

Earth

My name is Ani (displaying stylishly).

Yoruba acolytes call me Ile,
The Earth which nourishes you and me.

Edo people call me Agbon.
My Igbo name is Ani.

Urhobos call me Akpo.
Akpo oyo yo wing:
Beautiful earth.

Hei, My name is Ani!
Omaticha Nne:
Beautiful mother.

I am the mother of Ngun-Ngumi,
Ancestral pot of the Ganda and Yola,
Sacred and sweet to all my children.

My bowels are full of riches.
I spit precious stones,
Which you use to grow rich,
And marry more women,
And have more children.

I grow yam, you know (demonstrates digging),
Which you eat and grow big,
Which you sell to grow rich,
And marry more women,
And have more children.
I also grow pepper.
Do you hear? I grow pepper.
Red screaming pepper,
Like my luscious lips (touching lips),

And red like burning fire,
And wild blazing eyes I

Hei!
My name is Ile, Ani, Earth.
In Ivory Coast, they call me Assie.
Men like me.
They like me very much.
From far and near,
They come to marry me.

Oduduwa.
Oduduwa came from far farther North,
All in the bid to claim my hand.
But, I made him pitch his tent,
In my father's land, Yorubaland.
For,
I cannot move from my father's house.

Ginuwa came through the rivers,
All in the bid to claim my hand.
But I made him pitch his tent
in my mother's house, Amatu,
And Ade-Itsekiri.

Hei!
in Igboland,
Men came from far and near,
From Nri to Arochukwu,
From Agbor. and Iseleukwu,
They came to claim my hand.
I shake my head to the left and right.
They fall to my feet and do worship (simulating the art of the marabout).

In England, they call me Earth.
In Ireland they call me Mater:
Great mother, beautiful Mary.

In Brazil, Yorubas call me Yemoja,
Meaning, Yeye omo eja:
Mother of us all.

And I refuse to marry.
Cannot belong to one man.
God made me for ALL His children.
But what do they do?
God's children rape me,
They rape me, rape me...

They, dig the earth, poke my nose,
Seeking places, sacred and serene.
God's children fight for earth's gifts,
Given freely to them by God.
They tear my thighs,
And they pinch my ears.
They kill God's other children,
For they seek to have me, all alone.
So they block rich bounties
From Earth's bed-chamber.
And, and, and...
Father my unconceived child
feel my pots of poetry.