

## BABA DÁRÍ JÌ WÁ

A fẹ́ sá di Ọ  
Ọlórún ọba gbà wá bí a bá dé;  
A ti wòwò àìgbọ̀ràn tán,  
A ti síwọ̀ ipánlẹ̀:  
A ti rín Ọ fín tó,  
Olúwa wa, wá gbójú fọ́ṣẹ́ ibii wa:  
Èdùmàrẹ̀ wá foríjì wá,  
A fẹ́ sa padà lẹ̀yìn Èṣù

Òkétée wa ló gbàgbé ibòòsí,  
Ewú awa wáá káwọ̀ ẹ̀kún rù lóri àtẹ;  
A ti hubi tíí  
A ti ta kókó irọ̀ jẹun;  
Àwa ti fúnṣìhun tá ò jẹ̀ gbà

A ti parọ̀, parọ̀ tíí í tí  
Ìṣẹ́ ibi la rí ẹ̀ lójúmọ̀, lójúmọ̀;  
Ibi èṣù ọ̀dàrà bá rán wa sí là ń dé;  
A ò ná-án-ní ọ̀fin tó o ẹ̀;  
A ti gbẹ̀ṣẹ́ tíí, a fẹ́ jáwọ̀ nínú ọ̀bẹ́ tí ò  
yọ̀.

Gbogbo ịgbà là ń ẹhun tó wù wá  
A ti deṣẹ́ tó kún kànga;  
A ń gbógún ẹ̀ṣẹ́ lójúmọ̀,  
Ìṣẹ́ iree wa kò pé méjì

## FORGIVE US, OH LORD<sup>1</sup>

We do seek you as our refuge  
Receive us when we come Almighty God  
We are done with recalcitrance  
We've stopped unruly rascality;  
We've belittled you enough  
Our Lord, discountenance our sins;  
Merciful God, do forgive us  
As we wish to desert the devil.

We ignorantly rejoiced in temptation  
Only to regret after destruction;  
We've sinned and sinned  
We've lied just to make a living  
We've done to others what we ourselves  
despise.

We traded for long in falsehood  
Wickedness has been our daily chore;  
We obeyed and followed the dictates of Satan  
We cared less for the statutes you gave  
We've sinned enough and wish to beat a  
retreat.

Every time we did our own selfish desire  
We've amassed sins enough to fill a well;  
We sinned twenty times daily  
Our good works are less than two.<sup>2</sup>

10

20

<sup>1</sup> 'Baba Dari ji wa' was released in 1975 on the flip side of 'Igba oro kii fo' on Yinka Esho Label (SLP 18 Vol 3). Even though the poet translates the title as 'Forgive us O Lord', the proper translation should be 'Father, forgive us'. This is one poem in which Adepoju's effort at accommodating only Christian and Islamic visions of the divine is evident. He condemns those who are non-religious or idolatrous.

<sup>2</sup> This simply suggests that they are not many.

A ti délé ayé tán  
 A jọ gbàgbé ikú pátá;  
 Èṣù ọ́dara gba wa ni bọ́lu titi  
 A ǵáyé, a gbàgbé Ọlórún;  
 Èdùmàrè wáá foríjì wa,  
 Wáá tọ́ wa sọ̀nà nìgbẹ̀yìn.

We came to the world  
 Only to forget death completely;  
 Satan dribbled us for long like football,  
 Having come to earth, we forgot heaven;  
 Almighty God, forgive us  
 Do give us direction at last.

A ti lérí, lérí  
 Ibi a dúró sí la gbàgbé orí líle sí,  
 Àwa ọ̀mọ ẹ̀dá ti jẹ́jẹ́ ohun tá ọ̀ leè ẹ̀!  
 Irọ́ ni gbogbo wa pátá ń pa á jẹun;  
 Orin èké ọ̀un ẹ̀tàn là ń kọ fẹ̀lòmíì

We've pledged and pledged  
 Only to forget our pledge on the spot  
 We human beings have pledged what we  
 cannot do!  
 We all survive by means of falsehood;  
 Falsehood and deceit is our usual song for  
 others

30

Àwa ọ̀mọ ẹ̀dá peraa wa lónígbàgbọ́  
 A kò náání itẹ̀bọ̀mí;  
 Ẹ̀ni ẹ̀ni gbogbo wa ń sáré ayé kiri;  
 Ẹ̀gbàágbẹ̀je ìgbàgbọ́ ló ti gbé gbàgbọ́  
 Jù nù.

We human beings call ourselves Christians  
 But care little for baptism  
 All of us run about after the world;  
 Thousands of Christians have jettisoned their  
 faith

À ti gbélé ayé ru  
 A kì í ẹ̀ ẹ̀ pípé;  
 Àwa èyàn ń peraa ní Mùsùlùmí,  
 Bójúmọ́ bá mọ́  
 A kì í kírun fỌlúwa ọ̀ba;

We burdened ourselves with the world  
 We never do any good work;  
 We human beings claim to be Muslims  
 And whenever the day dawns  
 We never offer *salat* to the Almighty God  
 We've been ritually cleansed according to  
 Muslim rites

40

A kì í wé wọ̀nkà tán, ka tún ń ẹ̀bọ́;  
 Gbogbo wa, ọ̀wò àbòsì la mú pọ́ mẹ̀sìn

But still embrace idolatry,  
 All of us mix deception and religion together.

Ayé ti burú tan,  
Gbogbo rẹ ti bọwó-órí;  
Gbogbo ètò ẹdà ló ti dibàjẹ.  
Gbogbo ayé ló ti rà tí ń sẹdín;  
Ayé dabarú, ó ti polúkúrumu ọ;  
Gbogbo èyàn ló ń ọge lódi-lódi

The world had turned fully evil  
All things are upside-down,  
All human schemes have gone stale  
All the world stinks and rots with maggots  
The world is in turmoil and wholly confused 50  
All human beings engage in false fashion.

A ọọ wàhálà lomo èyàn ń dá  
Omọ aráyé ti wà ńínú ìpayínkeke!

Human beings daily seek nothing but trouble  
People are now in distress and gnashing of teeth!

Omọ ènìyàn dera wọn nígbèkùn tán

Human beings having brought themselves into snares

Ó ku ẹnì tí ó gbà wọn là.

Have no one to bring them total deliverance

Ayé ń di búúru, a kò ríbi sá sí;

The world's on the move and there's nowhere to hide;

Àsikò yíi tí ń pòwè àdìitú,  
Omọ aráyé kò gbédé.

The times tell the truth in parables  
But human beings lack understanding.

Heee! Agogo ìgbàlà tí ń lù lówólówó  
Taa ni ó wọ 'jọba ọrun  
Eni tó bá fẹẹ ọrìire  
Kó wáá gbọ tOlúwa ọba

Heee! The bell of deliverance is now tolling!  
Who prepares well enough to go to heaven? 60  
Whoever would end up being lucky,  
Should come now and hear the message of God;

È sáré padà lẹyin Èşù nítorí àbámọ

Run back from the devil to avoid regret.

Ìlẹkùn ìgbàlà tí fẹrẹ sẹ!

The door of salvation is about to close!

Omọ Áádámọ, má sàfira;

Don't delay, children of Adam;

Kí lẹ jọ gbójú le

What exactly is your mutual hope

Ti ẹ fi jọ mọjọ ikú dẹngbẹrẹ?

For which you treat death with levity?

Níbo lẹ fẹẹ fàbọ sí

Where would be your destination

Bí ẹ bá fabo si koto?

When you leave the land of the living?

Mósáláásí ń bẹ nítòòsí ilée rẹ

There's a mosque close to your house 70

O kò jẹ lẹ sí Mósáláásí;

But you just never go to the mosque;

Ilée 'sinimá' ló yá ọ lára;

You rather prefer to go to cinema houses;

O kò pèsè sílẹ fúnlé ẹlẹsẹ mẹfà

You do not prepare for the six-feet abode<sup>3</sup>.

Bójúmọ bá ti mọ

As soon as the day-dawns daily

O kí í wọn nílẹ ọtí;

You never miss your visit to beer parlours

O kò sì jẹ lẹ sí 'Sọsì' tí ń bẹ lẹkùlẹ rẹ

And you just won't visit the church near your house

Iran an 'bọlù' lásán lo mọ ọn wò

You love only to watch football matches.

<sup>3</sup> This is a reference to death symbolized by the grave.

Omọ èniyàn máa wo ohun tó bá wù ó.

Adániwayé ń wòran an rẹ;

Ọba tí ń bẹ ní kọlọfín.

Tó ń rí ọ ní kedare!

Ọbaà mi, Àwòdì òkè, tó mọhun ayé ń  
dánwò nísàlẹ̀.

O ò tètè máa túúba ẹ̀ sẹ̀ kíákíá,

Kí wọn ó tóó fàwéé rẹ ya lálákeji

Bí a ti sẹ ń jí sáyé lojọ ń lọ,

Ọba òkè kò ní í forí jì ọ,

Bó o bá kú sí pòkìl.

You human being, watch whatever else you  
cherish,

The Creator is certainly watching you as well,

The king that resides in secret,

But sees you clearly in the light!

My King the heavenly Dove, who sees  
peoples' doings below.

You had better engage in quick repentance of  
sins

Before your record is turned off in heaven;

As we daily wake, time flies;

The Heavenly King would not forgive you  
Should you die an infidel.

80