

Nana Buuken - Restoring Balance

The goal of the Ifa Foundation has always been to disseminate knowledge regarding the ancient philosophy of Ifa. In order to do this, it was necessary to examine the basic premises and Truths of this oral philosophy. Unlike our Western counterparts, who rely upon the absolute *truth* of the **Word**, and thus became frozen in the time period of any particular interpretation, Ifa remained fluid and adaptable. While Ifa's understanding of Energy was timeless and universal, the wise men and women of the culture understood that the applications of these basic energies would depend upon the time, culture, character and technology of those using them. Yet, the basic overriding goal was always the same: **achieve Balance**. Energy was to be employed to restore balance and through balance, allow us to achieve our Destiny.

Through the incursions of Western religion, methodology and cultural bias, the goal of genuine balance has been severely distorted and corrupted. On every level this has crippled and castrated the power and beauty of this ancient philosophy. Today, priests, influenced by the Western "word worship", interpret divination from written or previous interpretations that have been printed, and which have little or nothing to do with the specific energy or needs of the client in this time and place. Women, at the very least, equal partners in our journey through life, have been made second class citizens within the practice of energy. There are dozens of more examples, but today let's focus on the question of Balance, Women and Nana Buuken.

When the Foundation first began to initiate women Ifa priests - which we call *Iyalawo* (mother of the secrets) as opposed to Africa's *Iyanifa* (wife of Ifa), we met with great resistance. Lucumi/Santeria practitioners found the concept heretical and threatening. Even upon learning that Woman had been initiated for thousands of years into ifa in Africa, the idea was still too threatening to their cultural bias. Even within the Ifa community, the idea was considered by many to be: "not really the same as Ifa initiation for men," due to the fact that women could not gaze upon Odu. The reality that Ifa always seeks balance, and would insist upon balance (equality) between its priests of male energy and its' priests of female energy, didn't dissuade them. They would always fall back on their "Odu position." What never occurred to those that wanted consciously, or subconsciously, to continue the subservience of women, was the reality that Ifa would have provided something for "women to gaze upon" as well. That something is what we refer to as Nana Buuken! (see "Vassa creates. link here) While literally not placed here with a prohibition

that men not look upon her face, Nana Buuken represents the Primal female energy that has existed since the beginning of time. **And, as the Igba Iwa is for men only, Nana Buuken is restricted to the use of women!** This energy is so old, that the knife she carries is made of bamboo because She existed before the age of iron.

Today, at the Foundation, more and more female Ifa priests are receiving their Nana Buuken. It restores the balance between male and female Ifa priests. It is not a matter of female supremacy vs. male supremacy, it is about equality and getting the job done. In order to do that, in whatever we endeavor, we must have balance. Without it our Destiny will not be fulfilled.

Blessings,

Oluwo Philip Neimark

Please Contact Us At

iyav.ifafoundation@gmail.com

1-800-906-4322 or text to 386-214-6489

IFA FOUNDATION