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PATAKIN : Sacred Literature of Cuba

by

Rogelio Martinez FURE

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One of the most exciting features for any researcher interested in studying the continuity and development of the cultures brought to America by the black captives is the survival of the African languages and their literature in various New World countries and thus their influence on the native languages of those countries.

Unfortunately, in Cuba very little work has been done to study this aspect of our culture. For example, Anagó, vocabulario lucumí, by Lydia Cabrera, which examines the Yoruba spoken in Cuba; Fernando Ortiz' Glosario de afronegrismos; Guiné gongorí, by Teodoro Díaz Fabelo and some other articles or lists of words in more generalized works, provide the sole bibliography<sup>(1)</sup> available to anyone interested in these linguistic questions. Nevertheless, it is usual to find - even in the more studious historical works - erroneous generalizations such as the following :

"The different dialects spoken by the Africans eventually disappeared, due to the inferior circumstances in which they had to live "<sup>(2)</sup>.

It is true that Castilian Spanish - or rather, its Cuban variant - is our national language, but it should be pointed out, nevertheless, that sectors of our population, in certain instances in their lives, have recourse to the remnants of various African languages in order to express themselves and to communicate. These languages, which survive to a greater or lesser extent, but always more than might be expected, belong to two large linguistic families :

the Sudanese and the Bantu. The first group includes Yoruba and Lukumi, used in the santeria rites ; Fon or Arara, used in the religion of the same name, and the Efik language of the secret society Abakua, brought by the Carabali from Southern Nigeria (3). All three are preserved chiefly in the western provinces of Cuba. Likewise, the other languages, used in the Congo or Palero rites, belong to the Bantu family.

#### Understanding one another in Yoruba

Our people have retained thousands of words and many of them are even able to keep up a conversation in these languages. Such eminent students of Africa as William Bascom and Pierre Verger have confirmed this. Writing about his research, Bascom maintains that :

"the most surprising discovery of my work in Cuba was the fact that the Yoruba language is still spoken (...). With a limited knowledge of Yoruba, I was able to prove that the Yoruba language is actually spoken, and not just recited. When I asked questions in Yoruba I received meaningful replies in Yoruba, and then I had to answer questions which were asked of me in Yoruba in return.

In one summer I met some fifty Cuban Negroes who could make their way about Yoruba country with little difficulty, despite the fact that they cannot speak English "(4).

During his short stay in this country, Bascom recorded conversations in Yoruba which he played afterwards to a Nigerian of Yoruba origin who was studying at the North American university where he taught. The student in turn recorded a greeting in Yoruba for the Cubans that Bascom played back to them on his return to Cuba in 1950. Once again he recorded a reply to this greeting. Both parties understood the messages perfectly.

Later in the same work, the distinguished scholar states :

"In addition to Yoruba, it seems likely that Fon (Fonu) or Dahomean (Arara), Efik (Efi) or Ibibio (Bibio) and Bantu (Congo) language may also be spoken in Cuba today"<sup>(5)</sup>.

The Cuban gods of African origin are spoken to in "the tongue" - the term used by our people to describe the languages and dialects which came from the Guinea coast and the Congo. But these "tongues" are not restricted to ritual ceremonies, although it is on these occasions that it is easier to confirm their continued existence, but they are also used in profane circumstances. An example of this is the case of certain politicians who, before 1959, published election propaganda in Efik.

#### From "Malembo" to "Tiki-Tiki"

The influence of these languages on Cuban speech is extremely important.

In 1924, Fernando Ortiz compiled a whole book of African expressions used in Castilian Spanish; but this transculturation process has not stopped and in latter years new words have emerged from those cults of African origin, actual subcultures which survive in this country, as they are being absorbed in the course of national life. The extensive use of such words as malembe<sup>(6)</sup>, mayimbe, asere, ekobio, terepe, lorokon, mambo, ocambo, ñampearse, molopo, etc. and all the characteristic expressions of the Bantu and the Sudanese languages formed by one word repeated, that so often occur in common Cuban speech (ple ple<sup>(7)</sup>, chin chin, lepe lepe, tiki tiki, tua tua, mbote mbote, and many others), constantly remind us of the extent of this influence and the importance of studying it in order to have a better understanding of Cuban speech. This influence is not limited to enriching our vocabulary but also goes far beyond that, even

changing the prosody and syntax and to a great extent giving to our speech many of the features which differentiate it from that of other Spanish-speaking peoples.

They brought their names

In one of the few works on Cuban linguistics written in the last few years, published by the Revista de la Universidad de la Habana in 1963, C.T. Alzola states : "The Africans incorporated into the Spanish spoken on the Island, to a far greater extent than did the indigenous population, their names for their ethnic groups, foodstuffs, drinks, dances, clothing and also musical instruments and beliefs. But the black population, although decimated through maltreatment and disease, did not disappear but became, by gradual integration, intermixed with the culture of the country (...). The black presence increased and developed tendencies and features already existent in the white Creole and which thus passed on to the black Creole<sup>(8)</sup>, resulting in the Cuban of today"<sup>(9)</sup>.

Language was not unaffected by this long process of physical and spiritual intermixing which went on for four-and-a-half centuries, since, "in Cuba, from the first recording in 1517, until the unloading of the last shipment recorded in 1873, more than half a million Negroes entered the country, coming from about 20 African ethnic groups. Between 1819 and 1850 the black population outnumbered the white by, at times, 100,000 inhabitants. In Cuba, recording the language of the Blacks was more than a pastime, it was essential in the national interest"<sup>(10)</sup>.

These are conclusions which inspire confidence in the positive results to be found by further field research of greater scope on this subject, and which confirm the pressing need for the publication of new lexicons of Cuban

Yoruba, Congo, Carabali and Arara, many of which are still unpublished, as well as for paying greater attention to the study of the West and Central African languages, their structures and characteristic features because, as Lydia Cabrera states :

"(...) from what friends say who know the Blacks of Haiti and Brazil well, it seems to me that no other country who took in, like ours, huge cargoes of ebony, men from the lands of Ifa, Shango, Oya, Yemeha and Oshun, has retained so much from this long African impregnation as has Cuba"<sup>(11)</sup>.

#### Loyalty to ancestral traditions

From religious and musical points of view, the captive African and his American descendants resisted - to a great extent successfully - the assimilation process imposed by the slave-owning classes and then by the Republican oligarchies. The preservation of the African cultural wealth, despite the unfavourable conditions in the Colony and under the bourgeois regimes, constitutes one of the finest episodes of resistance to destruction by an exploitative regime, of the values of a culture; of "ancestral loyalty", as Roger Bastide would say.

Religions, "cabildos" (sect meetings) and secret societies acted as repositories of this civilization and contributed to the fact that many of its elements integrated definitively into the intermixed cultures that were developing in America once the colonial class system disappeared. Due to the more favourable conditions under the Republic and the greater mobility of the classes, many of these elements passed on to other sectors of the population and took on a national character, well beyond ethnic limitations. In order better to understand the continued existence of African features in

our country and their influence, it is not insignificant to point out that its heirs and curators nowadays are Cuban Negroes, Whites and Mulattoes, from all sectors of the population.

### The Captives' Word

The holds of the slave ships brought not only the ill-treated bodies of captive Africans, their music and their gods - but also captive gods who eventually took under their control all of the water springs, trees and the sun's rays of the island. Those men, in spite of their diaspora and despite the bad treatment and humiliation that they had suffered, still survived and succeeded in saving their most subtle creation: their literature. Indeed, the Cuban people have been able to preserve this heritage by oral tradition, which is the closest to the heart. Today, it is possible to collect orally hundreds of myths, fables, legends, sayings, poems, ceremonial expressions, etc. in their original languages or translated in Cuban Castilian. Most of this astonishingly rich and varied literature remains unpublished.

### Of the Sacred and of the Profane

Although this literature is generally preserved by religious centres since it constitutes a fundamental element of the rites, it also has a profane aspect represented by its didactic and moralizing role in social and family life, although it is always difficult to establish precisely the dividing line between the secular and the religious with regard to African and Afro-American cultures because both aspects are frequently inter-mingled.

### The Yoruba and the Myths

Of all the African peoples - the Congo, the Arara, the Caribali, the Ganga and others - who brought cultural elements to our country, it is the Yoruba or the Lukumi who, from a literary standpoint, made the greatest contribution. It can be stated that there exists a Cuban Yoruba literature which is completely different from literatures of other origins and which expresses a mythology which, by its universality, is comparable to the great oriental and Mediterranean mythologies, with which many researchers claim it has common features. This literature is in verse and in prose form and is recorded chiefly in the Yoruba dialects Oyo, Ijesa and Egbado.

### In the Sacred Note-Books

Although the myths, fables, legends, names of praise, proverbs and poems of ancient Yoruba origin, taken as a whole, are transmitted by oral tradition, this literature is preserved in manuscripts which are consulted by the priests and priestesses - babalaos, babaloshas and iyaloshas - to refresh their memory concerning the stories of the saints<sup>(12)</sup> and other details of the cult.



The manuscripts, called Libretas (note-books) by the followers of the faith, are documents of inestimable value in the study of the African religions in America. They are veritable works of popular literature. Written partly in "Cuban" and partly in Yoruba, they constantly reflect the intellectual level of the authors - who generally came from the most under-privileged and poorly educated sectors.

The note-books contain hundreds of myths and fables, lists of sayings, Yoruba-Spanish vocabularies, ritual expressions, recipes for spells and sacred foods, stories of the orishas and details of their avatars, hymns, divinatory methods and their secrets, the names of herbs of the divinities and their use in rites and in the popular pharmacopoeia, etc., that is, all the wisdom of the ancient Yoruba people and their culture that lives on.

### The Affairs of the Saints

The note-books provide one of the most efficient means of transmission and propagation of the sacred "mysteries". In the past, "god-fathers" lent them to their "god-sons", that is to say, this was the reward of the older priests to the young ones whom they taught if they showed themselves to be studious and interested "in matters of saints". And this tradition is kept up with respect to the most ancient and valuable hand-written note-books. But in recent years it is not unusual to find note-books that are type-written, mimeographed or even printed on small local presses. Until not long ago believers could even buy them for large sums of money in shops specialized in the sale of objects for the santeria rites, in Havana as well as in the interior of the country. As proof that the Yoruba sub-culture is

not dormant in Cuba, it is possible to find in many note-books excerpts from books edited by Oxford University on the African Yoruba, ordered by post and translated by a university-trained santero (disciple)<sup>(13)</sup>.

The scope of the sacred note-books also includes other Cuban cults of African origin (Arara, Congo, Ganga, Abakua, etc) containing myths, ritual expressions, vocabularies, hymns, magic signs, sayings and other texts from West and Central Africa, written partly in "Cuban" and partly in Fongbe, Kikongo, Ganga or Efik, respectively.

#### "Patakin": the Stories of the Elders

In Cuba, the patakin are the stories that are associated with the oracles of Ifa, of the dilogun<sup>(14)</sup> and the Cocos (spirits), used in the santeria rites and by which the oracle communicates to his audience what the gods are supposed to have prophesied. Thus, it is babalaos, the Ifa priests, and babaloshas and iyaloshas (the priests and priestesses who use the other two divinatory methods) who have preserved this literature and know it best.

For the most part, the Cuban patakin that have been collected are myths about the journeys or avatars of the different orishas which give rise to certain rites and taboos, or else have a cosmogonic content. Some have also been collected on the creation of man and the animals, or about death, or about some technical discovery such as the forge.

### The Lessons of the Animals

If we consider the patakin where the protagonists are orishas or gods as myths, we consider those in which animals play the principal roles as fables, whose most striking feature is a didactic and moral purpose. In fables, pride, avarice, envy, deceit, ingratitude, treachery, gluttony and so on, are attacked mercilessly. The culprits of all types of anti-social behaviour are plainly shown making their way steadily towards a calamitous end.

The animal which features the most often in these fables - to such an extent that it could be said that an entire cycle is dedicated to it - is the turtle (Ajapa Tiroko): symbol of the cautious patience of the weak forcing their way among the powerful. However, the rabbit, the tiger, the chameleon, the dog, the kid and the snake<sup>(15)</sup> and other Cuban and African animals appear as chief characters at other times.

While the myths about the gods are important for facilitating an understanding of the essential or "profound" aspects of the rites, for which they generally serve as a basis, the importance of fables stems from their role of "guides to social behaviour". All this literature is functional, existing not for aesthetic enjoyment alone but rather to convey moral values in the interest of setting a code of social behaviour.

### Legends and Man

In Cuban legends of Yoruba origin, the chief protagonist is man. Animals or gods are introduced on a secondary level, but the central action is always performed by human beings. Almost every legend has a moralistic aim. At other times, with great poetic ingenuousness, explanations are given as to the origin of mores and customs, social and political institutions and generation conflicts. Some of the legends contain references to historical

facts that would merit analysis in the light of modern research.

### Hymns and Songs

The Yoruba poems generally come to us sung, chanted or told. At times they were played on the 'bata' drum. In traditional African societies this link between poetry and music is almost universal; it is therefore not surprising that it should be so in Cuba.

The poems that are sung (yonkori or soroyi)<sup>(16)</sup> are performed with or without instrumental accompaniment. Up to the present time, I have personally collected from the singers called apwon or akorin; more than one thousand hymns and songs in Yoruba - which proves the wealth of music and poetry which is still unpublished in this country. These poems can be sacred or profane. The hymns praise the power of the orishas and refer to episodes of their mythical lives. Others are used in cryptic ceremonies such as initiation, funerals, divinatory rituals and the sacrifice of animals, or else they form part of a story.

For its part, the profane aspect is present in the songs of banter and innuendo between the performers, in the songs of historical reference and in those which are inserted into fables and legends.

### Home Truths

Sayings (owe) are another interesting aspect of the survival of the Yoruba language. Whether recapitulating the moral of a story or in the refrains sung in chorus, whether spoken by the orishas or illustrating

the speech of the elders, the saying will always contain a home truth. Hundreds of Yoruba proverbs have been collected in the original language or in their 'Cuban' version from the people themselves, who carry on using them in all circumstances of their lives.

### 'Oriki' and 'Oruko'

Amongst the poetical expressions to be found in Cuban Yoruba, two types should be distinguished: the oriki and the oruko.

Oriki (or oyiki)<sup>(17)</sup> are names of praise dedicated to the orisha and to men and take the form of a greeting, exalting their qualities or feats. They are also played on 'bata' drums.

Oruko are the ritual names given to the novice or iyawo during the initiation ceremonies, known as 'dia de Ita' when, by the divinatory system of the dilogun, the priests and priestesses (olocha) unite to foretell his destiny and tell him the rules of conduct that will govern his religious and lay life, as well as the prohibitions (ewo) that he should heed for the rest of his life. This category of Yoruba names is always connected with the divinity into whose cult the individual was initiated, and has symbolic significance. Henceforth, the western name of the santero will be replaced by his oruko name, which is the sole name that he will use during the ritual offerings and sacrifices that he makes to his orisha. Even after the death of the olocha it will be the designation used by the other priests to invoke his egun or spirit, during the ceremonies in memory of the dead. These oruko are jealously guarded secrets and are generally

only known to those closest to the person, since it is believed that if an enemy knew it, he could do harm to the olasha or even cause his death because the life of the believer is considered to be somehow linked with his personal oruko.

### The narrative style

An analysis of oral literature of ancient Yoruba origin shows certain characteristic features :

- a) a simple and direct style;
- b) a magic realism;
- c) the use of repetition to increase the listeners' interest in the development of the plot;
- d) the frequent insertion of hymns and songs into the story;
- e) the tense of the dramatic action is manipulated to create greater suspense for the listeners, changing with great audacity within the same speech from the preterite to the present and from the present to the past tense;
- f) marked didactic and strong moralistic tone, often contained in a final proverb used to end the narrative;
- g) the literature is elitist and propagandist in favour of the babalao caste or the priests of the Ifa oracle, at the same time demonstrating the fundamental role that this caste played in the Yoruba society;
- h) symbolism of universal scope and exaltation of the values of man and his society;
- i) the myths, stories, fables and legends are known as patakin (pataki, appataki)<sup>(18)</sup>, when they illustrate the "letters" or signs of the divinatory methods of Ifa, of the dilogun and Biague or of the Cocos, but other separate names also exist for each oracle and even with secular themes
- j) Amongst the stories (okawe or orimu)<sup>(19)</sup> are those called oroiya<sup>(20)</sup> which are used to send children to sleep;
- k) Worthy of inclusion in a special category are the so-called "letras" of the divinatory methods, for their complexity and for including other oral expressions in prose and verse, such as patakin , suyeres or

prayers, owe or proverbs, ebo or recipes for offerings or ritual sacrifices, and others. Odu is the name given particularly to the "letras" of the Ifa oracle.

It is possible to distinguish three levels of development and antiquity of the stories :

- a) the most archaic correspond to the Yoruba culture in Africa ; they contain very precise references to mores and customs, to social and political organizations and to the animals of the Old Continent.
- b) the second group corresponds to an intermediate period, in which typical elements of the African cultures are mixed with others acquired from Cuban colonial society.
- c) The third group is represented by stories created on the Island, always starting off from elements of Yoruba style but in which the theme and the personalities come from Creole life. These are the most recent histories.

The inheritance today :

From 1959 there has been a revival in interest by many Cuban writers in our African heritage and in the common speech, which has taken the form of theatre plays, novels, stories and poems by such writers as José R. Brenes, Miguel Barnet, Eugenia Hernandez Esponosa, Nancy Morejon, Manuel Granados, Pablo A. Fernandez, Excilia Saldañas, Pedro Perez Sarduy, Abraham Rodríguez, Manuel Cofiño, Tomas Gonzalez, et al., which show a new, well defined trend within our literature. All of which confirms the urgent need for studying our oral and linguistic traditions of African origin in order to be able in the future to interpret with greater accuracy and understanding its increasing influence on Cuban writings.



## Examples of Cuban Yoruba 'Patakin'

### The Envious Chameleon

The chameleon was an animal of only one colour. He had no collar to wear, so he was very envious. He was so envious that he hated dogs because whenever he saw one, it was a different colour and was wearing a collar. One day, he asked a dog: "Why are you always a different colour while I'm not? You are more handsome and look smarter than I. I must find out how this can be."

The next day, he went to Orula's house <sup>(21)</sup> to ask him for something to make him match the dog. Orula advised him to be careful, not to envy others nor to wish anyone else harm, because by seeking harm for someone else one brings it upon oneself. Then he carried out the purification ceremony and told him: "Now you are as you wished."

As soon as the chameleon got back from the mountain, he climbed a tree and changed colour. At that moment, he saw the dog coming and called him, saying: "Look, my friend!" And he jumped from tree to tree, showing off his colours. The dog watched him, unmoved, but the chameleon never succeeded in overcoming his indifference. So, he returned to Orula's to ask him for something that would strengthen his sight <sup>(22)</sup> so that he could subdue the dog by just looking at him. Orula warned him that what he wanted was very wicked and told him to remember that if one seeks ill for someone else, it will turn against oneself. The chameleon insisted so much that Orula accepted to cast the spell asked of him. He gave the chameleon a special powder, but warned him that he should first go back home without ever looking at anyone on the way before using the powder.

The chameleon did so. When he arrived home, he knocked on the door. And when it was opened, he looked up and saw that his mother, who had opened the door, had fallen to the ground, dead.

From then on, every time people see a chameleon they throw stones at it or beat it to death and each time one climbs a tree, it changes colour and sticks out something it has around its neck.

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### The Three Calabash Trees (Güiras)

There was once a man who, finding himself in a bad situation, went to consult the oracle Orula. The oracle performed the ebo rite of purification<sup>(23)</sup> and told him to be careful when he bathed in the river because he would lose something which could be to his happiness or to his loss. Some time after, the man went to swim in the river. As all he had was a half-peso coin, he put it in his mouth so as not to lose it by accident. After swimming a while and when he was ready to come out, he involuntarily made a sudden movement and dropped his coin. The man began to swim after the coin which was washed along by the current, until he arrived at the mouth of the river. Night was starting to fall and he asked Olokun's<sup>(24)</sup> permission to sleep on the reefs. But he could not stop worrying nor could he sleep. In the morning, Olokun asked him:

- "How did you sleep?"

- "Very well", he replied politely.

Then Olokun asked him, "Do you see that grove of calabash trees?"

- "Yes."

- "The ones on the right cannot speak," continued the orisha, "but the ones on the left can. Pick three from the left and at the same time throw one down. Half-way home, throw down another and when you arrive home, throw down the last one."

The man did as he was told and when he arrived home, he found the house transformed into something of great beauty and wealth. The whole town was amazed at this change and people never tired of asking him how it had happened. One day, the man told the story to a neighbour who was always questioning him. The neighbour then said:

"I am going to do the same as you."

And without going to consult the oracle, he went to bathe in the river with a half-peso in his mouth. As soon as he arrived, he dropped the coin and swam after it while the current washed it away. At last he arrived at the river mouth. When he got to the appointed place, he asked for Olokun's hospitality and was given permission to spend the night in his domain. At dawn, the orisha asked him:

"How did you sleep?"

"Very badly!" he replied, irritably. "It is impossible to sleep well on top of these reefs."

Then Olokun said:

"Do you see those calabash trees? The ones on the left speak and the ones on the right don't. Pick three from the right and throw one down; half-way home, throw down another one and when you arrive home, throw down the last one."

But the neighbour replied:

"You surely don't think I am going to take the ones that don't speak!"

And he picked the ones on the left.

When he threw down the first calabash, everything went dark and it started to thunder. When he was half-way home, he threw down the second and snakes and other fierce animals came out of the bush and ate him up.

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To Each Man A Wife

Once upon a time women and men lived separately and each had their own land. But when the men needed to make use of the women, they went to fetch them and when they had finished with them, each returned to their respective place. At one point, the men decided to wage war on the women and take advantage of them. And so war was declared. But before engaging in battle, the men went to Orula's house and he told them that if they wanted to win, they would have to make an ebo offering of six gourds of bees' honey, six gourds of palm oil butter, six animals of all kinds and money. But the men replied: "Why should we make an offering for something so unimportant? We don't need to do anything to wage war on women! One blow will be enough to overcome them!" So they did not make the ebo offering.

At that moment the women learned that the men were waging war against them so they prepared themselves and went over to consult Orula. He told them to make an ebo offering of two kids, a hen and sixteen coins. The women made the offering.

When the men arrived at the walls of the women's town, it was night and it had started to rain so hard that all their weapons became wet and they could not use them. Suddenly, they all began to feel an intense cold and they had no other recourse but to ask for help from the women. Each woman took a man into the shelter of her house.

The next day, Olofin<sup>(25)</sup> said that each man who had been lodged in a woman's house would take that woman as his wife ... and this is the origin of marriage.

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Ika and the Maize

Ika was very miserly; he did not like giving anything to anybody. One day, he was sitting on a heap of maize and a mouse came to ask him for some. Ika refused. A short while later, a cat came to ask him and he refused him as well. At this moment, Eshu<sup>(26)</sup> arrived and toppled Ika from the heap of maize and in the free-for-all that resulted, the maize spilt and they all ran away.

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Why Orula Prefers to Eat Hens<sup>(27)</sup>

Once upon a time, Orula, the god of divination, went looking for a land where there would be something different from the other things on Earth. After a long journey, he arrived in the land of the Ape and as he met one, he asked him:

- "What's your name?"

- "Ape."

- "And what's your father's name?"

- "Ape."

- "And your mother's?"

- "Ape."

- "Your brother's?"

- "Ape."

I don't think much of this, he thought and continued on his way.

He arrived in the land of the Elephant and he met one:

- "What is your name?"

- "Elephant."

- "And what is your father's name?"

- "Elephant."

- "And your mother's?"

- "Elephant."

I don't like it here either, he thought.

He carried on his way and arrived in the land of the Dogs, but here too everything was the same. He continued his journey until he arrived in the country of the Roosters, where he met a chick. Orula asked him his name:

- "Chick," he replied.

- "And what is your mother's name?"

- "Hen."

- "And your sister?"

- "Chicken."

- "And your brother?"

- "Cockerel."

- "What is your father called?"

- "Rooster."

I like this, he thought, and asked the chick to take him to his home. When they arrived, Orula said respectfully:

- "Good day, Madam Hen."

- "Well," she said grudgingly, "Who are you?"

- "I am Orula and I am passing by."

- "All right but you cannot stay here. My husband isn't here," and she added, bad-temperedly, "so you'd better leave my house."

When Orula went out to the road, he met the Rooster coming home, who greeted him respectfully: "Ah, Orula, iború, iboya, iboshishé!<sup>(28)</sup>" and made him come back with him into the house. When the Hen saw that Orula had come back, she grew so angry that she said to her husband:

- "If you let him stay here, I'm leaving!" And she left.

After several days, the Hen began to cast evil spells on her husband from afar, but as Orula was there, nothing happened to him. Then Orula, seeing this, told the Rooster:

- "You will be my best friend and I shall not eat the Cockerel nor the Chicken because I pity them. But I shall eat the Hen."

And that is why Orula prefers to eat hens and then a great stroke of luck befell him.

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#### The Ash-Grey Coloured Bird

An ash-grey coloured bird asked the other birds for shelter, promising them that in exchange he would look for food for all of them. The other agreed but the visitor, instead of fulfilling his promise, began singing and whistling and making such a noise that he attracted the attention of the hunters who located the nest and killed them all.

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Oshun and the Three Brothers

The Caridad del Cobre<sup>(29)</sup> had had an argument with her sister, the Virgen de Regla<sup>(30)</sup> and went to form her kingdom elsewhere. Wherever she put her feet, a ditch opened up and a river flowed. In the end, she arrived at a land where she set up her household with her companion, Inle. A son was born of this union, but Inle did not look after his wife and the Caridad began to experience hardship and want.

She was so destitute that she had reached the point where her only white dress had turned yellow from so much mending. Oshun could only cry and lament.

Then, one day, Shango appeared to her:

- "What is the matter. Why are you always so sad?"

Oshun told him everything that was happening.

- "You had better go and consult Orula," said Shango. "He will be able to advise you."

So she went. At the consultation, making use of an aji ogbe<sup>(31)</sup>, Orula stated:

- "I know what is happening to you: your husband does not look after you and you are going through hardship. Go and tell Inle to come to see me." But Inle did not want to go. In face of this snub, Orula once again sent Elegba to look for him.

- "Orula says he wants to speak to you, Inle."

- "I don't need to speak to anyone," was the surly reply.

Then Orula gave up and said to Oshun:

- "If you want to improve your situation you must make an ebo offering of a chick, an unripe stalk of maize, a rodent, smoked fish, palm oil butter and three fresh fish. Oshun made her offering.



"Now," added Orula, "you must take it to a road that I am going to tell you about, but don't be afraid of what you are going to find."

Oshun left for the place but, despite the warning, she was very surprised to find a huge palace at one of the bends in the road. Three brothers lived there. Two were twins, and one younger (idoú). Seeing the Caridad, they were greatly perturbed and in their terror an argument sprang up between the three. Each drew his sword and they fought.

In the end Oshun saw one of them fall down dead. Terrified, she dropped her ebo offering and ran away. When she arrived at Orula's house, she told him what she had seen.

"That's all right," said the old man. "Now go and pay your respects to Elegba, drink some water and rest." This she did. After she had rested, he sent her to prepare another offering of a chick, a bottle of water, an unripe stalk of maize and a pumpkin.

"Take it all to the same place."

"No, I am scared," protested Oshun.

"You must do it, it's for your own good!"

In the end he managed to convince her.

When Oshun arrived once again in front of the palace, the two surviving brothers, seeing her there, again drew their swords and fought. The youngest brother killed the other twin. Oshun threw away her offering and fled, horrified.

When she told Orula what she had seen, he said:

"Greet Elegba, drink some water and rest."

Once she had rested, he ordered her to prepare her offering again with a blanket or a yellow cloth, a chicken, a kid, a frying pan, an unripe stalk

of maize, sixteen doves and sixteen yards of 'apolota' cloth. When Oshun returned trembling to the same spot, the idoú (youngest brother) came out to meet her. The Caridad was about to run away but he stopped her:

"Don't run away. I'm not going to hurt you."

She was so frightened that she could not move.

"Your happiness is here," he went on. "In this palace there are many riches - you can find everything you desire. I know I am going to die soon and I want you to inherit all my wealth."

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### The Turtle and the Drum

Once upon a time, Orula told the king that his son should not be allowed to hunt. The king, knowing that his son liked hunting very much, sent some servants to watch him. One day, without the knowledge of his father and his servants, the young boy saw a pigeon fly over and, taking advantage of the fact that the servants were chatting together, he made a sling, took a stone and threw it with such a good aim that he killed the pigeon. The bird spun through the air before falling into a river. When the boy saw that the current was carrying it away, he tried to catch it but unfortunately he also fell into the water. He was drowning when a turtle appeared and offered to save him in exchange for making him its slave. The boy accepted. The turtle saved him but afterwards put him inside a drum where the boy often sang about his sorrows while the turtle boasted that it had a drum that sang by itself.

The king was heartbroken at the disappearance of his son and sent for Orula. The oracle came and told him that if he wanted his son back he had to give a huge feast in the palace and invite all the musicians in the country. He did this and on the day of the feast, all the musicians came one by one to play before the king and Orula who was also attending. When it was the turtle's turn, it appeared with its drum and immediately the boy, who was inside, began to sing. They both recognized the Aremo's (chief heir) voice and Orula told the king to order the musicians to go but to leave their instruments and come back the next day to find out the name of the winner.

When the musicians went out, Orula pulled the boy out of the drum and put an echo in his place.

### Orula and the World of Men

Orula asked Olofin's permission to come into this world and Olofin agreed. When Orula arrived, he fell in love with Earth and did not want to leave. But Olofin called for him. Orula sent him a chicken as a present and he was very pleased. Three months later, he called again for Orula and Orula sent him another chicken but this time a guinea hen. Olofin liked this chicken much better than the previous one and let Orula stay on. But one year later, he again called him to his side. Orula then sent a white hen and a message saying that he still had many things to settle on Earth. When Olofin saw the presents sent by Orula, he let him stay in this world with his sons.

### Eshu and the Palm-Tree

One day, Orula went out early and met the Palm-Tree. He told it that it should make an offering in order to prevent something that was going to happen. The Palm-Tree, who was proud of his strength, paid no attention and replied: "My bark is so hard, who could do anything to me?" Orula continued on his way. A short while later, he came across Eshu and told him what had happened with the Palm-Tree and what it had said. Eshu at once set out to look for the tree. When he found it, he seized a stone, threw it at the Palm-Tree and flattened it.

The Babalao's Son and the Son of Death

The Babalao's son and the son of Death were always arguing. One day, while they were playing, the Babalao's son remembered that his father had told him to come back to the house before moonrise.

- "I must go, I am going to be late. My father asked me to be back before moonrise."

The son of Death, just for the sake of contradiction, said :

- "Don't worry, there will be no moon today."

- "How can there be no moon? Today is the new moon!"

The son of Death said nothing because, it was true, the moon was due to rise that night. But as the Babalao's son enjoyed arguing, to the point of inventing lies to do so, he stopped and said:

- "I shall play a moment longer because the moon will not rise until the third day."

The other boy looked at him scornfully:

- "Don't be stupid, the moon rises the first day."

- "That's a lie," replied the boy, pleased to have provoked an argument.

"You don't know better than my father who is a well-known Babalao. It was he who told me."

Annoyed, the son of Death asked:

- "What do you bet that the moon doesn't rise the third day?"

- "My life," replied the other without thinking.

Then each returned to his own house.

When the Babalao's son told his father about the argument, his father was angry. "What have you done?" he asked, "Don't you know that the moon comes out the first day?"

- "Yes, but I am the son of a Babalao and I can't let that fool get the better of me."

His father looked at him in alarm:

- "Because of this argument, you are going to lose your life."

Swiftly, the Babalao made an offering with eboreo, milled maize (eko), a rodent (eku) and smoked fish (eja). He wrapped the whole in a chamois leather which he greased well with palm oil and said to his son:

- "Go and place this on a high hill."

The boy did so. A short while after a dog came to lick the leather and stepping on it inadvertently, he stained his paw. That night, when the moon was beginning to come out, it stained one side of its face, became ashamed, and decided not to come out. The following day, it showed the other side of its face and the same thing happened. The third day, the full face appeared but late. Thus the Babalao's son won the bet, thanks to the offering that his father made.

#### The Story of the Stick (Igi) and the Sheep (Agbo)

Olofin needed the Stick to make a sacrifice at the New Year's feast that he was giving, but Igi had gone to consult Orula who told him to make an offering of nine bracelets, nine jingle bells, a trap and owo la maro, and then, after making the prayer of offering, to keep the bracelets and bells on him for five days and, also, not to go out in the street for seven days so as not to be seen. But Agbo volunteered to Olofin to go and look for Igi at the sunset, that is, from half-past five to six o'clock (this is the hour of treason). He said that if he did not succeed in coming back with Igi, he should be prepared to pay with his own head. As Agbo knew

that Igi was very fond of coconut, he picked up a box with a lid, filled it with coconut and went to look for him, going to his house. He arrived and knocked. When Igi opened the door and saw that it was his friend, he got ready to go out but his wife reminded him that he should not.

Igi replied:

- "But, woman, don't you see, it is my friend Agbo?" And he went out.

- "Look what I brought you!" Agbo said.

When Igi saw the coconut, he got into the box to get it; Agbo immediately shut the lid and trapped him. Then he set out to deliver his load to Olofin. Igi complained about his situation, saying: "When I think that I made a sacrifice to the gods and made an offering and now look!"

At this moment, a terrible storm broke out and the wind tore the box off Agbo and it rolled away up to some wooden stumps. Igi made use of that moment to escape but, first, he left the bells and bracelets in the box and shut it again.

When Agbo returned to the place, he picked up the box and went on his way supposing that Igi was still inside because the bracelets and bells were clinking. Upon arriving at Olofin's house, he took the lid off the box and realized it was empty. Then Olofin at once ordered that his head be cut off for all his lies.

Oturasa, Arikoshé and the Turtle (Ajapa Tiroko)<sup>(32)</sup>

Oturasa had a farm planted with yams and Arikoshe stole from him every day. Oturasa made an offering and then caught the thief. But the latter, seeing that he was discovered, said:

"Don't argue, you'll see it's better for you. Look, just take this stick and hit me softly on my rump." And as Oturasa hit him, money poured out of Arikoshé.

But Ajapa Tiroko saw all this. When Arikoshé went out, instead of hitting him with the stick, Ajapa was so anxious with greed, that it threw a stone at Arikoshé and killed him. Then, alarmed, it put him inside Oturasa's farm so that everyone thought Oturasa to be the culprit. When Arikoshé's body was discovered, the neighbours said that Oturasa could not be the killer because they had been good friends. The governor issued a decree saying that Arikoshé's murderer would be rewarded with a silver stick because he had been a dangerous thief. When Ajapa heard of this, it went out singing: "It was I who killed Arikoshé!" So he was captured ... and was then put to death. Ever since then, they kill Ajapa Tiroko.

The Tiger and the Kid

The tiger went to see the kid to ask if he could sleep at his house. The kid let him sleep at the door. The following day, the tiger went into the living room, then to the bedroom, and in the end wanted also to take possession of the whole house. He even began to look at the kid with evil intent. When he saw this, the kid began to be afraid that the tiger might do him harm, he went to consult Orula. The diviner advised him to make an offering with an apron having two pockets, filling both



with stones and roasted corn and to go about wearing the apron all the time.

One day, the tiger, with the intention of making a meal of him, said to the kid: "Come, my friend, let's go for a walk." And the kid accepted. They went out together into the road. The kid started eating the corn that he was carrying in his pockets. Seeing him chewing, it occurred to the tiger to ask him what he was eating. The kid replied: -"I'm eating stones," and he showed him some. When the tiger saw this, he told the kid to wait where he was for a moment. While he fled at full speed, he thought: "If this one can eat stones, he can eat me." And he never came back.

#### The Power of the Shade

The Shade had had enough of being considered the least important in Olofin's house. She existed beneath everybody else. Neither the animals nor men called on her for anything and when she complained, they said: -"Sister, why should we pay homage to you as if you were Obatala."

The Shade was vexed and went to complain to Olofin. He told her to make an offering with a young she-goat, water, earth, three cuje bushes, a cockerel, white cloth, cotton, a rodent (eku), smoked fish (eja), efun<sup>(33)</sup> and 8.40 pesos, and to offer it to the sun in a basin with eko<sup>(34)</sup> and cotton; when the sun went down, she was to make dust of the eko and blow it to the four winds, the sea, the river and the earth, so that everyone would henceforth see her. That is why everyone on the earth sees the Shade and that was how the Shade got her power : she became friend of death, enemy of the enemy and rescuer of the innocent. The Shade reveals, the Shade conceals, and the Shade kills.

EXAMPLES OF YORUBA SAYINGS AND EXPRESSIONS USED IN CUBA

1. Edirose idin agwo adifa fun imu.  
(All the body sleeps, except the nose.)
2. Oré o pa oré.  
(Friend kills friend.)
3. Igi kan kin she gbo.  
(One sole bush does not make a forest.)
4. Imalú bioñiro Olorun lonté eshin fun.  
(God drives away the flies from an ox without a tail.)
5. Odafo imu gogo meji.  
(Two long-nosed people cannot kiss.)
6. Duru dié.  
(One day brings another.)
7. Obesebi la erí.  
(He failed because of his judgement.)
8. Ikú lo bí osha.  
(Let the dead man create the saint.)
9. Ebo keun edu keun.  
(Do a little today, do a little tomorrow.)
10. Ilú ofojú won berojú okan sho sho won ni oba.  
(In the world of the blind, the one with an eye is a king.)
11. Ara wan dele ise won ojú fě.  
(In the land at which we arrive, let us do as we see done.)
12. Bembeni shobe.  
(He who feels is he who reacts.)
13. Alagbede onu.  
(A two-edged knife.)
14. Ajá n bekun bele ko ima be ka pa ni yě.  
(Let he who is afraid buy himself a dog.)

15. Ala ba yo ala ba otá.  
(One hand washes the other and both wash the face.)
16. Biwo osé Olorun ojú ri won.  
(God sees you when you are doing wrong.)
17. Bojú rí enu so da ke.  
(Look, listen and be silent.)
18. Oso maje obo kan le.  
(He left the road for the path.)
19. Osha towi ni ni la ase.  
(Help him who helps you.)
20. Laiyé lagbá laiye la a fisí.  
(Everything we know remains here.)
21. Ai dupué ara enie.  
(Fathers do not ask their sons' blessing.)
22. Bebá ri ki sina.  
(He who does not know, asks.)
23. Molé yakoyá oshukúá gbe i koko.  
(When the moon comes out no one puts out its light.)
24. Ikú ogun igba a tinku.  
(The brave fear neither war nor death.)
25. Egugu ta ajá adie.  
(The hen cannot eat the egg left by the dog.)
26. Ajá to ni elese meri ko le ona meri.  
(The dog has four legs and cannot take four ways.)
27. Aki ife eje dudu sinu tuto funfun jade.  
(He who has black blood should not spit white.)
28. Oré kuaní obata kunai.  
(His best friend is his worst enemy.)
29. Ossain elese kan gbe lese mejí.  
(Ossain with one foot does more than others with two.)
30. Oba iku ro.  
(The king does not lie.)

EXAMPLES OF CUBAN "ORIKI"

Dedicated to Elegba, divinity of the roads and crossroads :

Laroye

Eshu beleke

Dedicated to Ogun, divinity of war and the metals :

Ogún Alagbede (Ogun the blacksmith).

Ogún Onire (Ogun, master of Ire).

Ogún Onile (Ogun, master of the earth).

Ogún de (Ogun comes)

Ogún Agbaniye

Oke

Dedicated to Shango, god of lightning, thunder and virility :

Kawo kabiyesi le Shangó (Let us adore King Shango).

Oba koso (The King did not hang himself).

Oba Oso (The king enchanter).

Ejila seborá

Olele bi oke

Dedicated to Obatala, god of peace and justice :

Hee pa Baba (Long live the Father)

Baba agba akiri kiri (God, who art so great).

Oba mola (Great king)

Dedicated to Yemaja, divinity of the sea and maternity :

O mio Yemajá

Yemajá Atara magba

Dedicated to Oshun, divinity of fresh water :

Ori Yeyé o

Yeyé kari

(Olo) titi leko (Mistress of many parrot feathers)

Dedicated to Oya, god of the wind and lightning flashes :

Hepa heyi Yansa

EXAMPLES OF YORUBA PROPER NOUNS ("ORUKO") IN CUBARelating to Elegba :

Eshu alai bodé, Eshu bí, Eshu dina, Eshu lari,  
 Eshu laniwé, Eshu migbá, Oba gbe sí, Omó ako jù,  
 Osiká, Towá ...

Relating to Ogún :

Maká, Osha niwe, Ogún dasi, Ogún fu mi to, Ogún ibi igi,  
 Ogún kowó kowó, Ogún Niké, Ogún Oká, Ogún salé, Ogún tolá.

Relating to Shango :

Abán kolé, Abita, Até borá, Ade shina, Ení ola,  
 Lari obá, Oba dina, Oba limí, Oba funike, Oba teki.

Relating to Obatala :

Adé bí, Aka lashe, Alá bu mi, Alufán def, Babá funké,  
 Ewín tolá, Eke letí, Ele fún, Odéni, Osha ri.

Relating to Yemaja :

Adé fu nike, Afoko Kunloro, Emí aké, Lorali, Lama,  
 Omí fora, Omí leundé, Omí Larí, Tinumí, Yemajá Omí lekun.

Relating to Oshun :

Ala banké, Bito mi, Ati lewa, Ilarí, Kada, Koré,  
 Okan to mi, Olóshun de, Oshún funké, Oshún iko ladé.

Relating to Oya :

Ada sí ikú, Oyá du mi dú, Oyá koke, Oyá lesí,  
 Oyá fu mi to, Oyá oro mú, Oyá tosun, Oya tobí,  
 Oyá tilewá, Tokí.

CUBAN POEMS IN YORUBAA song of greeting to begin a ritual celebration :

- |                        |                                    |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| - Ashe mo juba lorisa  | (The blessing, I greet the orisha  |
| mo juba o              | I greet                            |
| mo juba lorisa.        | I greet the orisha.                |
| - Ashe mo juba lorisa. | The blessing, I greet the orisha.  |
| - Mo juba inle         | I greet the earth                  |
| mo juba lorisa.        | I greet the orisha.                |
| - Ashe mo juba lorisa. | The blessing, I greet the orisha.) |

Songs dedicated to Elegba :

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| - Eshu o              | (Eshu                                  |
| Elegbara e            | Elegbara                               |
| Eshu o                | Eshu                                   |
| Elegbara e            | Elegbara                               |
| Elegbara mo fo ribale | I worship Elegbara                     |
| Elegbara ago          | Elegbara Agbo.)                        |
| <br>                  |  |
| - Ago Elegba bukenke  | (By your leave, Elegba the Hunch-back, |
| ago Elegba bukenke.   | by your leave, Elegba the Hunch-back.) |

Song dedicated to Ogun :

- |                    |                           |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| - Asho eje Ogunde. | (Ogun's suit is of blood. |
| - Asho ewe Ogunde. | Ogun's suit is of grass.) |

Song dedicated to Shango :

- Kawo e (Let us look  
Shango kawo e Let us look at Shango  
Alafi kawo e Let us look at Alafi (33)  
kabiosile o. at the king.
- Kawo e Let us look  
kawo e let us look  
kawo e let us look  
kabiosile o. at the king.
- Ajala kawo Let us look at Ajala  
Oba lube kawo let us look at Oba lube  
Aigoro kawo let us look at Aigoro  
Olufina kawo let us look at Olufina  
Shango kawo e let us look at Shango  
kabiosile o. at the king.
- Kawo e Let us look  
kawo e let us look  
kawo e let us look  
kabiosile o. at the king.
- Ajala kawo e Let us look at Ajala  
Sango oni kawo e let us look at King Shango  
Alafin kawo e let us look at the alafin  
kabio sile o. at the king.
- Kawo e Let us look  
kawo e let us look  
kawo e let us look



Songs dedicated to Obatala :

- Oba-n-la e (Great King  
Oba-n-la dide. Great King rise up.)
- He he he pa o (Long live,  
he pa baba long live Obatala  
he pa o. long live.  
- He he he pa o. Long live.)

Song dedicated to Yemaja :

- Yemaja Awoyo mo tumba o. (Yemaja Awoyo, I pay homage to you.  
- Yemaja Awoyo mo tumba o. Yemaja Awoyo, I pay homage to you.  
- Akere iya mi Awoyo mo tumba o. Akere, my mother, Awoyo, I pay homage to you,  
- Yemaja Awoyo mo tumba o. Yemaja Awoyo, I pay homage to you.)

Song dedicated to Oshun :

- Yeye oñi o. (Mother of honey.  
- Oñi agbe. The cup of honey.)

## Notes

1. Cabrera, Lydia: Anagó, vocabulario lucumí (el yoruba que se habla en Cuba), Havana, Eds. C R, 1957.  
  
Ortiz, Fernando: Glosario de afronegrismos, Havana, Impr. El Siglo XX, 1924.  
  
Díaz Fabelo, Teodoro: Lengua de Santeros (Guiné Gongorí), Havana, Editorial Adelante, 1956.  
  
Deschamps, Pedro: "El Lenguaje Abakuá", Etnología y Folklore, Havana, No. 4, July-December, 1967.  
  
Gonzalez Huguet, Lidia and Jean René Baudry: "Voces bantú en el vocabulario palero", Etnología y Folklore, Havana, January-June, 1967.  
  
Quesada, Miranda, Candida, Judith: "Remanentes de una lengua africana utilizada por la sociedad secreta de los abakuá en Cuba", Islas, Santa Clara, No. 45, May-August, 1973.
2. Historia de Cuba, Havana, Dirección Política de las FAR, 1967, pp.65-66.
3. According to Delafosse's classification, the Yoruba language belongs to the Nigero-Cameroones group and according to Westermann and Greenberg, it belongs to the Kwa group. Delafosse puts Fon in the Eburneo-Dahomeyan group while Westermann and Greenberg classify it in the Kwa group. According to Delafosse, the Efik-Ibibio language belongs to the Nigero-Cameroones group, while Westermann calls it "isolated non-class". Greenberg includes it in the Benue-Congo group (Alexandre, Pierre: Langues et langage en Afrique Noire, Paris, Payot, 1967, pp.16-24).
4. Bascom, William, R.: "The Yoruba in Cuba". Nigeria Magazine, Lagos, No. 37, 1957, p.17.
5. Ibid.
6. Malembe : slowly, gently, with calm; mayimbe : turkey buzzard - a sacred bird in the Afro-Cuban religions and fig. an important personage; asere, ekobio : brother; terepe : an hysterical outburst; mambo : Cuban dance, song; lorokon : a braggart, flashy; ocambo : old; ñampearse : to die; molopo : head.
7. Ple ple, lepe lepe, tiki tiki : gossip, fuss;  
chín chín : drizzle;  
tua tua : a medicinal plant (Jatropha gossypifolia, Lin.);  
mbote mbote : completely full.
8. Criollo : During the colonial period, the sons of Africans born in Cuba were called "Criollo" (Creole) (first generation) and their grandchildren (second generation) were called "Reyoyos". In time, both terms also came to apply to the descendants of the Spanish.

9. Alzola, Concepcion, T.: "Habla popular cubana", Revista de la Universidad de la Habana, Havana, No. 159, January-February, 1963, pp. 97-98.
10. Ibid. More recent research has shown that not less than 1,310,000 Africans entered Cuba as captives during the centuries of slave trade. (Perez de la Riva, Juan: "El monto de la inmigración forzada en el siglo XIX.", Revista de la Biblioteca Nacional José Martí, Havana, No. 1, Year 1965, Vol. XVI, Jan.-April, 1974, p.101). By 1916, Don Fernando Ortiz had identified about one hundred African ethnic groups and sub-groups who had entered the country.
11. Cabrera, Lydia: Op. cit., 1975, p.20.
12. Santos : saints. In the so-called Afro-Catholic "syncretism" that developed in Cuba, the santo (saint) represented the African divinity (orisha, voodoo or nkisi).
13. Santero : A pupil of the Cuban religion called Santería, which is the result of the "syncretism" of the Yoruba cults (and also the Arara) and elements of popular Catholicism.
14. Dilogun : Cowrie shells considered to be sacred (Cyprae moneta).
15. Snake (Maja) : Non-venemous Cuban reptile (Epicrates angulifer).
16. Diaz Fabelo, Teodoro: Op. cit., p. 140.
17. Cabrera, Lydia: Op. cit., p. 273.
18. Diaz Fabelo, Teodoro: Op. cit., p. 20.
19. Cabrera, Lydia: Op. cit., pp. 248 and 274.
20. Ibid, p. 276.
21. Orula : the oracle.
22. "Sight" : capacity to see the supernatural.
23. Ebo : propitiatory offering to the orishas or gods. or act of ritual purification.
24. Olokun : god of the river depths and the ocean.
25. Olofin : Supreme god, creator of all things.
26. Eshu : one of the journeys of Elegba, orisha of the roads and crossroads, of malevolent character but lover of justice at times.
27. This myth is an example of patakin in which is explained the origin of a ritual sacrifice and why bens are offered to that divinity.

28. Iború, iboya, iboshishé! : Greeting dedicated exclusively to Orula and the priests of Ifa (babalaos).
29. La Caridad del Cobre : Catholic syncretism of the orisha Oshun, goddess of the rivers and beauty.
30. La Virgen de Regla : Catholic syncretism of Yemaha, goddess of the sea.
31. Eji ogbe : Name of an odu or prophesy.
32. Ajapa or Ajapa Tiroko : Name in Yoruba for Jicotea (Turtle).
33. Efun : White paste made up of the crushed shells of dried eggs. Offering to Obatala, god of peace and justice.
34. Eko : a food made with milled maize.
35. Alafi, Ajala, Oba lube, Aigoro, Olufina, Alafin : different names for the orisha Shango.