

Iro Ye

♩ ~ 78

Language: Gen (Mina)

Aural Source: Dona My Djedjevi ([link](#))

Song Type: Lullaby

Form Type: Barform

Toneset: rmfsl d'

Scale Type: Dorian (incomplete)

Handwritten musical notation for 'Iro Ye' in Gen (Mina) language. The notation is written on four staves. The first two staves each have two measures, and the last two staves each have two measures. The notes are written in a simplified staff notation with stems and flags. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first two staves are separated by a vertical line, and the last two staves are separated by a vertical line. The first two staves are also separated by a vertical line. The first two staves are also separated by a vertical line. The first two staves are also separated by a vertical line.

Note: The eighth note inner anacrusis to the second measure in the first two phrases is almost sotto voce in the recording.

Iro ye nou ka ye manao

My Iro, what am I going to give you?

Nie nou do nou ye anao

I have nothing to give you.

Napodenao

I'm going to pray for you

akbe la mio nao

your life will be happy

so yakbe na yoma

until eternity.

Source: Djedjevi, D. M. (2022). Iro ye. On *Djedjevi: Lullabies from Benin* [Album]. ARB Music. ([link](#))

What stands out to me pedagogically:

Rhythm: The first two phrases are so clearly anacrusic with 8 beats. This prepares us to determine exactly where and how the next two (?) phrases fall and would be an excellent listening activity with no clear correct answer.

Melody: I'm drawn to the descending l-s-f-m-r and d'-l-f-m-r patterns

Other: The Gen (Mina) text is accessible to English language speakers, as evidenced by the large number of Western recordings and arrangements available online. Regarding the form, I did not provide a specific form, but the form type seems to follow the typical barform structure of *statement-restatement-something different*.

Contextual Information

I could not find much about the singer, Dona My, but I believe this is their SoundCloud page and particularly enjoy the song N'Kevese ([link](#))

See more about the Gen (Mina) language ([link](#)).

Mama Lisa ([link](#)) documented a version of this song with a recording by Élodie Chebat, containing a couple of interesting differences. Chabat sings a slightly, not substantially, different melody. However, Chebat's version sounds to me as though it clearly begins on the strong beat in 4-meter, whereas the version documented here sounds as if it begins with a one-beat anacrusis. In terms of the song's meaning, this source describes it as a song for both babies and brides, as well as "your child, your sister, or anybody that means much to you." Iro ye may, then, be translated to "my dear" in some sense.

This song is also documented in Beth's Notes ([link](#)), without a recording, displaying a version of the melody that follows the same contour as the source recording here, but is interpreted as la-based (hexatonic). This seems to be the tonal center also used by Jill Gallina for her 2-part arrangement published by Hal Leonard ([link](#)), based on the key signature. I strongly hear this song with re-centered solfa, but the toneset could also be l,t,drm s.