

MAGICAL AND MEDICINAL NAMES

In the following examples we shall see how the names given to the leaves bear a relationship to their inherent curative qualities and virtues, reflecting a similar “name-to-result” system that can be found in other cultures. However, sometimes verbal links seem to be based more on magical reasoning than on direct medical/physical results.

In the formula for good luck, *àwúre oríire*, classified in the *odù ògúndá soríire*, *ògúndá*-has-good-luck, one must grind *ewé awóréré* (*COLA MILLENNII*, Sterculiaceae), *ewé réré* (*TRICHILIA MONADELPHA*, Meliaceae), *ewé ori* (*VITEX DONIANA*, Verbenaceae), mix them with soap *ọṣẹ*, wash one’s head with the resulting mixture and pronounce the following incantation, so rich in assonances that I have shown them in bold type.

*Awó**réré**, je kí n ẹ̀ ọ́**ríire**.*
*Ewé **réré**, jẹ́ kí n ẹ̀ ọ́**ríire**.*
*Ògúndá ọ́**ríire** l’ó ní kí n ẹ̀ ọ́**ríire**.*
*Orí **rere** ni t’èmi.*

Leaf of *awóréré* let me have good luck.

Réré leaf, let me have good luck.

Ògúndá-has-good-luck said that I too should have good luck.

Good luck is mine.

The *odù ògúndá ogbè* is also called *ògúndá egbò* (*ògúndá*-wound-of-knife) within which is classified *oògùn egbò ọ́gbé*, the recipe to cure knife wound. This uses *ewé pọ́gbé pọ́gbé*, leaf-killer (of pain) of-knife-wound (*CYATHULA PROSTRATA*, Amaranthaceae). The same leaf is used to cure *nárun* (crawcraw), according to Burkill¹⁹. Formula 78 deals with knife wounds and uses the incantation:

422 (2121) Ìdààbòbò lówó àfòşẹ

Òyèkú méjì, 2

Ewé pèrègún

Ewé awerepèrè

Ewé apàsà apèsè

Ọşẹ dúdú

A ó gún wọn, a ó sá wọn, a ó sí jò wọn. A ó wá tẹ àwọn odù ifá mērin àkókó, pèlú ọ̀rùngún méjì. A ó pò ó mọ ọşẹ dúdú a ó máa fi wẹ tàbí kí a fi sín gbéré sí ara (A kò gbogbò jẹ ẹ tí a ò bá fẹ kí àwọn ògùn dáadáa tí a ẹ sára bàjẹ).

Igi pèpèpèpè

Igi pàşẹpàşẹ

O ní òun ni wọn ní pè ní pèrègún

Pèrègún elépè

Pèpè fún mi nígbà yíi o pèrègún elépè

Awere pèpè ifá ni ó pelépè fún wa awerepèrè.

422 (2121) Protection from curses

Leaf of DRACAENA FRAGRANS, Agavaceae

Leaf of SPILANTHES FILICAULIS, Compositae

Unidentified leaf

Black soap

Pound, dry in the sun, sift. Draw the first four *odù* and *òrùngùn méjì*.

Mix with black soap and use it to wash, or make incisions on the body and rub the preparation into them (not to be eaten, otherwise the other preparations you have made will cease to work).

‘The tree kills curses

The tree kills all evil spells

He said it is what they call *pèrègún*

Pèrègún the master of curses

Help me destroy all curses in my life, *pèrègún* master of curses

Awere pèpè ifá will kill the person who says the curse.’



VITEX DONIANA, Verbenaceae
Òrì, òrì nlá or òrì ọdan

A, flower. B, fruit.