



ABSTRACT

While Luke 22:19-20 (the Lord's Supper) is foundational to Christian theology, its interpretation is most times Eurocentric, which refers to viewing west, particularly Europe as the center of the events of the world. This disregards rich African cultural insights derived from symbolic food, drink and communal traditions. Consequently, there is limited research exploring the symbolism of bread and wine through African cultural

EXAMINING LUKE 22:19-20 ON THE SYMBOLISM OF BREAD AND WINE IN AFRICAN CULTURAL OUTLOOK

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Introduction

The passage in Luke 22:19-20 is fundamental to Christian theology, recording Jesus instituting the Lord's Supper during his final meal with his disciples (Jacobson, 2017). Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." Afterwards, he took the cup, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood". This is traditionally interpreted by Christians as symbolising the body of Christ's and his blood sacrificed for redemption of human (Jeremias, 1966). Jesus' command to "do this in remembrance of me" highlights the memorial nature of the event of the Lord's Supper. Many African cultures also greatly value memory tradition and the veneration of ancestors, suggesting a point of connection with this biblical text when viewed through an African cultural lens. African cultures make use of symbolic expressions extensively, with food and drink central to rituals and community life, connecting people to ancestors, deities and the community. Examining Luke 22:19-20 through this perspective offers fresh insights. In many African cultures, bread symbolises community, unity, and sharing (Mbiti, 1969). McKenzie (2011)



hermeneutics. This study addresses this lacuna aims to examine Luke 22:19-20 through diverse African cultural viewpoints through biblical exegesis, comparative analysis with traditional interpretations, and exploring theological implications. Comparing the Lukan text with African traditions surrounding staple foods like fufu, beverages, for example palm wine and communal rituals (*igongona*, libation) using biblical exegesis and comparative symbolic analysis methodology constitute the scope of the study. The findings reveal that African hermeneutics significantly enrich Eucharistic understanding, highlighting communal solidarity, covenant, sacrifice, memory and hospitality. The study holds that this approach provides theological depth for inculturation, strengthens African Christian identity, and contributes a vital, communally-focused outlook to global Eucharistic scholarship. The study concludes that integrating cultural faith expression, thereby serving as a theological foundation for self-definition in post-colonial perspectives.

Key Words: Luke 22:19-20, African, Cultural, Outlook, Symbolism, Wine and Bread

notes the enduring nature of spoken words in African communities, guiding them through generations, a notion resonant with the Eucharist as a living memorial. The breaking of bread does not only commemorates Christ's sacrifice but also strengthens communal bonds and collective memory. Wine is associated with celebration, joy and purification (Parrinder, 1962). The African practice of libation, pouring drink to invoke ancestors and affirm unity, provides a cultural parallel for remembering Christ through the wine, epitomizing the link between the living and their forebears and stressing continuity and collective identity (Okoye, 2016).

Biblical interpretation has often been Western-centric, plausibly neglecting the significance of symbols in non-Western contexts like Africa (Sanneh, 1989). In spite of the rich potential of African worldview on bread and wine symbolism, scholarly research on this topic is limited, with most studies on Luke 22:19-20 stemming from Western viewpoints (Tiénou, 1993). This paper aims to address this by examining the symbolism in Luke 22:19-20 from African cultural outlook, a topic that requires more in-depth analysis. The objectives of the study are to conduct a biblical exegesis of the passage, explore traditional theological interpretations, investigate the symbolism of bread and wine in various African cultures, apply African cultural hermeneutics, and analyse the theological implications within an African framework.



A careful biblical exegesis of Luke 22:19-20 reveals nuances, such as Luke's inclusion of "which is given for you" regarding the bread, emphasising the sacrificial aspect of Jesus' death for believers. In the same vein, Luke's description of the cup as "the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you" brings out the establishment of a new relationship with God through Christ's sacrifice. The command "Do this in remembrance of me," applied to both bread and cup (as noted by Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:25), embodies the act as a continuous memorial of Jesus' sacrifice. These variations in the Gospel accounts suggest distinct authorial emphases, with Luke's focus on the recipients and the new covenant potentially aligning with African communal and relational values (Nsiah, 2020).

Exploring parallels with African ritualistic food and drink use is also instructive. Across Africa, rituals involve staple foods like yam, cassava and maize, then drinks like palm wine and millet beer (Okoye, 2016). These serve purposes which includes remembering ancestors, community reinforcing, hospitality, covenant making and spiritual affinity. Communal meal sharing in African culture is a fundamental way to build relationships and show hospitality, it mirrors the communal nature of the Last Supper (Okoye, 2016). The use of food and drink as offerings to ancestors and spirits in African traditions can illustrate the concept of "remembrance" in Luke 22:19, with libation providing a cultural analogy for remembering Christ through wine (Lose, 2013). The biblical symbolism of bread (divine provision, sacrifice) and wine (joy, celebration and covenant) may differ from that of African staple foods, usually fastened more directly to sustenance and cultural identity (White 2011). The historical absence of wheat and grapes in some African regions also mean that these items may lack the essential cultural importance of local foods and drinks. The methodology involves textual analysis, comparative analysis of symbolism, using scholarly literature and applying African cultural hermeneutics for an Afri-centric interpretation.

Textual Criticism and Literary Structure in Luke's Gospel

Modern commentaries on Luke often adopt the established critical text without engaging recent developments in textual criticism, resulting in a persistent gap between manuscript studies and Lukan exegesis (Barnhill & Parsons, 2019). Variant readings in Luke 22:19 b–20—most notably the presence or absence of "Do this in remembrance of me"—suggest that some scribes harmonised Luke's institution narrative with earlier eucharistic traditions (Ehrman, 1993). Close attention to individual manuscript families can thus illuminate how theological concerns shaped the text even in Luke's Gospel (Barnhill & Parsons, 2019)



Biblical Interpretation of Bread and Wine in Luke 22:19-20

Traditional theological interpretations of the bread and wine in the Eucharist differ significantly among Christian denominations (Nelson, 2023). The Catholic Church teaches Transubstantiation, the belief that the bread and wine become the actual body and blood of Christ while retaining their appearance (Akin, 2023). Martin Luther proposed Consubstantiation, where Christ's body and blood are present "in, with, and under" the bread and wine. This term is in link with Lutheran theology. The Memorial view, common in Baptist traditions, sees the elements as symbolic reminders of Christ's sacrifice (Bible hub). Reformed theology, following John Calvin, usually emphasizes a Spiritual Presence, where Christ is truly present spiritually to empower believers through the Holy Spirit.

Despite these variations, denominations generally agree that the bread and wine symbolise Christ's body and blood, signifying his atoning sacrifice (Christianity.com). The Eucharist is widely understood as a remembrance of Christ's death, a participation in his life, and an anticipation of his imminent return. The terms "body" and "blood" are deeply important within the New Covenant. The "body" represents Christ's physical sacrifice and the community of believers (the Church). The "blood" symbolises the shedding of his life for atonement and the establishment of the New Covenant based on grace through faith, replacing the old covenant of the Law (Jacobson, 2017). In African cultures, where blood can symbolise life force and lineage and covenants are often sealed through shared rituals, these terms may carry additional layers of meaning.

The Symbolism of Bread and Wine in African Tradition

Across Africa's diverse cultures, staple foods and celebratory drinks hold great symbolic weight beyond just sustenance. In West Africa, yam is significant to cultural identity and harvest festivals (Mbiti, 1969). Cassava and maize are staple foods in many regions, crucial to daily life and communal meals. Drinks like palm wine and millet beer are used widely in social gatherings, ceremonies and covenant rituals across various African cultures (Mbiti, 1969). The specific meanings vary by ethnic group and region, reflecting the continent's rich diversity. Food and drink are mostly used in African rituals, ceremonies and social events for numerous purposes. They usually connect the living and the spiritual realms, serving as offerings to ancestors (living dead) and spirits for gratitude, respect, or blessings (Parrinder, 1962). They mark important life's events like births, weddings and funerals through special traditional dishes and drinks. Communal dining and sharing food and drink are powerful expressions of hospitality, unity and the forging of social bonds and covenants (Okoye, 2016). Some foods and drinks are also believed to have healing or spiritual properties (McKenzie, 2011).



Comparing African food representation with biblical bread and wine symbolism reveal both overlaps and divergences (Nelson, 2023). African staple foods signifying sustenance, provision and community resonate with the biblical symbolism of bread. Similarly, African celebratory drinks related to joy, celebration and social bonding share themes with biblical wine. Nevertheless, historical, cultural and agricultural differences lead to diversities. The specific cultural associations of biblical bread and wine, embedded in a Mediterranean context with wheat and grapes as staples, may not directly coincide with African cultures where these were not historically prevalent. For instance, while breaking bread in the Last Supper stands for Christ's broken body, similar actions with African staple foods might have different primary cultural meanings (Lose, 2013; White 2011).

Historical Setting of the Last Supper & Passover Meal

Jesus' actions at the Last Supper draw heavily on Passover typology. He refashioned the paschal lamb's sacrifice in terms of his impending death, interpreting bread and wine as new covenant signs embedded in first-century Jewish sacrificial meals (Pitre, 2016). Nevertheless, the Synoptic omission of key Seder elements (lamb, bitter herbs, four cups) and John's chronology—placing Jesus' death “before the festival of the Passover”—have led scholars to question whether the Last Supper was a formal Passover Seder (Klawans, 2001). Contrary to later liturgical readings, the meal may contemplate an ordinary Jewish fellowship setting rather than a rigid Seder format. In Luke 22:19-20 the command to “do this in remembrance of me” has two functions both a memorial and a call to communal service, echoing African meal traditions where shared eating symbolises covenant solidarity and mutual care (Nsiah, 2020). This outlook highlights the role of the supper in forging moral and relational bonds within the faith community. Luke's two layers account - first as reminiscence of Jesus' self-offering and then as inauguration of a new covenant fellowship blend Hellenistic libation patterns with Jewish meal rites to form a liturgical practice that both celebrates the past and anticipates God's Coming kingdom (Working Preacher, 2017).

Comparative Symbolic Analysis

In Luke 22:19–20, the language of institution fuses covenant and sacrifice into meal elements. “This is my body, which is given for you,” and “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:19–20, ESV) place the very substance of Christ's redemptive self-offering into the bread and wine. The demonstrative pronoun τὸδε (“this”) in verse 19 functions as a performative sign, definitively associating the loaf with Jesus's body poured out on the cross (Nsiah, 2021:91). “Unity, communalism, and sacrifice are characteristics of a true eucharistic community” (Nsiah, 2021:103), a triad that



also features many African meal customs. In Ethiopia, *gurasa* the practice of feeding one another mouthfuls from a shared plate—embodies interdependence and mutual care (Chamisso, 2024:53). Among the Agĩkũyũ, *igongona*—the reciprocal passing of fermented beer cups—creates a living symbol of fellowship and shared life (Ndegerege, 2019:1–2). And in Urhobo sacrificial meals, *Emu r’iye ego*, the community’s partaking of a slain animal dramatizes covenantal fellowship and communal blessing (Omosor, 2023:1). By reading the Last Supper alongside these indigenous symbols, the bread and cup appear not only as memorial markers, but as implementations of covenant renewal, sacrificial love and communal healing. The socio-rhetorical texture of the text highlights this dimension: “Religious texts ... connect [readers] with the sacred,” and the ritual act of blessing and sharing the meal “enables the reader to perceive ... the word of God intended for teaching and educating the faith community” (Etukumana & Areghan, 2023:5 - 6). Thus, the Lukan eucharist reverberates fully with African prototypes of food-sharing as divine encounter and covenant solidarity.

Bread in African Cultural Perspectives

Across Africa as a continent, bread and other staple foods serve not only as sustenance but as powerful symbols of identity, heritage, and communal belonging. In South Africa’s Cederberg mountains, everyday bread-making rituals anchor rural communities to ancestral landscapes and reinforce intergenerational ties (Kriel, Meth, & Swanepoel, 2024). In Uganda, millet bread functions as an ethnic emblem: its preparation, presentation, and consumption both distinguish group boundaries and promote solidarity among clans (Amone, 2014). In Ghana, the evening *fufu* meal remains the defining “proper” plate, uniting households in shared memory and social obligation (Miller, 2021). Underscoring these practices is a broad African culinary logic in which starch staples structure not just diets but entire social worlds what McCann (2009) terms as a “coherent body of food preparations” that scaffold communal rituals and cultural continuity. In the Cederberg, bread-making remains a communal craft handed down through families, connecting modern households to locally harvested grains and environmental rhythms (Kriel et al., 2024). In the same vein, among Ugandan ethnic groups, millet bread is both a dietary staple and a public declaration of heritage: variations in grain type and baking method signal clan allegiance and regional roots (Amone, 2014).

Ghanaian *fufu* ceremonies exemplify how shared meals foster social contracts: participants jointly pound cassava and plantain, strengthening teamwork and harmony, while the final communal feast reiterates kinship responsibilities (Miller, 2021). More broadly, African food traditions are celebrated as acts of hospitality and family bonding,



where the act of serving bread or staple dishes cements trust and mutual care (Afrenet, 2025).

African menu mostly centre on one or more starch staples—maize, millet, cassava, or plantains—around which complementary tastes, textures, and rituals blend. McCann (2009) describes this as a “distinct and consistent body of food preparations,” whereby staples not only nourish but also shape social order and cultural memory (McCann, 2009). Jack Goody’s comparative work highlights that, unlike Classics of topnotch cuisine elsewhere, African societies maintain egalitarian meal structures built on shared staple consumption, mirroring socio-economic modes of production that prized communal over elite dining (Goody, 1982). Bread and other staples remain central to African social life from mountain home steads to village compound transmitting heritage, structuring rituals, and sustaining communal bonds. In many African communities, beverage fermentation is a household or village-level activity, employing locally available substrates honey, palm sap, or banana juice and indigenous microbial flora (Steinkraus, 1995). Through spontaneous or back-slopping fermentation, families pass down starter cultures, ensuring continuity of flavour and probiotic properties (Jespersen, 2003; Tamang et al., 2020). The production process usually involves collective participation: duties such as sap tapping, mashing, or honey harvesting are carried out by gender- and age-defined groups, buttressing social bonds (Steinkraus, 1995; Jespersen, 2003). Sharing these beverages is not separated from African notions of hospitality. Upon arrival, a visitor is offered a cup of palm wine or banana beer, signifying welcome and the host’s generosity (Tamang et al., 2020). Refusing such an offering can be seen as a breach of etiquette or even an affront to communal unity (Steinkraus, 1995). In many cultures, the pouring of drink for an elder or guest of honour follows strict protocols often beginning with a libation poured on the ground as an invocation of ancestors (Tamang et al., 2020).

Spiritual and Ancestral Connotations

Fermented drinks function as liminal substances in African cosmologies, linking the material world and the realm of spirits or ancestors (Steinkraus, 1995). Libations of palm wine or beer to household shrines summon the presence of ancestors, seeking their guidance, protection, or favour in agricultural and domestic affairs (Tamang et al., 2020). In some societies, special batches are reserved solely for ritual purpose; these may be infused with aromatic herbs to retain a ‘living’ quality believed to appeal to deities (Steinkraus, 1995). The exuberance and transformation deep-rooted in fermentation metaphorically reverberate with themes of renewal and rebirth. As yeast converts sugars into alcohol and carbon dioxide, communities discern a parallel in spiritual regeneration, especially resonant when reflecting on the symbolic “blood of Christ” in Luke 22:20



(Tamang et al., 2020). As a result, African fermented beverages become living emblems of both earthly fellowship and transcendent communion with the divine and ancestral dead.

Case Studies

Ethiopian Tej

Tej is Ethiopia's iconic honey wine, fermented in clay vessels (beri) using a wild yeast starter called gesho (*Rhamnus prinoides*) (Bahiru et al., 2001). Production varies among households, but typically involves blending honey and water, adding crushed gesho leaves, and fermenting for five to ten days (Bahiru et al., 2001). Tej's sweetness, volatile acidity, and phenolic elements contribute to both its sensory attraction and supposed health benefits (Bahiru et al., 2001). In Ethiopian culture, Tej accompanies weddings, Meskel and other communal gatherings; it is both a gift and a fellowship medium (Steinkraus, 1995). The communal sharing from a single pot emphasizes unity, while pouring the first cup as an offering to saints or ancestors signifies deep spiritual implications (Steinkraus, 1995).

West African Palm Wine

Palm wine, tapped from species such as *Elaeis guineensis* or *Raphia hookeri*, is universal across West Africa (Amoa-Awua et al., 2007). The fresh, sweet sap ferments rapidly, yielding a mildly alcoholic beverage typically consumed within hours of collection (Amoa-Awua et al., 2007). Microbiological studies reveal a succession of yeasts (for example, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) and lactic acid bacteria that shape its flavour profile (Jespersen, 2003; Amoa-Awua et al., 2007). In Igbo society, *Nkwu-Elu* (palm wine ceremony) is central to marriage rites: the prospective husband must present palm wine to the bride's family, symbolising respect and the request for ancestral approval (Onuegbu, 2015). Beyond courtship, palm wine ceremonies mark festivals, funerals, and oath-taking; libations offered to deities at shrines brings about communal well-being and ancestral blessings (Onuegbu, 2015).

East African Banana Beer

Known by names such as urwagwa (Rwanda) or malwa (Tanzania), banana beer derives from mashed, ripened bananas diluted and fermented with sorghum or millet gruels. Fermentation may last one to three days, producing a beverage with moderate acidity and alcoholic strength (Byaruhanga et al., 1999; Shale et al., 2014). Banana beer plays a central role in communal events harvest festivals, initiations, and clan meetings where large batches are brewed together with (Byaruhanga et al., 1999). Offerings of beer to



ancestral spirits accompany agricultural rituals, soliciting for a bountiful harvest. However, open fermentation can introduce microbial and biochemical contaminants, a concern for both health and ritual purity (Shale et al., 2014).

Implications for Eucharistic Theology in African Churches

Inculturation invites the intentional weaving of cultural meal symbols into Eucharistic liturgies so that “do this in remembrance of me” is proclaimed from within the full texture of local identities. The elements and gestures of Ethiopia’s *gurəša*, *Agīkūyū igongona*, or *Urhobo Emu r’iye ego* can enrich homiletics and ritual, allowing congregants to recognize Christ’s self-giving in familiar patterns of shared sustenance (Ottuh et al., 2016:241). Drawing on sacrificial meal imagery deepens appreciation for Christ’s once-for-all atonement. The covenant enacted through *Emu r’iye ego*’s communal feast, for instance, brings cultural analogues to Christ’s substitutionary sacrifice without dwindling its uniqueness (Omosor, 2023:1). In the same vein, framing the cup as a symbol of covenant blood resonates with the life-giving reciprocity of *igongona*, thereby strengthening sacrificial themes while avoiding syncretism through careful catechesis (Ndegerege, 2019:2).

As a socio-rhetorical act of reconciliation, the Eucharist becomes more than remembrance: it depicts peace and communal restoration. “A text has a transforming and illuminating ability for the faith community” (Etukumana & Areghan, 2023:7), and so stressing the Lord’s Supper’s healing dimension can strengthen African churches to proclaim forgiveness not only in word but in shared meal participation. This enriched Eucharistic theology demands robust theological formation. While “unity, communalism, and sacrifice” find natural expression in cultural meal practices, preserving the mystery of Christ’s Supper requires guidance so that liturgical adaptations remain biblically and theologically sound (Nsiah, 2021:103; Okoye, 2002:160). When thoughtfully blended, these cultural symbols do not replace but brighten the one true Body and Blood offered “for you,” drawing African congregations into the heart of Christ’s redemptive feast.

Theological Implications for African Christian Identity

The Eucharist, as a theological act of remembrance, sacrifice and communion becomes a decisive lens through which African Christian identity is both defined and expressed. Grounded in the memory of Christ’s redemptive act, the Eucharist not only bridges heaven and earth but also embodies a dynamic narrative of African agency in Christian worship. In post-colonial African contexts, the Eucharist offers a counter-narrative to enforce liturgical forms by serving as a theological space for self-definition and cultural reclamation. African Christian identity, in this light, is not an inert assimilation into



Western Christianity but a reconstruction of the Christian faith through indigenous symbols and cosmologies. This theological task demands that Christianity in Africa be more than a naturalised faith; it must be deeply rooted in the historical, spiritual and communal realities of the African people (Akper, 2020). The bread and wine, as liturgical symbols, cease to be neutral carriers of grace they become re-evaluated in contexts where maize, millet or palm wine hold sacramental resonance, making known an incarnational theology that speaks with African idioms and through African levels of meaning. As a result, the Eucharist does not dilute identity but confirms it. By participating in the meal that Christ instituted, African believers enact a communal memory that aligns their spiritual heritage with their cultural selfhood. This integrative process resists the cultural marginalisation often perpetuated by global liturgical uniformity. The symbolic re-appropriation of the Eucharist positions it as a vital theological cornerstone in the ongoing negotiation of African Christian identity within a global Church.

Challenges and Opportunities in Inculturation

While inculturation holds obligation for contextualising Christian worship, it also confronts important theological and ecclesiological challenges. One main tension lies in the balance between maintaining the universal character of the Eucharist and expressing it through local cultural forms. Symbolic elements such as vestments, sacred vessels, and even language become sites of negotiation between fidelity to tradition and relevance to contemporary African communities. The absence of sufficient theological frameworks for such adaptation often leads to uncertainty or resistance within ecclesial structures (Osei-Bonsu, 2024). In Kenya, for example, the inculturation of Eucharistic symbols within Anglican traditions is inhibited not only by theological conservatism but by lack of adequate recognition of laity as theological agents. Clericalism, inherited from missionary structures, hinders liturgical creativity and limits the Eucharistic table to inherited designs that feel foreign to many congregants (Kiarie, 2019). These hindrances, however, also serve as opportunities for renewal. They call the Church in Africa to review the doctrine of sacramentality in light of indigenous cosmologies where meal-sharing, sacrifice and ancestral veneration supply immerse analogies for Eucharistic involvement. The invitation is not to syncretism but to theological depth to a sacramental imagination that takes both the Gospel and African culture seriously. Liturgical symbols, when thoughtfully contextualised, need not compromise orthodoxy; rather, they have the potential to reawaken a more genuine, incarnational expression of Eucharistic life in Africa's diverse ecclesial settings.



Contribution to Global Eucharistic Scholarship

The African experience of the Eucharist offers a unique and profound contribution to the global theological discourse. In many African cultures, communal meals function not merely as biological necessities but as sacred acts that convey identity, belonging, and spiritual cohesion. These cultural predispositions render African communities particularly receptive to the symbolic depth of the Eucharist, not as an abstract rite but as a lived encounter with divine hospitality (Ronzani, 2022). By bringing these rich liturgical experiences into conversation with global theology, African Eucharistic theology provides a corrective to overly individualised or rationalised interpretations of the sacrament. The Eucharist, when viewed through an African lens, emphasises communal healing, reconciliation, and the breaking down of socio-ethnic barriers—elements urgently needed in a fragmented global Church.

Furthermore, the crossway of Eucharistic theology with globalisation introduces new dimensions to the sacrament's relevance. As Eucharistic practice is challenged by cultural homogenization, consumerism and technological alienation, African theology reaffirms the Eucharist as an act of justice, solidarity and cultural affirmation (Hogan, 2009). It stands as a prophetic symbol against economic exclusion and cultural obliteration, embodying what it means to be one Body in Christ within a profoundly pluralistic world. Thus, African Eucharistic reflection enriches the universal Church, not as an exotic theological supplement, but as an essential voice that embodies the Gospel in its fullness, rooted, contextual, and completely communal.

Conclusion

This study has undertaken an examination of Luke 22:19-20, exploring the deep symbolism of the bread and wine of the Eucharist through the illuminating lens of African cultural outlook. Moving beyond traditional, often Western-centric interpretations, the analysis reveals important resonance between the biblical institution of the Lord's Supper and the deep seated values and practices embedded within various African societies. The symbolism of staple foods (like millet, fufu, yam) as markers of identity, community and sustenance, alongside the role of fermented beverages (palm wine, tej, banana beer) in hospitality, ritual, celebration and ancestral connection, provides a rich comparative framework. The investigation highlighted how core African concepts—such as communalism (evident in practices like Ethiopian *gurəša*), covenant solidarity (seen in *Agĩkũyũ igongona* or *Urhobo Emu r'ye ego*), the significance of memory and tradition, and the spiritual significance of shared meals and libations parallel and deepen the theological understanding of the Eucharist. Luke's emphasis on remembrance ("Do this in remembrance of me") and the sacrificial ("given for you," "poured out for you") and



covenantal ("new covenant in my blood") aspects of the meal finds vibrant echoes in African cultural practices, enriching the interpretation of Christ's self-giving love and the formation of the faith community.

The implications of this cross-cultural reading are numerous. Theologically, it offers pathways for meaningful inculturation within African churches, allowing the Eucharist to be celebrated in manners that resonate profoundly with local identities and experiences, thereby promoting its perceived relevance and transformative power. It foregrounds the communal, relational and reconciliatory dimensions of the sacrament, providing a corrective to overly individualistic interpretations. For African Christian identity, integrating these cultural symbols validates indigenous heritage within Christian faith expression, serving as a theological cornerstone for self-definition in post-colonial contexts. Furthermore, this perspective makes a vital contribution to global Eucharistic scholarship by stressing lived experience, communal healing, hospitality and social justice, enriching the universal Church's understanding of this central Christian rite. While challenges in inculturation regarding theological fidelity and ecclesial structures persist, the opportunity to develop a robust, contextually rooted Eucharistic theology provides a significant path forward for the Church in Africa and beyond. Therefore, reading Luke 22:19-20 through African eyes underlines the universal message of the gospel while celebrating its competence to be greatly embodied within divergent cultural particularities.

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