

# The Orisa & You

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In order to understand and benefit from the energies we refer to as the Orisa (also known as Orisha, Orissa, Irunmole, Orixá) it is **imperative** you understand their place in the universal order as created by Oludumare (also referred to as Olorun, Eledumare, Eleda and Olofin-Orun).

In Yoruba cosmology, unfettered by the incursions and adaptations forcibly grafted onto its inherent perfection and functionality by *well* intentioned but diametrically opposed world views, the Yoruba understood:

- a) that Oludumare (God) was, and had to be, inherently **Benevolent**,
- b) that as an extension of this Truth, the Universe, as a creation of a benevolent Creative Force, was **inherently** benevolent
- c) that therefore all the individual creations, within the overall Creation, would be provided for **by** the Creation itself and, finally,
- d) that the relationship between all that was created must be symbiotic to each other and the Creation itself.

There was NO supremacy within that world view. There was NO discrimination within that world view. Each and every species, plant, animal, fish, human, bird or tree was created with its own 'ase' (life force) that functioned most effectively in direct relationship to how closely it adhered to the way the Whole had been designed.

With the exception of humans, all other creations were provided with the inherent knowledge/instincts for most effectively caring for themselves. The tree inherently responded to the hours of available light; the sea turtle was born knowing the right direction to crawl as quickly as possible from the nest in the sand to the safety of the ocean waters; the newborn colt was designed to immediately struggle to its feet so that it could flee to safety if necessary. All animals were designed to flee instinctively from fire, and to take high ground from flood or impending earthquake. Only humans were born without any of this inherent knowledge. Instead, we were given a greater capacity for reason and thought as our way of more effectively caring for ourselves within the symbiotic reality. We increasingly see our arrogance, hubris, rapaciousness, and desire for control and short term fixations deviating significantly from that reality. Through both individual and planetary response we are being increasingly threatened by this.

**Make no mistake; humans will not destroy the planet or the Universe.** If we continue to ignore the benevolent/symbiotic nature of the Creation, it will shake us off as a dog climbing out of the water shakes out the moisture from its coat, and historically we will join the Dinosaurs in a failed experiment. In order to re-establish our relationship in a healthy manner, we must understand and use the tools that were always here for us.

First among these is the concept of Orisa (also known as Orisha, Orissa, Irunmole, Orixá)

These are the inherent and specific energies that, in totality, form **all of** the structural and functional parts of the Universe. For example:

**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 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.

This is the reason that, to understand the genuine power and possibilities of any Orisa energy, you **MUST** understand them within the world view that identified them! In subsequent posts I will deal with the energies of:

**Obatala (also called: Oxala, Orixá funfun, Our Lord of Bonfim, Our Lady of Mercy, Oluwa Aye, Oluwa Aiye, Alabalase, Baba Arugbo, Baba Araye, Orisanlá, Orishanlá or Orishainlá, Oshanlá)**

**Osun (also called: Oshun, Ochun, Oxum, La Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre)**

**Ogun (also called: Ogoun, Ogún, Ogou, Ogum, Gu, St. Jacques Majeur, Ogun Akirun, Ogun Ajero, Ogun Alagbede, Ogun Onigbajamo, Ogun Lakaye, Ogun Onire)**

**Yemonja** (also known as: Yemoja, Yemanjá Ymoja, Yemowo, Yemanjá, Iemanjá, Janaína, Yemalla, Yemana, Yemoja, La Diosa del mar)

**Sango** ( also known as: Chango, Shango, Xangô, Jakuta,)

**Oya** (also known as: Iansan, Oiá, Iansã, Virgin of Candelaria)

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