

# The Rites of Initiation in Christian Liturgy and in Igbo Traditional Society: Towards the Inculturation of Christian Liturgy in Igbo Land (Europäische ... / Publications Universitaires Européennes)



The Second Vatican Council aims to make the Christian life to command greater appeal and to deepen the faith in the Paschal Mystery among Christians everywhere through very lively celebrations. It therefore gives special attention to the renewal of the liturgy in consideration of the plurality of cultures, languages and customs of particular Churches within Christendom. This study belongs to the area of possible liturgical adaptations and renewals of the Roman rite to accommodate the multicultural reality in the Church. Directives in this regard are given in the Councils constitution on the Liturgy, *Sacro-sanctum Concilium* 37-40. Today, the different contextual engagement with these directives are designated with the word inculturation. For the sake of precision and thorough treatment, this work is geographically restricted to the Igbo land Nigeria which belongs to the English speaking part of West Africa. It makes an extensive investigation into the traditional forms of initiation rites in the pre-Christian Igbo society. Holding to the fundamentals of the Christian rites of initiation as well as the true principle for liturgical renewals, it distributes responsibility for the tension between the traditional pre-Christian practice of initiation and the Christian practice as the missionaries of the 19th century introduced it, to crises of cultural identity and the missionaries inattention to the cultural grammar of the people they wanted to evangelize at all costs. Apart from the problems associated with mass religious ignorance of many Igbos as it is evident in the mushrooming of religious movements in the area, it exposes the biased attitude in the way the traditional and cultural rites of the Igbos were eliminated by 19th century missionaries, and in the light of the theological intimacy between the Church and her liturgy, it asks for possible ways out as it makes recommendations.

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