the unfolding of Creation is to acknowledge the existence of chaos as a component of every ecosystem. Nothing in the material world exists in a state of perfection. Every physical structure on earth carries the seeds of its own self-destruction. These seeds often sprout in seemingly random and unexpected ways. Mutation and extinction forever remains an inherent ingredient in the life cycle of all things.

The appearance of *Yemo* refers to the existence of form in the universe. The appearance of *Yemo* in the story is an affirmation of the idea that form sustains itself throughout Creation. From a metaphysical point of view form is feminine or contractive power. In very simple terms an elephant never gives birth to a rat. *Yemo* is a primal expression of the structures of the Laws of Nature as they manifests on earth.

*Obatala* is described as molding life from clay. Lab tests have proven that when lightning gets certain types of soil it can stimulate the growth of bacteria leading to the development of more evolved life forms. The oral teachings of *Ifa* include the belief that primal forms of bacteria arrived on earth buried in the core of meteors. Throughout Africa meteors are considered sacred symbols of the seed of life. In Egypt these stones were called *benben* stones and were traditional placed on the top of large obelisks as a shrine to the Mother of human life. One of the largest of these *benben* stones was used as an ancestor shrine for cross-cultural

groups who traded throughout the Fertile Crescent. Following the creation of Islam the stone was appropriated by Muslims who use it as a temple for the Goddess *Allat* located at the Mosque in Mecca. Ifa scripture says that when Islam desecrated the ancestral shrine in Mecca only the symbols of Ifa were allowed to remain on the altar. The altar to *Ogun* at the *Oba's* palace in Ile Ife appeared to me to be classic examples of a benben stone that have a pyramidal shape due to the burning that occurs when the stone falls through the earth's atmosphere. In South Africa the largest cultural group is the *Kwa Zulu*. The words *Kwa Zulu* means we come from the sky. This suggests to me a possible reference to the life supporting essence of the *benben* stone.

To say *Olodumare* breathed the breath of life into the living world is to say the reasons for the miraculous appearance of life remains a mystery known only to the Creator.

At this point the *Ifa* Creation Myth is a fairly straightforward description of natural phenomena. The appearance of *Ogun* and *Orunmila* in the Yoruba creation myth is a key to the historical development of Yoruba culture and will be considered in the next segment of this series.

In the Yoruba Creation Myth, *Obatala* makes the journey from *Orun* (invisible realm) to *aye* (earth). *Obatala* drops sand on a planet covered with water and drops a hen on the sand to spread the solid ground surrounding the city of Ile Ife. Geologists identify Nigeria as one of the three oldest landmasses on the earth. It is a general rule of geology that the flatter the terrain the older the land, the higher the mountains the younger the land development. The rain forest surrounding Ile Ife is flat to the horizon in every direction.

This may seem like a simple and highly unlikely story. An exploration of the meaning of the symbolic language used in the Yoruba Creation myth illuminates a number of mysteries (*awo*) related to the creation process giving the story remarkable depth. Astrophysics (the study of the creation

of the universe) has calculated the amount of matter needed to be present in the universe to have effectively generated the galaxies created by the "Big Bang" (the explosion giving birth to the visible universe). For decades astrophysicists were perplexed by the observation that 90% of the physical matter expected to be present in the universe cannot be located. In the scientific world this was considered a big problem. Astrophysics was provided a solution to the quandary by the science of quantum physics (the study of subatomic structure). Studies of the patterns created by colliding sub-atomic particles clearly showed the building blocks of physical matter appear and disappear under a variety of circumstances. Current scientific theory explains this phenomena by postulating the existence of a ten dimensional universe in and around the four dimensional (three physical dimensions + time) universe visible by human perception. According to quantum physics matter flows between these ten dimensions making the overwhelming mass created by the Big Bang invisible in the arena occupied by human life and visible by human perception. *Ifa* says *Orun* (the invisible realm) has seven dimensions. The number is different the concept is the same.

To understand the concept of a multidimensional universe requires some understanding of the structure of matter. In the Western world matter was considered a solid grouping of atoms based on ideas developed by early Greek philosophers. Isaac Newton formalized this idea into a scientific theory. In 1867 William Thompson rejected the Newtonian description of atoms as infinitesimally small hard bodies with physical mass. Thompson postulated the theory of the "vortex atom" which he described as a "whirlpool" of "aether", meaning patterns of energy having no solid mass. Thompson's vision is based on the premise that everything in the universe is a manifestation of the essential components of light. This became the foundation for Einstein's theory of the conservation of matter, the idea that nothing in the universe is created or destroyed, simply transformed. In *Ifa* the idea of the conservation of matter is expressed in the single (I) and double (II) lines used to mark the verses of *Odu* (sacred scripture) used in *Ifa* divination. In *Ifa* the single lines symbolize light and the



double lines symbolize dark. This is not a polarity between "good" and "evil", it is a polarity between expansive ase called "light" or "radiation" and contractive ase called "matter". The tendency in the Diaspora to associate darkness with "evil" is the result of a non African, Christian theological influence. In Christian cosmology, the earth is tainted by the fall and original sin. In Ifa cosmology, the earth is the Mother of human evolution and the source of nourishment and compassion.

In 1873 James Clark Maxwell used the Thompson model of the atom to unite the available data on light and magnetism into an electromagnetic theory of light vibrations based on the premise that three-dimensional physical phenomena including human consciousness is dependant on higher dimensions of reality. He created a mathematical model of the universe based on the theory that light and gravity were untied as a single form of energy in the invisible fifth dimension (outside of time and space). He referred to this invisible energy source as "aether". In *Ifa* this invisible energy source is called ase.

Maxwell called the invisible fifth dimension hyper-dimensional space. In *Ifa* the invisible fifth dimension is called *Orun*. In a book titled "The Aether" published in 1876, Maxwell summarizes the implications of his theory.

*"Whether this vast homogeneous expanse of isotropic matter [the aether] is fitted not only to be a medium of physical Interaction between distant bodies, and to fulfill other physical functions of which, perhaps we have as yet no conception, but also as the authors of The Unseen Universe seem to suggest, to constitute the material organism of beings exercising functions of life and mind as high or higher than ours are at resent, is a question far transcending the limits of physical speculation . . ."*

In somewhat convoluted language, Maxwell is suggesting that the condition of the visible physical universe is dependent on the influence of conscious beings existing in invisible dimensions of the universe. *Ifa*

calls these beings *Orisa*. He is also saying the invisible dimension is the source of all forms of consciousness. In *Ifa* cosmology (theory of the structure of the universe) the source or Spirit of consciousness is called *Obatala*. The idea of spiritual beings influencing the shape and development of the physical world is not popular in the Western scientific community. Once you introduce the idea of Spirit into the scientific equation you undermine the vision of being able to dominate and control Nature and this in turn demolishes the concept of privilege based on the belief in the intrinsic value of survival of the fittest. Maxwell's theory was a threat to the entire Euro-centric world view.

Maxwell passed away at an early age and one of his peers; Oliver Heaviside re-wrote all of his equations eliminating the references to a fifth dimensional reality. Current academic references to Maxwell's work are based on Heaviside's re-write and the original mathematical formulas have largely been ignored and are extremely difficult to locate. Richard Hoagland, in an article on his website (<http://www.enterprisemission.com/hyper1.html>) summarizes the implications of Maxwell's original theory.

*"This discovery contains major implications, not only for past geophysics and terrestrial evolution ... but for future geological and climatological events -- "Earth changes," as some have termed them. These may be driven, not by rising solar interactions or byproducts of terrestrial civilization (accumulating "greenhouse gases" from burning fossil fuels), but by this same "hyperdimensional physics." If so, then learning a lot more about the mechanisms of this physics -- and quickly! -- is a critical step toward intervening and eventually controlling our future well being, if not our destiny, on (and off!) this planet ... "*

In other words, an understanding of hyperdimensional physics would eliminate the world's dependency on petroleum and could be used as a limitless source of free electrical energy (as proposed by Nicolas Tesla based on Maxwell's equations). Hoagland's article went on to describe

what happened to Maxwell's theoretical work when a man Oliver Heaviside presented it to academia.

*"Heaviside actually felt that Maxwell's use of quaternions and their description of the "potentials" of space was ". . . mystical and should be murdered from the theory . . ." which by drastically editing Maxwell's original work after the latter's untimely death (from cancer) excising the scalar component of the quaternions and eliminating the hyperspatial characteristic of the directional (vector components Oliver Heaviside effectively accomplished single handed.*

*This means, of course, that the four surviving "classic" Maxwell's Equations which appear in every electrical and physics text the world over, as the underpinnings of all 20th Century electrical and electromagnetic engineering, from radiation to radar, from television to computer science, if not inclusive of every "hard" science from physics to chemistry to astrophysics that deals with electromagnetic radioactive processes never appeared in any original Maxwell paper or treatise."*

In simple terms, Hoagland is suggesting the self-described objectivity of Western science is both self-serving and untrue. The censorship of ideas is contrary to the inherent inquisitive nature of the human spirit. Censorship is always based on a political agenda.

The journey of *Obatala* is a symbolic reference to the process described by Maxwell and suggests our ancient African ancestors embraced a profound understanding of the inner workings of Nature. An understanding of the concepts developed by Maxwell would lead to the ability to manipulate gravity. Some of the blocks used to build structures in Africa weigh a thousand tons. That is the equivalent mass of two 747 airplanes. The pulling stones with ropes using human labor model does not work because no rope invented in the history of life on earth can pull a thousand tons without snapping. The evidence suggesting ancient Africans were able to manipulate gravity is extensive to the point where

it is useless to argue with those who cannot see the obvious. If Western academia is willing to suppress earth-centered ideas expressed by one of their own, how hard is to imagine the notion of suppressing similar ideas expressed by Ancient Africans who have typically been regarded as "primitive," "pagan" and "illiterate?"

In the 1960's science developed highly sophisticated telescopes and discovered that planets in our solar system reflected light in the infrared spectrum from internal energy sources. Anomalous internal infrared radiation coming from Jupiter, Uranus and Neptune cannot be explained as reflections of solar energy and cannot be explained as heat generated by internal nuclear fusion. The data shows these planets clearly radiate more energy into space than they absorb from the sun. For Western science this is another big problem. In the language of Ifa all the planets in our solar system are producing ase from an invisible link with *Orun*.

Hyper-dimensional physics as currently explained by Richard Hoagland describes interdimensional openings that exist at specific places in the structure of every solar and planetary sphere. In Hoagland's model two invisible three sided pyramids support every circular mass in the visible universe. One pyramid has its apex at the north pole, and the foundation is at 19.47 Latitude, below the equator, the other pyramid has its apex at the south pole with its base is at 19.47 Latitude, above the equator. Approximately half the mass of each pyramid overlap. A two dimensional drawing of this formation creates what is commonly referred to as the either the Seal of Salomon or the Star of David. An older version of this same symbol is found on some of the stone structures in Luxor Egypt. There are eight points where the edges of these two pyramids touch the surface of the sphere. Hoagland identifies these eight points as inter-dimensional windows and the source of the otherwise unexplained energy coming from the planets in the solar system. The amount of energy generated by these openings is regulated by the relationship between various planets and moons in our solar system. The gravitational pull coupled with the spiral momentum of the planets affects the inter-

dimensional openings. This means the ecology of the earth is affected by its relationship to the other planets. It is well known that ancient earth centered cultures all over the planet were extremely sophisticated in their observation of planetary movement in the night sky. What is less well known is the fundamental reason for this interest. Ase, or inter-dimensional radiations coming from the eight contact points of the internal grid cover the surface of the earth in a grid pattern called Dragon lines, Serpent lines, Ley lines and various other names. The place where these lines cross, especially where they cross over underground water systems, were identified by the ancients as power spots, sacred places used for regeneration, healing, and spiritual elevation. An understanding of astronomy is the indicator of when and where these power spots become activated in the course of various planetary cycles. In Ifa these power spots are called *igbodu* meaning womb of the forest. The Yoruba word that describes the process of understanding the activation of *igbodu* is called *gede*. The word *gede* is an elision of *ge* meaning female power and *de* to stand up or arise. *Gede* is a reference to the out powering of primal energy from the womb of Creation. The selection of times for seasonal celebrations for specific *Orisa* in Nigeria is determined by when the *igbodu* associated with a particular *Orisa* is activated. Perhaps the most well know example is the annual appearance of the Spirit of *Osun* at the bend in the river near the *Osun* shrine in *Oshogbo*.

There is a Mosque in Iraq with a mechanical planetarium attached to a wall. The planets on the wall move to mirror the actual position of the planets in the night sky on any given day. Next to the planetarium and attached to it by a series of gears are eight square windows in two vertical rows of four. The windows expose either a single line (I) or a double line (II) in relationship to the movement of the planets. This mechanical model produces the eight marks used in Ifa divination. These marks are used throughout Africa and were preserved in Egypt by the Essenes and the Sufi. Both the Essenes and the Sufi use these patterns for systems of divination related to their own sacred scriptures. The Mosque in Iraq is a glimpse into the past and the cosmological principles at the foundation of

the symbolism found in African based systems of divination.

The transference of ase is not limited to large spherical stars and planets, it also occurs on the sub-atomic level. A clear example of the movement between dimensions occurs when iridium is subjected to extremely high temperatures in a furnace. At predictable temperatures 56% of the mass weight of any given sample of iridium disappears. When the iridium cools it returns to its original physical weight. This can only be explained as an inter-dimensional transference of physical matter. Western science became aware of this phenomenon at the turn of the last century and quickly suppressed the data. In the past decade some scientist have cautiously taken another look at the phenomena.

The spiritual technology of Africa has preserved an understanding of the process of interdimensional transference of physical matter for many thousands of years. The original name for the region now known as Egypt was Khemet meaning the Black Land, a reference to the fertile soil deposited by the Nile River. This soil is rich in iridium. When Akhenaton was deposed as Pharaoh of Egypt, he took his family and supporters to live at the base of Mt Sinai where he built a huge furnace to process iridium into white powder. The powder was used as medicine to elevate human consciousness and was used as a key element in the transformation of precious metals. Historically the process of making white powder from iridium is called Alchemy from the root words Al Khemet meaning Light from the Black land. In traditional Egyptian religion the white power made from iridium was ingested for thirty days followed by a ten day fast as part of an initiation process. At the end of the forty-day ordeal, the novice was described as having the ability to see God in a burning bush. The reference to a burning bush is a symbolic description of the bright light that emanates from an inter-dimensional opening. The ability to create these openings is an integral part of the initiation process in virtually every earthcentered culture on the continent of Africa. Discussing phenomena that occurs during initiation is not divulging secrets (awo) because the phenomenon has already been

described by a number of authors. Discussing how to produce the phenomena is (awo) and remains a closely guarded secret.

Anyone with a Western education was taught to believe that Alchemy was "occult foolishness". Egyptologists know that most of the gold found in Egypt was artificially produced and carries a different atomic signature than gold found in nature. The Russians have perfected the process of using alchemy techniques for making gold from base metals. The reason the price of gold remains stable is to keep the cost under the price of artificial production. Another example of objective science subordinating itself to a political agenda.

The Egyptian Book of the Death translated by Budge contains the following passages:

*"It says, I am purified of all imperfections, what is it? I sin like the golden hawk of Horus, what is it? I pass by the immortals without dying, what is it? I come before my father in heaven, what is it?"*

The Hebrew word *Mana* means what is it? *Mana* is the white powder produced from iridium. The historian Laurence Gardner makes a convincing case that Ahkenaton was the model for the mythical figure of Moses. Maybe, maybe not, the fact remains alchemy is one of many technological gifts from Africa that historians attempt to denigrate for political reasons having nothing to do with available information. The important point related to the Yoruba Creation Myth is that inter-dimensional openings can be created through the use of ritual. They also occur spontaneously at certain places at specific times of the year. In Yoruba these power spots are called *Igbodu* from the elision *igbo odu* meaning womb of the forest. The timing of annual festivals marks the window when these power centers are activated. Some *Igbodu* make use of meteorites (benben stones) as sacred symbols of spiritual power (*ase*), iridium is a major component of most meteorites.

Some readers will find the material in this article difficult to believe and possibly unfamiliar to their understanding of *Ifa*. There is an unfortunate tendency in the rapidly growing *Ifa* community in the United States to believe the notion that initiation makes a person wise. Initiation is merely permission to study, the integration of information and experience is the foundation of wisdom. There is also a tendency in this country to dismiss the value of elders and to dismiss the need for formal training. There are even *Ifa* communities who negate the value of Yoruba culture and the need to integrate formal prayers and traditional songs into the *Ifa* ritual process. This painful manifestation of ignorance seems to be predicated on a lack of understanding of the purpose and function of traditional African spiritual training. It also reflects a total lack of understanding of the tools needed to access *Orun*.

Malidoma Some in his book *Of Water and the Spirit* (page 225-226) states clearly the reasons for embracing the wisdom of the ancestors.

*"What we see in everyday life is not nature lying to us, but nature encoding reality in ways we can come to terms with under ordinary circumstances. Nature looks the way it looks because of the way we are. We could not live our whole lives on the ecstatic level of the sacred. Our senses would soon become exhausted and the daily business of living would never get done. There does, however, come a time when one must learn to move between the two ways of "seeing" reality in order to become a whole person.*

*Traditional education consists of three parts; enlargement of one's ability to see, destabilization of the body's habit of being bound to one plane of being, and the ability to voyage transdimensionally and return. Enlarging one's vision and abilities has nothing supernatural about it, rather it is "natural" to be a part of nature and to participate in a wider understanding of reality.*

*Overcoming the fixity of the body is the hardest part of initiation. As with*



*the seeing exercise, there is a lot of unconscious resistance taking place. There is also a great deal of fear to be overcome. One must travel to the other side of fear, crossing the great plains of terror and panic to arrive at the quiet one feels in the absence of fear. Only then does true transformation really begin to happen. It feels strange to not be afraid when one thinks one should be; but this is the condition for the voyage to other worlds. This metamorphosis cannot happen as long as the body is weighed down by heaviness. One must go through a process of relearning, enforcement of these lessons, and the consolidation of new knowledge. This kind of education is nothing less than a return to one's true self, that is, to the divine within us."*

American culture makes a serious and vicious attack on notions of pride, self-esteem and the idea that each and every one of us is a good and blessed person by virtue of our undeniable connection with the Source of Creation. Too often initiation is seen as a way to buy a quick fix to complex and deeply painful social and personal wounds. When a person goes through the initiation process and fails to look these wounds in the eye, there is a subsequent feeling of disappointment, a feeling of being cheated by the process and a need to justify the sacrifice and expense involved in going through initiation. Instead of understanding initiation as permission to begin the process of learning, there is a false assumption that initiation will eliminate all personal problems in the future. The consequence of this false premise is the creation of elders who tend to deify their problems and who use bully tactics to convince others they are "all knowing" and "all powerful."

Malidoma presents an alternative view (ibid, page 277)

*"In that moment of awareness, (during initiation) I had an epiphany, that the light we encounter on the road of death is our being in the act of coming home to itself. I understood that light is our natural state, but that we human beings must help each other as we move toward the shores of light. We must be born and die many times to reach the light, and ten*

*thousand years can pass in a flash. Being in the light is knowing we must get others into it. The soul that has already attained perfect enlightenment returns to life in compassion to help others along their journey.*

*The light is where we belong. Everyone who is not in the light is looking forward to being there. So we leave the light to go and experience the need for light, and thus come back to it anew."*

In *Ifa* the Spirit who brings light to the world is called *Obatala*. The place where *Obatala* enters the world is called *igbodu*. When we enter *igbodu* we have an opportunity to travel back to that place from which we came. In order to place both feet on the road back to Source we need a key to open the door blocking our access to *Orun*. The key is called *egbe* meaning the heart of our ancestors. The heart of our ancestors is a symbolic reference to a concept that is known in English as courage.

In the *Ifa* Creation story *Obatala* creates land on a planet (*aye*) that is covered with water. After the land (*Ile Ife*) is formed *Obatala* climbs down a chain to live on earth. In *Ifa* sacred scripture the *Orisa* (Force in Nature) always have a range of incarnations (*atunwa*) giving them different functions as the cycles of evolution unfold. The most distant incarnations manifest as natural phenomena the most immediate incarnations manifest as human behavior reflecting a specific mode of behavior represented by deified ancestors. During the earliest incarnation of *Obatala* described in the *Ifa* Creation Myth the *Orisa* (Force of Nature) symbolizes the transformation of light into matter. This transformation is represented on the *Ifa* divination tray by the contrast between a single line and a double line. The chain used to climb from *Orun* to *Aye* symbolizes the holographic blueprint for Creation contained within light, meaning the seeds of evolution are present at the beginning of time at the moment of cosmic inception. Information hidden within a Force of Nature, as latent potential, can be described as the Spirit of a particular aspect of Creation. For example the inner essence of the Spirit of Light is

to illuminate that which it encounters. The Spirit of Light is manifestation of Nature that generates illumination. In the Ifa Creation Myth, *Obatala* illuminates the process of evolution that occurs as the planet cools and becomes compatible with the development of life. This illumination can be described as *ori ala* meaning the consciousness of light as the root word of *Obatala's* praise name *Orisanla* meaning consciousness brings light.

Traditionally *Obatala* is described as androgynous meaning the Spirit or essence of Light has both male and female attributes. In the symbolic language of Ifa metaphysics male attributes are expansive (symbolized by a single vertical line) and female attributes are contractive (symbolized by a double vertical line). In the language of physics electromagnetism is male; gravity is female representing the fundamental polarity between dynamics and form. Gravity allows matter to hold a consistent shape, while electromagnetism is the force of decay and regeneration. In Western scientific language light (*ala*) can be characterized as both wave (male) and particle (female) giving it an androgynous quality using the symbolic language of *Ifa*. The *awo* (secret wisdom) associated with *Obatala* clearly expresses an understanding of the dual nature of light. This is a remarkable observation pre-dating similar observations in Western science by thousands of years. The traditions of our distant ancestors used myth to integrate science, history and to provide a template for spiritual growth. Myth was able to integrate these elements because they emerged at a time when spirituality was understood as an effort to live in harmony with nature and the only way to do that is to understand the multiple environments we live in. When Western culture started to engage in the process of controlling Nature the function of myth was relegated to obscurity and the ability to understand myth was lost. In ancient times every aspect of culture was a coded reference to Natural Law. *Obatala's* staff symbolizes the polarity between light as wave and light as particle. The stick is cut in the form of a serpent symbolizing the *ase* (spiritual power of the earth) or the ability of light to form a particle and the serpent is crowned by a bird symbolizing

the ase (spiritual power of the sky) or the ability of light to form a wave as generated by the sun. The integration of these two forces, or the creation of harmony and balance between them, is at the heart of *awo Obatala* (The mystery of the Spirit of Light).

In *Ifa* cosmology *Odu* is described as the womb or source of all the various manifestations of light in the material world. *Odu* exists in *Orun* (the invisible realm) where the male aspect of *Obatala* is called *Eji Ogbe* and the female aspect is called *Ofun Meji*. In simple terms *Obatala* is born of *Odu* because form precedes manifestation. The understanding of the meaning of the word *Odu* is an important key to understanding the *Ifa* worldview. Every *Odu* (womb) is considered an inter-dimensional portal linking *Orun* and *Aye* including the female reproductive organs which function as an inter-dimensional portal for the manifestation of *egun* (ancestors) who become *omo* (children) in the process of *atunwa* (reincarnation). Women as guardians of this portal in both the physical and spiritual realm are the traditional sources of prophetic wisdom (*Gelede*) and the source of *ase* for the installation of *Oba* (Yoruba Kings). It is the voice of the Mothers (*Iyaami Osorongu*) that makes the final judgment concerning the level of cultural harmony existing between community and spirit.

To say light travels to earth on a chain is to say the holographic blueprint of Creation exists in every particle of light potentially manifesting as the protein double helix *Ifa* calls *ase oka* (serpent power) and science calls DNA. *Ifa* expresses the idea of a holographic blueprint by saying everything in Creation has *Ori* (consciousness) and the light of *Obatala* exists in all *Ori*. The development of quantum physics is based on the observation that sub-atomic particles do not behave in a mechanistic way. Sub-atomic particles respond to stimuli with a range of options that are mapped in a cyclotron and referred to as the probability curve of a particular element. This is an indirect way of saying that sub-atomic particles make choices and the ability to make choices is the fundamental definition of consciousness.

In both academia and the mass media African spirituality is typically characterized as "primitive superstition". A close examination of the meaning of *Ifa* symbolism clearly reveals the existence of a paleo-physics (ancient science of the structure of reality). Hermeneutics is the name given to the academic study of religious symbols. As a discipline the study of African religious hermeneutics is generally ignored by Western academia raising the question of whether this exclusion is unconscious racism or the deliberate suppression of what might be considered threatening information about the basic structure of reality. Even a rudimentary study of the literature on African spirituality reveals the influence of both agendas on any discussion of the topic. If some effort is not made to identify these negative influences those who are interested in learning about African spirituality through the use of the written word are often given distorted information without realizing it. These distortions are re-written and passed on as fact in a painful movement away from source. For example, every version of *Ifa* scripture written in English has censored and removed most references to female *ase*. There seems to be no discernable reason for this other than the influence of Christian theology that identifies woman of power with evil. This identification is incompatible with both *Ifa* scripture and with *Ifa* practice outside the Diaspora. The African symbolic language that describes the polarity between male and female is sometimes expressed as the polarity between darkness and light. Any association between darkness and evil is a Western convention that does not reflect the original meaning of the symbol. In symbolic language, darkness means hidden. All *awo* (mystery) is hidden until it becomes revealed, all mystery is unrevealed truth and truth by definition is life affirming.

When *Obatala* arrives on earth he is described as ruling the land with a silver sword. In symbolic language a sword represents conscious thought. In *Ifa* silver is used for *abori*, which is a ritual cleansing used to elevate consciousness. *Ifa* describes the era of *Obatala* as a time when the distance between *Orun* and *Aye* was short and humans walked among the *Orisa*. Western occult traditions describe this as the "Golden Age", a time

when humans inhabited the earth in a state of peace and harmony with each other and the environment. Living in harmony with our environment includes an understanding that we live in a multi-dimensional universe. This means we share life on the planet with life forms that are not visible to the normal range of human perception. The more a person is able to access a state of harmony the broader their perception becomes opening an expanded awareness of the unseen influences that help shape life on earth. Christian theology refers to this process as exploring the "occult" and judges it to be a "sin". To refer to self-understanding as a "sin" is to deify ignorance.

References to a Golden Age exist in virtually every earth-centered tradition on the planet and appear to be a universally held ancestral memory. To understand this aspect of the Ifa Creation Myth requires some understanding of Yoruba history. According to *Ifa* oral tradition the first *Oba* (king) of the Yoruba Nation was *Oduduwa* from the elision *Odu* (womb) *dudu* (black) *iwa* (character) meaning the Invisible Source of Character. The word black in relationship to the word womb is a reference to the invisible or hidden mystery of Creation. The name *Oduduwa* suggests someone who manifests the essential nature of Creation. The *Ifa* Creation Myth says *Oduduwa* came from the east and settled in the country now called Nigeria. At this point the narrative has two distinct components. First *Obatala* arrives at *Ile Ife* and becomes the progenitor of the indigenous people of the earth. The reference to *Oduduwa* appears to suggest settlers from another part of Africa joined the original people who lived in and around *Ile Ife*. Migration, immigration and assimilation are natural cycles of any culture that is thousands of years old. A simple study of Yoruba linguistics shows a wide range of cultural influences from across the continent and in the Middle East.

I have visited the shrine of *Oduduwa* in *Aleketu*. It is in the home of the *Oba* of *Aleketu* who is a direct descendant of *Oduduwa*. The oral tradition of the shrine in *Aleketu* says that *Oduduwa* migrated to the west from

Egypt after becoming initiated as Pharaoh. The association between Egyptian culture and Yoruba culture is controversial for a number of reasons including the inference that any such association diminishes the contribution made to African culture by Africans. Some of this controversy is, I believe, the result of the deliberate denigration of African history in general and Egyptian history in particular by those historians who use political agendas to distort the historical record. An examination of this record shades light on some of the reasons for the controversy and gives some background on the confusion and contradictions that make any understanding of African history a challenge.

One of the first European archeological studies of ancient Africa occurred when Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798. He brought with him a team of scholars who made a detailed study of the stone structures near Cairo and started the European tradition of looting artifacts without regard to the sentiments of the colonized culture. At the time of the French incursion European scholars believed European culture originated in Greece. The French scholars who traveled with Napoleon came to the conclusion that Greek culture originated in Egypt. This expedition discovered the now famous Rosetta Stone that became the basis for later translations of Egyptian hieroglyphics. It would take at least another hundred years before the information from the Rosetta Stone could be put to practical use. Without the burden of having to rely on Egyptian written sources, the French were free to describe Egyptian history in a way that was consistent with their own worldview. They decided the pyramids at *Giza* were built by Joseph to store grain during the biblical era of Jewish captivity. They believed the significant contributions to Egyptian culture came as a result of the migration of non-Africans to the Nile basin for no objective reason other than the fact that they didn't want to believe Africans were the ultimate source of European culture. Unfortunately the theory was not consistent with the African features on the face of the Sphinx so Napoleon ordered his troops to destroy the face with cannon fire. At the time of this desecration the Sphinx was buried up to its neck

in sand and the face was an easy target. To this day the grain storage theory is the prominent belief about the purpose of the pyramids among fundamentalist Christians. Prejudice becomes intractable once it is promoted as the "Word of God".

The French effort to date Egyptian culture was influenced by a meeting of London booksellers that occurred in 1779, twenty-one years prior to Napoleon's expedition. Collectively the British cabal raised funds to publish a forty-two-volume compendium titled *Universal History*. After consultation with the prominent theologians of the day the publishers determined that "God's Creation" began on August 21st 4004 BC. The meeting was contentious because some of the theologians argued in favor of a March 21st date as the first day of Genesis. All subsequent European interpretations of history were obliged to conform to this time line. The sciences of biology and geology have pushed back the actual date of Creation by thirteen billion years, but historians and Egyptologist continue to frame the time line of written history in a way that makes it consistent with the early British time line generated by the Christian Bible and by the authors of *Universal History*. This is an early manifestation of one of the most prevailing attitudes guiding academic historical research; not annoying Jerry Farwell is more important than being objective because Jerry is an advisor to the President and the Federal Government is the source of 80% of all research funding for universities in the United States.

The British were skeptical of the grain storage theory promoted by the French. It seemed a bit excessive to move three and half million stones to support two small rooms that would only hold a minimal amount of food. Contemporary Egyptologists link the Pyramid at Giza to the Pharaoh Khufu sometimes called Cheops. They base their conclusions on the archeological evidence provided by a British soldier named Colonel Richard Howard-Vyse. In 1836 the Colonel hired 700 laborers to dig through the floor of the Queens Chamber inside the Giza Pyramid. Finding nothing, he decided to blast through the roof of the King's



Chamber using gunpowder. After blowing holes through three layers of crossbeams, the Colonel claims to have discovered a hand painted cartouche (royal insignia) in a small space between the granite cross beams. They are the only inscriptions of any kind found either inside or outside the Giza Pyramid. An analysis of the writing indicated it used hieroglyphics from three different historical periods all dating from a time after the reign of Khufu. The original reaction to the Howard-Vyse discovery concluded the hieroglyphics were fakes and suggested the Colonel was the person most likely to have committed the fraud. Despite his total lack of credibility, the Colonel's discovery was embraced by academia because it met the important requirement of fitting within the Biblical time line.

Ignoring the obvious problems with the inscription, Egyptologists continue to associate the Giza Pyramid with Pharaoh Khufu. The orthodox theory is that Khufu built the structure as a tomb. There are approximately eighty pyramids in Egypt, less than a dozen mummies have been discovered in and around any of these pyramids, and those were clearly placed under ground long after the original construction. Pharaohs are buried in subterranean tombs most notably in the Valley of the Kings. There is absolutely no Egyptian text that identifies the pyramid at Giza as a tomb, none, anywhere. Egyptologists as a group tend to believe their own analysis of artifacts is superior to the history recorded by the Egyptians themselves.

Italian Egyptologists with access to material hidden in the Vatican basement claimed the Egyptians had knowledge of the exact dimensions of the planet and used this knowledge as the basis for their system of measurement. In the nineteenth century the British were obsessed in their effort to find the dimensions of the earth as an aid to navigation in shipping. In 1882, forty years after the dubious discoveries of Howard-Vyse, Sir William Flinders Petrie traveled to Cairo to measure the ancient stone monuments in hopes of unlocking the mysteries related to the size of the earth. To his astonishment the thirteen-acre base of the

pyramid was flat to a tolerance of inch across the entire surface, a level of precision not possible at the time and not possible today. He also discovered the dimensions of the pyramid incorporated an understanding the properties of pi a mathematical formula believed to have been discovered by the Greeks. His analysis of the data he collected suggested the scale of the pyramid was in direct proportion to the size of the earth indicating a precise knowledge of the distance of the equator. He also discovered the Egyptian unit of measurement was remarkably similar to the British system suggesting an ancient influence based on previously unknown interaction between the two cultures.

While taking his measurements Petrie noticed that many of the stones inside the pyramid appeared to have saw marks and drill marks. The depth of spin on a drilled hole can be measured and the depth of each rotation determines the amount pressure coming from the bit. Petrie's measurements indicated the drills where using in excess of two tons of pressure which is absolutely and physically impossible with hand powered tools. The saw marks cut through granite leaving a surface as flat as glass. There are no hand held saws in existence that can duplicate the same level of precision. Petrie's obvious conclusion was the stones were dressed with powered tools. The response from Egyptologists to his discoveries about stone cutting was a thunderous silence. Their logic is simple, they have no artifacts that appear to be power tools; therefore Petrie's observations are wrong. The orthodox response to his measurements is that any correlation between the size and shape of the pyramid and the planet is a "coincidence". Scholars who refused to let go of antiquated ideas are great believers in coincidence.

Outside of academia Petrie's detailed report inspired the theory that the pyramids were built by an "advanced race" from "Atlantis". This popular premise was based largely on the writings of Plato who described the continent of Atlantis in two of his dialogues the *Critias* and the *Timaeus*. Plato states he received the information on Atlantis from an Egyptian priest and presents the story as a true historical account. Since no one

knows what an Atlantean looks like the British writers in Petrie's day assumed they were fair skinned with blue eyes and blond hair eliminating the trauma of having to attribute anything Egyptian to Africans. Psychologists call this projection. At about the same time British anthropologists were trying to prove human evolution originated in England. The one piece of hard physical evidence used to support their theory turned out to be the skull of a human fitted with the jawbone of an ape. The obvious forgery remained undetected for fifty years.

Shirley Andrews in her book *Atlantis Insights from a lost Civilization* makes a thorough review of the literature on Atlantis including a summary of the Egyptian texts on the subject. According to Andrews the Egyptians do describe an ancient civilization that once existed on a now submerged Atlantic island. Recent discoveries of stone buildings off the coast of Bermuda and more recently off the coast of Cuba tend to confirm the possibility such an island once existed. Andrews says the Egyptians considered the Atlanteans to be a hostile culture in no way associated with the development of their own culture. There are even Egyptian texts describing a settlement of Atlantean refugees that survived the destruction of their island kingdom and settled in Egypt for a short time before migrating west. The proponents of the theory that Atlantis is the source of Egyptian technology want us to believe Egyptians did not honor the memory of the ancestors who were responsible for the development of their technology. Egyptian culture, like virtually all traditional cultures in Africa, is deeply rooted in the veneration of ancestors. The idea that any significant ancestors would be ignored for any reason is not credible from a cultural perspective. The Atlantis genesis story simply does not work.

At the turn of the twentieth century German archeologists were uncomfortable with the idea that European culture was in any way related to Africa. The politically correct German theory of cultural genesis was that a super human race of superior beings lived in the center of the earth under the illumination of a black sun. This race emerged on to the surface of the earth in Tibet, migrated to Mesopotamia, created a migratory

culture known as the Acadians who settled in Greece before reaching their final destination in southern Europe. One of the most prominent German archeologists of this era was R.A Schwaller de Lubicz who, to his credit, managed to rise above his political bias. In the course of Lubicz's explorations he noticed that most Egyptian temples faced south. His examination of temple texts indicated the orientation was based on the desire to honor the ancestors of the Nile culture. To the dismay of his colleagues Lubicz was saying the Sudan and Ethiopia was the ancestral home of those who built the pyramids. This meant Africans created indigenous Egyptian culture. If we look at a map we see Ethiopia is bisected by the rift valley. This region is the richest source of ancient fossil human remains on the planet. Not only was this region the ancestral home of the Egyptians it is likely the ancestral home of everyone alive on the planet. Despite the obvious global implications of Lubicz's observation, Egyptologists treat the idea as if it was the source of some deadly viral infection.

To add insult to injury Lubicz was the first to notice that the weathering pattern on the Sphinx was caused by rain not wind. This was a serious problem because the Sphinx was supposed to be five thousand years old and the most recent period of flooding around the Giza plain occurred ten thousand years ago. His observation was all but ignored until a tourist guide named Jonathan West invited geologist Robert Schock to examine the evidence first hand. When Schock presented his findings to a gathering of Egyptologists he was told the water erosion was caused by water seeping up out of the ground and into the stones at the foundation of the Sphinx in what must be the only recorded instance of water defying the laws of gravity.

For the past twenty years there has been a vigorous effort by Egyptologist to prove the pyramids could have been built using simple tools and simple methods. They have gone so far as to film a documentary building a "mini" pyramid in Egypt based on the premise they could use simple technology to accomplish the task. The initial efforts failed so the

pyramid was built using modern equipment, as "proof" the ancient Egyptians needed no extraordinary technology to accomplish the task. The largest stone involved in the experiment weighed two tones and was moved with trucks and cranes. None of the footage involving the use of modern equipment was included in the final cut of the film. The issue of moving stones weighing in excess of one hundred tons was conveniently ignored. (That is the weight of two 747 jetliners, the obvious problem being what kind of rope can pull that weight without braking?)

Most of the history of Egyptology appears to be a reflection of the resistance by self-proclaimed experts to accept obvious evidence due to a difficulty in accepting the accomplishments of ancient African culture. It does not seem to be unfair to attribute much of this difficulty to an ethnocentric bias that has no foundation in reality. The deliberate distortion of the historical record seems to have reached an all time high during a recent Fox documentary showing exploration of the one of the four shafts inside the Giza pyramid. The special featured a robotic camera traveling up the shaft to a stone door that was drilled open before a camera was inserted through the hole to reveal another door. Dr. Hawass the director of Egyptian antiquities explained the shaft was added to the tomb of Khufu long after it was originally built. He claims the shafts were chiseled through the stone to provide an escape for the Pharaoh's soul. That's possible, the problem is the shaft is approximately eight inches square and travels for one hundred and fifty feet before making a sharp right angle. The entire shaft inclines at a consistent angle with tolerances similar to those measured by Petrie. In order to accomplish the task as described by Dr. Hawass a stonemason would either have to use a chisel one hundred and fifty feet in length or the mason had an extraordinarily long arms. I cannot imagine how Dr. Hawass could make such a statement to reporters without everyone in the room dropping to the floor howling in laughter. Why the deception, what is it that everyone is afraid of, and what does any of this have to do with the *Ifa* Creation Myth?

Egyptian historical records carved on the walls of the Temple at Luxor

include a list of dynasties that push the date of early Egyptian culture back by 45,000 years. Academic Egyptology deals with the contradiction by describing all dynasties listed as existing prior to 6,000 years ago as "mythic," meaning having no basis in the objective historical record. One of many problems with this analysis is that clay tablets discovered in Mesopotamia (Iraq) at the turn of the last century include king lists that are nearly identical to the Egyptian records found in Luxor. Why would two different countries make up the same fantasy about the origins of their cultures? The obvious answer is they wouldn't. The reason for the academic dismissal of these older dates is very simple; modern Homo Sapiens reportedly first walked the earth some 30,000 years ago. The predecessor of Homo Sapiens is called Cro Magnum and is described by anthropologists as a small brained, hairy, protohuman who wore animal skins and survived by scrapping the bones of dead animals and picking wild fruit. If the Egyptian time line on the Temple inscriptions is correct, Cro Magnum communities built the pyramids, developed a sophisticated system of geometry, invented a complex system of writing and made accurate measurements of the size of the earth and charted the relationship between the planets and the sun.

Carl Sagan a great defender of academic orthodoxy admitted there were books in the Library at Alexandria (Egypt) that traced human history back 100,000 years. Those books were supposedly destroyed in a fire. This seemingly innocent statement by the late Dr. Sagan appears to be confirmation of the possibility that orthodox history is a deliberate deception. If the books were all destroyed where was Carl getting his information?

The apparent problem with letting go of the hairy proto-human Cro Magnum theory is that it completely undercuts the Darwinian theory of evolution. Without Darwin and the notion of survival of the fittest there is no justification for elitism, imperialism, colonialization, prostelization and the exploitation of resources in non-western countries. It is not hard to imagine that the foundations that fund historical and scientific research

might find the subversion of these ideas to be unworthy of funding.

If it is true that Yoruba culture interacted with Egyptian culture an examination of Egyptian history should help illuminate the *Ifa* Creation Myth. If it is also true that Western academic accounts of Egyptian history are politically and racially biased the best alternative source is clearly the oral accounts of the Egyptians themselves. The pre-Islamic, pre-Christian, and pre-Judaic religious traditions of Egypt still exist. Indigenous Egyptian religion has survived in Egypt in much the same way that Yoruba religion survived in the Diaspora, by going underground. In the past ten years a small number of indigenous Egyptian religious elders have started to speak publicly about the oral legacy left by their ancestors. Among them is Abd'El Hakim Awyan who has assisted in the preparation of a several books that provide a glimpse into traditional Egyptian oral history.

In *The Land of Osiris* by Stephen S. Mehler, Hakim Awyan makes it clear that Dynastic Egypt was based on the culture of Khemit and he says the culture of Khemit is of unmistakable African origin. The civilization of Khemit was made up of indigenous African families who were not "superior outsiders", they did not come from Atlantis and they did not arrive in Egypt from another planet. The word Khemit means "The Black Land". The use of the word Egypt was a Greek invention coming from the Greek word *Aegptos* that is a corruption of the Coptic (Egyptian) phrase *HitKa-Ptah* meaning "the place of projection of the God Ptah". In the Egyptian Creation Myth *Ptah* created the world. The Egyptian landscape was designed to create a symbolic map showing the geometric patterns (*Odu*) responsible for the creation of the visible universe. The Egyptian proverb that has become a cornerstone of Western esoteric thought says, as above so below. Creating structures in stone that mirror the structures of Creation amplifies the power of Creation insuring fertility, harmony, abundance and peace; based on the belief that life works.

Hakim Awyan says the Sphinx is over 50,000 years old and that the

pyramids located near the Sphinx are considerably older. Islamic scholar Abu Zeyd el Balkhy has located hieroglyphics in Egypt that say the pyramids at Giza were built at a time when Lyre was in the constellation of Cancer suggesting the structures are 73,000 years old. This perspective on Egyptian history means the Pyramid at Giza was built during the era of Cro Magnon culture described by the Egyptians as the time of the "Gods" (*Neters*). The shift between Cro Magnon and Homo Sapiens represents the most radical mutation in the historical record. The shift is so extreme it is scarcely mentioned by contemporary anthropologists because it threatens the fundamental notion of mutation as a response to environmental change. To make matters worse for the defenders of orthodox history the Egyptians and the Sumerians both claimed to have developed the ability to engineer genetic changes in biological life forms. If our Cro Magnon ancestors deliberately created a new species we call Homo Sapiens it would not be unreasonable to discover that the new species deified those who were responsible for their creation. Many Christian theologians have difficulty accepting the idea of evolution. The acceptance of the Egyptian explanation for the development of the modern human life-form would involve accepting the notion that genetic engineering was developed by "heathens". The difficulty in accepting an idea does not necessarily make the idea false, but there does not seem to have been any effort made to confirm or negate the validity of ancient Egyptian texts discussing the process of genetic alteration. It is one of those ideas that is so threatening to the commonly held belief in the nature of things that it fails to register as an idea worthy of serious study.

Hakim Awyan is adamant the pyramids were not constructed for use as tombs. They were built to accumulate, absorb, and transmit interdimensional forms of energy referred to in Yoruba as *ase*. The pyramid at Giza is not a tomb, its not a grain storage silo, its not a stone monument with an encoded secret message, it is not a beacon for extraterrestrial space craft, it is a machine. The purpose of the machine was to absorb *ase* from the earth and *ase* from the sky, transforming it into a usable form essential to the stability and fertility of the culture.



Christopher Dunn is a trained machinist with no formal training in the study of Egyptian culture. Early in his career he read Petrie's book on the measurements and tolerances observed by Petrie as part of the construction of the Giza Pyramid. Dunn examined Petrie's data and decided the only reason for such small ranges of variation in the physical dimensions of the structure was because it was built as a machine with a specific function and that function would in some way be inhibited by less strict attention to exact measurements. Dunn decided to back engineer the structure based on the premise that any viable theory concerning the function of the pyramid would have to explain all the architectural features and anomalies. Following twenty years of study Dunn published his conclusions in a book called *The Giza Power Plant, Technologies of Ancient Egypt*. In his summary he makes the following statement:

*"If my power plant theory was based on evidence from a singular exhibit or a few artifacts, critics and skeptics could rightly attribute that evidence to pure coincidence. However, I have amassed a plethora of facts and deductions based on sober considerations of the design of the Great Pyramid and nearly every artifact found within it that, when taken together, all support my premise that the Great Pyramid was a power plant and the King's Chamber its power center. Facilitated by the element that fuels our sun (hydrogen) and uniting the energy of the universe with that of the Earth, the ancient Egyptians converted vibrational energy into microwave energy. For the power plant to function, the designers and operators had to induce vibrations in the Great Pyramid that was in tune with the harmonic resonant vibrations of the Earth. Once the pyramid was vibrating in tune with the Earth's pulse it became a coupled oscillator and could sustain the transfer of energy from the Earth with little or no feedback. The three smaller pyramids on the east side of the Great Pyramid may have been used to assist the Great Pyramid in achieving resonance, much like today we use smaller gasoline engines to start large diesel engines." - page 219*

If Dunn's theory is correct it would appear the pyramids are the culmination of a much older technology and there is evidence to suggest this is the case. To understand the evidence requires some understanding of ideas developed by Nicolas Tesla. When Thomas Edison first invented the light bulb the filament burned out quickly and the bulbs only lasted for a couple of minutes. Tesla suggested the use of alternating current, which was the break through concept responsible for giving birth to the electronic age. During the course of his research Tesla observed phenomena associated with electricity that was not electro-magnetic and seemed to function as a plasma or gas. Because there was no theoretical basis for this observation in physics Tesla examined and extended ideas originally developed by Thomas Maxwell (discussed in part one of this series). Without going into a technical explanation Tesla called the unknown phenomena radiant energy and believed the energy represented a transfer of power from dimensions outside the visible universe. He was able to design machines that separated radiant energy from electrical current. (The same process described by Dunn as the basis for ancient Egyptian technology.) The machines were able to access an inter-dimensional power source without having to mimic structures the size of the Pyramid at Giza. He was able to build transformers that accessed radiant energy and used it as a power source with access to unlimited amounts of free energy. He used his inventions to design a detailed system of delivery of free utilities for the entire planet. Tesla's laboratory in New York was destroyed by arson at a time when he was thought to be inside the building. Fortunately he was elsewhere but the message was clear. Tesla continued his research in seclusion (Financed by Mark Twain).

In very simple terms Tesla theorized that electro-magnetic energy coming from the sun carries the plasma he called radiant energy. This plasma is stored under the surface of the earth moving along magnetic grids influenced by polar magnetism and gravitational pull from celestial bodies. In ancient religious texts a bird symbolizes radiant energy coming from the sun and either a snake or a dragon symbolizes radiant energy

absorbed by the earth. Anyone who has spent time in the rain forest will know that lights looking like a camera flash bulb can be seen periodically lighting up the trees. These flashing lights are natural manifestations of an inter-dimensional transference of radiant energy and they are universally identified by inhabitants of the rain forest as "spirit birds". Serpent power from the earth occasionally becomes visible in the form of ball lightning that periodically appears along fault lines following an earthquake. When serpent power becomes visible inside a cave it looks like a long undulating red snake. The ancients appeared to have noticed a unique phenomenon when the radiant energy of the sun entered the mouth of cave and co-mingled with the serpent energy of the earth. The places where this junction of natural forces occurred were identified as sacred sites (Igbodu). The phenomenon that occurs can best be described as the manifestation of pure unformed consciousness. Our ancient ancestors observed this phenomenon and made an amazing discovery. They noticed that anyone standing in the presence of unformed consciousness influenced the manifestation of the radiant energy, which amplifies any thoughts directed towards it. They also discovered this amplification could be projected on to the natural landscape by channeling it towards underground water tables (The bend in the river at *Osun's* shrine in Oshogbo). At some point more than a 100,000 years ago our ancestors started building mounds in an effort to replicate this natural phenomenon. The development of these mounds occurred all over the planet and led to the understanding of accessing natural power sources that eventually manifested itself in the construction of the Pyramid at Giza.

Because of their age, very little is known about the people who have come to be called "mound builders". What is known is deduced from the paintings and carvings they left on rocks and inside caves. The shamans who developed this early sacred technology are always depicted with shaved heads and carrying a serpentine staff crowned by a bird exactly like the *Osun* staff carried by initiates of *Obatala*. In some drawings they appear to be wearing white robes. There is no way to tell where and when this priesthood originated, but it is clear from the archeological record it

was a global society affecting every continent on the planet. (Mounds explored by the Smithsonian Institute along the Grand Canyon and near Cleveland yielded African artifacts just prior to World War II, to date none of those artifacts have every been put on display.)

It was the task of the early shamans of the bird and the serpent to insure only those with good character and good intentions had access to the radiant energy manifesting as unformed consciousness. To this day the society of *Obatala* initiates are considered to be guardians of moral and ethical behavior. They enforce this mandate through the traditional Yoruba judicial process called *Ogboni*. In *Ogboni* meetings the *Obatala* elders are the senior priests and priestess. The male *Obatala* initiates worship the radiant energy of the earth (serpents), which is considered feminine, and the female *Obatala* initiates worship the radiant energy of the sky (birds), which is considered masculine. Between them the world is born. The *Ogboni* temples have the same floor plan as Egyptian temples; an outer open courtyard, leading to a covered inner courtyard leading to the inner sanctum. The inner sanctum is the place of manifestation of radiant energy and only accessible to initiates. In Egypt the radiant energy of the inner sanctum is directed from the Pyramid at Giza to the various temples through underground waterways. If Yoruba culture has been influenced by Egyptian culture there should be pyramids in Nigeria as part of the fundamental structure of Ifa spiritual technology. There is a pyramid shaped mound in Eredo surrounded by a wall seventy feet high and one hundred miles long. Local tradition associates the earthworks with Bilikisu Sungbo, which is the Islamic name for the Queen of Sheba. The British archeologists investigating the site refuse to believe it is associated with the Queen of Sheba because they do not understand the word Bilikisu Sungbo is a title and not the name of a person. Hakim Awyan says the royal position of the Pharaoh in ancient Egypt was granted by matrilineal selection, which means the priestesses of the royal court selected the heir to the Egyptian throne. The priestesses who were a part of the selection process worshiped the cow and the cow is represented in Egyptian sculpture resting its chin on the head of the

Pharaoh a symbol of "making the head" or initiation. The cow is sacred to Hathor and Hathor is the Egyptian equivalent of *Iyaami Osorango*, the women who have direct involvement in the selection of Kings in Yoruba culture. The temples run by female devotees of Hathor typically were surrounded by large circular fences most notably the temple compound in Yemen located due east from Ethiopia which is also a temple of Bilikisu Sungbo. This means we have a Yoruba temple in Eredo of Egyptian design honoring an Ethiopian Priestess. Archeologists have no clue.

Back to the point, Christopher Dunn has confirmed Hakim Awyan's statement about the function of the pyramid from a technological point of view. Both Tesla and Maxwell have provided a theoretical explanation that supports Dunn's description. Hakim Awyan obviously does not need any validation to carry forward the wisdom of his ancestors, but those who study culture and history might want to consider the validity of oral tradition as a way of understanding history as opposed to the more popular method of trying to get history to conform to popular prejudice.

According to Egyptian Creation Myth the universe came into existence through the ejaculation of Ptah. Science calls this the "Big Bang", the expulsion of all the potential energy and matter in the Universe generated from a single source of infinite density. In Yoruba this singularity is called *Oyigioyigi* meaning the "Eternal Rock of Creation", the stone from which everything is born (the reason stones are sacred in Yoruba culture rocks are the Eternal Mother). If you take an ordinary rock and blow it up all you have left is scattered debris. The reason we do not have scattered debris from the Big Bang is because the initial moment of existence resulted in the manifestation of a universe in which none of the present laws of physics were in evidence. That is because the temperature was so intense none of the atomic structures that give form to the evolutionary process were able to stabilize. In the beginning the Universe was pure unconditioned radiant energy called *ase* in Yoruba. The universe existed in this state for a fraction of a second then started to cool (*ori tutu*). The cooling process created a medium for the containment of sound waves

generated by the initial explosion. These sound waves are called *Oro* in Yoruba meaning Word of Power and are referred to in the Torah as the Word of God. Sound creates invisible geometric patterns that permeate time and space (currently called string theory in physics). These patterns create invisible structures for increasingly complex manifestations of *ase* eventually leading to the manifestation of physical matter. These structures are the foundation of consciousness and the basis for the Yoruba belief that everything in the universe has *ori*. The primal geometric patterns were described by Plato based on his studies in Egypt. Later in history these patterns became the basis for Islamic Temple art. The sound from the primal moment of Creation is still detectable on radio telescopes and recently the Hubble telescope captured images of a band of light emanating from the moment of Creation. The wave band from the explosion created by the big bang is perfectly resonate with the shafts in the Pyramid at Giza and has the effect of amplifying these sounds as they are directed towards the Kings Chamber and the Queens Chamber. The Pyramid is a magnet for the absorption of the sound of Creation. Yes, our ancient African ancestors were that sophisticated and we are only beginning to re-discover their ageless wisdom.

As the universe cooled sub-atomic particles developed as infinitesimally small reflections of the galactic geometric patterns created by the Big Bang. These patterns are all spherical in form with a variety of plus and minus electromagnetic polarities existing within the sphere. As the universe cools these patterns replicate with increasing degrees of density. Ifa refers to this process as the descent of *ase* from *Orun* (The Invisible Realm) to *Aye* (The Physical Realm). The structure of these forms can be examined by studying Platonic geometry. But this is only half the picture. Form is sustained by dynamics meaning a system of energetic propulsion moving the form through the cycle of life, death, transformation and rebirth. The infusion of form with dynamics is mapped in the markings of *Odu*, which are two-dimensional symbols of a three dimensions energy exchange (described in part one of this article). *Odu* patters are a template representing the various ways unformed radiant energy (*ase*)

moves between the visible and the invisible realms of Being. Visualizing the geometric patterns created by sound infused with radiant energy created by constant motion implicit in the structure of *Odu* generates a visual map of the essential nature of everything that exists in the physical universe. In Ifa the component of sound is added to *Odu* through the use of *ofo ase* meaning the power of incantations. In Ifa the understanding of these principles comes from *Orunmila* who is known by the praise name *Elerin-ipin* meaning witness to Creation. The discipline of Ifa is the ability to grasp and make use of the fundamental principles of manifestation. It is sacred science.

The Shape of the Pyramid at Giza is the construction in Stone of one of the basic geometric patterns manifested by sound. The shafts in the pyramid are the openings for the radiant energy described by *Odu*. If you understand these two principles you have the ability to transform reality. The pyramid is a machine used to help form and shape the earth itself insuring stability and fertility by accumulating the fundamental energy source of Creation and then consciously directing it (ritual) through underground water channels where ever you want it to go. The entire Giza plateau is honeycombed with underground tunnels used to move water. These tunnels extend for hundreds of miles into the desert. Egyptologists pretend they don't exist. The pyramid is a terraforming machine built to enrich the planet we live on. The sacred technology used to operate this machine is still evident in Nigeria among the Yoruba initiates of *Ifa*. The *Awoni* are initiates living at the palace of the *Oni* (king) in Ile Ife who saying daily prayers for the elevation of all *Ifa* and *Orisa* worshipers. These prayers are spoken over underground water systems. The same technology has been preserved in European occult traditions in the myths associated with the Holy Grail and is the source of the folklore associated with wishing wells.

Ancient Africans, long before the Creation of Pyramids and long before written history, discovered the principle of capturing primal radiant energy in underground temples built with walls of alternating layers of

organic (dirt) and inorganic (rock) material. These underground temples were placed on energy lines inherent in the structure of the earth itself and aligned with astral bodies to absorb radiant energy from both heaven and earth. The connection between these two forces of energy is symbolized throughout Africa as a staff in the form of a snake with the image of a bird at the apex of the snake. In Yoruba culture the elders of *Egbe Obatala* who are the guardians of this ancient African wisdom that predates both Yoruba and Egyptian culture. The staff of *Obatala* survives in Western culture as the symbol of the Caduceus used to represent the medical profession.

*Ifa* teaches that every force in Nature has an equal and opposite reaction. The closer modern science comes to rediscovering the mysteries of our ancient ancestors the more insidious becomes the opposition to that discovery.

On the day after Nicolas Tesla died all of his research was confiscated by the Department of Naval intelligence and has not been seen since. This could be why Egyptology is smothered in such nonsensical rhetoric; people who build modern empires and eventually buy television networks do not support the idea of free energy.

*Ifa* myth like all sacred literature born of Spirit is both a reflection of real history and a key towards understanding the inner dimensions of the human struggle to grasp the meaning of self and world. If we take another look at the *Ifa* Creation Myth and interpret the waters of the earth as the unformed consciousness of the human spirit we are blessed with the revelation of a true *awo* (mystery). Just as the magical ritual of *Obatala* creates land on the planet, the ritual and discipline of *Obatala* worship creates land in the midst of the chaos in our unconscious self. It is a formula for what psychologists call self-actualization. *Obatala* created a land called Ile Ife meaning the House of Love. In the endeavor we call historical research that is known as a big clue.



An examination of history based on the oral traditions of Egyptian and Yoruba culture presents a radically different view of the accomplishments of our ancient African ancestors than the information presented by the mass media and is in stark contrast to the paradigm propagated by orthodox academic dogma. From the perspective of *Ifa* spiritual discipline this conflict in historical perspectives can cause serious problems. Communication with the ancestors (*egun*) is a fundamental component of the *Ifa* liturgical process. We run the risk of limiting our own good fortune by failing to appreciate the depth of wisdom available to us through serious dialogue with those who have come before us. If we do not believe the ancients were able to use stones structures to generate energy we will never ask them to tell us how it is done. If we do not believe the ancients were able to create inter-dimensional portals we will never know what is on the other side of the veil. Our understanding of the past informs us about who we are and inspires our vision of who we can become. The "official" version of history would have us to believe that Africa was a "primitive" place isolated from the rest of humanity until it embraced Christianity, a place that remains unable to govern itself and unable to develop its natural resources. The lie has been told so often and so well that anyone proposing an alternative perspective is suspect.

Nicolas Tesla may have re-discovered some of the lost technology developed by ancient Egyptian culture. Tesla claimed that many of his insights came as the result of dialogue with interdimensional beings, an interesting admission coming from one of the pioneers of the electronic age. Tesla was granted hundreds of patents and they were all virtually based on first time drawings of his original ideas. This means his inventions manifested in his own consciousness as fully developed concepts needing no corrections or alterations. Given Tesla's description of his own internal process the question arises, was this skill the result of his personal genius or was it the result of the effectiveness of his communication with Spirit? I suspect it was large doses of both.

According to *Ifa* ancestral wisdom we become who we are by standing on the shoulders of those who came before us. If our understanding of our ancestors is distorted, we cannot begin to know who we are let alone build on our ancestral heritage. Ignorance is fertile ground for manipulation. A manipulated life fails to develop to its fullest potential. When I first started studying *Ifa* over twenty-five years ago, I was told that *Ifa* no longer existed in Africa. My first trip to Africa completely dispelled that lie and subsequent trips have left me humbled and astonished by the amount of wisdom and understanding that is available from elders who are largely ignored outside of their own communities. If you believe *Ifa* is no longer practiced in Africa, or if you believe the *Ifa* practiced in the Diaspora is somehow "better" than the wisdom that exists in its place of origin your expectation will only confirm your shortsighted belief. If you assume something does not exist you will never find it, even if you bump into it.

*Ifa* says those who cannot call the names of their ancestors going back seven generations cannot seat their *ori* (consciousness) in the world. In an effort to understand where we have come from it is necessary to look seriously at and understand the legacy of past generations. Taking a serious look means challenging the propaganda and misinformation that shaped the consciousness of those of us who were manipulated by a Western "education". Our institutions of higher learning are set up to support industry, industry in this country is dependant on the exploitation of global resources, and exploitation requires justification. The conflict between justification and illumination is a financial struggle and those who are interested in reinforcing justification have the economic advantage.

The *Ifa* Creation Myth indicates there was an extended period of peace and harmony on the earth, a time when a global priesthood venerated the Spirit of Light (commonly called Sun Worship) known by a wide range of names in virtually every early culture known to history manifesting in Yoruba culture as *Obatala*. If the Egyptian and Sumerian records are

accurate, this period in history lasted for at least 70,000 years. If we consider the fact that most of the technology used in the contemporary world was developed in the past hundred years, the potential for developing unimaginable technology over a period of 70,000 years staggers the imagination. In the words of Arthur C. Clark, "Any significant advanced technology is undistinguishable from magic." Western culture denigrates magic, and as a result anything in the historical record that appears magically is immediately dismissed as untrue. The knee-jerk criteria becomes "if we can't do it, they couldn't do it". As a result perception becomes self-fulfilling prophecy. This is a problem of ori (consciousness). The mind that creates a problem is not the mind that can fix the problem.

If you can appreciate the possibility that the Pyramid at Giza was a power plant, then many of the pieces of the archeological record start to fit together in a coherent pattern. One of the difficulties in seeing this pattern is the belief that history is linear. The linear model is based on the belief that time moves forward making culture and civilization progressively better. The notion of unconditional cultural progress is the result of the influence of Darwinian theories of survival of the fittest on the political theories used to justify the exploitation by those who have monopolized the development of superior weapons of mass destruction. One of the earliest manifestations of the effect on politics of Darwinian theory was Hitler's notion of a "master race". German academics in the early years of the twentieth century argued that the development of sophisticated weapons gave Germans the moral right to rule the world. Their excuse for invading Austria, Poland and France was that each of these countries represented a threat to national security. Slight provocations were used as an excuse for military action. In retrospect we now know that most of the provocations were engineered by the Germans themselves to create the illusion of a threat. Before going to war Hitler burned the Reichstag (German parliament) and blamed the fire on "radicals" which at the time was a code word for people of Jewish ancestry. If the purpose of life were to dominate and control others the

Darwinian argument would be valid. If the purpose of life is to live in harmony with the environment and make the earth a better place then the argument is insane.

*Ifa* as well as most indigenous spiritual traditions teaches the idea that history moves in cycles of growth and decay. This is a fundamental concept necessary to any understanding of *Odu*. *Ifa* oral tradition teaches that every *Odu* emerges from its opposite, for example:

I I II II I I II II I I II II I I II II *Eji Ogbe* becomes *Oyeku Meji*

The single lines represent light the double lines represent darkness. All light fades into darkness and all darkness emerges into light, a fundamental principle in nature. Be clear; Darkness is not evil. Darkness is the absence of light. All matter starts to decay once it comes into existence. The process of decay is symbolized in *Ifa* as the movement between light and dark. *Ifa* also teaches the spiritual principle of rebirth, meaning all darkness becomes light. The linear view of history negates the possibility of rebirth as a Force of Nature. This perspective is not consistent with reality and can only be imposed on *ori* (consciousness) through deliberate manipulation, distortion and control. Understanding the dynamics of transformation is an essential element in any effort to deflect the influences of manipulation, distortion and control. The study of *Odu* is the study of the ways in which transformation occurs. There are an infinite number of ways in which you can track the movement of *Eji Ogbe* to *Oyeku Meji* and back from *Oyeku Meji* to *Eji Ogbe*. The point is that everything in existence is in a constant state of flux, moving in cyclical patterns from source to its opposite polarity and back to source. Nothing in Nature is unambiguously progressive, including the development of culture. Most earth-centered spiritual traditions speak of at least three previous cycles of development, extinction and re-birth. In the *Ifa* Creation Myth, the earliest of these cycles is referred to as the time when *Obatala* ruled the world with a silver sword.

During the period of *Obatala's* ascendancy as a primary organizing principle in culture there were amazing developments in what can be described as an earth-centered, environmentally friendly, energy efficient forms of technology. If this technology was based on an objective understanding of the inner mysteries of Nature it should be possible to rediscover the same principles and put them to use for the benefit of life on earth. An examination of the history of science indicates this is exactly what has occurred. Robert Oppenheimer was the director of the Manhattan Project responsible for developing the atom bomb. At a press conference following the detonation of the bomb in Japan, Oppenheimer was asked how it felt to be the first person to create an atomic bomb. In response he said; "I was the first person to do it in modern times." Why would he say such a thing? The test sight in Nevada has transformed large tracks of sand into glass as the result of the above ground detonation of atomic bombs. This artificially produced glass does not occur in nature as a natural phenomenon. Geologists report the existence of artificially created glass fields in deserts around the planet. The glass is thousands of years old. What they fail to mention is the only known method for creating the glass. (This will be discussed in detail in the next installment of this series)

The pressing question for anyone who prefers illumination over manipulation is this; what is the *awo* (mystery) understood by Ancient Africans that enabled them to create a technology so sophisticated it appears magical (meaning fanciful) rather than real? The answer to this question is at the foundation of the African worldview on the nature of reality and the source of continuous transformation in the universe.

The ancient Egyptians described the earth as two twelve sided pyramids joined together at the equator. This is virtually the same structure used by Buckminster Fuller to build geodesic domes. The Egyptians were not referring to the visible spherical shape of the planet; they were describing the invisible energetic pattern that supports the internal structure of the earth. There is no known record of how they came to their conclusion, but

there are numerous examples of temple art depicting the grid pattern that infuses the planet with radiant energy (dragon lines ase). In the 1970's J.J. Hurtack, Ivan Sanderson and Christopher Bird, independently rediscovered the energetic grid described by the ancient Egyptians. Their work was largely based on research conducted by three Russian scientists Yyacheslav Morozov, Valery Makarov, and Nilolai Goncharov who theorized the planet was a giant crystal radiating electromagnetic impulses along detectable routes. These lines correlated with the earth's fracture zones (earthquake faults), ocean ridges, atmospheric pressure zones, known travel routes of migratory animals and the site of ancient megalithic stone structures.

In his book *The Keys of Enoch* J.J. Hurtack describes the grid pattern as an icosahedron (a spherical shape with twenty flat surfaces). Based on his research he theorized that there were ten places of maximum intersection of the grid lines that run along the equator in a zigzag pattern (above and below the equatorial line). He describes these points as inter-dimensional openings or portals to invisible realms of existence. Ivan Sanderson called these anomalies "vile vortices" because the history of these power spots indicates a pattern of strange disappearances from the visible realm of three-dimensional time and space. Sanderson identified one of these vortices as the Giza plateau.

In 1984 Bethe Hagen and William Becker identified twelve anomalous power spots forming a zigzag pattern along the equator. This pattern is consistent with the grid pattern found in Egyptian temple art and is the pattern that was used as the basis for Pythagorean geometry and Plato's theory of forms. When the early Greeks invaded Egypt and established the library at Alexandria, the esoteric tradition of Thoth as preserved by the Egyptian priesthood was cultural appropriated becoming transformed into the Greek esoteric tradition of Hermes. Virtually all of the ancient stone temples located around the planet are in perfect alignment with the power spots identified by Hermetic science. This suggests that the early temple architects were operating from a universally shared worldview

based on common objectives and engaged in a collective effort to implement those goals. The Egyptian records on this matter are obscure, however in the Hermetic tradition we find a clear expression of the use and function of the planetary grid.

Hermetic documents describe seven fundamental principles of manifestation: the principle of mentalism (the idea that everything in the universe has some form of consciousness, called *ori* in *Ifa*), the principle of correspondence (the idea that everything in the material realm is a reflection of its source in the invisible realm, called *Eji Oko* the farm of heaven and earth in *Ifa*), the principle of vibration (the idea that everything in the universe is in a state of constant motion, called *ase* in *Ifa*), the principle of polarity (the idea that everything exists in relationship to its polar opposite, represented in *Ifa* by the single and double lines of divination), the principle of rhythm (the idea that everything moves through cycles, expressed in *Ifa* as the movement between *ire* and *ibi*), the principle of causation (the idea that everything exists in relationship to cause and effect, called *ayanmo* meaning my spiritual tree or destiny in *Ifa*), and the principle of gender (the idea that everything has expansive and contractive qualities, called *Okunrin* male and *obinrin* female in *Ifa*). The fact that all of the fundamental concepts of Hermetic science have direct correlations in *Ifa* is further confirmation that the Greek system of metaphysics has African origins. Hermetic science, as it was developed in Greece, influenced the development of "objective" science throughout Europe. If Hermetic science is based on African science, the notion that Africans were "primitive" (meaning unable to develop technology) has no basis in the historical record. The only way to propagate the lie is to distort the facts. Prior to World War Two western academia taught the idea that European culture originated in Egypt. German politics found this idea unacceptable and postulated the idea that European culture started in Greece. The basis for the German argument was their repulsion over the idea of a non-Aryan source of culture. The German model remains the dominant paradigm in Western academia.

The Egyptian, Greek, and Yoruba mystery schools were based on the premise that the principles of manifestation were best learned and understood through direct contact with Nature. This contact took the form of guided initiation designed to reveal particular aspects of the fundamental aspects of Creation in an experiential way. Based on their understanding of the earth grid all three of these traditions believed that phenomena generated at those places along the grid where energetic lines crossed represented an amplification of otherwise invisible forces in Nature. Hermetic tradition refers to these intersection points as Domes; in Yoruba they are called *Igbodu*.

In an article titled “Ley Lines and The Meaning of Adam” by Richard Leviton and Robert Coons reprinted in *Anti-Gravity and the World Grid*, by David Hatcher Childress, the authors summarize the Hermetic tradition on the history of Domes.

*According to Dome theory, when the Domes appeared on Earth they activated lines of light and energy already present in the etheric skeletal web of the planet. The Domes were Ships brought here as a response from what is called the Architect of Cosmic Destiny and in line with past proposals and future events for Earth. Technically, it's not accurate to say the Domes came and went because they exist spatially in between spirit and matter. However, they were present on Earth three times in planetary history. It is also not accurate to construe the Domes as mechanical material vehicles according to our customary understanding; they are more like transdimensional magnetic/energy facilitators overlaid on the physical landscape. In the first Dome Presence, there were no humans on Earth; in the second Dome Presence, there was primitive human life; and during the third Dome Presence there were some humans who could clearly see the Domes and understand their function. What these early humans say is recounted in various ancient mythologies (notably the Irish and Sumerian) as the House of the Sky Gods.*

The Hermetic tradition identifies the Domes as natural power centers



activated and enhanced by inter-dimensional beings variously called Gods, Angels, *Neters*, *Orisa*, *Elohim* (Biblical reference to Gods plural) and a variety of other names in virtually every culture on the planet. In Yoruba culture this process is described as the journey of *Obatala* from *Orun* to *Aye* who travels from the invisible to the visible realm on a chain. According to Ifa Creation myth the first activated Dome is called *Ile Ife*. Ifa Creation myth also indicates that *Ile Ife* on earth (*aye*) is a reflection of the *Ile Ife* in Heaven (*Orun*), reflecting the Hermetic idea of as above so below. *Odu Ifa* refers to this principle as *Eji Oko*, meaning the first farm of Heaven (*Orun*) with the inference that the farm of heaven is the inspiration for the farm of earth. To this day the central market in the city of *Ile Ife* is believed to be the portal between *Aye* and *Orun*, or the road leading from the farm of Heaven to the farm of earth.

*Ifa* Creation Myth describes the Silver Age of *Obatala* as a time when *Orun* (the invisible realm) was much closer to *Aye* (earth), a time when *Orisa* walked the earth. The Creation Myth of all earthcentered traditions describes the Golden Age or the Silver Age as a time when the Gods walked among humans. It has become popular in New Age literature to infer that these references mean the planet was at one time visited by extraterrestrials (beings from a different planet). This may or may not have happened. My elders in Africa make clear references to contact they have had with extraterrestrials, they are also clear that beings from a different planet are not *Orisa*. The *Orisa* are inter-dimensional forms of consciousness that can and do manifest in physical form on the earth. The *Orisa* are not short humanoids with Grey skin and large eyes. The reason the New Age Movement has miss-identified this aspect of ancient history is based on a myopic view of the past that refuses to accept the possibility that ancient cultures were capable of saying what they meant. The Internet is overloaded with speculation on the meaning of UFO's, Crop Circles, and Alien abductions. None of this is a mystery to our African elders. Illumination of these apparent mysteries will not come through wild speculation; it will inevitably come through humility.

Greek cosmology describes the Domes as transmitters of two forms of radiant energy. One form flows from the center point in an expanding spiral pattern (the Golden Mean), symbolized in the *Ifa* Creation myth by the snail shell. The other form flows in a straight line connecting all the power spots on the grid, symbolized in the *Ifa* Creation myth by *Obatala's* staff. The existence of two forms of energy explains why *Obatala* gets drunk. If only the male expansive energy connecting the power spots existed, the planet would overheat and become a small star. In symbolic language the expansive energy would burn out of control or get "drunk". The polarity between the male expansive energy and the female contractive energy allows the planet to cool in a way that provides an environment for the manifestation of human life. The lines are described in the *awo* of *Damballah*. Two serpents hold together the universe; one holds the sky the other holds the oceans of the earth. Here we have the polarity between sky or fire and earth or water. Two forms of energy sustaining creation.

In the Hermetic tradition the Domes are described as appearing at regular intervals in a set pattern. This does not mean they all radiate the same quality of energy. The influence of celestial bodies on the planet creates an overlay on the grid pattern. For example the Giza plateau is located on a major ley line. The three pyramids at Giza are a reflection of the stars in the Constellation Orion. The radiant energy emanating at Giza has male and female qualities influenced by the effect of specific stars on the manifestation of that energy. In *Ifa* the discipline of studying the cosmological influence of power (*ase*) on Domes (*igbodu*) is called *gede* usually translated to mean astrology. The word itself reveals the true inner mystery. *Igbodu* is from the elision *igbo odu* meaning the womb of the forest. *Gede* is an elision of *ge dide* meaning female *ase* (the power of fertility) stands up, or in the context of *igbodu* emerges through the invisible portal. In Africa many of the sacred sites designated as *igbodu* go through seasonal cycles of activation and dormancy. These seasonal cycles are a manifestation of celestial influence marked through the spiritual discipline of *gede*. This means that *gede* is not the astrology of

personal fortune; it is the astrology of planetary energetic patterns of manifestation. In *Odu Ifa* this mystery is described in terms of the time and place when specific Orisa arrived on the earth. The relationship between *Esu's* shrine at Alaketu, *Obatala's* shrine at Ile Ife, *Osun's* shrine at Oshogbo and so on, is not history so much as it is a reference to an earth mystery identifying the quality of *ase* (energy) passing through the landscape from this power sources.

Most of Western science rejects the notion that planets have inter-related influence. There is one significant alternative view. The current model of the relationship between quantum physics (the structure of the atom) and astrophysics (the structure of the universe) is based on string theory. This theory is based on the idea that sound waves created by the Big Bang (the initial explosion of Creation) resulted in the manifestation of invisible lines of energy connecting everything in the universe. These strings are sometimes referred to as wormholes. A true understanding of wormholes would give science the ability to travel to distant places in the universe at rates faster than the speed of light. The ancients referred to wormholes as Star Gates. Hollywood has usurped the Star Gate symbol insuring that it remains an element of science fiction. Nonetheless the ancient references are there for those who have the vision to read them correctly. String theory is a modern re-invention of the sacred science developed in Africa before being appropriated by the Greeks.

Researchers in England who began studying ley lines in the nineteenth century noticed that the lines between the Domes also marked the existence of underground waterways. This is not a coincidence. The expansive energy emanating from the Domes influences the movement of underground water just as it influences the migratory patterns of animals. Water also serves the purpose of amplifying the effect of the interdimensional radiant energy that flows from the Domes. In simple terms the Domes are interdimensional terra-forming technology put in place by Spirit and developed by those human elders who were able to see and understand the nature and function of that technology. The ancient

priests and priestesses of *Obatala* understood this relationship and it became a fundamental element in the creation of their worldview. Historically there was a progression of development of their understanding. The Domes or power spots were initially located and marked with a stone and or a dirt mound. The stone was placed in such a way that the sun hit a particular spot in the landscape when the Dome was activated. An underground chamber was built to concentrate and release small amounts of radiant energy (white light or *ala*). The radiant energy would manifest as pure unformed consciousness. This means the light can take on the quality of those shamans and priest who project their consciousness on to the light. The chamber operated like a cosmic mirror (symbolized by *Osun's* mirror) amplifying the intentions of those who stood before it. This is the reason why the initiates of *Obatala* put so much emphasis on good character. *Igbodu* is exactly like a computer, garbage in garbage out, or elevation of spirit in elevation of spirit out. *Oriki* developed as a way of imprinting radiant energy with sound vibrations (called *ofo ase* in Yoruba) that would sustain fertility, peace, elevation, enlightenment and harmony. The light projected into the ungrounded water and carried throughout the landscape takes the effect of these incantations for long distances creating a land ruled by a silver sword, the sword (symbol of consciousness) of elevation. We know this because the process is still being used in Ile Ife. To the extent that this is not done in the Diaspora is the extent to which we still have things to learn from our elders in Africa. To the extent that this process was disrupted in Africa by Christian missionaries is the extent to which the Christian denigration of African culture becomes self-fulfilling prophecy.

As the priestly understanding of Domes increased the stone structures used to mark them became more elaborate and complex often involving the placement of massive rocks transported long distances. The list of theories offered to explain the rock moving techniques used by our ancient ancestors is extensive. The problem with most of the theories is that those who make them are unable to reproduce the results; they are unable to move stones of the size and weight used to build megalithic

temples. There is one notable exception, and that is the castle built in Homestead Florida by Edward Leedskalnin in the early years of the last century. In an article by Christopher Dunn in Atlantis Rising Magazine the accomplishments of the Latvian immigrant are compared to the building techniques of the ancient Egyptians:

*An immigrant to the United States of America, Leedskalnin devised a means to single-handedly lift and maneuver blocks of coral weighing up to 30 tons each. In Homestead, Florida, using his closely guarded secret, he was able to quarry and construct an entire complex of monolithic blocks of coral in an arrangement that reflected his own unique character. On average, the weight of a single block used in the Coral Castle was greater than those used to build the Great Pyramid. He labored for 28 years to complete the work, which consisted of a total of 1,100 tons of rock. What was Leedskalnin's secret? Is it possible for a five-foot tall, 110 pound man to accomplish such a feat without knowing techniques that are uncommon to our contemporary understanding of physics and mechanics?*

*Leedskalnin was a student of the universe. Within his castle walls, built of coral blocks weighing approximately 15 tons each, he had a 22-ton obelisk, a 22-ton moon block, a 23-ton Jupiter block, a Saturn block, block, a 23-ton Jupiter block, a Saturn block, tons, and numerous puzzles. A huge 30-ton block which he considered to be his major achievement, he crowned with a gable shaped rock.*

Leedskalnin claimed his technique involved an understanding of magnetism in relationship to the flow of force fields (ley lines) along the surface of the earth and the ability to use those force fields to eliminate the effect of gravity. Beyond that he remained silent. The Government made repeated efforts to learn his secret and he refused to give any of the details. The Castle is currently a museum open to the public and the official history of his remarkable accomplishment says he moved the entire structure from Shangri-La Florida to Homestead Florida by using

his secret to load the massive stones on a truck. No truck every built can hold 30 tones of rock, making the accomplishment truly amazing and the official explanation less than adequate.

B.J. Cathie a prominent contemporary researcher into the phenomena associated with the earth grid offered an explanation of Leedskalnin's Castle.

*. . .there exists an all-encompassing global grid with direct harmonic relationship to the speed of light, gravity, magnetics and earth mass. All major changes of the physical state are brought about by harmonic interactions of these manifestations. The controlled manipulation of these forces would make it possible to instantaneously move mass from one point to another in space/time.*

*. . . measurements from Coral Castle yield harmonics related to Light and Gravity. The distance between Coral Castle, and Grid Pole A (in the north), dispel any doubt about the site being an ideal position to allow Ed Leedskalnin to erect the huge blocks of coral with relative ease. Measurements indicate the harmonics necessary for the manipulation of anti-gravity.*

If Cathie is correct in his analysis, Leedskalnin's methods would eliminate the need for the use of a truck. (i.e. movement coupled with time displacement). Such a possibility is so far outside the normal range of contemporary human experience it invokes easy skepticism. In an Article titled "Acoustic Levitation of Stones", Cathie describes the experience of a Swedish doctor named Jarl who traveled to Tibet in 1939 to treat an ailing Lama (Buddhist Priest). During his visit Jarl was invited to witness the construction of a wall leading to the entrance of a cave located 250 meters above the ground. Directly under the mouth of the cave the doctor observed a semi circle of 19 drums arranged in a 90-degree arch around a large stone.

*When the stone was in position the monk behind the small drum gave a signal to start the concert. The small drum had a very sharp sound, and could be heard even with the other instruments making a terrible din. All the monks were signing and chanting a prayer, slowly increasing the tempo of this unbelievable noise. During the first four minutes nothing happened, then as the speed of the drumming, and the noise, increased, the big stone block started to rock and sway, and suddenly it took off in the air with an increasing speed in the direction of the platform in front of the cave hole 250 meters high. From time to time a stone split, and the monks moved the split stones away. Quite an unbelievable task.*

Dr. Jarl was sent to Tibet on behalf of the English Society. While in Tibet he filmed the rock moving process. When he returned to England the film was confiscated and has never been shown in public.

To assert the notion that the power spots of antiquity were developed by a global culture from a single vision of interconnected spiritual and material relationships requires hard evidence to be credible. An archaeocryptographer (person who makes surveys of ancient structures and cities) named Carl Munck has used satellite photographs and on sight measuring techniques to make the case for a unified network of sacred sites. Carl Munck believes that in order to understand the enigmatic structures built in antiquity we must first understand the "mathematical precisions of the earth". The basic elements of his system of analysis include counting the number of obvious features at a given site, locate the position of the site in relationship to the Prime Meridian which he believes was originally located on the Giza Plateau, then correlate the position to other know monuments in the grid. For example, Munck analyzed the Kukulkan Pyramid at Chichen Itza in the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico in an article by Laura Lee.

*. . . the pyramid shows us nine terraces. This is the first number we use to assemble our formula for the decoding process. The second number is 365 Kukulkan has four staircases, one on each side of the monument, on each*

*staircase are 91 steps. For the four, that totals 364 steps with the top platform of the pyramid being the 365th step, giving us our second number 365. There are four sides, and four staircases. We now have all the numbers shown by the architect and put the decoding formula together: 9 terraces x 365 steps x 4 sides x 4 stairways = 52,560. 52,560 is also arrived at by multiplying the numbers in the ancient grid coordinates for Kukulcan: 119 degrees x 42 minutes x 10.51620248 seconds 52,560.*

In the process of surveying ancient sites Munck discovered that the grid coordinates were carved into the stone monuments using an early form of writing called Ogam (looking similar to hash marks used to count in sets of five i.e. four vertical lines crossed by a single horizontal line). Munck has published a number of highly technical volumes of data recording the result of his global surveying effort. His work is further confirmation of a global culture based on the veneration of the Sun and the use of natural earth centered technology for both scientific and spiritual elevation.

Egyptian oral tradition suggests the large stone pillars and obelisks located across the planet were used for sending messages across the grid. The idea sounds unlikely if you're not familiar with the "vibrating telephone" developed by Nathan B. Stubblefield in 1888 and installed as Kentucky's first public communication system. Stubblefield located ley lines throughout the rugged Kentucky landscape. He developed a system for accessing power from the grid and used that power to send messages back through the grid. Stubblefield located places where the ley lines crossed (Hermetic Domes) and inserted iron rods wrapped with copper wire insulated with cotton. Using this simple method he was able to draw electricity from the earth that he used to power transmitters and receivers he called "ground telephones". The messages were sent through the earth without the aid of wires and the sound quality was superior to the conventional phone systems used at the time. He also used his understanding of the grid to create lamps that needed no bulbs and no electrical outlets other than a connection to his rods. Gerry Vassilatos



describes Stubblefield's work in his book *Lost Science*.

*... Mr. Stubblefield experimented with the buried power receiver and a system of telephone sets. He found it possible to send vocal signals through the ground to a distant receiver, referring this system as a "ground telephone". Telephoning through the ground became routine for this remarkable man.*

*Signals sent through the Stubblefield method were notable for their reported "great clarity". What is strange about this system is its elegant simplicity. Stubblefield's transmitting system evidences an almost crude minimalism, which offends some researchers, while surprising others.*

*Numerous private and public demonstrations of this first system were made in Murray, Kentucky (1886-1892), where his mysterious "black boxes" were seen. Two metal rods were stuck into the ground a few feet apart from each distantly placed set. Speech between the two sets was loud and clear despite distances of 3500 to 6000 feet. - page 95*

After making several unsuccessful attempts to get financial backing for his system, Stubblefield went into seclusion developing his ideas and applying them to the rural area where he lived. All of the components he used for his inventions were made from simple materials available to our ancient ancestors. In parts of rural Kentucky he is still considered something of a folk hero where traces of his system remain in tact.

There is some speculation that the projection of sound by the ancients was enhanced by the use of crystals. Large circular crystal plates have been found throughout Egypt and are typically described as "altar objects". It is interesting to note that *Oke Itase* the sacred mound in Ile Ife identified, as the home of *Orunmila*, is an outcropping of silicone crystal chips directly above an elaborate system of underground water channels. It is the place where *Egbe Ifa* continues to say prayers and make *ebo*.

Egyptian oral history also suggests that sound generated by the size and shape of stones located on the grid were used for healing both physical and mental illness. Many of the ancient temples in Egypt have niches the approximate size of a coffin. Archeologists look at them and assume they were cut as burial slots. It is more likely they were used as healing tables like the padded beds found in a contemporary doctor's office. Again, if the idea of sound therapy would seem fanciful if it were not for the research of Dr. R. Raymond Rife. In 1920 Dr. Rife invented an ultraviolet projection microscope. The invention was effective in capturing images of cell structure with far greater magnification than is currently possible with high tech electron microscopes. In simple terms the telescope used ultra-violet light projected through prisms in a way that lost none of the clarity and focus generated by other systems of high magnification. Dr. Rife was the first to capture images of the various viruses that are the cause of a wide range of illnesses. While watching these viruses under his projection microscope he discovered the viruses were affected by sound and could be effectively dissolved through the use of sound waves. He did extensive research identifying specific waves, frequencies and amplitudes needed to cure specific viral infections. His research was confiscated by the government and is currently unavailable. If his research were in fact an effective means for curing viral infections the use of sound therapy would literally destroy the pharmaceutical drug industry. The sale of prescriptions drugs represents 18% of the American gross natural product. This statistic begs the obvious question.

Rife was not alone in his effort to find alternative healing methods that were prevalent in ancient times. If the ancient Egyptians used sound therapy at their temples, the use of sound would function in conjunction with the natural therapeutic effect of the energy flowing along the grid lines of the earth. Dr. William Reich discovered that he could generate the energy found along the ley lines by constructing a box using alternating layers of organic and inorganic material (i.e. alternating layers of metal and wood). This simple idea generated what he called Orgone energy and Reich spent most of his career as a doctor studying

the positive and negative effects of Orgone energy on physical and mental health. He also discovered that if he projected Orgone energy into the sky it would affect the weather. The government confiscated Reich's research and he died in jail awaiting trial.

When Reich first starting building his therapeutic boxes he discovered that the temperature inside the box was higher than the temperature outside the box. According to current laws of physics this would be impossible. He demonstrated the effect to Albert Einstein who was stunned by the revelation and was unable to provide an explanation. The use of alternating layers of organic and inorganic material is the structure of the Ark of the Covenant (i.e. alternating layers of wood and gold built to specific geometric proportions). The ark was supposed to be used as a medium of communication with the *Elohim*. Biblical scholars tend to translate the word *Elohim* to mean "God", the actual translation is "Gods", plural. The ark was in fact an energy accumulator used to access inter-dimensional realms of being in the same way that Hermetic Domes, along the power grid were used as interdimensional access points. Western historians would have us believe that there was only one ark and that it was first created by Moses. In fact the ark was a common device used among the Egyptians and a number of boxes identical in size and structure to the Ark of the Covenant were found in the tomb of King Tutankhamen. Six of these boxes were taken from Egypt to Europe by the Knights Templars in the 13th Century and are believed to be buried under the Templar Chapel in Rosslyn Scotland. The history of the Ark of the Covenant traces its movement from the Temple in Jerusalem to an island in Ethiopia and eventually to a small church in Axum Ethiopia. (The reason for this move will be discussed in a future installment)

If the sacred technology of the ancient world was based on an in depth understanding of nature, it should be possible to reproduce the accomplishments of our ancestors that are reported in the myths and legends of antiquity. A survey of visionaries who stepped outside the conventions of the Western worldview suggests that the rediscovery of

ancient metaphysics has generated a long list of effective alternatives to mainstream science and technology. This raises the question of why has so much time and effort been devoted to the suppression of these re-occurring discoveries and what is the big secret that academia wants to keep hidden from the general public?

The commonly held Western worldview is deeply rooted in what is generally referred to as the scientific method. It is based on the idea that objective scientific theory is only valid if it can accurately predict the consequences that result from the interaction between specific forces in nature. For example if heat is applied to water it generates steam and the liquid is transformed into a gas. Anyone who observes the application of heat to water will witness the same effect. This formulation of the scientific method produced the industrial revolution that has transformed the consciousness of the entire planet. The method was unchallenged until a scientist named Wigner suggested that the consciousness of the observer had an effect on the results of a scientific experiment. He noticed that physicist who believed light was made up of particles created experiments that proved light was made up of particles, while physicist who believed light was made up of waves created experiments that proved light was made up of waves. Stephen Hawking says; "The eventual goal of science is to provide a single theory that describes the whole universe". Such an endeavor is called "unified field theory". As a step towards creating unified field theory scientist became very interested in conducting experiments in a vacuum. The use of a vacuum was believed to eliminate the possible influence of invisible forces on a particular experiment. A vacuum is essentially an enclosed space in which all gas, including air, has been pumped out. Much to the dismay of Western science, it was discovered that vacuums generated an electromagnetic pulse. It was assumed that this energetic pulse was a residual effect of radiation from the sun. In an effort do eliminate this radiation from the vacuum the enclosed space was drained of all heat until it reached the point of zero degrees Celsius. The theory was that freezing the vacuum would dissipate the radiation. At zero point

temperatures scientist still discovered the existence of electromagnetic pulses inside the vacuum. If the temperate countered the heat from the sun then the electromagnetic energy had to come from somewhere and the only possible source of radiation was a inter-dimensional transference of energy. Having the key to this inter-dimensional window creates access to an unlimited source of free energy. Pick up any textbook on electrical engineering. The textbooks all have tables showing the wave patterns of electrical currents at different temperatures. When you get to the place on the chart marked zero degrees there is an asterisk, which directs the reader to a footnote. The footnote says the data related to zero point electromagnetic radiation is classified by the United States Government for reasons of national security. No joke. What is so dangerous about understanding a fundamental law of physics?

The electromagnetic impulse generated by zero point vacuums is pre-atomic in structure. In other words it is made up of fundamental units of energy that come together to form matter. These pre-atomic units are called gravitons and they are responsible for the effect of gravity in the universe. Gravitons move from the fourth dimension to the third dimension as a result of planetary and stellar spin. Scientist first discovered this phenomenon during the Apollo missions to the moon. Using Newtonian physics NASA engineers calculated that the Apollo craft would leave the pull of the earth's gravity at a distance of 221,586 miles from the earth and be pulled towards the moon by the moons gravitational field. This calculation was important for creating the sling shot effect used to gauge when the craft needed to fire its buster rockets. The actual point at which the moon started to pull the actual point at which the moon started to pull the mile discrepancy was the result of gravitons generated by the spin of the moon moving between dimensional realities. After this discovery was made many of the top executives at NASA including Werner von Braun resigned and went into private industry. Very strange.

When he was twenty-three years old Einstein claimed to have solved the

mystery of Unified Field Theory. If he did, it means he understood the relationship between inter-dimensional reality and gravity. Shortly after making the announcement concerning his discovery Einstein claimed his theory was inaccurate and withdrew the data relating to his theory. The top scientists in physics as well as the top scientist in NASA know the ancient mystery of African sacred technology and they are determined to keep it a secret. How do we know they know? The data collected by Russian scientists marks the flow of electromagnetic pulses along the ley lines based on technical readings using sophisticated equipment. Based on their research, the strongest Dome center in the United States is located in Washington DC. The original streets of the city are laid out in a way that mirrors the flow of earth energy from the center point of the Dome. Exactly at the center point of the Dome the founding fathers built Washington's monument in the shape of an obelisk. .

For those who are interested here is the secret that is being suppressed:

***TIME IS ENERGETIC; TIME CARRIES THE FUNDAMENTAL BUILDING BLOCKS OF CREATION. THE FUNDAMENTAL BUILDING BLOCKS OF CREATION EMERGE FROM GRAVITY. IT IS POSSIBLE TO ACCESS GRAVITY THROUGH THE USE OF SPHERICAL SPIN. UNDERSTANDING THE STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS OF TIME OPENS THE PORTALS TO UNLIMITED SOURCES OF ENERGY AND ALLOWS FOR THE DISPLACEMENT OF TIME.***

This is the *awo* or mystery that enabled our ancient ancestors to build the pyramids. Cut a stone in the shape of a ball. Attach magnets to the ball at the equator. Spin the ball. At high speeds the spin generates a Mesmer field, which in western scientific language means antigravitational. Anything you place above the ball will have no weight. You move huge stones simply by moving the ball. Couple this with an astute understanding of the effect of sound on gravity and you have all the tools you need to build Coral Castle, or the pyramid at Giza. The museum at

Coral Castle has a circular stone slab with magnets attached to the outer parameter. This was Leedskalnin's secret; the secret he said was a rediscovery of the methods used by ancient architects to build megalithic stone temples. Gravitons come into being in the third dimension in bundles of four, two strong units (expansive or male) and two weak units (contractive or female) this is the fundamental structure of one leg of the Ifa oracle. In part one of this series I suggested that *Odu* was zero point energy. The marks of *Odu* represent all the possible manifestations of zero point energy moving from the fourth dimension into the third dimension. *Odu* is a map of the way in which pre-atomic particles form physical reality. Is this a coincidence? I don't think so.

The denigration of African spiritual technology clearly has a racist component. It also has a political component related to the fear of African spiritual technology by those political houses that want to maintain their control of global resources by denying humanity access to a true understanding the mystery of Nature. How far back does this conspiracy go?

The Montauk Indians in Long Island New York claim they migrated to the United States from Africa long before the arrival of Columbus. Their traditional homeland is near a lake at the end of Long Island that is an access point to one of the major underground waterways on the east coast. The common ancestral name of the Montauk elders is Pharaoh. They built their homes along the Long Island Coast with rock in the shape of Pyramids. Just before the American Revolutionary War an American Scientist lived with the Montauk Indians for six months so he could study their language and oral history. He compiled a complete dictionary of the Montauk language and took extensive field notes. When he returned to his home in Virginia he claimed to have lost the dictionary and all of his notes. The man's name was Thomas Jefferson. Prior to World War I the US Park Service dismantled all the pyramids built by the Montauk Nation on the Long Island shoreline. The United States Government has never given the Montauk Nation Native American Status they continue to fight

for this right to this day. Their traditional homeland is currently being used by the Military as a research center for nonconventional weapons (i.e. weapons based on the theories of Nicolas Tesla) and for the development of technology used for mind control.

Can anyone imagine what impact there would have been on the American economy if it were known that the Africans who were forced to come to the United States had access to a sacred technology that was superior to the technology of the oppressing culture? There is a reason why the early laws related to slavery made it a capital offense to practice traditional African religion.

I firmly believe the reason was rooted in a fear among the Euro-American elite regarding the inherent power of *Odu*.

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### **Awo Falokun Teaches and Offers Initiations**

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