

## IYE AJA (Umbilical Cord) Project



**TWINS (Ibeji)**

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ibeji>

In Yoruba culture, when twins are born, the parents would visit a Babalawo, meaning, "father of mysteries", to find out their wishes. The first of the twins to be born is traditionally named Taiyewo or Tayewo, (which means 'the first to taste the world'); this is often shortened to Taiwo, Taiye, or Taye. Kehinde, "the last to come", is the name of the last-born twin. These are what could be called "celestial" Yoruba names; names due to birth circumstances. The child after the twins is called "Idowu" regardless of the sex, a boy or a girl.

It is said that Kehinde sends Taiyewo to check out what life is like on earth and to tell him (or her) whether it is good. Therefore, Taiyewo goes as sent by Kehinde, and becomes the first child to be born. He then communicates to Kehinde spiritually (believed to be from the way he cries) whether life is going to be good or not. The reply determines if Kehinde will be born alive or stillborn. Both return to where they came from if the reply from Taiyewo is not good enough for both of them. The Yoruba traditionally say that Kehinde is the true elder of the twins despite being the last to be born, because he sent Taiyewo on an errand, a prerogative of one's elders in Yorubaland.

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