

## Ọṣun (Oshun) ~ by Oluwo Ifajitan

“Self-reflection... who am I?”

Ọṣun is one of youngest Ọriṣà (*Orisha*) for she arrived on earth at a point in evolution when we were no longer so focused on survival and safety. Once our basic needs had been met; enough food and water; tools and weapons to build and defend (*lessons from the Ọgún energy matrix*). Ọṣun manifested when we finally had time for “self-reflection”. Ọṣun is represented by a symbolic gold or brass *abẹbẹ* (“hand mirror” as well as “fan”), the journey of self-discovery begins...



Artist: Menote Cordeiro

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**Ọṣun** is a **cool energy** and the **abẹbẹ** when used as a **fan** is symbolic of her power to calm the turbulent waters within us - our emotional energy. She is also depicted wearing **5 brass or gold idẹ** (*bracelets*) that jingle like a cascade of water, giving you her blessings.

The **abẹbẹ** or “**hand mirror**” is also representative of “**personal relationships**” for they also induce “**self-reflection**”, we see ourselves in relationships. In fact, in our initial quest to find another person to be with, we look for someone just like us. It’s only as we learn more about who we are, that we start looking for qualities in a person that are more complementary than identical. Relationships with people quite different from us are often more **passionate and rewarding** for they teach us about ourselves and expose us to new exciting experiences. **Ọṣun** teaches us to find a balance in relationships, a mix of the familiar and the diverse, there must be a certain amount of commonality to keep you together as well as individuality to maintain a level of tension that encourages interest and passion. Beauty and physical attraction are what gets you to notice in the first place, passion, mental curiosity, and emotional chemistry are what keep you together.



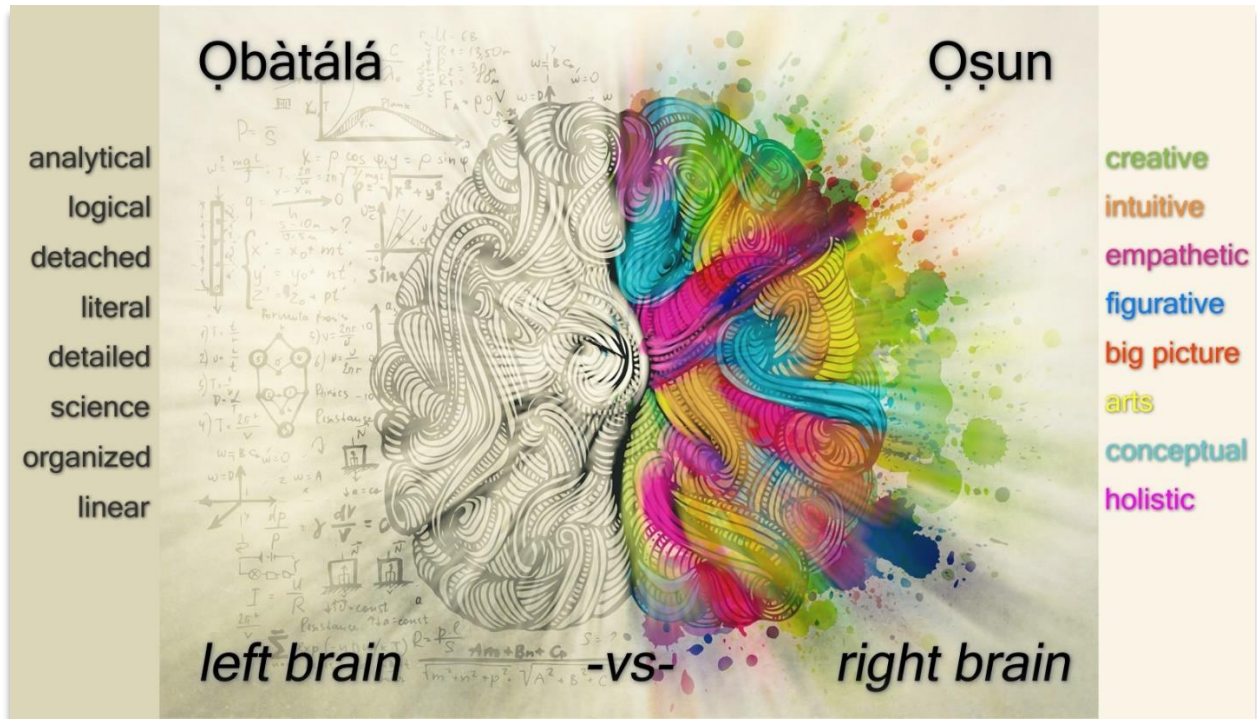
## The 5 Senses:

To connect with **Ọṣun**, we need to understand how **Ọṣun** manifests herself through “**sensuality**” where life is experienced through the five senses, “**touch**”, “**taste**”, “**smell**”, “**sight**”, and “**hearing**”.

**Ọṣun** teaches us that to really experience the joys of life, we need to allow ourselves to experience it through our senses. The senses foster an artistic creative expression that many choose to convey in a form of arts, music, dance, writing, cooking, and so on.

## Sexuality:

Sexuality is important manifestation of **Ọṣun** energy as it involves all five of our senses, it fulfills our desire for passion, feelings, pleasure, and intimacy. **Ọṣun** can help you with your intimate relationship issues, whether they involve expressions of sexuality, emotions or communications.



## Emotional Intelligence & Heartfulness:

Each of the **Ọriṣàs** has something to teach us and we **all** experience each **Ọriṣà** energy matrix at various times in our lives. Often, these experiences are revealed through interactions with the children of those **Ọriṣàs**. However, the experiences and lessons associated with **your guardian Ọriṣà** are significantly more pronounced for you, as per your soul's desire to grow and advance your destiny.

It helps to understand the **Ọṣun** energy matrix when we compare it with that of **Ọbàtálá**.

- In the **Ọbàtálá** energy matrix, we process a lot of information to develop “**logical intelligence**”; the ability to quantify things; make hypotheses; gain perspective; collect facts and discern value from them. At the same time, we're challenged with “**mindfulness**”, the act of maintaining a **nonjudgmental** state of heightened awareness in the present moment.
- In a similar fashion with the **Ọṣun** energy matrix, we process a lot of emotions to develop “**emotional intelligence**”, the ability to discern emotions and the impact it has on self and others. At the same time, we are challenged to develop “**heartfulness**”, the act of maintaining an **empathetic and compassionate** state of social awareness, which includes kindness, generosity, diplomacy, gratitude, and a heightened sensitivity and appreciation to see the beauty in all things.

## Money & Wealth:

**Ọṣun** is known to help you in this area but it behooves you to understand why. It goes back to having time for self-reflection, it's difficult to learn about yourself and explore your spirituality when all your attention is on survival and livelihood. That said, **Ọṣun** will give what you need, anything more only serves to distract you again. Once you understand how and why this works, you'll be successful in getting **Ọṣun** to help you improve your finances.

## Life & Fertility:



**Ọṣun** represents the power of the feminine to birth life and is the **Òriṣà** of fertility. She is the leader of the **Àjé** (*the powerful divine manifestation of “the mothers”*). **Àjé** loosely translates to “witches” or “powerful beings” in English, although the term “witches” is not generally used due of its negative, fear-based connotations that were unfairly assigned by people outside the Yorùbá culture. Furthermore, it doesn’t capture the true essence of their vast power.

**Olódùmarè** (*God*) endowed the principal **Òriṣàs** with vast power over different aspects of creation and humanity, each having a specific power and mission. The mission that **Ọṣun** had to perform was neither understood nor appreciated by the other **Òriṣàs**, so **Ọṣun** gathered the **Àjé** and led them out of creation. The energy imbalance caused the earth to dry up and become barren of life.

**Olódùmarè** said that the **feminine power** is essential to the cosmic order, the continuity and evolution of life and that **Ọṣun** must be appeased and included in all aspects of creation. The **Àjé** must always be given their rightful place.

**Ọṣun** has its own innate powers, but as leader of the **Àjé** she also possesses the knowledge of their collective power and the inherent duality that comes with it to **apply** or **withhold** their power to cause a major energy shift.

Women who want to get pregnant or are having a difficult pregnancy will pay homage to **Ọṣun** at the river’s edge. It is also taboo for a female child of **Ọṣun** to have an abortion if they ever want to have children in the future.

### ***On a personal story ...***

I first became acquainted with **Òriṣà** worship when I was 22 years old, then at 34, I became a priest of **Ọṣun**. But, when I look back at my life, **I know** I met **Ọṣun** when I was around 5 or 6 years old at a time when I was living in Mendoza, Argentina. I had been very sick, first with “measles”, then “scarlet fever”, then “whooping cough” which nearly took my life.

Bed-ridden at home, there was a young man, a med student, that would come to the house to check on my vitals and give me some shots. I recall very vividly a conversation he had with my parents outside my bedroom door. He said, this boy is always sick and still very weak, I recommend he don't stay in bed all the time and that he get more fresh air. He suggested to my parents that they take me to the mountains for a few days.

Soon after, my parents did just that, the mountains were only a few hours away by bus, so along with my two siblings, we made the trip. The small hotel did not have vacancies, but they had a small one-room cabin by the river. It was a sunny, but chilly day when we got to the cabin. When I saw the river, I thought it was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen, never seen a river before, I felt I had come home and was being welcomed and embraced with love. I instinctually took off my shoes



and socks and went into the cold water, ignoring my mom's attempts to stop me and pleads not to go in because I was still sick. My father said it was ok and took some river water and put it on my head, he nicknamed me **YèYé** and was the only one that has ever call me by that name. When I became a priest later in life, I was surprised to learn that **YèYé** was a reference to **Ọṣun** and means “*the good mother*”. I have to believe that since my father was not a religious man, that someone had told him to do this for me.

My health soon recovered, and even the recurring bad dreams and the paranormal activity that was disturbing me, stopped. The **Ọṣun** experience left a strong imprint on my psyche. Throughout life, whenever I found myself hurting or sad, in my mind, I would go there again, to my “happy place”.

### **Children of Ọṣun:**

The children of **Ọṣun** are particularly sensitive to the experiences of the senses and will gravitate towards careers in the arts, theater, music, and dance. As well as culinary, fashion and any field that calls on creativity and innovation. It is because of this sensitivity that the **Ọṣun** children tend to respond in a way that's more emotional and intuitive rather than logical and practical. That's not to say its better or worse, rather an observation to understand the diversity. **Ọṣun** children who are in touch with their feelings are happiest when they can be themselves and not have to conform, and this is the key to creativity and innovation. Children of **Ọṣun** should be careful with overindulgence of the senses.

## Offerings to Oṣun that represent the 5 senses:

### Touch:

- Textiles (bright, soft and colorful): Silk scarf; chiffon; chenille; charmeuse.
- Feathers: peacock (peacocks and vultures are sacred to **Oṣun**); parrot feathers.
- Shells: cowrie; abalone.
- Gemstones: amber; citrine; tiger's eye; carnelian; orange agate.
- Polished river stones
- Beautiful Pottery and Gourds

### Taste:

- Greens: watercress (grows by the river's edge); water chestnut (another aquatic plant); lettuce.
- Sweets: **honey** (always taste it first); cinnamon sticks; marmalade (a preserve made from citrus fruit like oranges); pastries (especially with cinnamon or lemon icing); carrot cake.
- Fruits: oranges; lemons; nectarines; persimmons; kumquats; mandarins; peaches; apricots; pineapple; coconut; cranberries; dry fruits.
- Vegetables: yams; sweet potatoes; pumpkin; yellow squash; carrots.
- Liquor: sweet vermouth; white and muscatel wine (sweet); Grand Marnier (orange-flavored liqueur).
- Cooked foods: duck eggs; polenta; wild rice; yellow rice; fresh water shrimp (honey garlic shrimp dish)

### Smell:

- Herbs: basil; parsley; mint; lemon balm; lavender; thyme; chamomile.
- Flowers/Plants: sunflowers; yellow roses (take out the thorns); lilac; jasmine.
- Incense; scented candles; perfume.

### Sight:

- Reflective objects: hand-held mirrors; jewels.
- Metals: gold; brass; copper.
- Flowers: water lilies; sunflowers.
- Colors: orange; yellow; amber (yellow-orange); chartreuse (yellow-green); peacock blue.
- Beautiful hand-craft art: fans; combs; drawings and paintings.

### Hearing:

- Small fountain (sound of running water)
- She loves music, singing and dance!
- Musical instruments:
  - Bell (use the bell in your **Oṣun** altar to call her, also take it to the river and ring the bell at the water's edge).
  - Bàtá drums, Bongos.
  - "**Agogo**" (percussion instrument - small bell made of two metal cones).
  - "**Sekere**" (gourd surrounded by a net of beads).
  - "**Şéré**" (gourd rattle used to call on the Orishas)