

## ESU

### IFA FOUNDATIONAL INTERNATIONAL

**ESU (also called: Exu, Eshu Eleggua, Elegbara, Eshu Elegbara, Elegba, Legba, and Eleda)** was a pure energy that embodied the reality of OPPORTUNITY. The myriad applications of this energy resulted, as it has in most philosophies, with a series of tales or metaphors designed to teach, in understandable form, one or more of these thousands of untold possibilities. So tales of Esu ( Exu, Esu Eleggua, Esu Elegbara, Eshu Elegbara, Elegba, Legba, and Eleda) that related how this energy was in charge of roads, paths etc. were simply metaphors for the essence of the opportunity presented. Similarly, the acceptance that Esu must come first in every ceremony, morning ebbo etc. was simply a logical (or perhaps illogical but understandable) interpretation that we must FIRST create an opportunity if we are to be able take advantage of it. So, connecting with the Essence of Opportunity to assure we could go forward with enacting the event was born.

Interestingly, when understood in this context, it is easier to see how the Christian Missionaries, in their zealous self-righteousness, could confuse the obvious reality that opportunities can be positive or negative, into converting the Esu energy into the Devil (a concept that does not even exist in Yoruba Ifa) as a result of some opportunities that bring negative results when embraced by an individual. The ENORMOUS difference in the Yoruba and Christian expression of the Esu complex comes from the differences in world view. The Yoruba world view also includes the imperative of Iwa Pele, or Good Character, interlaced with the symbiotic and benevolent world it is meant to function in. Therefore, bad results from opportunities would be results of failure to understand and adhere to this template and to learn, empower, and self-correct your thinking and behavior, The Christian world view, of a constant struggle between good and evil, of a malevolent place where a devil is enticing you to break the “rules” and we are born failed and must rely on a paternalism to survive, would automatically conclude the Esu was negative.

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