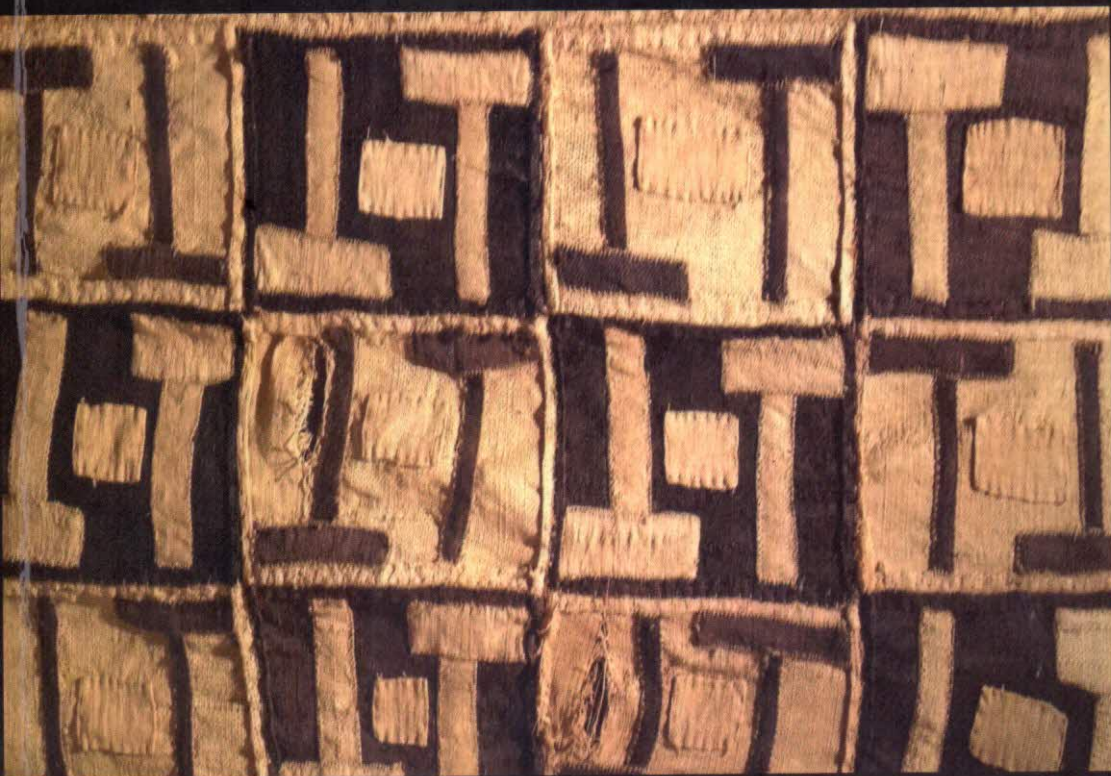


HARNESSING CULTURAL CAPITAL FOR SUSTAINABILITY

A Pan Africanist Perspective



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Munyaradzi Mawere &
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Chapter 7

The Role of Indigenous Religion in Fostering Social Stability and National Development: Lessons from *Ifá* of Nigeria

Hezekiah Olufemi Adeosun

Introduction

Nigeria, today, is faced with a plethora of challenges among which is religious rivalry between the two imported religious faiths, namely Christianity and Islam. This ugly development affects the entire aspects of her endeavours, namely; economic, social, political and environmental. This chapter aims at examining the relevance of *Ifá*, a Yorùbá indigenous religion, towards addressing a mirage of problems confronting the Nation as a result of unhealthy rivalry between the two foreign religions. The basic traditional worship of the Yoruba is *Ifá*, it is known as the Yorùbá god of wisdom. *Ifá* philosophy is one of the oldest forms of knowledge revealed to mankind. It encompasses the revelations, way of life and religion taught by *Òrúnmìlà*, who was the Creator's own witness when the creation of all other organic and inorganic substances was undertaken. The method adopted in this chapter is descriptive, using some verses in *Ifá* corpus in Yẹmí Èlẹ̀bùibọ̀n's *Ifá: The Custodian of Destiny*, as data to substantiate claims on the effectiveness of indigenous religion in building a virile Nation. The chapter reveals among other things that indigenous religious system, as exemplified in *Ifá*, enhances social stability and national development. It, therefore, notes that unless the people of Nigeria go back to their root and practice the ethos of their indigenous religion as prescribed, peace and stability may continue to elude the society.

