Retrieving, Translating, and Archiving Hubert Ogunde’s Ayé

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Abstract
As the rapid evolution into a globalised community progresses, translation across languages becomes a major tool of cross cultural and transnational negotiation. This study is conceived more as a translation of the libretto of Hubert Ogunde’s Ayé for archival and literary purposes. This is with the understanding that as the contemporary world continues to move centripetally towards globalisation, translation across languages becomes more important than ever. The significance of Hubert Ogunde’s works as precursor to the Nigerian Operatic Alarinjo (Travelling) theatre can only be preserved in translated forms that makes the performance texts retrievable. This paper is divided into four parts: an introduction to the opera of the Alarinjo School, a synopsis of the opera, an inclusion of a picture of the translator with Hubert Ogunde’s statue standing before the drum he played in his life time, a sequential arrangement of the full music of the opera as produced by Hubert Ogunde in his earliest performance of the opera on stage and the translation of the full music of the opera by this author - Adedoyin Aguoru. Hubert Ogunde’s theory, art and performance defined the earliest professional theatrical movement in Nigeria. The preservation of this national theatrical form through translations and storing it in a retrievable format will enhance the preservation of this national treasure.

Keywords: Archival methods, Translation, Hubert Ogunde, Ayé

The Opera of the Alarinjo School
Hubert Ogunde, without doubt, redefined the ‘de-retualised’ (Ogundeji 2007) performance of the eegun alare (the Yoruba masque performers), also
known as the *Alarinjo*. This form of performance originated from the Oba m’Oro play after the conspiracy of the *Oyo* Mesi (the King’s council) to deflect the Alaafin’s plan to return Oyo back to Katunga was uncovered (Ogunbiyi 1981). Hubert Ogunde drew extensively from the tenets of this itinerant masked performers in establishing his African Music Research Party (Clark 2008) His enterprise grew and evolved in to the Yoruba travelling theatre. His dramatic canon is numbered above 50, it includes :The *Garden of Eden and the Throne of God* (1944), *Africa and God* (1944) *Israel in Egypt* (1945), *The Black Forest* (1945), *Strike and Hunger* (1945) *Tiger’s Empire* (1946), *Towards Liberty* (1947) *Human Parasites* (1946) *Half and Half* (1949), *My Dul-ling Fatima* (1951), *Delicate Millionaire* (1958), *Yoruba Ronu* (1964), *Aropin N’tenia* (1964), *Oh Ogunde* (1969), *Ayanmo* (1970), *Iwa Gbemi* (1970) *Onimoto* (1971), and *Aiye* (1972) to mention a few. So esoteric and significant is *Ayé* among his folio that it was his choice of production for the Celebration of his 33 years of being on stage the Ogunde Festival ’77 which held from 3rd January till 30th April 1977. *Ayé*, perhaps because of the esoteric characters and the mystical realisation of the opera on stage was Ogunde’s legendary production and hit performance. The rich music and lyrics along with Ogunde’s recitatives in his baritone voice would define Ogunde and his unmatchable role as Osetura, the Chief Priest. The music of the opera continued to develop until the film *Ayé* was produced on celluloid.

It is crucial to state that The Hubert Ogunde school (Aguoru 2011 &2012) was a dominant influence in the springing up of the Operatic *Alarinjo* (Travelling) theatres of Duro Ladipo and Kola Ogunmola, the Comic tradition of Moses Olaiya and the entire Yoruba Travelling Theatres. Biodun Jeyifo (1984) captured the activities of most these theatrical groups in his grandly written *The Yoruba Popular Travelling Theatre of Nigeria*. Aguoru (2019) Compares Ogunde’s aesthetic ideals which are reflective of the Yoruba cultural identity and the theoretical underlying currents of his works with that of Zeami the world acclaimed Japanese theatrical theorist. Ogunde’s theoretical postulation is found to be an agency in creating and nurturing his art. His emphasis on *Iwa lewa* (good character is the essence of beauty) (Adedeji and Ekwuazi 1998) purposively postulates that significance, rapport and social activity culminate in beauty and edification.

This study adopted the archival method as well as translation in accessing the text of *Ayé*, which Hubert Ogunde wrote and performed in Yoruba. Archiving, particularly in the humanities and contemporary times transcends the traditional contexts of institutional archiving with researchers themselves becoming more involved as the archivists and exploring numerous possibilities. Here, access, to this opera is via explication. This is with a view to ensure the preservation of the original text as well as make the cultural asset
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accessible being my first attempt first attempt at pursuing the preservation of the body of the texts of the earliest professional *Alarinjo* travelling school. Within this Nigerian travelling theatrical school most of the texts of performance were unscripted and remain inaccessible in either written, translated, or digital forms. To attain and retain its place as a cultural asset, texts of the operatic tradition especially Hubert Ogunde’s folio, ought to be documented, transcribed, and translated into other languages to enable them enjoy scholarly attention such works deserve and to purposely make the texts and contexts accessible to the scholars, the academic, theatrical as well as the international community (James 2002).

**Synopsis**

Ogunde’s *Ayé* begins with the portrayal of the preparation for the ancient Idi Iroko Festival. The milieu is set with mystical undertones and drums are reverberating summoning revered elders that are initiated into the sacred cult into their secret place. Before each house a sacred fire is kindles while the maidens race to the stream to fetch water from the sacred river. The Idi Iroko ceremony holds at the foot of the Iroko tree. The High Priest Osetura is considered by the villagers to be the only mediator between ‘God and Man’. He is the carrier of the sacrifices and offerings made or given at the shrine, which is ‘the foot of the sacred tree’ to the ‘gates of heaven’.

The Idi Iroko Festival commences on cue with Osetura on the sacred drums. He leads the villagers in a procession to the foot of the sacred tree. The shrine is purified by the kindling of the sacred fire and sprinkling of the sacred water on each member of the community. The worshippers present their offerings: yams, bananas, and kolanuts, palm oil, fowls, pigeons, goats, ram, sheep in veneration of the deity for being benevolent and for the prosperity, peace and happiness of the preceding year. The celebration continues amidst feasting, dancing, singing, drumming, clapping of hands. Osetura, the High Priest, stays behind after all the celebrants depart and the celebration ends to conduct other sacred ritual ceremonies.

Osetura while performing the sacred ceremony has a strange encounter. A hole suddenly opens up under the sacred tree, this is unprecedented. Three supernatural beings emerge from the enclave: large mysterious birds, coloured black, red and white. Osetura is informed of the mission of the birds: the black bird declares that there will be instant death and destruction of its victims. Red bird, he is told, symbolises demotion, losses, punishment and suffering, while white bird signifies peace, love, happiness and prosperity to the entire village and its inhabitants.
Subsequently, the presence of the two evil birds - black and red become evident. There are negative manifestations in the village. For instance, Dele, who is portrayed as a wealthy trader suddenly has a downward turn and he becomes a poor, poverty-stricken impoverished drunkard. Malomo, Dehinbo’s senior wife has been married to him for two decades without an offspring. Dehinbo, not satisfied with this state of childlessness marries a younger wife Kikelomo who at the end of the first month of their marriage conceives. A disgruntled Malomo collaborates with the red bird and at the end of twenty-two months, Kikelomo is still unable to deliver the baby.

The High Priest, Osetura, is consulted. He has capabilities and can influence occurrences at supernatural levels he also has the wherewithal to neutralise the negative forces of the red bird and invoke the positive forces of the white bird for comprehensive victory. However, he must engage this supernatural ability only as a final resort when all forms of mediation fail.

The High Priest’s initial pacification and persuasion fails. An open confrontation ensues between Osetura and a representative of the red bird. The black bird also corroborates with elements and now joins forces with the red. Chaos prevail in the village more incidents of death, suffering and destruction recur in the lives of the inhabitants of the village. Osetura, is necessarily under pressure, if he cannot deliver the people and the village from the evil forces he must either relinquish his position as High Priest or knowingly plan to leave the world for heaven.

The black and red forces, in their own domain, intensify their efforts. They meet regularly in enclaves, and perform rituals: dances of fire, chanting incantations of death and destruction. The evil forces without doubt remain firmly in control. Malomo, disgruntled because of her inability to conceive rejoices over the misfortune of others, particularly Kikelomo who she considers to be her rival and who has been carrying her pregnancy for twenty two months. Apparently a spell has been cast on Dehinbo and Kikelomo, they arrogantly go about in blissful ignorance and remain oblivious of the implication of their situation. Osetura’s attempts to rouse them out of that state remains abortive. He eventually becomes compelled to use his supernatural powers to rescue the village and its inhabitants from the clutches of evil. The archetypal battle of evil against good is won through the High Priest’s intervention and the power of light overcomes darkness.

**Conclusion**

This research note engages the text of Hubert Ogunde’s opera, *Ayé*, as a national treasure. It seeks to ensure that the libretto as well as the text of the opera is archived by reproducing the original text, by the translation of
the libretto and explicating the text in a retrievable form. This has been approached by the introduction of the significance of the Alarinjo School, a synopsis of the opera Ayé, by Hubert Ogunde, the Translation of the Text of Ayé, and the presentation of the full text of Ayé as produced by Hubert Ogunde in his earliest performance of the opera on stage along with a few pictures from the stage performance of Ayé. This engagement typifies a taxonomy for the archiving: translating and placing in retrievable form the wealth of the Yoruba and Nigerian theatrical traditions that are going into extinction.

The full text of Ayé (in Yoruba) as produced by Hubert Ogunde in his performance of the opera on stage; transcribed and translated into English by Adedoyin Aguro
Ẹyẹ Ire

Aleré tó lè o tì rékọjá o
Ọ̀kinkún tún paradá o dímọ̀lẹ̀ o
Mo gbóhùn ẹyẹ Olódùmarè tó ŋ ké
Ire!... Ire!...Ire!...

A! eyẹ ire o
Eyẹ Olùgbàlà Ọjíṣẹ̀ Olódùmarè
Eyẹ olóhùn méjì tibi tire ló ŋ ké
Ori mi o gbègbòdè ire ni mo yàn.
Jíṣé owó o jíṣé ọmọ, jíṣé ilé o jíṣé aya
Jíṣé ayé ěrò bi ayé omi
Pèṣè pèṣè bí etí odò
Mo ti gbóhùn Èlédà mi
Pè ire lónì o o mo yò o
Òtá alábòsí e paré láíláí
Amony ṣeni, afáímoniṣeni
Aṣeni bánidárò ọ, e m̀á ti já ku lẹ̀ o
Láláì fọ́tá pè o ire ŋ wọ́lé mi
Eyẹ ire ti rò, ó ti ké sórò tèmí
Ọ̀ṣéreṣeṣe o! ọ̀ṣéreṣeṣe o!
Ori se pèlé Èlédàá mi
Kó gbé ire kòmí lónà o

Bí mo jí lówúrò o...Ire!
Títí yìò fì dalé o...Ire!
Èdùmàrè kí o ye Èlédàá mi
Jàre gbé iré kò mí lónà o
Lónà àjò mi... Ire
Níbi isé ọjóó mi, Iré
Lóni dandan Èlédàá mi
Ní kí ó gbé Ire kò mi lónà o

Wọn ní kàngó kàngó o
Béèyen là à gbóhùn agogo
Kàngè kàngè bé yên là à gbóhùn àjá
A kí i fájá kó won lálẹ̀de ilú
Agogo l’Ọba fì n kò won jọ
Adáratán ọlàjinni
Èyí reṣù reṣù ti í n tẹ̀ẹ̀ aṣò ọgbà mólẹ̀
Njẹ̀ ire ni mo kò, ire ni mo jí rí
Ire tóróró o dóri mi o
Ire ti tòòrun Ògbèrì ò mò o
K’óko má mà kú o
K’áya má mà kú o
Tómo tómo kía sìrè dalé o
Ire tóróró o dóri mi o
Ire ti tòòrun Ògbèrì ò mò o
Àwá mà di pèrègún o o
A di’gi àlóyè o
Ire tóróró o dóri mi o
Ire ti tòòrun Ògbèrì ò mò o

Eye Ire - Benevolent Bird
The night has fallen and darkness has given way to light
With clarity I hear Olodumare’s bird screeching goodness! Goodness! Goodness!
(Symbolizing peace, prosperity and pleasantries)

Ah! Benevolent bird
Regenerating bird, Messenger of Olodumare
Two toned bird proclaiming goodness and evil
My head conspires not against me,
but procures goodness for me.
Deliver riches, deliver children, deliver wives,
Deliver peace like a calmness as of the riverside.
My creator’s voice I hear declaring:
Today guarantees much goodness,
I rejoice.
Enemies, mockers, vanish forever!
Conscious and non-conscious evil doers.
Friendly foes, who afflict yet offer
sympathy you have finally fallen.

Not taking cognizance of the enemies
Goodness follows me (inhabits my abode).
The benevolent bird has cried in my favour:
Oseresere o! Oseresere o!
My head be patient, my spirit
see to it that goodness coincides with me on my paths

Waking (rising) up in the morning…Goodness!
Till night falls…Goodness!
Edumare will not betray my spirit.
My plea is that you ensure that goodness
Coincides with me on my paths.

*Kango, kango*; sounds reverberating from gongs.
*Kange, kange*; the tone of the rattle staff.
The rattle staff has not the wherewithal to enslave the citizens of a town.
The gong, it is, that the king employs in gathering his subjects.
Hence, I coincide with goodness,
I rise up in the morning to encounter goodness.

Refrain; Goodness flowing upon my head
The simpleton cannot comprehend spiritual blessings
such as prosperity or procreation.
Goodness flowing upon my head,
The non-initiate cannot comprehend such spiritual blessings.

May untimely death elude husband,
May untimely death elude wives,
With our off springs, may we perform till
A good old age
(Refrain)
We have become living trees
(Refrain)

**A,B,D, Ayé**

* È bá mi kálo o
È bá mi k’a,b,d Ayé
A,b,d aláwòrán mí
A,b,d Onídòjé mi i
A,b,d,gb, a,a,a,a...
Ayé ò fé ki a s’orí ire
Ayé ò fé a rérù a sò o
Bí ó bá báyé ṣóré ò’í bikú siré
Bí ó bá báyé jà a ò dán isé Olorun wò
Írin ajò lawá jé n ì se tèmí o
Láyékàyé ò sé ki tíwa mà já sí yà
A k’a d ki d, Ayé e ... ò ... ò ...
Mo ránirá rè o Ayé o
A! ... èrù bá mì
Kò sóhun tò dün
À fì kí a gbà t’Qó́rún rò
Mo k’a, b, d ayé
Ki ilè máše yò mì pa
Mo k’a, b, d ilè o,
Ki ilè máše yò mì o
A, b, d, gb, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o,
O! ................áo, àò, àò...
P, r, s, t, u, w, y
O! ................yàò, yàò, yàò...
Láyékáyé o sé kí tiwá má mà já síyà o

A k, a, b, d, ayé ô.
B’igún bá jèbo, a jòó ighá o
B’ákàlà bá mepo, a fawo ilè
Sé mo fún ruúrúù è mì à se t’ikú
Máriwò èsi ma n fún ruúrúù ọpè
Sé mo mò roóróó è mà à se t’ikú
Máriwò èsi ma n mo roóróó lórúùn ọpè
Mo jèwé ikú derin ìpáta...
Mé mà ni bá won kú èjì
Mé mà ni bá won kú èçepù n
Tí tí laiyé ń o...
È mà jé n se tèmi o
Ayé, ayé, ayé!
È mà jé n se tèmi o
Tí tí layé ń o, È mà jé n se tèmi o

**ABC of the World (Fundamentals of the Universe)**

Come along with me,
Sing along with me A b d Ayé.
A, b, d my portrait maker
A, b, d my praise singer
A, b d gb, a, a, a, a
Ayé .does not desire our success,
Ayé’s desire is for our mission to be unaccomplished.

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1 *A,b,d* are the first three Yoruba alphabets. All other alphabets are also from the Yoruba alphabets and sounds.
Comradeship with Ayé is death in disguise. Contending with Ayé is tempting God’s creation. We are on the journey of life allow me to accomplish my mission. In this world or in the next may our lot not be suffering.

A k a, d, k, d, Ayé o o.

Merely remembering you, Ayé o! Ah! I tremble with fear Nothing is on its own worthwhile except we consider the things of God I salute the rudiments and fundamentals of the universal forces May the witches not destroy me in secrecy I salute the rudiments of the earth May the earth never become slippery under me A, b, d, gb, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o O! ao, ao, ao P, r, s, s, t, y, w, y O! Yao, yao, yao In this world and in the next may our lot not be suffering

I salute the a, b, d of the universe When a vulture devours a sacrifice, it lets go of the dish (the calabash used to prepare it). My freshness and flourishing is not unto death. The fresh raffia leaf blast flourishes like a crown on the palm tree. My sparkling cleanliness is not unto death. The fresh raffia leaf-blast sparkles like a crown on the palm tree. I roll back and forth, but not unto death. Fresh palm fruits roll back and forth on the palm tree. I shall not experience sudden and untimely death forever Let me carry out my responsibilities Ayé, Ayé, Ayé Let me carry out my responsibilities Ayé, Ayé, Ayé

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2 The palm tree is of great significance among the Yoruba in the Yoruba scriptures. It is the tree upon which the deities descended from the other world. It is also a source of wealth to its owner or wherever it is planted because all the parts of the tree are useful for consumption and for trade.
Let me carry out my responsibilities

Ọ̀ṣétúrá

Igbó Ewèlè! Ìrókò Ìmòrisà!
Ìrókò Ìmòrisà tí mbẹ̀ lókè E pèlè
Ọmọ aráyé ń se bi Igi ni,
Igi kó o èrò ni
Ìrókò tí wa tí kìi so élè.
Èrò gbèdègbèdè ni ilè Elédùmarè
Gégé bi àti se rojú ràyè
Tí a ń se odún odún yìi
Bèè gégè ni kí a jé kí a rojú ràyè ń se tí Èèmíràn
Amódùn, kí ojú pé
Kí esè pèlè...
Igbàmùrèn ká tún wá
Igbàmùrèn ká tún wá o
Aṣèyi sàmòdùn o’ lamùrèn o
Ọgèdè dùdù olóde gbòde
Ewúré, jé okó tán e è mòna ilè
Àgúntàìn jé okó tán e è mònà ilè
Eégùn erèmi pàripà ilè mì
À-wón-ri-wón dùjádùjá
Egbèwà orì è ti ma fowó
Hé è éé- ré ééé...
Èran wò wó lè ku
Atètè oníran
Olú ta ńgàrin wò ò
Ọ̀ fógàfógà ... Ọgbògbàgbògà...
Ọ̀ rèn n e luju èè feti kò
Èye abìè orùn gbakógbàkò
Ọ̀ gbòde ooo

Osetura (The High Priest)

Ewele Forest! Iroko shrine,³ Emblem of the gods
Iroko shrine upon the Epele Mountains.
Humans erroneously take it for a tree
A tree, it is not, a refuge, a succour, it is.
Our Iroko that does not bear hardship

³ The impression made here is that the Iroko does not bear the fruits such as hardness, strain or fatigue. Its essence is neither complex, complicated nor ruthless. The tree symbolically bears fruits of comfort, peace and soothing succour.
A soothing succour is the habitation of Eledumare
As we have been privileged
To worship upon your sacred mount this year
Enable us to enjoy the same next season
Next season the faces here will be present
The feet here will increase
May we be present at another festival day
May we be present at another festival day
Yearly may we celebrate you
Unripe plantains abound this season.
Goats eat and forget their routes home.
Sheep eat and forget their routes home.
Abundance in the season.

**Ejubona**

Èjúboná kò ṣe ìfẹ́ ire o o
Èjúboná kò ṣe ìfẹ́ ire
Kò mà mà jé ọ ọ o
Ìwò Èjúgbònà ayé rè é
Èjúboná kò ṣe ìfẹ́ ire oo
Èjúboná kò ṣe ìfẹ́ ire
Èjúboná kò ṣe ìfẹ́ ire o
Èjúboná kò ṣe ìfẹ́ ire
Bó ṣe gérè sé o oo
Bó ṣe gérè sé o alárẹ̀ a sọ o
Ìwò Èjúgbònà ayé rè é
Èjúboná kí ọ ṣe ìfẹ́ ire o
Èjúboná kí ọ ṣe ìfẹ́ ire
Èjúboná kí ọ ṣe ìfẹ́ ire
Èjúgbònà awo ire o o o
Awo o ọ kí ọ ṣe ìfẹ́ ire
Èjúgbònà awo ire o o
Awo o ọ kí ọ ṣe ìfẹ́ ire
E e e kí ọ mà mà jé ọ ọ o
Kó mà mà jé ọ ọ o
Kó mà mà jé ọ ọ o yẹ è
Ìwò Èjúgbònà ayé rè é
Èjúboná kí ọ ṣe ìfẹ́ ire o
Èjúboná kí ṣe ìfẹ́ ire e

**Ejubona (The Sacred Song Rendered only Once in a Year)**
Ejubona propitiate goodness o o.
Ejubona propitiate goodness.
Do not let it cease
You Ejubona
This is the world
Ejubona propitiate goodness ooh!
Ejubona promotes goodness.
Ejubona priest of good omen,
O priest do propitiate good.
Do not fail to take advantage of providence.

Ayé

Ayé! Ayé, Ayé ò ò ò
Ayé l’ohun àínítumò o o o
Ayé! Ayé, Ayé ò ò ò
Àwọn tó ń wá ọ kò rí ọ o, Ayé
Àwọn tó rih ọ kò mò ọ
Àwọn tó ń wá ọ kò rí ọ o, Ayé
Àwọn tó ri ọ kò mò ọ
Ayé düdú bí aró ọ o o
Ayé pupa bí ejè ọ o o
Ayé funfun ni tèmi Olórun
Olúgbohùn gbóhùn mi o
Ayé ërò ni tèmi Olórun
Olúgbohùn gbóhùn mi o o o
Ayé, Ayé, Ayé ò ò ò ò
Jéjé layé gbà a o o o
Ará mi ...
È jé a máa fura
È jé ara máa fu ni
Ìfura lòògùn àgbà o
Ilé ò fura, ilé jóná
Agbón ò fura, kò lóyin
Ọbo ò fura, kò dèniyàn
Ágbà tih ò fura bí i kò m ọsá
Kí ó mò pé ará ilé éni ni n ẹni
Ayé, Ayé, Ayé ò ò ò ò
Ayé È má ba a yò mi jé o
Ayé, Ayé ò
Ayé l’ohun àínítumò Ayé ò
Ayé ò ò ò ò ò ò
Jéjé l’ayé gbà à o o o
Àwọn tó n wá ò kò rí ò
Àwọn tó rih ò kò mò ò
Ayé dúdo bí aró
Ayé pupa bí èjè ò ...
Ayé funfun ni têmi Olórùn
Olúgbóhùn gbóhùn mi o
Ayé èrò ni têmi Olórùn
Olúgbóhùn gbóhùn mi o ... Ayé ò !
Gbédi kúró lónà mi
Kí é jé kí n hùwà orí mi
E má se mi l’éràn ijiyà a
Ìwò Ayé ò ò ò!
Èran dēdē ... èye awo o o !
Èye ire o funfun ni le mi
Mámá jé n té o èye awo
Mámá jé n rí ijàre o èye ikú
Mámá jé n rí ijàre o èye ijiyà
Ó dilé odi, ó dilé ọtástà,
Ó dilé Ågbébo máma rúbò
Ó dowó Ågùdè o Ó doòwó Ågùdè
Ó dowó Ågùdè- Ågùdè
Olórí èye ti ń fi Olódùmáre síwájú
Ó dowó Åjàgùmålè
Tí ń s’Oláwó òde èrùn
Èyìn le ón t’ajè àdò
È pín t’a’jè ọtástà
T’óròmòdìè lèmi kó
A kí i morúkọ orò k’órò pa ni jé ò
Èràn dēdē
Èràn dēdē èye awo
Èye o wó ò èye òmò
Èye ọkùn è, è èye ire
Èye àlàfìà, èye ire
Mámá jé n té o o èye awo
Mámá jé n ráhùn èye awo
Lójó ìdánwó òyé o, èye ire
Mámá já mi tilè o, èye awo...
Alélè tó lè ò lé t’ìgbò eré ko wá
Ọkùnkún tó kùn, ò ti bi tire lésélélé ìbò o
Ó dífá fún barà mi Ågbònnirègún,
Baba n lo gbé n lé pètùpètú n’Ifé Oyelágbò
Étútú tá wa še léèni à fín dandan
Lèkélèké šeye a lé

Àwọn olùmònlà wón mái šeye òkùnùn
Èye òkùnkùn má f’ilé mi še pàdé
Funfun làúláú nílé awo
Ìbà Ìyá mì Ō Ō Ō ...

Ó digbò, ò dòkèèrè
Má mà jé n rì ijà rẹ o èye ikú
Mámá jé n rì ijà rẹ o èye ìjìyà
O kà n pà tète lóri èbu
Atibà še kérékéré gbilé
Orun gbosù látète
Șèkèrè kò sanwò olóde
Dá Òrùnmílà
Tí n lo gbé Ikú so rò sì ilé onídiyàn o
Ñjé mo fi àdán so ikú rò
Dain dain
Mo fi ààdè so ikú rò
Dain dain
Mo fi àdán so ikú rò
Dain dain
Mo fi àràdè so ikú rò
Dain dain

Bí Œ bá n gbó ayé, ayé
È má wòkèrè bi igba ibúsò o

Retrieving, Translating, and Archiving Hubert Ogunde’s Ayé
Ẹ má wòkèrè bí ẹgbèrin ibùsò
Ẹ jé ká bojú wèyin ká w’olé ēni
Ká wo àyiká ēni
Ká mò pé ehinkülé lọtá wá
Ilé laṣeni ń gbé
Ēni bá mọ ni délè ni n ṣeni

Ayé kan ọ mà sì nibi kan
Awon abínú ēni
Awon amoníṣeni
Aṣenibánidárò o, àwọn layé
Ẹ mà jọ ọ mi ayé

Gbékọ́ gbékọ́ ...Ayé!
Gbékọ́ gbékọ́ niyín ...Ayé!
È mà mà gbóyùn mi kó ... Ayé!
È mà mà gbómọ mi kó ... Ayé!
È mà mà gbáya mi kó ... Ayé!
È mà mà gbóyùn mi kó igi
Ayé è mà jọ ọ mi mo bérù ìgbà
È mà mà gbáya mi kó igi
Ayé è mà jọ ọ mi mo bérù ìgbà

Gbékọ́ gbékọ́ ...Ayé!
Gbékọ́ gbékọ́ niyín ...Ayé!
È mà mà gbáyé mi kó ... Ayé!
È mà mà gbé ilé mi kó ... Ayé!
È mà mà gbé isé mi kó ... Ayé!
È mà mà gbówó mi kó ...Aye!
È mà mà pa iráwó mi dà o
Ayé è mà jọ ọ mi mo bérù ìgbà
È mà mà gbáyé mi kó igi
Ayé è mà jọ ọ mi mo bérù ìgbà
È mà mà gbé ilé mi kó igi
Ayé è mà jọ ọ mi mo bérù ìgbà
È mà mà gbé isé mi kó igi
Ayé è mà jọ ọ mi mo bérù ìgbà
È mà mà gbówó mi kó igi
Ayé è mà jọ ọ mi mo bérù ìgbà o
Eleye èmi à wo ibi eye ma fô ... 

Eleye 
A ki i fi eye igún bo ifá o 
Eleye, èmi à wo ibi eye ti máa fô 
Eleye 
A kii fákàlàmàgbò f’órìṣà ...

Ọ mà mì wù wón kí wón lè mèkùn so ...
...
Ìgbéré ojú èkùn kò mà ní jẹ o 
È mà jẹ a beleye lòwè s’èleye...
...
Eleye, èmi à wo ibi eye ti ma fô... 
Eleye ...

_Ayé (Theme Song)_

_Ayé! Ayé! Ayé o o o.
This world is incomprehensible
_Ayé! Ayé! Ayé o o o.
Slow and steady is the requirement for living
They that seek you find you Ayé!
They that see you know you.
_Ayé_ , black as indigo,
_Ayé_ , red as blood,
Lord, I identify with the white Ayé .( the good of the cult)
I desire a life of peace, pleasantness, Lord,
Listener to petitions do hear my voice.
_Ayé! Ayé! Ayé o o o
Slow and steady is the requirement to live.

My people
Let us be vigilant.
Elders make vigilance their charm.
A house that lacks vigilance gets burnt.
The wasp for lack of vigilance, lacks honey.
Lack of vigilance it is that robbed monkeys of their humanity
Lack of vigilance in adulthood and in spiritual matters beclouds one from
the fact that close
Associates are usually responsible for one’s ruin
_Ayé o, Ayé o, Ayé o o o._
Ayé o do not bring damnation upon my joy
Ayé o, Ayé o, Ayé o o o.
This world is incomprehensible
Ayé o, Ayé o, Ayé o o o.
Slow and steady is the requirement for living
They that seek you find you Ayé!
They that see you know you.
Ayé, black as indigo,
Ayé, red as blood,
Lord, I identify with the white Ayé. (the good of the cult)
I desire a life of peace, pleasantness, Lord,
Ayé o!
Do not sit upon my affairs (to cause delay or stagnation in issues of life)
Permit me to put my luggage on my head.
Move your limbs out of my path.
Let me act true to my head
Do not make me a scapegoat.
Oh Ayé o o o!

Benevolent one, cultic bird.
The white cult is my home.
Preserve me from shame benevolent bird.
Preserve me from murmuring and complaints benevolent bird.
Do not wage war against me suffering bird.
Off to another land! off to my enemies abode!
Off to the abode of ritualists who refuse to
Placate with sacrifices.

Benevolent one!
Over to Agude, Over to Agude
Over to Aduge-Agude leader of birds,
One that defers to Olodumare.
Over to Ajagunmale, the Oluwo of Heaven.
You it was that appointed the lot of the witches in Ado
You it was that appointed the lot of the witches in Ota.
It is impossible to chant the nomenclature of the Oro cult and be devoured by the cult...

Benevolent one, cultic bird,
Benevolent bird, the white cult is my home,
Bird of wealth, bird of procreation...
Bird of peace and goodness
Preserve me from shame benevolent bird
Preserve me from murmurings and complaints benevolent bird.
When the challenges of life come,
do not let me down cultic bird...

The night has fallen...
Darkness takes over...
Hence the need for Agbomiregun’s divination in Ife Oyelagbo:
Sacrifice performed today must fulfil its purpose
*Lekeleke* is not a night bird
*Olumona* is neither a bird of darkness
Birds of darkness are not welcome in my abode
White and sparkling is the sacred cult
Reverence to my mothers o o o o.

Off to the thick woods, off to the farthest places.
May I never incur your wrath, death bird.
May I never incur your wrath, bird of suffering.

...Which tells of the exploits of Orunmila
Who tied death up in Onidiyan’s dwelling
Therefore, do I tie death up with the bat firmly?
Supernaturally I tie death up
Firmly!
Therefore, do I tie death up with the bat!
Supernaturally I tie death up
Firmly!

Off to the thick woods, off to the farthest places.
May I never incur your wrath, death bird.
May I never incur your wrath, bird of suffering.

Abede, priest of Okira, divined for Okira;
Who fails in his endeavours daily.
Abede has come today, Okira’s diviner:
Edumare, see to it that I no longer fail in my endeavours.

Off to the thick woods, off to the farthest places
May I never incur your wrath, death bird.
May I never incur your wrath, bird of suffering.
If you hear *Ayé, Ayé !*
Look as far as 200 miles,
look as far as 800 miles,
let’s turn back and look upon our homes,
let’s examine our surroundings,
and be conscious that the enemy is in our
courtyard and evil doers within the homestead.
It is our closest associates that cause us great harm.
There is no *Ayé* anywhere,
Those vexed on our account,
The friendly foes,
Those who afflict and yet sympathise, they are *Ayé*
Let me be *Ayé o!*

Oppressors, oppressors - *Ayé*
Oppressors, Oppressors, that’s who you are - *Ayé*
Do not hang my pregnancy - *Ayé*
Do not hang my child - *Ayé*
Do not hang my wife - *Ayé*
Do not alter my star (destiny)*
*Ayé* do spare me, I revere ‘elders’
Call: Do not hang my pregnancy on a tree
Refrain: *Ayé* do spare me, I revere elders
Call: Do not hang my child on a tree
Refrain: Do not hang my wife on a tree
Oppressors, Oppressors - *Ayé*
Oppressors, Oppressors; you are indeed – *Ayé*
Do not hang my life – *Ayé*
Do not hang my home
Do not hang my job
Do not hang my resources (riches/money)
Do not alter my destiny
*Ayé, do spare me, I revere elders*
Do not hang my life on a tree
Do not hang my job on a tree
Do not hang my resources (riches/wealth) on a tree
*Ayé do spare me, I revere elders.*

Owner of birds, I will watch for the bird flight, (to see where the birds will take off)
My blood is bitter for the witches.

*Akalamagbo* can never be an acceptable sacrifice for the Ifa oracle.

It is desirable to hold the tiger captive,

The tiger’s fierce countenance is what keeps humans at bay.

Let us placate the owner of birds through the bird owner.

Owner of birds, I will watch to see where the birds will take off.

Owner of birds.

**Ilé Awo Iná**

*E...e...e...e...e!

Ìyá mi ọkùnkùn tí ń kùn nínú irókò

Iná tí ń jó nibodè òrun yé è-è!

*E...e...e...e...e!

Ikú m̀á ré o onídà iná

Àrùn m̀á ré ò onikùmò lòrùn

*E...e...e...e...e!

............

*E...e...e...e...e!

Ìyá mi ọkùnkùn tí ń kùn nínú irókò

Iná tí ń jó geregere lóri omi

Ówìwi a dérù bòòyè

Dúdú léyè awo, pupa léyè awo

O ju ọmọlọmọ nù sì kòtò

B’ólómọ sunkùn ojú gbereghere

*E...e...e...e...e!

............

*E...e...e...e...e!

Ikú m̀á ré o onídà iná

Àrùn m̀á ré ò onikùmò lòrùn

E m̀á filé mi s’è pàdé o

Eyè awo, ó dilé odi, ó dilé òtá

Ó dilé aghégbó m̀á m̀á rúbọ o

*E...e...e...e...e!

**Ile Awo Ina (The fire Cult)**

*E   e   e   e   e   e   e!

My mother, darkness, mumbling in the Iroko tree⁴

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⁴ The iroko tree is a hardwood tree that grows in Africa. The scientific names of the two identified species of the tree are *Milicia excelsa* and *Milicia regia*. Among the Yoruba, the tree is revered and believed to be the abode of spirits and, in the case of this work, it is a shrine of worship and route or entry point for the supernatural beings.
Raging fire at the gate of heavens ye-e-e!
See death armed with a fiery sword!
See destruction and disease with a neck slung hammer!
E-e-e-e- e……e……e!
My mother, darkness, mumbling in the Iroko tree.
Fire burning swiftly on water,
Owiwi bird that scares the living,
The black bird is of the cult,
The red bird is of the cult,
Casting children of the innocent into the pit.
When the innocent shed tears, the cultist’s eyes remains ever dry
E e e ye…………ye o!
See death armed with a fiery sword!
See destruction and disease with a neck slung hammer
Do not make my abode your meeting point.
Bird of the cult, off to the strange land.
Off to the abode of the enemies!
Off to the abode of the ritualists,
Who refuse to placate with sacrifices
E e e e e e!

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