

## Lecture Notes on Segun's "Eniyan"

This week we keep with the major theme of defining the Ifa tradition. The specific focus here is the relationship between the origin and structure of the universe within the Ifa tradition, the Orisha and human destiny.

So last week we unpacked the systematic origin of existence, the creation of the Yoruba Ile ifa, the land of the Yoruba. At the beginning of creation were the Orisha in the spiritual domain above the marshy lands, while one Orisha Olokun is in the marsh. This signifies that Orishas comprise all dimensions of existence. So, how do the Orisha manifest in the lived realities of the Yoruba? It is thought, according to Segun, the author, himself a Yoruba, that each eniyan, or person, prior to being born within the physical world has a direct relationship with the Orishas.

So how is a person created and how does one acquire their destiny? First know that the supreme being is the Orisha Olodumare or Olorun, which gives each eniyan, emi or life force. Life force is energy that allows all persons the eemi, the breath; both come from Olorun. And the Orisha, Orisa-Nla or Obatala created the physical body as indicated from the creation narrative that you read last week. Ajala is the maker of the Ori. What is Ori and how is Ori similar to or different from Ori Inu? The Ori Inu determines each person's personality, which is one's inner self that is linked to an Orisha. So, one's Ori Inu is in fact the qualities of an Orisha that guides one's life. It is the Kadara, destiny, that is sealed up within the Ori Inu. See pages 47 here.

Read pages 28- 29 and 33, to think about the Okan. What are the two definitions of the Okan?

Read pages 49-51, 55-56 and 59. How does one acquire their Ori/ Ori Inu and Kadara? Read this section very very carefully.

Finally, if one is born with a kadara, can the kadara be changed? Well, according to the Yoruba, through right action, good deeds, appealing to your Orisha and of course getting an oracle reading from a Babalawo (reader of oracles) then one can in fact change their destiny in this tradition.

What does all of this suggest, then, about the human condition?