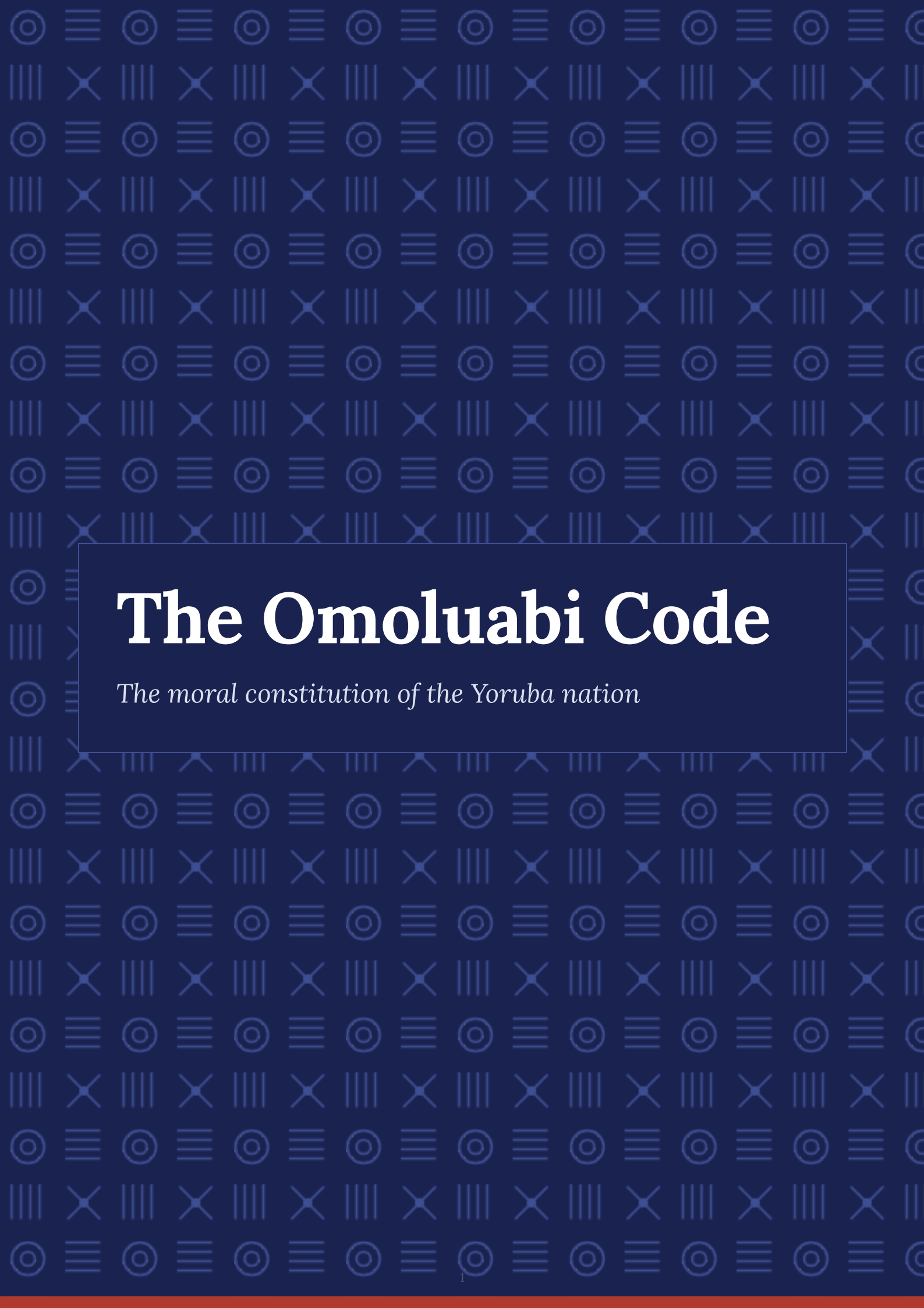




The Omoluabi Code

The moral constitution of the Yoruba nation

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Preamble

The Omoluabi Code is the moral constitution of the Yoruba nation: the shared standard of character by which its people live, judge their leaders, and stand together.

Nations endure not only through land, language, and institutions, but through a common idea of the honourable person. For the Yoruba, that idea has a name: Omoluabi. It has guided conduct in homes, markets, palaces, and councils for centuries, long before any modern state was imposed on Yoruba land.

This document sets out the Code in formal terms. It defines the concept, traces its philosophical roots, states its core principles, explains its role in Yoruba nationalism, and provides a pledge and framework for adoption by individuals and organisations committed to the renewal of the Yoruba nation.

Article 1

Definition

An Omoluabi is a complete and honourable person whose character, speech, conduct, and service to the community show sound upbringing and uphold the dignity of their lineage and people.

The word is commonly understood as “the child begotten by the Lord of Character.” It describes a person whose behaviour testifies to good moral formation. Its opposite is the person of no moral formation: a human being in body only, who carries no honour and offers no example.

For the purposes of this Code:

1. **Omoluabi** means the Yoruba ideal of the person of good character.
2. **The Omoluabi Code** means the body of principles set out in this document that defines that ideal and binds those who adopt it.
3. **The Yoruba nation** means the Yoruba people at home and in the diaspora, united by language, heritage, and shared destiny.

Character, not wealth, title, or religious affiliation, is the measure of a person under this Code.

Philosophical foundations

The Code rests on the Yoruba conviction, preserved in the Ifa tradition and in proverb, that character is the foundation of every other good.

In the Ifa tradition, Character is personified as the wife of Orunmila, the custodian of wisdom. When he neglects her, she departs, and his fortunes collapse. He recovers only when he humbles himself and seeks her out. The teaching is plain: knowledge, wealth, and status are worthless without character.

Yoruba proverbs carry the same teaching into daily life:

- **Character is beauty.** Outward appearance fades; conduct is what makes a person admirable.
- **Good character is a person's true adornment.** No garment or title substitutes for integrity.
- **Character is religion.** Moral conduct is the true measure of devotion. This principle places character above denominational identity and unites Yoruba people of every faith.
- **Patience is the father of character.** Self-mastery is the root from which other virtues grow.
- **Work is the antidote to poverty.** Industry is a moral duty, not merely an economic choice.

The ten pillars

The Omoluabi Code stands on ten pillars. Each is binding on every person who adopts the Code.

1 **Good character**

Integrity is the foundation of all conduct.

Act rightly whether or not anyone is watching.

2 **Truthfulness**

A person's word is their bond.

Keep promises, honour agreements, and refuse deceit.

3 **Disciplined speech**

Words carry weight and consequence.

Speak with wisdom and restraint; know when to keep silent.

4 **Sense of honour**

Shame is a guardian of conduct.

Avoid any act that would disgrace oneself, one's family, or one's people.

5 **Respect**

Wisdom and legitimate authority deserve deference.

Honour elders and rightful leaders; extend courtesy to all.

6 **Goodwill**

Kindness binds a community together.

Show hospitality, generosity, and care for the weak and the stranger.

7 Industry

Work is a moral duty.

Be diligent, competent, and self-reliant; refuse idleness and dependency.

8 Courage

A people must be able to defend what is theirs.

Stand firm for family, land, and truth, with honour and within the law.

9 Wisdom

Knowledge is the light of a nation.

Pursue learning, exercise sound judgement, and pass knowledge on.

10 Patience and composure

Self-mastery is the root of every virtue.

Remain calm under pressure; act from reflection, not impulse.

Article 4

The Code and Yoruba nationalism

The Omoluabi Code gives Yoruba nationalism its moral foundation. It serves the nation in six ways.

It defines the nation by values as well as heritage

Shared language and ancestry make a people; a shared idea of the good person makes a nation. The Code gives Yoruba identity a moral content that every Yoruba person, at home or in the diaspora and of any faith, can claim and live by.

It establishes a standard of accountable leadership

In the classical Yoruba polities, authority was held in trust. In Oyo, the council of state could reject a ruler who had lost legitimacy, and other institutions checked royal power. The Code

restores this principle: every leader is measured by whether they conduct themselves as an Omoluabi, and authority is forfeited by bad conduct.

It grounds collective solidarity

One hand cannot lift a load onto the head. The Code obliges cooperation, mutual aid, and loyalty to the community, the same spirit behind traditional cooperative savings and communal labour. This is the social basis of collective economic power.

It sustains economic self-reliance

The duty of industry gives the nation an economic spine: enterprise, competence, and the refusal of dependency on others.

It upholds dignity and the right of self-defence

The pillars of honour and courage together describe a people who will not accept humiliation and who defend their land and heritage, while remaining honourable and law-abiding.

It is an instrument of cultural renewal

Reclaiming the Code as a public standard counters the erosion of values and the culture of impunity in public life. It offers a moral alternative rooted in Yoruba civilisation itself rather than borrowed from outside.

Article 5

Safeguards

The Code is protected against four forms of misuse, and those who adopt it must guard against each.

1. **Against romanticisation.** The Code draws on the best of Yoruba tradition without claiming the past was flawless. Its authority comes from the worth of its principles, not from an idealised history.
2. **Against misuse of respect.** Respect for elders and authority must never become a demand for silence before wrongdoing. The Code's own tradition of accountable leadership forbids it. No person may invoke the Code to shield misconduct.
3. **Against chauvinism.** The Code is the Yoruba expression of virtues that other peoples also honour. The Yoruba nation chooses to live by it and to hold its leaders to it; it confers no licence to despise others.

4. **Against empty slogans.** The Code is easily invoked and hard to live. Any organisation that adopts it earns credibility only when its officers visibly uphold it.

Article 6

The Omoluabi Pledge

Every person who adopts the Code affirms the following pledge.

As an Omoluabi and a member of the Yoruba nation, I solemnly pledge:

1. To keep my word and speak the truth at all times.
2. To guard my name, my lineage, and my people from disgrace.
3. To respect elders and legitimate authority, and to hold all authority to account.
4. To work diligently, to be competent in my calling, and to refuse dependency.
5. To support my brothers and sisters in need and to build together with them.
6. To pursue knowledge and to pass it on to the next generation.
7. To speak with wisdom and to act with composure.
8. To defend our land, language, and heritage with courage and honour.
9. To treat the stranger and the weak with kindness.
10. To place character above wealth, title, and religious label, for character is the true measure of a person.

Name

Signature

Date

Adoption and application

The Code takes effect for an organisation when its governing body adopts it, and for an individual when they affirm the Pledge.

Adoption by organisations. A cultural, civic, or professional organisation may adopt the Code as its ethical charter by resolution of its governing body. It may incorporate the Pledge into membership admission and the installation of officers.

Standard for leadership. Every officer and leader of an adopting organisation is held to the Code to a higher degree than ordinary members. Before assuming office, each affirms the Pledge publicly. Conduct contrary to the Code is grounds for review and, where proven, removal from office.

Accountability procedure. An adopting organisation should establish:

1. A council of respected members to receive and consider complaints of breaches of the Code.
2. A fair hearing for any member accused, with the right to respond.
3. Proportionate remedies, from private counsel and public apology to suspension or removal.

Education and transmission. The Code is passed on through teaching. Adopting organisations should teach it in reading clubs, youth programmes, campus chapters, and family settings, so that each generation knows the standard it is expected to keep.

Review. This Code may be refined from time to time by those who adopt it, provided its ten pillars and its foundational principle, that character is the measure of a person, remain unchanged.

Character is the true measure of a person.