

UNIVERSITY OF KWA-ZULU NATAL

**AN INCULTURATIVE CRITIQUE OF HOLY COMMUNION
SYMBOLS WITHIN THE ANGLICAN COMMUNITY OF THE
DIOCESE OF THIKA KENYA**

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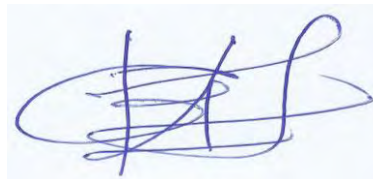
(Pietermaritzburg Campus)

2015

DECLARATION

This study was undertaken at the School of Religion Philosophy and Classics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg in South Africa.

I hereby declare that this thesis, unless stated otherwise, remains my single-handed work and has not been presented to any other institution of higher learning. It is hereby submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Systematic Theology), in the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, South Africa.



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Pietermaritzburg, 2015

As Supervisors, we approved this thesis for submission

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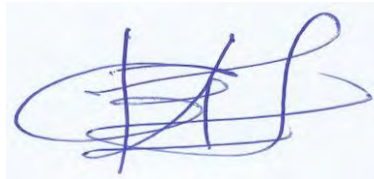
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EDITING CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned declare that we have abided by the language editing policy of the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics in the College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal. We also declare that earlier forms of this dissertation have been retained should they be required.

Lou Levine

Lou Levine, Language Editor



GEORGE KURIA KIARIE

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work firstly to my late mother, Serah Wanja Kiarri, the mother who taught me the Christian faith and virtuous life. Together with my dad, Timothy Kiarri, for he relentlessly kept praying for me and encouraging me to press on in my studies. Thus far my dad and mum, I cherish your warm and tender love you have showed me throughout my life. Mum, thank you very much for teaching me that the ‘blood of Christ’ in the Holy Communion supersedes all other bloods. This blood of Christ has transformed my life and in this fountain, I will dwell forever. It could have been great joy to witness this success so far, but your counsel will ever continue speaking to me.

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ABSTRACT

Holy Communion symbols (wafers and wine) were new phenomenon when they were introduced in the Anglican Church in Kenya. This study seeks to investigate how the diocesan Christians in Thika have constructed meaning around these symbols and the extent to which these symbols have been indigenised in the diocesan context.

The study findings disclose that there is discontent in use of Holy Communion symbols in the Anglican tradition due to different contexts. As symbols are contextual, their use in some Provinces has been perceived as a locus of alienation of the people, rather than salvation. The result has been an unofficial rise of substitution of these symbols in most Provinces in the Anglican Communion, because they are not only foreign symbols, but sometimes offensive to the people they are intended to communicate. In the diocese of Thika, Christians have socially constructed diverse meaning on these symbols as meaning varies and is amplified when symbols are taken out of their context. The study established that these symbols are understood as a symbol of the body and blood of Jesus Christ as universally shared Christian experience in the globe. However, it emerged other diverse meanings constructed by diocesan Christians viewed them as foreign products, prohibited products, symbol of modernity and symbol of neo-colonialism.

The study applied inculturation theory as the framework to unearth the contextual meaning of Holy Communion symbols constructed by diocesan Christians as well as how these symbols have been indigenised in Thika. Methodologically, this study was a qualitative research where sixty-seven participants from twenty-five parishes in the diocese were engaged. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires were engaged while thematic and discourse analyses were used in data analysis. The analysis of the findings suggested dynamic selective (equivalence) inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols. Therefore, the study concludes first, that the diocesan Christians ascribe more to Holy Communion symbols as symbol of the body and blood of Christ in relation to the other constructed meaning. Second, the diocese is conservative, highly influenced by diachronic logic of conscious tradition and its inherited evangelical roots from the English Church. In spite of the imported meaning, Holy Communion symbols been contextualized in the diocese of Thika where there are marginal voices urging for the use of indigenous symbols of nourishment that would communicate to people effectively and lead them to experience God in a more revitalized way in their context.

A NOTE ON KEY TERMS AND IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

Key terms:

Acculturation, Anglican Church in Kenya, Communion, Contextualization, Dynamic Equivalence, Elements, Eucharist, Anglican, Holy Communion, Inculturation, Indigenization, Missio-culture, Muratina, Rite, Sacrament, Wafers, Bread, Wine, Communicants

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACK	Anglican Church of Kenya
AICs	African Instituted Churches
AIPCA	African Independent Pentecost Church of Africa
BCP	Book of Common Prayer
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CSM	Church of Scotland Mission
Dr	Doctor
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECUSA	Episcopal Church in the United States of America
EJCSK	Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by Prophet Simon Kimbangu
Fr	Father
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
KAMA	Kenya Anglican Men Association
KAYO	Kenya Anglican Youth Association
Mt	Mount
MU	Mother's Union
Prof	Professor
Rev	Reverend
St	Saint
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
WCC	World Council of Churches

Working Definitions

Acculturation: Acculturation according to Jesse Mugambi (1995:7) is a sociological concept that refers to the process through which the people of one culture absorb and internalize the norms of another culture and internalize the forms of another culture during the period of encounter between the two cultures. This process of internalization may be spontaneous or forced.

Enculturation: Aylward Shorter (1988:5) says enculturation is a sociological concept that has been used analogously by theologians for the theological notion of inculturation, and this refers to the cultural learning process of the individual, the process by which a person is inserted into his or her individual culture. This means that enculturation is the insertion in one culture with the prime goal of learning it.

Holy Communion: This sacrament is also referred to as the Eucharist, Lord's Supper or Mass in other traditions. W.G. Wilson defines Holy Communion as the sacrament in which, according to Christ's command, Christians make continual remembrance of Him, His passion, death and resurrection until His coming again, and in which Christians thankfully receive the benefits of His sacrifice (1980:339).

Inculturation: Justin Upkong (2013:531) defines inculturation as a way of doing Christian theology, a method of reflecting on the Christian faith in relation to the African context using the mediation of African cultural resources. This implies that inculturation is the mutual dialogue between the Christian faith and the context it encounters, with the ultimate goal of evangelizing one another. Inculturation in this study will entail that mutual dialogue between the gospel and the Kikuyu context, as far as Holy Communion symbols are concerned. When this term is used, it will also be referring to how the indigenous symbols of nourishment or food would be considered for use in the Holy Communion rite.

Indigenisation: Peter Schineller (1990:18) defines the indigenization of theology as where the local community, with its own indigenous leadership, having the primary responsibility and task of developing the teaching, the liturgy and the practice of that local Church.

Liberal: George Carey (1996:15) interprets liberal to mean Christians committed to orthodoxy, though open to new thought, new knowledge and the challenges of our culture. Therefore, the use of this term in this study postulates participants who advocate the use of

indigenous symbols of Holy Communion rather than the imported European food products such as wafers and wine.

Sacrament: Alister McGrath (2001:403) defines this term as the physical or material elements set before the external senses, representing by likeness, signifying by its institutions, and containing by sanctification, some invisible and spiritual grace.

Symbols: F.W. Dillistone (1986:13) defines symbols as an object or pattern that, whatever the reason may be, operates upon human beings, and causes effects in them, beyond mere recognition of what is literally presented in the given form.

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Chapter One

Introducing and Locating the Study

“This is what the Eucharist as nourishment and medicine is for us: it is not merely Christ present to us for contemplation, but much more for our nourishment and vivification” (Bujo 1990:82).

1. Introduction

The sacrament of Holy Communion is the highlight of the Christian worship in the Anglican tradition. This sacrament in the Anglican tradition serves as a significant source of spiritual sustenance for believers in the Christian faith. In light of this, this study envisions to analyse the understanding and practice of the sacramental rite of Holy Communion symbols in the Anglican Church of Kenya (hereafter ACK), Diocese of Thika. It will examine how the Anglicans in Thika have constructed meaning around the Holy Communion symbols. In addition, this study seeks to explore the extent to which the Anglicans have inculturated¹ these symbols within their context.

This introductory chapter establishes the foundation of the study by presenting a general overview of the motivation and background of the study, preliminary literature review, research problem, research questions and objectives, theoretical framework, methods and methodology, scope and limitations and the structure of study.

1.1. Motivation and Background to the Study

The Holy Communion is the central act of worship in the Anglican Church and the climax of any given service. As Bujo observed, this sacrament in the life of Christians reconciles them with God and provides spiritual strength to withstand the wiles of the evil one (1990). However, its significance has not been fully understood and Christians continue to do travesty whenever they participate in it. Philip Tovey suggests that this is because of the foreignness in this rite that is manifested in the use of imported symbols and foreign words in the Holy Communion (2004:47). Thus, the purpose of doing this study is to explore the process of inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols within the Kenyan context in the diocese of Thika and explore the possibilities of using the local staple food. This is anticipated to improve and enhance deeper understanding and practice of this sacrament

¹Inculturation involves an adaptation of Christian liturgy to a non-Christian cultural background that ultimately acquires the cultural traits of the people and context.

within the diocese, because it will be incarnated in the diocesan cultural framework or thought forms. The study was motivated by the following two experiences:

1.1.1. Personal Motivation

The motivation for this study was influenced by two issues: my previous academic studies² and my pastoral experience (2011). In my masters research, I observed that the understanding and practice of the sacramental rite of Holy Communion within the Kenyan context has been approached from a Western classical perspective. That legacy disconnects people from their indigenous understanding and experience of this rite and therefore risks cultural alienation, because according to Joseph Galgalo and Esther Mombo western theology in its uncontextualized form is irrelevant, inadequate and impotent to address challenges facing Africa today (2008:34). This contradiction influenced my interest to further explore what constitutes the most authentic indigenous symbols that best communicate the rite and meaning of Holy Communion within the local context.

The second motivation concerns my pastoral experience in a local Church. I was scheduled to share in the liturgy of Communion but no wafers were available to use as one of the symbols required in the sacrament. The shops in the community were closed because it was the special Easter weekend holiday. Instead of postponing the Holy Communion service in the Church, I opted to use *Chapatti*³ instead of wafers - the traditional and officially approved bread for use in the rite of Holy Communion. This unfamiliar practice in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion within the diocese raised theological, missiological and cultural issues among the local Christians, with regard to the authenticity of *Chapatti* as an element of Holy Communion. It also posed an important question concerning what constitutes the theological justification for the use of a locally produced food substitute that can communicate the meaning of the symbol instead of always depending on the foreign imported wafers and the branded 'altar' wine.⁴ These questions, according to Sammy Githuku, suggest that the Church has not become a vital part of African life as the evidence of this manifests itself in the worship life of the Church, biblical interpretation, liturgy and Church structures (2012:16). This research therefore offers the space to examine what would be the best

²In this study I noted that unless inculturation of Holy Communion is done the Christians will continue to do travesty to this holy meal for they do not well understand its significance in their life as Christians.

³Originally *Chapatti* was an Indian/Asian food according to Ken Albala (2011:82), but took root in Kenya during the colonial era when the Indians migrated to Kenya. Now it has become a common staple food among many Kenyans.

⁴This is the officially approved brand of wine for use in the Anglican Church of Kenya.

inculturative local elements that could replace the imported elements of wafers and wine as the uncritically accepted traditional practice of the sacrament of Holy Communion.

1.1.2. Academic Motivations

This study is also motivated by the Anglican Bishops in Africa conference that was held in Lagos, Nigeria in November 2004 under the theme “Africa Comes of Age.” The bishops echoed that:

The time has come for the Church in Africa to address the pitfalls in our present theological and western worldview education, which has failed to relate with some of the socio-political and economic challenges and Christian faith in Africa. We need well-resourced, highly rated and contextually relevant theological institutions that can engage intelligently with our peculiar challenges from an African perspective (Global South Anglican 2005).

This statement insinuated that African Christianity has not been adequately appropriated in the African thought forms, symbols and images because the Church has inherited imperial western theological principles, influences and formation. The result according to Shorter is a Euro-American Church in an African context, with patchy piecemeal adaptation that incorporates elements of African culture into basically foreign structures, rites and institutions (1999:60). Therefore, the bishops suggested that there is a need to listen to African culture so that the gospel can be appropriated accordingly in order to answer in a culturally meaningful way the questions posed by the African people. This study on the inculturative significance of Holy Communion symbols used in the diocese of Thika constitutes a response to the challenge. I was concerned about the imported symbols of wafers and wine in the diocese of Thika and whether it was theologically and culturally acceptable to switch to the use of indigenous food in the Holy Communion. Is there any theological justification for that? Issues relating to the challenge of indigenizing the Communion have emerged in other African contexts according to Phillip Tovey, who pointed out that: “The issue of the Eucharistic species was raised and a very welcome stress given to listening to local cultures ... in favor of indigenization in this area ... and said that more work was needed. Kanamai (1993) suggested that local foods and drinks could be used and that Provinces consider the matter” (2004:137). Therefore, the African Bishops focus on the subject challenged me to engage in this study to examine whether the Holy Communion symbols used in the diocese need to undergo an inculturative assessment to find out the significance of the meaning that they communicate within the culture and whether alternative local symbols would be more meaningful.

1.2. Introducing the Anglican Church of Kenya

According to Barney Hawkins the Anglican Church in Kenya has a long and rich history and traces its beginning from the middle of the nineteenth century with the arrival of the Anglican missionaries at the port of Mombasa in the Indian Ocean (2013:163, see also Church Province of Kenya 1994:2). Julius Gathogo, Dickson Nkonge and Grant LeMarquard point out that the Anglican Church in Kenya is a product of mission work overseas by Church Mission Society [CMS *hereafter*] led by Johannes Ludwig Krapf and Johann Rebmann⁵ in 1844 and 1846 respectively (2013:35; 2011:156; 2006:287). Krapf and Rebmann found no trace of Christianity as argued by Zablon Nthamburi and Philomena Njeri Mwaura because the Portuguese⁶ attempt to ‘evangelize’ East Coast of Africa had failed and it was only the dilapidated Fort Jesus and some ramshackled buildings erected by the Portuguese that could speak there once being Christianity there (1991:8; 2004:161).

The CMS was an evangelical wing of the Church of England that evangelized mostly in East Africa (Barker 1986:122). It placed much emphasis on personal salvation and the imminent coming of Christ, for they were convicted to convert as many ‘heathens’ as possible. Kamuyu-wa-Kangethe described this wing as “it evolved mainly from the Low Anglican Church of England [and its] Evangelical theology was basically selective, individualistic, pietistic, often unreflective. It embraced cultural norms and values such as abstaining from drinking, dancing, sex [unless it was for procreation], smoking, possession of worldly things, secular life and so on” (1988:24). John Pobee argues that the CMS missionaries were persuaded that the Bible was the rule of faith; justification was by faith in Christ alone with no room for a system of sacramentalism and conviction on the sole and exclusive priesthood of Jesus Christ (2009:26). In this line of thought, when CMS missionaries established Churches in Kenya they introduced ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ to the Africans who joined their newly founded religion. Through the CMS presence in Kenya, the Diocese of Eastern Equatorial Africa was formed, including Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika (modern day Tanzania) with Bishop James Hannington as the first bishop (Anglican Church of Kenya 2014). This diocese became an extension of the English Church overseas argues Dillistone, for there was stubborn

⁵Krapf and Rebmann were German pastors from Wuerttemberg and they were from the Pietist tradition of the local Lutheran Church. The CMS hired them to be missionaries in Africa for it was normal for the Evangelical wing of Church of England to recruit non-Anglican missionaries.

⁶Gathogo cited the reasons that affected the Portuguese Christianity in the East Coast of Africa as hostility and tension with Muslims, wanting moral behaviour of the Portuguese priests and Christians which escalated sour relationship with the inhabitants in the Coast, link with oppression and fraud. All these made them fail to win the converts in the East African Coast and Christianity disappeared with their demise in the Coast only to be revived by Krapf and Rebmann when they came (2013:33-34).

reluctance to establish independent dioceses overseas, far removed from direct allegiance to the crown (1986:209). Therefore, in 1927 the Province of Kenya was established after Northern Tanganyika was separated from the Diocese of Mombasa.

The missionaries came first, followed by the colonists, for the Bible came first to pacify the Africans, followed by the flag, according to Christopher Allen (2013:10; see also Carpenter 1960:1). In the late 1890's, Kenya was already a British Protectorate and the missionaries began to enjoy privileges such as security from the colony. The colony came as a blessing in disguise because the British Protectorate built the Kenya-Uganda railway that opened the interior of Kenya to the European missionaries (Strayer 1978:31). This building of the railway became a catalyst for the influx of missions into the interior throughout Eastern and Central Kenya. This made CMS drastically divert her attention from the East African Coast and their primary focus became Kikuyuland (Nthamburi 1991:11). Accordingly the CMS established mission stations in Kiambu County in Kabete in 1901, while in Muranga County they established in Weithaga and Kahuhia in 1903 and 1906 respectively (Kangethe 1988:29; see also Gathogo 2012). These mission stations became strategic for CMS and other European missionary operations in Kikuyuland. James Karanja cited the flourishing factors that contributed to European missionaries settlement in Kikuyuland, nicknamed then as 'white highland', as missionaries were free from malaria infection [since most Europeans died of malaria and a good example is Krapf's wife immediately they arrived in Mombasa at Rabai] and they held suitable lands for farming that subsidized the little funding they were getting overseas (2009:10).

The presence of all these mission centres attracted other European missions, such as Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) and Africa Inland Missions (AIM) in Central Kenya, leading to friction among the missionaries in competition to win adherents (Nthamburi 1991; Karanja 1999). John Karanja notes, "the location of four Protestant missions in close proximity to each other was bound to produce friction and cause overlapping and confusion. Hence in 1902 CMS and CSM agreed to divide Kikuyu area into spheres, with the CMS getting the territory to the East of a line from Ngong to Mount Kenya and CSM the area to the West of the line" (1999:21). The spheres of influence by the Protestant missionaries disintegrated the African social and religious fabrics. This left Kikuyus with no choice of where to worship but to abide with the sphere in their locality. My own case is a good example, where I am an Anglican by virtue of my locality falling within the CMS line of sphere of influence. The

worst effect of this scramble for ‘African souls’ by the missionary societies was hostility or a negative spirit against their counterparts (Mugambi and Magesa 1990:33).

With the advent of British colonialism in Kenya, English missionaries neglected their earlier focus on the Africans and instead concentrated on their white immigrants. This was evident in white priests and bishops in Kenya whose main mission was chaplaincy to English nationals and not Africans. This racial discrimination coupled with expulsion of the Africans from their ancestral lands by both colonists and the missionaries in Kenya led Kikuyus to not be able to distinguish between colonists and missionaries. So they concluded with a slogan: “*gutiri muthungu na mubia*’ that is, there is no distinction between a colonizer and a missionary” (Mugambi 1989:23; Lonsdale 2000:194). Ngugi wa Thiong’o in his novel *A Grain of Wheat* depicts missionaries behaving like the colonists who displaced the Africans because when the white priest asked the Africans to join in the Lord’s Prayer by closing their eyes, the white priest did not close eyes while Africans did, after the prayers the Africans had no land but the bible (1967:18).

However, by 1970 the Church took another turn when the leadership was handed-over to the Africans [native Kenyans] and saw the first black African Archbishop Festo Olang.⁷ This was in line with Henry Venn’s theory of 3 selfs,⁸ that is a self-propagating, self-supporting and self-governing Church. Since then, the Church has been growing tremendously at a growth rate of about 6.7 per cent per annum and today the Anglican Church in Kenya enjoys thirty-two dioceses and Thika Diocese is one of them (Nkonge 2011:166).

1.3. Background of the ACK Diocese of Thika

In the light of the above, it is true to say that the Anglican Church in Kenya is liturgically and ecclesiologicaly a carbon copy of the Church of England in all its forms. This is evident for instance in the English modal of Holy Communion liturgy that approves the use of wafers

⁷Bishop Olang and bishop Obadiah Kariuki were the first Kenyans to be consecrated by Archbishop of Canterbury at Namirembe cathedral in Kampala, Uganda on May 15, 1955. Both were consecrated as assistant bishops of the diocese of Mombasa. See also bishop Obadiah Kariuki (1985).

⁸Henry Venn was CMS General Secretary from 1841 - 1872. Max Warren described him as an outstanding missionary leader, thinker and administrator of the 19th Century (1971:636). His main idea of his theory argues Adrian Hasting was to establish a local Church overseas with all local elements after ‘euthanasia’ of mission (1994:294). This form of indigenization process initiated by Venn failed because of white missionaries racist supremacy (Pobee 1979:57), acting with mixed motives and unduly moralistic ethics (Kala et al 2010:162), imposition of Western lifestyle in the African Church rather than adopting the contextualization of Christian faith (Hasting 1994:290; Knighton 2012:24), spirit of imperialism (Stephen Bevans and Rogers Schroeder 2006:265), dependency syndrome (Gerloff 2003:230) and Nthamburi conclude that it was more theoretical than practical (2000:117).

and branded altar wine, that are foreign products in diocese of Thika. These symbols prompted me to examine their inculturation journey in the diocese in order to get the meaning given to wafers and wine by Christians after they appropriated them in their context. The diocese is unique due to her hybridity, born from its population composition of Christians that come from Kiambu and Murang'a counties with different worldviews and stereotypes⁹ toward each other. Furthermore, its conservative leadership in a pluralistic world today makes it an interesting locality to examine the inculturation of Holy Communion symbols. As a hybrid diocese that is open to change, doing this study would prove effective but provocative at the same time.

The diocese covers a geographical area of approximately 1960 square Kilometers (ACK Diocese of Thika 2009:14). It is located 45 kilometers to the North East of Nairobi, the capital City of Kenya. The Diocese was created in July 1998 after it was carved from the dioceses of Mount Kenya South and Mount Kenya Central (Anglican Church in Kenya: Church Diary and Lectionary 2014). Its jurisdiction falls both in Kiambu county and in Murang'a county in Central Kenya and it comprises of seven archdeaconries (Cathedral, Ruiru, Mang'u, Kariara, Giachuki, Memorial and Juja) and sixty parishes with eighty-nine clergy.

The diocese is highly inhabited by the Kikuyu ethnic group and they widely speak the Gikuyu language, according to Humphrey Waweru, which is the third most spoken language in the country, after English and Kiswahili (2005:158). The main economic activity in the diocese is agriculture, as the diocese is located in the Kenyan highlands, hosting pineapple, coffee and tea estates. There is also dairy farming and a number of industries. This has led some people to nickname Thika as the 'Birmingham' of Kenya.

The ACK Diocese of Thika as a member of the Anglican Church in Kenya has approximately four million members and inherited a unique identity from CMS that placed more emphasis on personal salvation and imminent *Parousia* as highlighted above (Nkonge 20011:154). As a member of the Anglican Communion, the diocese shares what the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams described Anglican Church uniqueness in reformed commitment to the absolute priority of the Bible for deciding doctrine, a catholic loyalty to the sacraments and the threefold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons, and a habit of

⁹The stereotype that prevails in Kiambu about Murang'a people is they are backward. This perception is symbolically coded in the Kikuyu term *metumi ndigi maguru* while Kiambu people are thought to be enlightened due to their proximity to Nairobi city so perceived *niacune maito ni mbaka*.

cultural sensitivity and intellectual flexibility (quoted by Ndungane 2006:17). The diocese in realization of her mission and vision,¹⁰ has been faithfully preaching the word of God and administering sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion to its members, as this is the true mark of a Church according to Article XIX of Religion of Anglican Church (Welchman MDCCLVIII: 47).

1.4. Literature Review

In this section, the study will review literature on symbols and give more attention to religious symbols, that is Holy Communion symbols of wafers and wine. It will also examine their role in human life as well as their characteristics. Consequently, it reviews literature on the debate on inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in the global Church.

1.4.1. Symbols

Scholars such as Sussane Langer, Victoria Urubshurow and Solomon Oduma-Aboh argue that the human being is a symbol making being (1957:134; 2009:6; 2014:138). This envisions that human life is full of symbols. This unique ability in a human being observes Oduma-Aboh distinguishes the human being from other species in the animal kingdom or vegetable kingdom (2014:138). Anthropologist Raymond Firth discloses that this term symbol is derived from the Greek root word *symbolos* and related words, which referred literally to the putting together of that which had been divided (1973:47). Therefore, symbol according to C.G. Jung, implies “something vague, unknown or hidden from us ... thus a word of an image is symbolic when it implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning” (1979:7). Sociologist Nijole Benokraitis also defines symbol as anything that stands for or represents something else to which people attach meaning (2015:267).

In light of this, it is worth noting that a symbol is different from a sign. While a sign points to something, a symbol communicates the very thing it represents. As philosopher Mel Thompson singled out, “a sign is something that points to something else [while] by contrast a symbol is something that evolves and that expresses and make real the power of that which it symbolizes” (2010:160). A good illustration is to compare a traffic light and a flag. A traffic light when it signals green points to the motorist that it is safe to move, while a flag is a symbol that symbolize patriotism to its nationals. This means that signs only point at

¹⁰The mission is to equip God’s people to transform the society with the Gospel while the vision is a growing, caring Anglican Church boldly proclaiming Christ (See Church Diary and Lectionary 2014).

something that they have no relation to, while the symbols represent the very object they relate to. Therefore, anthropologist Clifford Geertz observed that symbols are forms of objects, behaviour or stories that represent or remind one of something else (1973:128).

As the life of human beings is full of symbols, they play a significant role in their life. One of the crucial roles of symbols in any given society is communication, as observed by scholars (such as Firth 1973; Mbiti 1991; Sundermeier 1998; Mligo 2013; Dillistone 1986; Oduma-Aboh 2014). However, Jung described symbols as vague, unknown and with hidden meaning; the prime goal of symbols is to unveil the meaning to the people in their day-to-day life in their cultural context. In this regard, Oduma-Aboh suggests that they help us in our “inter- and intra-communication” (2014:140). Thus symbols are means and tools of communicating reality in life to the people in a given context. This helps people construct meaning in their life in relation to their visible and invisible world as Elia Mligo notes “the relationship between one person and another and the relation between one person and nature is enhanced by use of symbols. In this interaction, symbolism is the key role towards the proper understanding of the real meaning of life” (2013:40).

The symbols as communication tools in the society are well rooted such that the meaning they convey is socially constructed and culturally understood and accepted. This implies that symbols are not designed for communicating to ‘outsiders’, but to the people in a particular context and who share common life experience. Dillistone argues that communication is intended to achieve a single, direct result by using the sign or signal, which belongs to the common terminology of a particular cultural system (1986:8). In light of this, sociologist Benokraitis observed that symbols become a tool that unites people in a given society and at the same time divide the people if one is not initiated in that culture (2015:41). Thus for the symbols to be understood in the society, they call upon the custodians of that society to interpret them, for Geertz was convinced that meaning is stored in symbols (1973:128). The deeper meanings in symbols are layered according to Jordan Haug, necessitating the need for interpretation (2012:407). However, it still remains a paradox for human beings to fully fathom symbols, due to their mystical nature. As Jung put it: “it has a wider ‘unconscious’ aspect that is never precisely defined or fully explained. Nor can one hope to define or explain. As the mind explores the symbol, it has led to ideas that lie beyond the grasp of reason” (1979:7).

Symbols have dynamic powers in them and that is why they really symbolize what they represent (Arbuckle 2001:31; Firth 1973:49; Ott 2000:331). This power says Dillistone moves the human being to do certain things (1986:12). For instance, the symbol of flag moves people toward patriotism and when provoked they can defend their flag, for it is a symbol of their nationality or identity in relation to other people. Besides symbols unveiling reality to humanity by means of communicating to them, they also touch the emotional aspect of the human being and arouse their emotions at the same time. As Theo Sundermeier argues, symbols have a “sensory character in them that speaks to the emotional nature of human beings” (1998:39). When they do stir human emotions, this prompts some people to cry or to be in deep contrition of their deed when they encounter a symbol, since symbols speak deeply to the human imagination.

1.4.2. Religious Symbols

Sociologists Keith Roberts and David Yamane say that symbols are categorized into two levels, namely at macro level and micro level (2011). These scholars classified the religious symbols at macro level and nonreligious symbols at micro level. They differentiated these two symbols in the following words:

Macro symbols are those that help one interpret the meaning of life itself and that involve a cosmology or worldview [cross, a loaf of bread or cup]. Because they serve this important function, they tend to acquire a sense of sacredness or profound respect. [while] Many nonreligious symbols are micro symbols that is, symbols that affect everyday interaction with others and thus enhance daily communication and cooperation [for example shaking hands, smile]. Micro symbols do not claim to explain the purpose of life and do not suggest values and beliefs that claim highest priority in one’s life (2011:8).

This suggests that these two levels of symbols play a complementary role in the life of human beings. For religious symbols connect humanity with the invisible world that is divine, while nonreligious symbols help human relate with the visible world that is with one another. Thus, these two levels of symbols coexist together in human life, for they have vertical and horizontal dimensions in them that ensure a healthy society.

In this regard, religious symbols, according to philosopher William Rowe, “are those which ‘support’ and or symbolize symbols on the primary level” (2007:72). Many of these religious symbols says Benokraitis are “objects like cross, bible, bread and wine et al, but also include behaviours like kneeling or bowing one’s head, words and physical appearance” (2015:268). Paul Tillich (1957), a philosopher and theologian, observed that these religious symbols communicate the religious ideas and truth, sentiments shared by a feminist Susanna Mancini

(2009:2631). Tillich was persuaded that religious symbols in human life “not only open up dimensions and elements of reality, which otherwise remain unapproachable but also unlock dimensions and elements of our soul which correspond to the dimensions and elements of reality” (1957:42). Tillich intended to convey that human beings cannot fully comprehend the invisible world and especially the infinite being. The only way to comprehend and express the invisible reality is through symbols that open up that reality and in return our potentiality to grasp that reality unlocked to us. However, philosophers such as Pojman and Rea (2013:54) refute this religious claim, and maintain that symbols only possess some truth. This implies that religious truths are not absolute so to speak but relative, thus holding no moral authority to monopolize truth. To this end, philosophers to defend their cause advanced various arguments. In his evaluation of symbols, Peter Edward critiques Tillich and argued that “it is not possible for religious symbols successfully to represent that which is beyond human experience. There is no way to know if the symbols give the wrong insights about the ultimate reality. Therefore, there is no way of knowing if the symbols are appropriate [because] symbols are about the real world” (Quoted in Jordan et al 2002:19). Two, the religious symbols should not boast of being unique in relation to other symbols for it is one among the equals. Eugene Long substantiates this by saying that religious symbols communicate qualitative or shared experience (2012:47). In this way, they are like other social and artistic symbols. Hence, they dismiss religious symbols claim that they possess truth.

In Christianity, the use of religious symbols as a tool of communication began from its inception in the Greco-Roman world. Firth traces the use of symbols in the Christian faith by noting that they were used in Christian circles to affirm the official statements of religious belief that differentiated Christians from the others (1973:47). This envisions that at first symbols were to convey the Christian faith teaching that distinguished them from non-Christians. For a suspicious and ‘illicit’ religion (if not a sect) in the Roman Empire, Christianity had to invent symbols that communicated and advanced their religious ideas. Thus those who intended to join or know more about this faith, needed to be conversant with its religious symbols. Rose Aden believes that religion speaks in the language of symbols and for one to understand a particular religion one needs to study and understand its symbols (2013:135).

Firth also argues that as the Christian faith became more developed the concept of symbol was also developed in which the notion of a material token was linked with something

unseen, immaterial (1973:48). The Holy Communion symbols of wafers and wine are a good example of the material token linked with Christ's suffering and death on the cross for atonement of human sins to bring salvation. Tovey is right in acknowledging that the sacrament of the Holy Communion is therefore a particular type of symbol (2004:8). Thus wafers and wine are symbols that are rightly used in the sacrament of Holy Communion in the Christian faith, that Tillich observed "are intrinsically related to what they express, [for] they have inherent qualities which makes them adequate to their symbolic function and irreplaceable" (1963:130). For Tillich these are optimal elements to be used in the Holy Communion for they sufficiently express the body and blood of Christ that was shed on the cross for human redemption. Through consecration of these religious symbols, sociologists Ole Riis and Linda Woodhead argued that they bring humanity into a state of insignation that moves and inspires them (2010).

In spite of the significant role the symbols play in human life, it is worth noting that symbols grow and die. Tillich, in dialogue with his student in *Ultimate Concern*, was so regretful of this nature of symbols that he said: "Classical, traditional Christianity has lived in symbols ... all these are great symbols and I don't wish to lose them. We cannot replace them but they may die" (Brown 1965:96). This suggests that as time goes by symbols become out-dated and obsolete and others emerge. This mortal nature of symbols implies that language evolves with time and people develop new symbols for inter and intra communication in the society. George Tavard, following up Tillich's argument on death of symbols, stretches further and discloses that symbols do not die, but rather are killed by a change in the actual encounter (1962:58).

Philosophers such as Louis Pojman and Michael Rea share the same sentiments with Tavard that symbols are killed in religion, rather than them dying naturally. For they observed the religious people being responsible for the death of symbols and not scientific criticism as may be speculated. Their conviction is rightly put "the history of religion right up to our time, is full of dead symbols which have been killed not by a scientific criticism of assumed superstitions but by a religious criticism of religion" (2013:54). Tillich shares the same sentiments with Pojman and Rea and agrees that religious symbols have been killed by religious criticism. He lamented: "We find people who criticize not only the special distortion of the religious symbols but the real meaning of the symbol itself" (Brown 1965:97). When the symbol is distorted, the very meaning it conveys to the people is distorted, for it communicates another meaning according to those who distorted it. The other factor that has

contributed to the death of symbols according to Tovey is demonization (2004:13). A good example of demonized symbols is the African religious symbols that were pushed to the periphery by the missionaries. They were characterized as primitive and pagan, so irrelevant in Christian faith in spite of their religious richness if they could have been integrated in the Christian faith like in the Greco-Roman Church. This factor is closely linked with distortion of the meaning that symbol conveys since the main purpose of distortion is to demonize something. Tvard (1962) is sceptical of the death of symbols that convey the ultimate reality. He disagrees with Tillich that symbols die after being killed, especially the symbols that communicate of ultimate reality. He was swayed that the ultimate does not die, so he found Tillich failed “to be consistent when he does not add: A symbol remains true as long as what it reveals is truth. Since, the Ultimate truth does not disintegrate neither do its symbols” (1962:59). However, scholars such as Friedrich Nietzsche in his works *The Gay Science* (1882) and other proponents¹¹ of the *God is dead movement* would be comfortable to imply since God is already dead spontaneously the symbols that open up dimension and elements of his reality are also dead.

1.4.3. African/Kenyan Symbols

Africans like other races had their own symbols that communicate to them their own unique realities about their deities and life in general. Michael Nabofa identifies one crucial role of symbols in the African societies as maintaining order and coherence in the society (1994:45). Since some of the symbols in the society were attached to cultural taboos that hinged upon core values for mutual co-existence. For instance, in West Africa breaking Kola nut is a symbol of making an everlasting covenant, such that it bonded people together in the society. This means that symbols stirred behaviour in people’s life that ensures healthy society. Robert Neville illustrates how symbols shape human behaviour for good by saying “people engage in meaningful behaviours, because of the meanings and the motives carried by the meanings in the symbols shaping the behaviours, and these behaviours are meaningful in terms of one another because of network character of symbolic meaning” (1996:23). Therefore, Yusufu Turaki notes that symbols in the African societies are closely associated with charms as most communities including Kikuyus attributes symbolic objects to mysterious power especially when associated with spirits or with someone of high status (2006:99).

¹¹Such as Thomas J.J. Altizer (1967), Gabriel Vahanian (1961) et al

When Christian faith was taken in different contexts and especially in Kenya been a good example the cultural symbols that communicated to the people were demonized as pagan. As Firth witnessed that the western anthropologists used western symbolism to interpret ‘primitive symbols’, this became the same yardstick for the missionaries who brought Christianity in regard to measuring Kikuyu religious symbols like slaughtering of goat for meat and blood (1973). The missionaries like the anthropologists perceived their western symbols including Holy Communion symbols of wafers and wine as superior in relation to African symbols. This resulted in sidelining African symbols in Christian worship in spite of their richness to convey the Christian message. Hence, the faith remained clothed in European cultural dress and therefore became superficial due to the foreign symbols used to communicate to the African people. This culminated in disconnection of the people from their reality. As Mligo argues, “to deny Africans of their essential symbols is to deny their self-awareness. Ultimately it is to take away from them their lived reality” (2013:140). Therefore, to restore and reconnect Africans to and with their reality there is a need and urgency for inculturation of the symbols and in this study Holy Communion symbols - wafers and wine.

1.4.4. Inculturation of the Holy Communion Symbols

In light of the above, this section will examine the need of the Holy Communion symbols to assume ‘people’s flesh’ in different contexts. Amy Plantinga Pauw observed that the Christian faith is an incarnational faith that keeps ‘taking on flesh’ in new contexts, so that it may speak the language of the people and use their symbols that are deeply entrenched in their cultural milieu (2007:246). This incarnational ministry when fully accomplished resorts to inculturation of the Christian faith in a new context.

Inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols is one of the discourses in the Christian faith that has sparked a lot of debate around the globe and especially in post-colonial Africa. African scholars are divided in this discourse for there are those who advocate inculturation of symbols in line with the people’s ways of life while others opt to stick to inherited tradition. The proponents of inculturation of Holy Communion symbols raise various arguments to support their stance. Scholars such as Jean Marc Ela, Kabasele Lumbala, Benezet Bujo and Joseph Osei-Bonsu cite economic factors, because these symbols used in this rite are imported from abroad, especially wine (1986; 1998; 2001; 2005). To them this is an economic exploitation of African Christians at the Holy Communion in spite of this meal

being a liberative meal says Ela (1986:6). Dennis Smith and Hal Tausig also add that this is injustice to those people who are compelled to use these symbols in the Holy Communion (1990:88).

The other factor advanced to support the inculturation of Holy Communion symbols is the theological factor. Legrand Lucien for instance argued that Christ was bound by his Mediterranean world and his food habits were more Mediterranean (2000:77). Eugene Uzukwu, Ela, Bujo and P.C. Chibuko argued then that these symbols in the Holy Communion are alien to the African and do not communicate to them in their context (1980; 1986; 1990; 2000). This is in spite of Holy Communion symbols being for spiritual strength to Christians in their ecclesiastical context. For symbols can only be properly understood in their various cultural contexts; and wafers and wine are foreign to most Africans (Bourdillon 1990:10). According to Bujo, it is ironical for most African Christians to joyfully join in liturgy saying these symbols are fruits of their hand yet many have never seen a grapevine and cannot identify with this outlandish drink (1990:121). Hence, there is clamour for the use of indigenous symbols in the Holy Communion, because cultural symbols according to Bernard Lonergan allow people's mind and heart, heart and body to communicate in their spirituality (1972:64).

However, there are those African scholars who oppose this move and argue that there is no need to use the indigenous symbols. Scholars such as Henry Okullu (1974) and C. F. Okoye (1992) fall in this category and they argued that these symbols in the Holy Communion are no longer foreign to Africans for they have been acculturated. Okullu substantiates his argument by saying that wine is no longer strange to Africans such that it is only met at communion, for it is taken in African parties and at homes (1974:57). But the critical question to Okullu is how many Africans afford this wine in countries where most people live on less than one dollar a day? (Kenya National Assembly Report 2001:493). One may suggest that Okullu is arguing that as long as these symbols are available to all there is no need to inculturate them. Okoye adds that they have become local and they are now given unctious and roles in traditional situations (1992:284).

In Africa, this idea of inculturating the Holy Communion symbols is evident. For instance, in Kenya John S. Mbiti cites the Church of Friends of the Holy Spirit who use indigenous food, *Chapatti* and black coffee, though he does not elaborate their theological rationale for using these symbols (1971:114). Dillistone cites the Anglican Church in Uganda that used banana

juice, but the Archbishop of Canterbury abhorred this practice on the grounds of continuity of Church tradition and universality in the communion (1986:208). Uzukwu disagrees with the archbishop's argument because he adamantly maintains that the use of indigenous symbols as elements in the Holy Communion is not a dogmatic issue but a disciplinary one (1980:381). Tovey cites one Roman Catholic bishop Dispont from the diocese of Pala, Chad who celebrated the Eucharist with millet bread and millet beer (2004:46).

At a global level there are voices heard from Asian scholars, such as Jean-Jacques von Allmen (1954:111; 1969:42), Hup Young Kim (2003:134 & 135), Wann Fanwar (2008:31), Jose' de Mesa (2012:20) and Kosuke Koyama (1974). These scholars argued that if Christ was instituting the Eucharistic meal in Asia, he could have used rice, for it is the most commonly cultivated crop and the most eaten meal. To justify their voices, Kim used the symbolic Korean Christology from below by arguing that Christ became rice (2003:134). This is because rice to the Korean people and the Asians at large has multiple connotations of a meal, grain and food. Therefore, rice being the symbol of nourishment to them; they suggest that Christ is the rice of their life.¹² Thus, Christ's incarnation in this context means that fallen humanity attains full humanity in Christ, the rice of life that nourishes them. To this end, Fanwar lamented "rice eaters should recognize Him as their rice; they should not have to learn how to eat bread in order to know Him" (2008:31). To those who cultivate coconut fruit, John Kadiba argues they should view Jesus Christ as the coconut of life (1987: 145). In this regards, the Asian theologians register their dissatisfaction with wafers and wine and prefer the use of their indigenous symbols that communicate to them deeply.

In view of this, this study noted from literature review that there were attempts made in this discourse of inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols in Africa. Such attempts are evident from Tovey (2004), Moses Owdenburg (2005), Edison Kalengyo (2006) and Antony Amadi (2008) on this area of inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols. However, their pieces of work were inadequate for individually admitting their shortcoming. To delineate this Tovey did a survey of different Churches in Africa, both mainline and African Instituted Churches. Due to its large scope in different Churches, it was shallow and lacked in-depth study in a particular Church on inculturation of Holy Communion symbols. He therefore confessed that his work as it is could not claim to be an in-depth study, for he was surveying different Churches, thus a snapshot was given at a particular point (2004:150). Owdenburg in

¹²Compare John 6 Jesus is the bread of life to the Jew, to Korean Christ is the rice of life.

his doctoral thesis only suggested inculturation of the bread and wine among the Hehe people in Tanzania for authentic Christian conversion (2005:248). Kalengyo in his doctoral thesis (2006) dealt with the concept of sacrifice in the Holy Communion and the need to inculturate but he only focused on the understanding of Ganda sacrifices as a way of understanding the Holy Communion among the Baganda people in Uganda. Indeed, he paid little attention in inculturating the Holy Communion elements in his footnote (Kalengyo 2006:295). Amadi came closer to this thesis but he admitted that in his work the area on the use of local staple food had not been adequately addressed and was thus open for further studies (2008:ii). Therefore, lack of an in-depth study on inculturation of Holy Communion symbols using the indigenous food is the gap that this study identified and will attempt to fill.

1.4.5. Research Problem

This study of the doctrine of the sacrament of Holy Communion in the Anglican Church diocese of Thika falls under the discipline of systematic theology. Its understanding has been from classical understanding, that is, what the missionaries brought and taught Kenyans. Since theology is contextual as Galgalo argues strictly speaking, all theology is contextual because it takes the elements from the context this doctrine has never been adequately appropriated within the diocesan cultural context (2012:67). Therefore, this study will critically investigate to what extent the understanding and practice of the elements or symbols used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion have been inculturated within ACK diocese of Thika.

1.5. Key Research Questions, sub-questions and research objectives

1.5.1. Key Research Question

The key research question of this study is: to what extents have the understanding of the elements used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion within ACK diocese of Thika been inculturated?

1.5.2. Sub-Questions

The sub-questions below are vital in addressing this broader question/ research problem.

1. What is the Anglican Church's theological understanding of the Holy Communion?
2. What are socially constructed meanings of the Holy Communion symbols in the ACK Diocese of Thika?

3. How have the Holy Communion symbols been inculturated in the diocese of Thika?
4. What are theological and cultural challenges associated with inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika?

1.5.3. Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- 1.5.1.1. To critically analyse the Anglican Church theological understanding of the Holy Communion.
- 1.5.1.2. To explore how the meaning of the Holy Communion symbols have been socially constructed in the ACK diocese of Thika.
- 1.5.1.3. To examine how the Holy Communion symbols have been inculturated in the ACK diocese of Thika.
- 1.5.1.4. To investigate theological and cultural challenges associated with inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols in the ACK Diocese of Thika.

1.6. Theory and Methodology

This study is undergirded by one theoretical assumption that is inculturation theory. This theory is derived from missiology with a prime aim of contextualizing the meaning attached to the Holy Communion symbols used in the Anglican Church in Kenya. Victor Minichiello and Jeffrey Kottler argue that theories attempt to understand how people perceive and make sense of the world as well as what motivates them to act the way they do (2010:23). Methodologically, this study will be a qualitative research that Michael Patton suggests entails talking and listening to discourses of the people that shape their experiences and perceptions about a particular subject (1990:10). Therefore these two areas constitute the engine of this study and will be given in-depth attention in chapters two and five respectively.

1.7. Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study will be limited in scope and will give attention to critiquing how the Christians in ACK diocese of Thika, in Kenya have constructed meaning of the Holy Communion symbols. The study will limit the scope in two areas that is: social construction of meaning and inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols used in the ACK diocese of Thika. On socially constructed meaning, the research will examine how diocesan Christians have socially constructed meaning around the Holy Communion symbols - wafers and wine and their significance in their life. On inculturation process this study will be exploring the extent

the diocesan Christians have inculturated these symbols as well as whether they are ready to embrace indigenous symbols of nourishment or food and consider them for use in the Holy Communion rite. Similarly, the study will investigate and analyse the theological and cultural challenges underpinning this process in the diocese. In terms of limitation, this study will be confined among the Anglican communicants of the Holy Communion in the diocese of Thika from Kikuyu ethnic group.

1.8. Significance of the Study

The purpose of undertaking scholarship is to add new knowledge (Dahlberg and McCaig 2010: 6). Hence, this study will evaluate the inculturative process of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika in order to discover the meaning constructed by diocesan Christians towards these symbols. This study on the Holy Communion symbols in the diocese being the first of its own kind will serve as useful guide in the Church, for it will unfold the Christians' internalized meaning of the Holy Communion symbols to them. This implies that the Church will be able to identify the weak areas so that it may find appropriate tools necessary for equipping diocesan Christians understanding and practice in these symbols. Furthermore, it will ensure deeply rooted meaning of Holy Communion symbols and their significance in Christians' life.

1.9. Structure of the Thesis

This study has eight chapters and the description of each chapter is as highlighted below. The first chapter is the introduction to the whole thesis, outlining an overview of the study. This chapter identified and expounded the motivation and the background of the study, purpose of study, research problem as well as research questions and objectives. It also earmarked the scope and limitation of the study. The chapter gave deeper thought on symbols and inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in the literature review. Consequently, it identified inculturation as the theoretical framework that informed this study and the research design and methodology employed. These two were discussed in detail in chapter two and five respectively.

The second chapter is theoretical, expounding the framework(s) used in this study. Inculturation is the framework that was embraced to set the lens that girded this study. The chapter discussed inculturation as missio-culture, translation, incarnation, liberation and symbolism.

The third chapter analyses the Kikuyu concept of meal so that it may be the basis for deeper and richer understanding of Holy Communion symbols as meal. This chapter delineated the meal as a symbol of initiation to a new life, friendship, unity, communion, blessing, hospitality and thanksgiving among Kikuyus.

The fourth chapter articulates the understanding and practice of the sacramental rite of Holy Communion, with special focus on the symbols used in this rite in ACK.

The fifth chapter is the methodology chapter that outlines in detail how empirical data was obtained. This entailed the methods/techniques that were engaged in data collection, that is triangulation, because the study used in-depth individual interviews followed by three focus group discussions and engaged twenty-five open-ended questionnaires in five parishes. The study employed purposive sampling, for it needed well knowledgeable informants on Holy Communion symbols. Thematic and discourse analysis was used in data analysis.

The sixth chapter critically analyses the socially constructed meaning of the Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika. It discussed the diocesan Christians socially constructed meaning of Holy Communion as memorial meal, the act of eating and drinking together, fellowship and as a means of salvation. Consequently, the socially constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbols as symbols of the body and blood of Christ, foreign product, prohibited products, symbol of modernity, symbol of colonialism and neo-colonialism. In addition, the chapter highlighted the significance of Holy Communion symbols to diocesan Christians. It concludes by discussing the prevalent practice as far as these symbols are concerned in the diocese of Thika.

The seventh chapter examines how Holy Communion symbols used in the diocese of Thika have been inculturated. It explored inculturation of Holy Communion symbols by using indigenous symbols of nourishment or local food products. Diverging views influenced by diachronic logic, conscious of tradition and synchronic logic of conscious inculturation emerged. Moreover, it analysed the benefits, hindrances and limitations of using indigenous symbols in Holy Communion. It established that these symbols have been inculturated through dynamic equivalent method of inculturation because the prevalent practice in the diocese is the use of wafers and wine, though with the indigenous meaning of being the body and blood of Christ. The chapter concludes by elucidating the theological and cultural challenges associated to inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika.

The eighth chapter serves as the general conclusion of this study. It describes the new knowledge contributed by this thesis as it mapped out the new signposts for further research in this area.

1.10. Conclusion

This chapter outlined the purpose of this study as an exploration of how diocesan Christians in Thika socially constructing meaning around the Holy Communion symbols. It argued that this study was motivated by the previous studies (masters) where it noted the teaching and study of Holy Communion has been from a western classical understanding. Hence there was a dire need for a contextual approach to this sacrament. From the pastoral experience of the researcher in the Christian ministry, it argued the predicament that the researcher faced when wafers run out and had to improvise using *chapatti* that aroused theological issues surrounding it as a symbol of Holy Communion. This chapter also cited the African bishops' statement and call in the Anglican Church to inculturate the Church since 'Africa has come of age'. It outlined the research problem, identified four research questions and objectives to be realized in this study, as it earmarked the social construction of meaning and inculturation of Holy Communion symbols as the scope and limitation of the study in the ACK diocese of Thika.

This chapter highlighted the establishment of the Anglican Church in Kenya by CMS missionaries in the 1880s at East African Coast. It argued that it is a member of the Anglican Communion family. It is in analysis that this study located the diocese of Thika in the province of Kenya. On review of literature, the study argued that symbols play a fundamental role in people's society, for they are a tool of communication. However, when the Christian faith was introduced to Africa it never considered the significant role of symbols. African symbols were dismissed as pagan and primitive, thus imposing western symbols that became a source of alienation. Hence the need arose to inculturate Christian symbols, in order to communicate to and with people and in return deeply root Africans in the Christian faith. This study also examined inculturation of Holy Communion symbols to achieve proper understanding of these symbols. It articulated the major significance of this study as search for new knowledge to add in the existing pool of knowledge. The chapter identified inculturation as the theoretical lens and qualitative method as the methodology to be employed in this study. I now turn to chapter two to analyse the theoretical framework that informs this study.

Chapter Two

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

“If Christianity is to change its status from that of resident alien to that of citizen, then it must become incarnated in the life and thought of Africa” (Fashole-Luke 1978:267).

2. Introduction

The first chapter introduced this study by outlining its purpose, objectives and locating the issue of the extent to which the Holy Communion symbols of wafers and wine are inculturated within the Diocese of Thika, Kenya. It was noted that these symbols are imported food products that have been part of the sacramental diet of Diocesan Christians in Thika for many decades and have acquired deep roots within the local ecclesial context. Therefore, the challenge to inculturate the Holy Communion symbols must be examined with great cultural sensitivity, because the phenomenon of inculturation is a complex social reality (Hewitt 2012).

In this regard, this chapter will deal with the inculturation framework that has informed this study. This lens will help to critically interrogate the broader question in this study: To what extent have the symbols used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion been inculturated in the diocese of Thika? An inculturation theory will be used to achieve the following three goals. Firstly, to examine how the Christians in the diocese of Thika have socially constructed meaning around Holy Communion symbols. Secondly, to analyse how Christians in the diocese of Thika have inculturated the Holy Communion symbols. Thirdly, to engage with the theological and cultural challenges associated to inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in Thika. The rationale of using this theory is influenced by what Africans perceive to be a situation of imbalance between Africa and the Christianity introduced into Africa by Euro-American missionaries that do not communicate fully to the African within their context (Odozor 2008:583). This makes the African Christianity to be a resident alien, as suggested by Fashole-Luke (1978). It is only now through the inculturation process that the African Church can make Christianity to be a citizen. To this end, the call is for a Christianity in Africa that speaks and communicates to Africans within their cultural thought forms and framework and according to Pobee has an African stamp to address and answer African problems (1979:17).

Hence in this chapter the term inculturation is defined and selective components that contribute to the phenomenon will be examined. These components are: missio-cultural, incarnation, translation, liberation and symbolism. These components will be integrated in the study to assist to inform the socially constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbols and the extent they have been inculturated in the diocese of Thika. Laurenti Magesa's work on *Anatomy of Inculturation* (2004) will serve as the primary text to shape the discourse on the subject. Other scholars that will contribute to the debate include (Upkong 2013, Hewitt 2012, Otto 2000, Bediako 1992, Bosch 1991, Sanneh 1990, Ela 1986 and Shorter 1988).

2.1. Inculturation Theory

2.1.1. Introduction to Theory

The term inculturation originated from Roman Catholic circles according to Justin Upkong, who argues that there is no certainty by whom, where and when the term was coined (2013:531). While Upkong is not certain of the origin of the term inculturation, Shorter claims "popularization of the term 'inculturation' seems to be very largely due to members of the Society of Jesus. The very first recorded use of the work in a theological sense seems to be by Fr. Joseph Masson SJ, professor at the Gregorian University in Rome" (1988:10).

In spite of this term being derived from the Roman Catholic tradition, it was embraced in the Protestant circles as the appropriate term to use. It is suited for the entire Church of Christ in all contexts, including the younger and older Churches. Edward Antonio (2006) recommends it to the African Churches because it is concerned with the impact of colonialism on the cultures, traditions and worldviews of formerly colonized territories and with the reactions and responses of colonial subjects to their historical plight. This was not the exception for the diocesan Christians of Thika. They are recuperating from the impact of colonialism and neo-colonialism that pervades in all spheres of life, including the inherited ecclesiastical practices. As such, this inculturation discourse in post-colonial Africa is timely, as it attempts to re-appropriate and re-interpret Christianity in Africa and especially in the diocese of Thika within the diocesan Christians' thought forms and in their cultural milieu.

In Africa the discourse on inculturation is an urgent response, due to the shift of the center of Christianity from the global North to the global South¹³ because, according to Andrew Walls:

It would not be unreasonable to expect that two thirds of the world Christians will be from the non-western world. What is already certain is that Christianity is now a pre-dominantly non-western religion, the profession principally of African and Asian and Latin American people, and that it is currently moving progressively in that direction (2008:199, see also Hesselgrave 1989:96; Kobia 2011:2).

This being the good news to the global South Churches, also poses a great challenge to inculturate the Gospel so that it can enter the deep meaning systems of the people. As Albert Kabiro wa Gatumu noted, “it is now appropriate time for African scholars to realize they are holding theological dynamite that may shape world Christianity” (2009:279).

For the African Churches to be deeply rooted in the culture of the people, they must appropriate the cultural symbols and values that facilitate fullness of life that Christ advocates (John 10:10). Christianity has been present in Africa long before the arrival of missionaries linked to European colonialism, for example in Ethiopia and Egypt (Baur 1994). Though, in many other parts of Africa, the planting of Christianity by Western Churches failed to acquire real and deep roots (Galgalo 2012; see also Mushete 1994:16). However, according to Aram, the post-colonial Churches in Africa are “now rediscovering their cultural identity; they realize that in order for the Church to survive in Africa, it has to become African” (Aram 1999:33; see also Upkong 1996:267). The Early Church had to embrace inculturation at a very early stage in her development (Acts 15), because of the encounter with diversity of cultures (Bosch 1991). The Anglican Church Lambeth Conference of 1978 maintained “the tongues of Pentecost first celebrated the Christian truth that the gospel may be spoken in different tongues; ever since that day the Church at her best has taken on the flesh of the culture in which she finds herself” (1978:94).

In light of this historical development of the term inculturation in the Christian circles, the study established that it originated in the Roman Catholic tradition but earned currency in all traditions as the appropriate term. Its relevance in the Christian faith fits all contexts because

¹³ Lemuel Ekedegwa Odeh defines these two terms as follows. The Global North represents the economically developed societies of Europe, North America, Australia, Israel and South Africa, amongst others. The Global South represents the economically backward countries of Africa, India, China, Brazil and Mexico amongst others. While the Global North countries are wealthy, technologically advanced, politically stable and aging as their societies tend towards zero population growth, the opposite is the case with Global South countries. While Global South countries are agrarian based, dependent economically and politically on the Global North, the Global North has continued to dominate and direct the global south in international trade and politics (2010:338).

it endeavours to make Christianity deeply rooted in the people's ways of life and eventually to become citizens rather than resident aliens. In the section below, this study will now examine various scholarly definition of the term inculturation.

2.1.2. Definition of Inculturation

Anne Nasimiyu-Wasike argues that defining this term is one of the difficult tasks for there are as many definitions as there are serious scholars reflecting on this process of inculturation (1994:48). John Waliggo defines inculturation as:

Honest and serious attempt to make Christ and his message of salvation evermore understood by people of every culture, locality and time. It means reformulation of Christian life and doctrine into the very thought patterns of each people. It is the conviction that Christ and his Good News are even dynamic and challenging to all times and cultures as they become understood and lived by each people (1986:12).

This definition by Waliggo is significant in this study because the primary goal of the gospel in any context is to make the message of Christ understood by the people evangelised. To the diocesan Christians whose understanding and practice of the Holy Communion symbols was a new phenomenon when these symbols were introduced in the diocese of Thika it became an appropriate time to re-express and re-interpret them within their thought systems. As such, inculturation in this case becomes faith seeking understanding through the cultural practices of the diocesan Christians of Thika.

Shorter, on the other hand, defines inculturation as “the insertion of the Christian faith into a culture where Christians were not previously present” (1988:6). Here Shorter perceives culture as the medium through which the gospel is transmitted in a new context in order to become the way of life of the people. Though this did not happen in the diocesan context at the inception of the Christian faith because the English missionaries did not embrace mutual dialogue as equals it has now become an appropriate time in this post-colonial era to re-examine and to go deeper into the Holy Communion symbols understanding and practice in the diocese of Thika. However, Peter Schineller defines this concept slightly differently from Shorter as “an effort by Christians in a particular place and time to understand and celebrate their Christian faith in a way peculiar to their situation and context while still sharing in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic” (1991:1). According to Schineller, the understanding of inculturation is an ongoing process, because it takes place in a particular time and space within human community. The importance of this understanding of inculturation is that however much it should be faithful to a given local ecclesiastical context, inculturation also

has to share some features with other contexts. However, what one notes is that this understanding of inculturation according to Schineller (1991:1) did not apply in the African context when the missionaries introduced Christianity in the diocese of Thika, because the indigenous people were hardly involved in this exercise. The result is Christianity became a resident alien, as it has not been incarnated in the local context of the people in order to communicate effectively to them.

Magesa offers another description of inculturation with emphasis on “the process whereby the faith already embodied in one culture encounters another culture; in this encounter the faith becomes part and parcel of this new culture” (2004:5). The common thread in all of these perspectives on inculturation seems to focus on the encounter between the gospel and people’s culture, where these two are invited to have mutual dialogue as equals. From all these definitions my working definition for this study on inculturation is a process where gospel and culture engage one another in mutual dialogue resulting in the formulation of a distinct and unique theology from both, after transformation of both the gospel and culture. Having now established the scholarly and working definitions of this term, the next section discusses in detail the theory of inculturation as missio-cultural, incarnation, translation, liberation and symbolism.

2.2. Five Theories that Undergird the Inculturation Framework

In this section five selective components of the inculturation theory and process are discussed: missio-cultural, incarnation, translation, liberation and symbolism. They will be examined in depth to identify and appropriate the factors that can lead to a contextual understanding of this study on inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika.

2.2.1. Inculturation as Missio-Cultural

The inculturation discourse embodies the mission of Christ through the church with the cultural context in which the Church bears witness to its identity and vocation. This means that the mission of Christ finds its new construction with the hosting culture. In other words, the specific mission of the gospel of Christ can only be articulated culturally in a given context (Kaunda and Hewitt 2015). David Bosch defines mission as:

Missio Dei [God’s mission], that is God’s self-revelation as the one who loves the world, God’s involvement in and with the world, the nature and activity of God, which embraces both the Church and the world, and in which the Church is

privileged to participate (1991:10).

According to Bosch's definition, one notes that mission is God's initiative to reach out to the Church in order to partnership together. In this gesture, Simangaliso Kumalo argues that this *Missio Dei* is "understood as an enterprise that brings about the kingdom of God by liberating and saving people from the power of sin and oppression" (2003:9). In summary God's mission invites the Church into partnership with God in order to bring wholeness in the world in words and deeds that facilitate fullness of life to the people. Robert Schreiter defines culture in terms of performance; every culture has ritual ways by which its basic worldview can be expressed and through which members of the culture are bound together (1997:29).

According to Schreiter, culture is not only an idea about people's worldview but it goes beyond conceptualization to actualization of those ideas in people's way of life. To him, he suggests that culture is the total way of life that shapes people's thoughts, ideas, symbols, feeling and religion. The 1978 Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church also perceived culture as "the soil in which men and women grow, against which they may rebel and yet out of which they draw their sense of identity and belonging" (The Report of the Lambeth Conference 1978:58). From these understandings of culture, one deduces that culture is the heartbeat of any given society because this is the process by which people are inserted and socialized within their society and find meanings behind the different use of symbols in their daily life. Interestingly, it makes one group of people different from another because this is where they draw their sense of identity and belonging.

Having understood mission and culture in this concept of inculturation Roderick Hewitt defines the term *missio-cultural* as "dynamic relationship between the missional identity of the Church and its engagement within the local culture/s" (2012: xviii). From this definition *missio-cultural* is a concept that implies that the Church in its missional identity and vocation is a 'missionary', sent by God in every context to incarnate God's love in its cultural thought patterns with the sole purpose of transformation and liberation. The Church communicates this love in a new context using the people's language, religion, art and symbols. When the gospel encounters another world, it communicates in the language of the people, transforming their culture. Ott argues that, "in the very encounter of gospel and culture begins a double dynamic of mutual exchange. The pattern of the dance of acceptance and refusal, encounter and change, reception and transformation is not predictable beforehand, nor does it ever end" (2000:70). Ironically, this mutual exchange as far as Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika are concerned was not embraced by the English missionaries in the

understanding and practice of the sacramental rite of Holy Communion. Rather their understanding and practice of this rite including its symbols were passed down in Kenya and in this case in the diocese of Thika as ecclesiastical orthodoxy to be emulated by all.

Therefore, the missio-cultural concept points to the need for the mission of the church to be communicated in the people's ways of life so that they may be transformed by the gospel and be liberated. The diocese of Thika's use of wafers and wine as the symbols in the Holy Communion has raised questions about the intercultural significance of the symbols and whether there is need for change. According to Mugambi, the "Gospel becomes rooted when the converts live with full appreciation of their cultural and religious heritage, not when they theorize about it" (1995:66). It is therefore necessary to first understand how the Christians in the diocese of Thika have understood the symbols that are used in the sacrament of Holy Communion in their context. The mission of the gospel in every culture is to inculturate the message of gospel within the culture, so that it may communicate to the people within their cultural milieu. In this study, inculturation as missio-cultural will serve as the medium of conveying the message communicated by Holy Communion symbols to the diocesan Christians.

This means that using the missio-cultural concept of inculturation helps to unearth the meaning and the significance attached to wafers and wine in the diocesan context of Thika. This suggests that through the missio-cultural concept, the message communicated by Holy Communion symbols in the context of Thika will emerge. According to Evans, "the missio-cultural seeks to capture this mission of God principle, as it comes alive in the everyday realities of a people's culture" (2009:7). When they were introduced by the British missionaries in the diocese of Thika, their Eurocentric values overlaid the Holy Communion elements of bread and wine which were used as the symbols to communicate meaning to the people. Shorter argues, "culture is acquired or learned by individuals as members of human society. Culture controls their perception of reality. It offers them a system of meaning embodied in images and symbols" (1999: 55). In view of this, the missio-cultural concept serves as a lens to interrogate the understanding and practice of the symbols used in the Holy Communion within the diocese of Thika with the objective of identifying what constitutes their constructed meaning around the Holy Communion symbols. Through the missio-cultural concept it will be evident in this study what is the message conveyed by the Holy Communion symbols within the ecclesiastical context of Thika. For Stephen B. Bevans and Rogers P. Schroeder argue that "... to be Church is to be in mission, to be in mission is to be

responsive to the demands of the gospel in a particular context, to be continually ‘re-inventing’ itself as it struggles with and approaches new situations, new people, new cultures and new questions” (2006:31).

2.2.2. Inculturation as Incarnation

Another key understanding of inculturation discourse is the incarnational nature of the gospel when it encounters a new culture. Magesa argues that the gospel in imitation of Christ, who assumed the human flesh and lived among the Jews, ought to do the same when it moves from one culture to the other. His argument is that:

The Church is not ‘Church’ until and unless its ‘made flesh’. This means that, the Church cannot be realized as such until it becomes part of a particular people, and is immersed in a particular language and ways of doing things (2004:137).

This concept in this discourse of inculturation is also echoed by both Nyamiti and Ukpong who affirm, “inculturation involves an effort to incarnate Christian teaching in African cultures on the level of theology” (1994:64; 1994:41). In this study it entails asking ourselves what is the meaning and understanding of wafers and wine to the diocesan Christians in Thika? Therefore, this study postulates the Church has to re-interpret the symbols used in the Holy Communion so that they may be contextual, relevant and meaningful to the people in the way they understand them and practice within their time and space.

In light of this, Nasimiyu-Wasike argues that this incarnational nature of Jesus is reflected in his life and teaching as the prime modal of inculturation (1994:54). Jesus’ model of inculturation may be attested by phrases such as ‘I am the bread of life’ (Jn 6: 35) or ‘I am the way’ (Jn 14:6) and parables like the mustard seed, among other exemplary illustrations he used. Through this discourse of inculturation theory in this study, it affirms that for the Holy Communion symbols to be fully understood by the Christians in the diocese of Thika, they need to be ‘incarnated’ in terms of re-interpreting them within Kikuyu thought forms and worldview, so that they may assume a cultural meaning coherent with the Scriptures. For example, Smith and Taussig (1990) say:

After Roman Catholic missionaries had made their first converts in New Guinea, they discovered that the Eucharistic sentence, ‘behold the lamb of God’, made no sense to the people, since there were no sheep on the island. Noticing that the primary domesticated animals of the island were swine, the priests then began saying mass with the phrase, ‘behold the pig of God’ (1990:89).

This demonstrates that the Church has the mission of incarnating Holy Communion liturgy, images and symbols used in light of people’s way of life so that they may be meaningful to

the people. A case in point is the use of wafers and wine in the Holy Communion rite in Africa and specifically in the diocese of Thika that:

Are not only nutritive elements that enter into the composition of a European's menu. They are cultural elements with a meaning for a people and connections with its history. We must admit then, that through the Eucharistic matter the Church is imposing western culture and its symbolic structure on us (Ela 1986:5; see also Bujo 1990:120; International Anglican Liturgical Consultation 2005).

As such, these symbols communicate best in their context because when used in other ecclesiastical contexts they are vulnerable to communicate other meanings than the intended one. If the mission of the Church is to communicate to the recipients of the gospel message in their language and symbols and become resident there rather than alien, it is obvious then that the Holy Communion symbols have to assume the diocesan flesh.

Through the inculturation process, Magesa argues that both culture and gospel critique and affirm one another for use by the people. Xolile Keteyi had earlier made an argument that Magesa seems to agree with. He argued that:

When Jesus finally appeared, he did not only become a Jew who uncritically endorsed the culture of his people, but challenged it and sought to purify it. The significance of incarnation is that Jesus became both like all human beings but also unlike them (1998:39).

This implies that through incarnation the cultural practices that are not repugnant to the gospels are accommodated and transformed for theological expression, while others are discarded, meaning that in inculturation there is both continuity and discontinuity with some cultural practices. A case in point is the Kikuyu concept of *Ngai* (Kibicho 2006), ancestors, sacrificial language (Anglican Church of Kenya 2002), musical instruments, tune and rhythms were integrated in the Christian faith. When this process of transformation of what is coherent with Scriptures is adopted and integrated in the Christian faith Stuart Bate would maintain the greatest role of inculturation is evangelisation of the culture and the gospel at the same time (1994:231). This evangelisation in inculturation discourse is also echoed by Magesa's work when he analysed evidence of inculturation discourses from the Bible, Patristic Church, Medieval Church, and Reformation Church and in the contemporary Church. All these thoughts can be captured in Saint Paul, who was good in inculturating the gospel among the Gentiles through concepts such as Parousia, Lord and slave. He used Greek philosophical ideas, worldview and thought patterns of the people he encountered. Hence, the integration of cultural practice with the gospel. As Peter Turkson says, this "reflects the clothing of Jesus' message in popular practices, habits and ideas of his day" (1994:5).

It is remarkable to note that in this incarnational nature, the gospel borrows heavily from the culture in order to be relevant and meaningful, because faith seeks understanding through people's culture. For instance, in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion terms such as mystery (Mashall 1980:28 and Brillioth 1930:49), sacrifice (Neil 1947:64) or Lord's Table (Hunkin 1930:24) were all derived from the pagan religions in Greco-Roman world. They were assimilated in Christianity but with new meaning, for "culture prepares words; theology baptizes them and make use of them" (Koyama 2008:46). Therefore, in this study the Kikuyu concept of meal and meaning as initiation into new life, symbol of unity, friendship, communion and blessings, hospitality and thanksgiving will be highly entrenched and re-interpreted in light of the understanding of what wafers and wine mean to Kikuyus and why. With this in mind, it calls for re-interpretation/'incarnation' of these symbols in the Kikuyu worldview, language, arts and symbols, in order to articulate the diocesan Christians' understanding and practice of the Holy Communion symbols, because according to Mbiti,

We add nothing to the Gospel for this is the eternal gift of God, but Christianity is always a beggar seeking food and drink; cover and shelter from the culture its encounter in its never-ending journeys and wandering (1970:332 see also Kirk 2000:76).

Therefore, the incarnation of the Holy Communion symbols within the context of Thika will culminate into contextual meaning attributed to the wafers and wine as understood by Christians (see Chapter Six).

2.2.3. Inculturation as Translation

The gospel of Christ experiences deeper incarnation when translated from missionaries' worldview to the indigenous people's worldview. Pobee was convinced that translating Christianity into authentic African categories should not be a subject of debate (1979:9). Lamin Sanneh and Samuel Escobar agree with Pobee and maintain that inculturation as translation "makes the bold, fundamental assertion that the recipient culture is the authentic destination of God's salvific promise" (1990:31; Escobar 2003:12). Walls in his work (1996) strongly acknowledges that, by citing an example where "Jesus had been presented as the Messiah, the Saviour of Israel. In this new, Hellenistic pagan context, he is given the title *Kyrios*, the title Hellenistic pagans gave to their cult divinities" (1996:31). Among the Kikuyus, this was evident when the missionaries translated Holy Communion liturgy in Kikuyu language where this rite adopted the Kikuyu religious worldview of a sacrificial rite that is *igongona ria giathi kia mwathani*. This means that through translation of Christianity

in the peoples' language, it enhances the understanding of the word of God and the people can now re-appropriate and articulate their own theology within their thought forms and worldview. The significance for this translation for instance among the Kikuyu people says Githuku is "the Kikuyu language is rich in symbolism. While translation conveys the general meaning of the words, the deeper significance of the original symbolism can only be understood in the original language" (2012:32). Therefore, inculturation as translation of the gospel into the recipients' thought forms and symbols makes them have deeper understanding.

The importance of translation according to Kwame Bediako is:

Translatability is a vital element in helping the Church offer an adequate interpretation of the Christian faith that will elicit genuine and correct response. It makes the Christian faith a truly universal and incarnational faith that is at home in every human culture. It gives people the feeling that God speaks their local language and in the way they will be motivated to pay more attention to the message of the Christian faith (1995:72-73).

It also results in a "revolt against blind following and quest for authentic spirituality" (Mugambi and Magesa 1990: 34). For the people are able to distinguish between the missionaries' understanding and interpretation of scriptures as the word of God. However, when mission and culture encounter each other without intentional translation, Walls warns that Christianity "...withers and fades" (2002:29). A good example is when Islam was introduced in North Africa. Christianity did not withstand the invasion of Islamic faith because it was not translated into the indigenous people's language but into the official languages of the Greco-Roman Empire, that is Greek and Latin (Baur 1994:29).

Magesa, contributing to this translation of Christianity into the people's way of life, argues that it should go beyond adaptation that is on a superficial level. This means that translation should move beyond correspondence between African terms and Christianity so that translation can attain her goal in the recipient culture. While we give credit to the early missionaries for their work of translation, we cannot bury our heads in the sand and say it was one hundred percent accurate. This is because some of the translation was at a superficial level in Africa while others were detrimental, for there was importation of alien western themes and concepts into the African context, claiming they were indigenous to Africa. Okot P'Bitek for instance cites that the missionaries misunderstood the Acoli of Uganda name *rubanga* (hostile spirit) to mean God the Father and creator when they were doing translation (1970:370). Among the Akan people of Ghana, Kwesi Wiredu mentions the concept of

creation out of nothing in the doctrine of *ex nihilo nihil* that did not make sense to them because their concept of creation is universal causation (2006:310).

On the state of inculturation in Africa Teresia Hinga argued that:

Inculturation remains a 'mirage' in the mainstream Churches. The process seems to have been satisfied with superficial liturgical reform and change of outward material symbols of religion, while there is no gain saying the impact and the need for translation of liturgy into vernacular, it is important, if an authentic inculturation is to take place to go beyond their translation (1994:16).

In light of this, Hinga saw inculturation as a noble task of translating Christian faith in the contemporary Church being mediocrity because it has failed to do comprehensive liturgical reform that touches the ontological aspect of the people's religion. She cautions that there is a need for inculturation to move beyond translation if authentic Christian faith is to be realized. Magesa concurring with Hinga argues further that when inculturation beyond translation is achieved it culminates into "true inculturation [that] is a deeper experience in the life of the individual and community that occurs when there is a constant search for identification between gospel and culture, and where there is mutual correction and adjustment between them" (Magesa 2004:145).

This study postulates that the concept of translation in inculturation discourse must take the Kikuyu people thought forms and systems seriously by integrating what is relevant and communicate to them because "for the gospel to be effective, it must enter into the world of meaning of a people's culture" (Hewitt 2012:8). This is possible through translation of the gospel into the people's language. Through this concept of translation, one can assess how the missionaries translated the meaning of the Holy Communion and the elements used in the rite among the Kikuyus in the diocese of Thika. Through translation, the Kikuyus socially constructed meaning around the symbols will emerge, as this concept will help to unearth those meanings and new words that enriched the Kikuyu worldview when they were introduced. Mbiti argues that translation "enriches the language with new concepts and terms that are either borrowed or adapted from another language, and those that are purposely created to express a new concept ... for example Eucharist ..." (1994:29; see also Pato 1998:49; Bunting 1996:231; Sykes 1996:21; Nthamburi 2000:29).

2.2.4. Inculturation as Liberation

The Anglican Church has been perceived as too English according to Michael McCoy and this is evident in its ecclesiastical identity (2006). A case at hand is the use of Holy

Communion symbols [wafers and wine], approved as the official elements for use by the Anglicans even those outside the British Isles, in spite of symbols being contextual. The implications of this imposed ecclesiastical practice in the Anglican tradition resort to cultural, political and socio-economic exploitation and alienation of African people. This was not an exception in the diocese of Thika and so it suggests that it is only through an intentional inculturation process that these symbols can acquire African roots, shape and identity. Bosch, in recognition of this, states that the West has succeeded to domesticate the gospel in their cultural thought forms (1991:455). In order for the mission Churches in contexts like Kenya to become self-propagating, self-governing, self-supporting and self-theologizing, they must undergo in-depth inculturation.

In the case of the sacramental rite of Holy Communion that is still Euro-American in the African ecclesiastical settings, it is high time to inculturate this rite in the African context. When realized, this culminates into a contextual sacramental rite of Holy Communion with contextual symbols that communicate effectively to the people. The West has successfully inculturated the gospel within their cultural and philosophical thought forms. It is now *kairos* for the African Church and especially the ACK diocese of Thika. Uzukwu states that “ecclesiology of Luke in the Acts of the Apostles ... that it is not necessary to force the local practices of Sister Church, derived from her interaction with her world, on converts coming from another cultural background and another local experience of the world” (1996:58). Hence, the Kenyan Churches must take the initiative to inculturate the gospel of Christ in their context without manipulation by their mother Churches in the West.

Inculturation as liberation addresses the need for the sacramental rite of Holy Communion using elements of wafers and wine in Kenya to become symbols of their contextual freedom. This is echoed by Ela that “the Eucharist in the life of the Church has become the locus of our daily alienation; this is illustrated by the use of European products as the ‘matter’ of the Eucharist” (1986:4). This suggests that the wafers and wine used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion do alienate Africans, for these are symbols that have meaning from elsewhere. Ela argues that there is a need to inculturate wafers and wine by either using African or contextual symbols of nourishment that communicate to the people in their cultural settings. Furthermore, the official and approved elements by the Church as orthodoxy in this rite could be re-interpreted and given indigenous meaning and so unpack their foreignness in them. Through liberative inculturation, Mercy Oduyoye argues, it will result in a “process toward anthropological dignity or the meaningfully abundant life that Jesus Christ

has promised” (2003:50). It could also facilitate restoration of people’s lost dignity in God’s salvific plan (Martey 1993:141).

Inculturation as post-colonial discourse in Africa therefore has the role of advocating the socio-economic, cultural and political liberation in all aspects of life of the people. Magesa states that the mission of the Church is “to make Christ and his message of, and invitation to total human liberation known everywhere in the world so as to establish God’s reign, whose outlines Jesus painted by his life and teaching” (2004:135). In this line of thought, inculturation discourse becomes the form of liberation motif to interrogate the Holy Communion as a liberative force that facilitates African life in abundance. Bevans and Schroeder acknowledge the liberative motif in the inculturation process because they argued that in any given context a “Christian proclaims Christ as the true liberator and transformer of culture. And the Church is the community of liberated humanity that finds its identity in its commitment to a liberated world” (2006:71).

On the other hand, Keteyi, writing in Apartheid South Africa, appraised the African cultural liberation that was incapacitated during the colonial period. This led to Africans hating everything African and he called upon Africans to appreciate their culture anew. He maintained that cultural liberation “does not mean that we have to go back and try to reconstruct our life on the basis of old formulas of life, of course there may be reason for appreciating culture for its own sake or examining old ways of life in order to enlighten the present” (1998:51). According to Keteyi, he points out that the gospel liberates the culture of the people and embraces its values, it recognizes the cultural potency while doing theology in that culture; and thus transforms it. In this regards, this study contends that there is the need to appreciate what our culture offers to Christianity. This culminates into the colonized mind being liberated and able to appropriate the Kikuyu symbols of nourishment as worthy elements used as Holy Communion symbols.

While scholars such as Keteyi and Okure (2008:67) focus on the cultural liberation in Africa, Ela focuses on socioeconomic and political liberation. According to Upkong the socioeconomic and political liberation in the inculturation discourse took another shift when “in the course of the 1980s, the situation began to change so that inculturation theology engages not only religious, but also secular issues, an approach that I refer to as integrative inculturation theology” (2013:536). This saw the Church in confrontation with the states in Africa where poverty was thriving and depriving human dignity. In Kenya, for instance, it is

demonstrated in the actions of Kenyan church leaders such as the late Archbishop David Gitari from the Anglican Church, Cardinal Ndingi Mwana Nzeki from the Roman Catholic Church and Timothy Njoya from the Presbyterian Church, among others (Githiga 2001). These leaders condemned the oppressive government structural systems during the period of single party rule in the country, from the 1990s to the first multiparty general election held in 1997.

In this discourse of inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols Ela finds the use of these imported symbols that are European food products in African contexts in this rite as a form of economic exploitation. This prompts him to lament “while the gospel authorizes no imperialism, the Church of Africa fails to escape domination even in the Eucharist, where believers celebrate the liberation of men and women in Jesus Christ” (1986:6). Bujo also shares the same sentiments with Ela and argues the reason for economic and politico-religious injustice in the use of Holy Communion symbols could suggest that “one cannot resist the impression that bread and wine imported from abroad also serve commercial interests, that is, that this is an economic exploitation of black people” (2001:5). These two scholars perceive this as exploitation of the African Christians in this rite. However, Ela is optimistic that through inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols in the African context that a form of liberation will “become the locus of our discovery of the gospel nature of the Church for the Church is an integral part of the community known as the ‘damned of the earth’” (1986:8).

To this end, liberation at the cultural level calls for decolonization of the Kikuyus mindset, from the colonising belief that regards the Holy Communion symbols that were brought by the missionaries from Europe as the only valid and authentic ingredients that can be used in the sacramental liturgy. Through cultural liberation, the locally produced Kikuyu products that will be identified as symbols of nourishments that can be used as the Holy Communion must be authenticated and accepted with the same commitment that Kenyans traditionally offer sacrifices to the local deity known as *Ngai*. Schreiter argues that “the gospel enters the culture and examines it thoroughly: affirming what is good and true and in turn elevating that goodness and truth to an even more exalted level” (1999:69). Through this concept of inculturation, the study will examine whether these Kikuyu food products that are identified as local equivalent substitute and reclaimed for sacred use will enhance deeper understanding of the Holy Communion symbols among the Christians in the diocese of Thika. On the socio-economic liberation level these products must be available at a cost-effective price within the

nation. If that objective is achieved then it could also facilitate regular celebration of the Holy Communion in the diocese of Thika. These are all the pertinent questions that the liberation concept will address in this rite of Holy Communion in the diocese of Thika. For the key message to be communicated by liberation in this Holy Communion rite is freedom and abundant life to all recipients of its symbols.

2.2.5. Inculturation as Symbolism

Inculturation also needs to be understood as symbolism. In this study on Holy Communion, the Church at the inception of Christianity introduced symbols of wafers and wine in this rite. As symbols, the wafers and wine, argues John Macquarrie, visualized a situation in which one thing stands for another thing, and throws light on some aspects of that other thing (1997:23). This signifies that the wafers and wine are not only the visible material thing, but point beyond themselves, because “just as there is power in words, so there is power in symbols” (Turaki 2006:98). In this line of thought, wafers and wine became the commonly used symbols in the universal Church, such that today in Africa these symbols have become the locus of alienation, in spite of Mbiti maintaining that “each people has its own symbols, whose meaning are generally known to almost everyone” (1991:25). Despite every people having their own religious symbols, what was evident is the introduction of bread and wine in Christianity did not take the context into consideration when their Euro-centric faith was taken abroad; rather these symbols were projected by the missionaries to be universal to all cultures.

In this study, inculturation as symbolism will critically analyse the understanding of wafers and wine as symbols among the Christians in the diocese of Thika. Through this concept, the internalized meanings of the elements of wafers and wine by the Christians in the diocese of Thika will emerge. As Ott argues, “symbols and images ... have a longer and deeper history in the evolution of human consciousness and include human level of perception which are not accessible to the word, hence they constitute a ‘deeper’ expression of culture” (2000:332). Through symbolism the Kikuyu worldview of symbols such as ancestors, the concept of blood, sacrifice, lamb and sacrificial food will be examined to determine their relevance in this rite of Holy Communion, because symbols are socially constructed and socially rooted to express the deeper meaning of a given context. The empirical data of this study will be examined to determine the following: is there any need to use indigenous symbols of nourishment in this rite of Holy Communion? How have the Christians in the diocese of

Thika internalized and constructed meaning around these symbols of wafers and wine in their context?

In light of the above discussions of inculturation theory in this study, it is good now to critically analyse the weaknesses associated with this theory.

2.3. Critique of Inculturation Theory

However good this theory is in this study, there are critiques of it because this process has been criticized as still a theoretical issue rather than a practical issue (Kurgat 2009:90). Magesa concurred with Kurgat and further argued that even the “previous studies [on inculturation] ... have been largely theoretical and rarely benefiting from the evidence gathered from empirical research” (2004:5). This study attempts to bridge the gap between theory and praxis by deriving insights from below, for Mombo argues that “while theologians struggle with terms tolerance, translation, assimilation, Christianization, acculturation, incorporation, inculturation, contextualization these things are being done by Christians” (2006:287). Another criticism of Oduyoye’s perspective is that “those who theorize about the process of inculturation are not the one’s promoting it [and] inculturation from the above, with the permission and advise of authorities, does not necessarily reflect the spirituality of the people” (2003:45). Inculturation from above revolves around the perspectives generated in theological institutions and international conferences without effective engagement with the lives of local people. Schreiter states that theology is supposed to be for the community of believers and should not remain the property of the theological class (2004:17). This dichotomy in African theology prompted Bujo to warn:

If our theology... restrict(s) itself to an academic exercise taking place exclusively in the lecture halls of universities and highly specialised institutes and seminaries or mainly at overseas conferences, we must necessarily conclude that it can be of no relevance, or significance whatsoever (for) our African society (1990:125).

African women theologians such as Oduyoye (1995), Musimbi Kanyoro (1996; 1999), Isabel Phiri (2000), Maaraidzo Mutambara (2006) and Susan Rakoczy (2007) argued that the theology of inculturation has been dominated by male theologians and to make the matters worse it is done from a patriarchal perspective. Therefore, they call for space and inclusion as partners¹⁴ in this theological discourse. Nasimiyu-Wasike maintains “women are calling for

¹⁴ This phenomenon also featured in the West among the Black women theologians being excluded in articulation of Black Theology, which is a form of liberation and inculturation. Delores Williams laments “the kind of problems facing black theology today because black Christian women demands for visibility, inclusion

an authentic inculturation which recognizes both male and female humanity, and which takes into account the male needs and female needs, male values and women values, male contribution and female contribution to make up a joint existence” (1994:54). Besides inclusion in this inculturation discourse Kanyoro adds that “African women are calling the Churches to go beyond a theology of inculturation and place cultures themselves under scrutiny, in order to determine whether they promote justice, life, peace and liberation or whether they diminish and dehumanize people” (1999:124). Furthermore, besides exclusion of women theologians in articulating African theology, women like Mutambara observed that when African theology is articulated it is dominated by patriarchal images¹⁵ and symbols of God and Jesus Christ, neglecting inclusive models of God and Christology in Africa (2006:179-181).

The inculturation process is also criticized on the grounds of fear of syncretism. In this fear, some Christians feel that they may end up having a different type of Christianity that would dismantle the central doctrine of our faith and thereby lower Christian standards. They suspect it would divert Christian growth by including the superstitious, long-condemned elements classified as paganism long forgotten and create a syncretistic Christianity (Waliggo 1986:13). Nevertheless, Okullu arrests this fear and indicates that “making Christianity indigenous does not mean engaging in a cultural excavation to resuscitate the Africa of a hundred years before Christianity came” (1974:52).

Therefore, this fear arrayed is superficial in the sense that when Christianity is taken in a different context, it is ‘incarnated’ as observed earlier in this discussion by assuming the language of the people, their ideas, worldviews, symbols, religion and values. This enriches both Christianity and the recipient culture because inculturation is two-way traffic. James A. Scherer and Stephen B. Bevans (1999), in response to this critic, argued that syncretism is not a local Church problem but universal, for all the Churches in the globe are vulnerable to syncretism. Both Scherer and Bevans maintain, “there is risk of syncretism for all Churches

and equality” (1990:192). James Cone admitted “there is still much work to be done to eliminate sexism in the black community” (1990:197). Letty Russell (1993:12) and Christine Grumm (1997:28), in response to this exclusion of women in theological circles, proposed the concept of a Round Table. Russell’s argument for a Church in the round table suggested the inclusion of all in the household of God, especially those in the margin. Grumm points the way to include those in the margin through the concept of round table by involving women [since they are one of those in the margin] in actually reshaping the table in order to accommodate their presence.

¹⁵ See Zablon Bundi Mutongu (2009) who evaluates African Christologies as chief, ancestors, healer et al. This is all viewed with patriarchal eyes. Other scholars include Charles Nyamiti (1984) on Christ as our ancestors and Fr. Wachege (1992) on Christ as our *Muthamaki* [this is a Kikuyu word for a king].

from struggling with the necessity of relating the local cultures to the kingdom of God” (1999:9 see also Bevans and Schroeder 2006:61). Therefore, the African Church should not fear to engage in inculturation and specifically in this case of the symbols used in the Holy Communion. This is because in this rite “we see that Eucharist as the proto-ancestral meal must be the foundation stone of a Church which is truly African” (Bujo 1992:94). Failure to do inculturation and “have unhealthy phobia about syncretism, will cripple the process of true contextualization when we so greatly need it in Africa” (Mazibuko 2003:218). The consequences will be what Fashole-Luke projected, that Christianity in Africa will be a resident alien rather than citizen, while the greatest task of the African Church is to incarnate the Christian faith in the African cultural milieu.

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter has articulated the theory of inculturation and how it will be used as the lens for critically evaluating how the diocesan Christians in Thika socially constructed meaning around the Holy Communion symbols. It succinctly expounded the five concepts of inculturation that is missio-cultural, incarnation, translation, liberation and symbolism, integrating them in the study. It is in this note that this chapter made the following conclusions:

First, the core mission of the Church in every context is to communicate effectively the gospel to the people in their own ways of life. In this study, the concept of missio-cultural helped to examine the message that Holy Communion symbols will communicate to the diocesan Christians. Second, the chapter argued that inculturation is more about translating the gospel of Christ in every context particularly in people’s language and thought forms. By doing so, it argued that inculturation as translation address the pressing need of the people by giving relevant answers to them. As failure to do so the people are asked the wrong questions as well as given answers to questions they have not asked. Third, it argued that true religion has to be liberative. In this regards it is imperative to touch the social, political, economic and religious aspect of the people with ultimate goal of ensuring abundant life to the people of God. Though through liberative aspect, this chapter noted that the African minds have been colonized, but through inculturation as liberation there is decolonization of the people’s mind so that the real self may be reclaimed. Fourth, symbols are understood within their own context and so there is need to use symbols that communicate to the people in their own cultural milieu. Therefore through this theory of inculturation as missio-cultural, incarnation,

translation, liberative and symbolism, it will be effective in answering the question raised in this thesis: the extents to which the Holy Communion symbols have been indigenised in the context of Thika.

On the other hand, this theory was critiqued that it is more theoretical rather than practical, so calling upon the integration of theory and praxis. Feminist scholars, on the other hand, criticise it as more patriarchal in approach, so excluding women, while in doing theology all the members of the household of God should be included. Syncretism was identified as a setback in this discourse, though scholars argued that it is a universal problem and there is no need to capitalize on it. This study will now turn to chapter three to analyse the Kikuyu concept of meal.

Chapter Three

The Kikuyu Concept of Meal

“African tradition is becoming a source and inspiration for new beginnings” (Nyamiti 1978:104).

3. Introduction

The previous chapter dwelt with a theoretical framework that informs this study, that is inculturation. In that chapter, five definitional concepts in this framework (missio-cultural, translation, incarnation, liberation and symbolism) were discussed in order to examine and explore how the diocesan Christians in Thika have constructed meaning around the symbols used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion. The chapter argued that symbols are contextual and there is a need to translate and incarnate the imported Holy Communion symbols in the ecclesiastical context of Thika, in Kenya. Through such an exercise, the symbols are given the local or indigenous meaning as understood and interpreted by the people. This helps to affirm the primary goal of using inculturation theory in this study so as to investigate the message communicated by the Holy Communion symbols to the diocesan Christians of Thika.

This chapter now presents a brief overview of Kikuyu peoples as a community, their language, neighbours, religion and rites of passage. This information will offer insights for the concluding task of presenting the Kikuyuan concept and understanding of meal that will inform how their culture view the Holy Communion symbols of wafers and wine as a symbolic sacred meal that is celebrated by Anglican Church members. As Nyamiti observed, the African tradition is becoming a source and inspiration for new beginnings (1978:104).

3.1. The Kikuyu People

Kenya is a multi-ethnic society with more than forty-two different ethnic groups (Kenya Information Guide 2015). Kikuyu is one of those forty-two ethnic groups in Kenya. According to Mary Wanyoike and Godfrey Mwakikagile, archaeological and linguist evidence shows that Bantu ethno-linguistic people are believed to have come from the West Africa border between Nigeria and Cameroon about two thousand years ago (2002:1; 2014:9). They are the majority ethnic group in Kenya and estimated to be over 9.6 Million.¹⁶

¹⁶ With statistics on July 2013 Kikuyus were estimated to be 22% of the Kenyan population, 44,037,656. For more details see www.indexmundi.com/kenya/demographics_profile.html. (Accessed on 03/06/2014).

Like other communities in Africa, Kikuyus have their own creation myth stories that describe their origin and descent from Gikuyu and Mumbi, according to Humphrey Waweru:

They traditionally believe that a man called Gikuyu was the founder of the tribe. This man had a wife named Mumbi, who gave birth to ten daughters but due to cultural taboos associated with counting human beings they were referred as nine full daughters¹⁷ (2011:24).

The myth asserted that their daughters had no men to marry them when they became of age. In this predicament Gikuyu turned to his God known as *Ngai*¹⁸ who had assured him “that whenever he was in need, he should make a sacrifice and raise his hands toward *Kere-nyaga* [the mountain of mystery] and the Lord of nature will come to his assistance” (Kenya 1938:3). *Ngai* in fulfilment of His promise provided nine handsome sons to Gikuyu when he prayed, who married all his daughters. Gikuyu made the sons in-law to vow that they will not leave his homestead if they marry his daughters. Rather, they will stay with him at *Mukuruwe wa Nyagathanga*, the place he was shown by *Ngai* to settle down. *Mukuruwe wa Nyagathanga* is geographically located in Murang’a county, central Kenya, where Kikuyus believe that Gikuyu and Mumbi settled first (Middleton and Kershaw 1972:15). Today this place is a pre-historic site where many Kikuyus visit. Gikuyu also requested them to retain the names of his daughters for clans’ names (Wanyoike 2002:4). This justifies the origin of Kikuyu clans named after women for “these nine daughters are regarded as the ancestors of the nine main Kikuyu clans” (Leakey 1903:48).

In light of this, one notes that Kikuyu community is matriarchal in terms of its naming system, as this phenomenon is still in place today. The significance of the myth has resulted in women having access to move into all spheres of national life within Kikuyu. According to Kenya: women assumed leadership in the society and Kenya observed:

Women became domineering and ruthless fighters. They also practiced polyandry. Moreover, through sexual jealousy, many men were put to death for committing adultery or other minor offences. Besides the capital punishment, the men were subjected to all kinds of humiliation and injustices (1938:6).

In response to what Kikuyu men perceived to be their unjust treatment by women, the myth claimed that Kikuyu men conspired to impregnate all women (Thiongo 1965:15; Wanyoike

¹⁷ It was a taboo among the Kikuyus to count people or have their census taken for they believed this might provoke *Ngai's*/ God's anger against the tribe and lead to death. This justifies the rationale for the Kikuyu founder Gikuyu and Mumbi of not giving the actual number of their daughters but they gave nine 'full' meaning ten. Such taboos among Kikuyus, Maasai, Luo, Kisii, Akamba, Kisii and Kipsigis are critically analysed by Sammy Githuku on his article 'Taboos on Counting', in Mary N. Getui, Knut Holter, Victor Zinkuratire (eds), *Interpreting the Old Testament in Africa*, Nairobi: Acton, 2001, 113-18.

¹⁸ This is the name of God in Kikuyu and this will be discussed in detail here below.

2002:4). They succeeded to do this and the last blow was when they lured Wangu wa Makeri¹⁹ (she was viewed as symbol of women's oppressive rule to men, though she was an outstanding Kikuyu leader) to dance naked and she accepted. Dancing naked was regarded to be a symbolic expression in Kikuyu to signify the relinquishing of power and leadership position because of failure to uphold moral integrity as a leader (Wanyoike 2002). The myth further claimed that men dethroned her from power and eventually Kikuyu society shifted from being matriarchal to patriarchal, though men agreed to retain clans' names after women. The contemporary purpose of this myth according to Gathogo is to enforce patriarchy in Kikuyu society, that has been oppressive and brutal to women (2008).

Kikuyus as Bantu-speaking people largely use Gikuyu language, which is the third most widely spoken language in the country after English and Swahili. The Gikuyu language is very important in expressing their worldview. This language is closely related to other languages of Embu, Meru and Kamba, who are the cousins of Kikuyus. The language has various dialects found in Kiambu, Murang'a, Nyeri and Kirinyaga. In Kiambu, Murang'a, Kirinyaga, Nyandarua, Nyeri counties and other parts of Kenya where Kikuyus are this language is widely used (Middleton and Kershaw 1972:16). In this line of thought, the diocese of Thika that falls within Kiambu and Murang'a counties does use Gikuyu as the main language of worship in the Church.

3.2. Kikuyu Land

Land is so essential in Kikuyu life, for according to their myth the Land was a gift from *Ngai* who was *Mogai* a symbolic expression of God as the divider of the universe (Thiong'o 1965:18; Kabira 1995:9). For *Ngai* commanded Gikuyu the founder of Kikuyu people to descend and establish his homestead on the selected place which he named Mokorwe wa Gathanga (Kenyatta 1938:3). Gikuyu the founder of the community settled at Mokorwe wa Gathanga. The land²⁰ was marked with four mountains such that;

To the North it is dominated by Kirinyaga (Mt. Kenya), a three peaked massif of an extinct volcano, rising to 5,600 metres. To the West its border follows the Kikuyu escapement of the Rift Valley, which merges, to its North with the Nyandarua (Aberdare) ranges, which rises to over 4,300 metres and to the East

¹⁹ Gathogo discloses that this was a myth that was passed down in Kikuyuland from generation to generation to perpetuate patriarchy and male dominance. However, Wangu wa Makeri was an outstanding colonial assistance chief who served under chief Karuri of Weithaga location in Murang'a (Gathogo 2008). For further details on Wangu wa Makeri, see Mary W. Wanyoike (2002).

²⁰ Geographically, the Kikuyu land argues Waweru "this country of Kikuyu people lies between 36° East and 38° East and between the Equator 2° North" (2005:157).

and South lies *Kia Njahi* (Ol Donyo Sabuk) and Kiambiruiru (Ngong Hills) respectively (Muriuki 1974:26).

In view of this, the four mountains that surround Kikuyuland symbolically became the beacons earmarking Kikuyu territory.

Kikuyus are neighbours to two main communities, namely the Maasai and Kamba who interacted with one another before the coming of European colonists in Kenya. The Maasai as the first neighbours of Kikuyus resided:

Along the eastern and southern boundaries of Kikuyu country ... this tribe was a purely pastoral one, practising no form of agriculture whatsoever. Maasai and Kikuyus had been in contact over a long period of time and had mutually influenced each other in a number of different ways (Leakey 1903:38).

The interaction between these two communities enabled them to intermarry, such that names like Nyokabi²¹ among women were common in Kikuyu land. They also traded together with Kikuyus who got spears and ornaments like beads and cowrie shells from the Maasai people, in return for agricultural products.

Kamba people are the second neighbours of Kikuyu, located at the South East and East and they were long distance traders as Waweru succinctly says “the Kikuyus’ had no contact with the outside world apart from their cousins the Kamba, who traded in Mombasa until the arrival of the British Christian missionaries and settlers.” (2011:25). Thus, Kambas acted as a link to the outside world to Kikuyus because they were able to get goods from traders at the Kenyan Coast and sell their products from inland. Kambas are closely-related to Kikuyu in terms of their language, for it has similar lexical form with Gikuyu. In time of drought, the Kambas would come to Kikuyu land for refuge.

Kenyatta noted that Kikuyu land enjoys a serene environment characterized by ravines, rivers, forests and game, as the gifts to the community by God (1938:3). With this serene environment, it ensured moisture in the entire year. This means Kikuyu land is so fertile for agriculture for its high altitude makes it experience higher rainfall (over 1750 mm per annum) than other parts of Kenya (Muriuki 1974:29). Hence the land experiences two rainy seasons, namely *mbura ya Njahi* (long rainy season) and *mbura ya mwere* (short rainy season), which determines the type of the crop to be sown (Sorrenson 1967:3). Besides the heavy and reliable rainfall throughout the year the volcanic soil of Kikuyu land lay many centuries

²¹ In Kikuyu land women were captured from Maasai people during the raid or intermarried and often these women were taken for marriage and were given symbolic names such as Nyokabi to mean they were originally from *ukabi* that is Maasai people.

undisturbed below a cover of forest humus that support the main traditional crops of bananas, sweet potatoes, yams, arum lily, millet, sorghum, *Njahi (dolichos lab lab)* and cow peas, though agricultural land is now becoming scarce due to growing population (Karanja 1999:7).

Kikuyus are naturally agriculturalists, cultivating crops for both domestic and commercial use. Besides agriculture,

They herd large flocks of sheep and goats and to a lesser extent, cattle, since their social organisation requires a constant supply of stock for such various purposes as 'marriage insurance' payment, sacrifices, meat feast, magical rites, purification ceremonies, and as means of supplying clothing to the community (Kenyatta 1938:XV).

Traditionally this herding of large livestock symbolized wealth and a person earns respect because the Kikuyus loved industrious people. This was attested by the Kikuyu proverb that says *ngombe itionagwo ni ithayo*, meaning cows are never acquired by lazy people. Similarly, in the community there was the spirit and culture of pulling resources together for economic empowerment such that the *ahoi* [poor in the society] were given some piece of land or animals to take care of as their own (stewards/*ta aramati*) (Barlow 1932:66; Sorrenson 1967:11; Middleton and Kershaw 1972:50; Muriuki 1974:35; Tignor 1976:7). In the spirit of pulling resources together, the poor person was given a calf out of the herd of cattle so that in future he/she will acquire his/her own herd. However, this perception changed with the introduction of monetary form by the British colonial system as well to the scarcity of land for pasture that impacted on the traditional ways of doing business and making payment (Tignor 1976:4).

Land among the Kikuyus is central to their life because it is not only the source of their economic security in life, but it also served religious, political and social roles in giving stability to their lives. Economically, it provided the produce used in their barter trade with other communities such as the Maasai and Kamba peoples. The bigger the tracts of land one had, the wealthier a person would become. Kikuyus were religious people and their religious activities performed were linked to their land, given by *Ngai*, the divider of the universe (Thiong'o 1965:18; Spear 1981:60; Kabira 1995:9). This land linked and connected them with their maker *Ngai* as well as with their ancestors who were closer to *Ngai* than the living (Trillo 2002:169). This meant when British colonialists displaced Kikuyus from their lands, not only were they deprived of their source of economic empowerment but also alienated

religiously and their identity destroyed. Kenyatta, who wrote in Colonial Kenya to defend the Kikuyu land tenure from colonialism, analysed the significance of Land that:

It supplies them with material need of life through which spiritual and mental contentment is achieved. *Communion* with the ancestral spirit is perpetuated through contact with the soil in which the ancestors of the tribe lie buried. The Gikuyu considers the earth as the 'mother' of the tribe, for the reason that the mother bears the burden for about eight or nine moons while the child is in her womb, and then for a short period of suckling. However, it is the soil that nurses the spirits of the dead for eternity. Thus the soil is the most sacred thing above all that dwell in it or on it. Among the Gikuyu the soil is especially honoured, and an everlasting oath is to be sworn by the earth (1938:21).

In light of the above, it is worth noticing that land played a significant role in the life of Kikuyus. This is because it not only served as economic factor of production but also religious functions. Meaning that when the colonists displaced them and took their land, they dismantled their source of economic activities and religious patterns linked with their land that enabled them to experience hypostatic union with their *Ngai*, food produce, religious specialists and their cosmos.

3.3. The Kikuyu Religion

Kikuyus like other Africans tribes are religious people such that "religions permeate all the aspects of life, there is no formal distinction between the religious and non-religious, between the spiritual and material areas of life. Wherever an African is there is his [sic] religion" (Mbiti 1969:2). This phenomenon is visible in their entire way of life for eating, walking, farming, visiting all have religious connotations. Every member of Kikuyu community belongs to this religious worldview by birth, marriage or adoption because no meaningful idea exists of being an atheist. It is very strange for one to declare that he/she does not believe in this religion because according to Kenyatta "religion is interwoven with traditions and social customs of the people" (Kenyatta 1938: 241; see also Mbiti 1969:4). However, with the introduction of Christian faith by missionaries they condemned and systematically weakened these Kikuyu religious practices by demarcating life between the sacred and secular instead of integrating them. This has resulted in what could be described as the emergence of a superficial Christian faith that is miles long but one inch deep among Kikuyus.

Leakey maintained that the family as a basic unit of the society became the centre of Kikuyu religion with the man of the house functioning also as the religious leader (1903:2). The family unit served as the religious, educational and social institution where all of the

members participated and were nurtured. For instance, children were taught about the deity, parents narrated folktales to derive lessons in life, riddles to stir their mind to think, parables and Kikuyu proverbs with their symbolic meaning told at the fireplace in the evening relaxing after the long day of hard work. Their religious worldview was passed on from one generation to the other. The parents and adults propagated Kikuyu religion in the society according to Kenyatta, “the duty of imparting this knowledge to the children is entrusted to the parents, who are looked upon as the official ministers of both religious ethics and social customs” (1938:241). This religious role at the family level spilt over into the society such that every parent had moral authority to extend that knowledge to other children for the understanding of a parent superseded that of the nuclear family (Githuku 2012). Hence, the head of the family ensured that the entire family live is in good relationship and harmony with *Ngai* and their ancestors and when necessary would offer sacrifices to restore lost relationship and harmony.

3.3.1. The Kikuyu *Ngai*

The Kikuyu people are monotheistic.²² They believed in the Supreme Being called *Ngai* who they believed is the creator of the whole universe especially Kikuyu land with fauna and flora (Githieya 1999:234). Some of the incommunicable attributes of *Ngai*, besides being creator, are: omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent (Middleton and Kershaw 1972:61; Kibicho 2006). He is incomparable with anything else in this universe and this has led Him to be accorded reverence and symbolically call *Ngai*, *Mulungu* meaning and describing His mysterious nature, power and mercy (Muraya 2013). While Kikuyus believed that *Ngai* is omnipresent, Leakey noted they were strongly convinced that He lived both ‘in the sky’ that is *Iguru*, symbolic expression of heaven and on earth, dwelling on the four mountains that surround Kikuyu Land (1903:1077). In light of Leakey’s description, the ‘sky’ may be meaningless when taken literally, but is symbolically understood as anthropomorphic discourse of dwelling place of *Ngai*. Kenyatta noted that among the four mountains, *Kerenyaga* later named by European explorers Mount Kenya was his resting place while on inspection tour of Kikuyu land (1938:3). Kikuyus believed Mount Kenya was the main abode of *Ngai* and that is why whenever Kikuyus were praying they had to face Mount Kenya, as that is the home of God.

²² Samuel Kibicho expounded this attribute of Kikuyu God and maintained that “The Gikuyu people have always believed in the one Almighty God, the creator and ruler of all men and things” (2006:17). His argument is that the Kikuyu God *Ngai* is the same God who was introduced by missionaries, meaning there was continuity from the Kikuyu religion’s understanding of *Ngai* to Christianity.

Ngai as a Supreme Being among Kikuyus was worshipped and in Kikuyu, *guthathaiya Ngai* as the only maker of heaven and earth. According to Njenga, Kariuki Kikuyus made this distinction clear from veneration of the ancestors, because when the British missionaries came in Kikuyu land, they misunderstood this and they concluded Kikuyus were ancestor worshippers (2006:118). Though to Kikuyus, the place of *Ngai* was so special for it was and is only *Ngai* who should be worshipped. To the ancestors, Kikuyu poured beer for them in the libation rite as observed by Karanja and this is discussed in detail (1999). The communal worship was a rare occasion because it only happened when there was a dire need in the society, such as famine or outbreak of a disease. It took place under a fig tree known as *Mogumo* tree, in the form of sacrifices, prayers, offerings, invocation of blessings et al, for family worship was the most common form of worship happening daily at household level.

3.3.2. The role of Ancestors among Kikuyus

The ancestors are the family elders within the community who have died but continue after death to influence the wellbeing of their family and community (Trillo 2002:169). Francis Oborji states that the ancestors “are people who have made it to the spirit-land and are being venerated by their descendants” (2005:26). Denis Sengulane (1991:161) compares the African ancestors with the Christians Saints and concludes that they were similar, for they influenced the living in the same way. Among Kikuyus, ancestors/*ngoma* are very important in their society. Silvana Bottignole pointed out that they were so significant among the Kikuyus because they were always present with the people as they shared with them their joy and sorrows and asked them for forgiveness when calamity fell upon the family members (1984:37). However, when the missionaries arrived and established themselves within the community, they opposed the role that Kikuyu ancestors’ *ngoma* played, because they saw them competing with the worship only of God as revealed in Christ and their influence. For example, during the 1926 translation of the Bible, Kangethe observed the word devil translated as *ngoma* (1988:30). This intentional mis-translation by missionaries distorted Kikuyus understanding of ancestors. To make the matter worse, missionaries preached this heresy to native Kikuyus who believed missionaries and their false ideological weakening of the community in order to make their British understanding and practice of Christianity have a monopoly in the belief system of the local people (Mbiti 1969:8).

Indeed, the ancestors in Kikuyuland were rather accorded the respect they deserved, enjoyed respect, consultation and communion with those who knew them while living members and

were not worshipped as suggested by the missionaries (Middleton and Kershaw 1972:61; Kariuki 2006:118). The community appeased *ngoma* when there were sacrifices made to *Ngai*. Muriuki argued that the pouring of libations and propitiation of the ancestors ensured the wellbeing of the family (1974:75). Kenyatta made this distinction that to worship *Ngai* was *guthathayia Ngai* would be to beseech *Ngai*, while to venerate *ngoma* was *guthinjira na guitangira ngoma njohi*, meaning, to slaughter and pour libation of beer to the spirits (1938:308). What is observable in this distinction between to worship and venerate is a very thin but culturally important understanding, as both *Ngai* and ancestors are accorded respect. The difference is the degree of respect toward *Ngai* is higher than ancestors who are intermediaries. This signifies that the role of *ngoma* among Kikuyus was the intermediary between the living and the Supreme Being, for the people believed that *ngomas* were in close proximity to *Ngai*'s realm than the living in the society. Waweru summarize this role stating, "to the Kikuyu respect for the ancestors was due to their role as intermediaries between *Ngai* and the people" (2005:171 see also Oborji 2005: 27). Therefore, the ancestors interceded for the living to be in perfect harmony and relationship with *Ngai* all the time. According to John Lukwata:

Ancestors are believed to have continuous influence over the living members of their immediate kinship unit. Their influence can be positive or negative depending on the conduct of the living. They are believed to be the proprietors of the land, and are responsible for promoting the fertility of human beings and that of the earth and growth of crops (2003:8-9).

In this regard, the ancestors were very instrumental in the life of Kikuyus as they acted as the source of blessings and curse to the society, depending on their way of life. This concept being central in the Kikuyu religious worldview saw its inclusion in the Anglican liturgy of the Holy Communion meal, where Christ is perceived as the believers' Ancestor (Anglican Church of Kenya 2002). Christ is articulated as an Ancestor who brings blessings of eternal life to those who partake in the Holy Communion meal.

3.3.3. Sacrifices

Sacrifice was the most common act of worship among Kikuyus for according to Mbiti this is where animal life was sacrificed in order to present the animal, in part or in whole, to God, supernatural beings, spirits or the living dead (1969:58). The sacrifices offered in most African communities were to ensure that there was perpetual harmony with the deity and other beings. Geoffrey Parrinder suggests that "the principal purposes of sacrifice are gift and propitiation" (1969: 73). Hence, sacrifices became gifts offered to *Ngai* who is the provider

of everything as an act of gratitude because of the good things that the community received from *Ngai* and continues to enjoy in their day-to-day life. As propitiation, the community amend their ways of life that is inconsistent with *Ngai's* will and sought forgiveness.

In Kikuyu, there were two forms of worship, namely the daily and occasional worships. One was the daily worship done at family or clan level. It was very simple and it was meant to keep the family in harmony with the spirits. Leakey argues that the appointed head of the sub-clan conducted the worship (1903:1082). The second was the occasional form of worship through sacrifices. It was elaborate and involved the entire community when there was crisis such as epidemic or drought, because Githuku argues that *Ngai* was not disturbed with minor problems, but approached only in time of dire national need (2012:45). The community was notified of the date the sacrifice was to take place and every member of the community was supposed to examine his/her life. Kenyatta put this succinctly that,

A public proclamation is made announcing the date of the ritual ceremony. A notice given in advance that after five days and nights have passed, the sixth day will be a day of communion with *Mwene-Nyaga*, and that no one will be allowed to make a journey ... to ford a river or a stream, that no stranger will be permitted to come in or depart on that day of communion (1938:245).

This ensured that the sacrifice offered be acceptable to *Ngai* for the whole community have repented of their sin and earnestly sought *Ngai's* assistance to end the crisis at hand. In these two forms of sacrifice, Kikuyus offered to *Ngai* their own food and animals. Uzukwu argues that:

‘What human eat they give to spirit’ so goes an Igbo saying. Hunters and gatherers ... use game, wild vegetables, and fruits in their religious practice. Pastoral and agricultural people or communities of mixed economy, express their beliefs by means of what they produce (1980:372-373).

Kikuyus being agriculturalists used their produce from the farms as well as goats or sheep that were the most commonly used animals in their communal sacrifices. The sacrificial food offered to *Ngai* was consecrated says Parrinder in words and deeds for use by *Ngai* and *ngoma* (1969:73). Through consecration of the sacrificial food to *Ngai*, the Kikuyu leading elder:

Raises his hands, holding the calabashes, towards *Kere-Nyaga*. In addition, standing in this position, he utters prayer to *Mwene-Nyaga* saying “Revered Elder [God] who lives in *Kere-Nyaga* ... we offer to you this sacrifice ... refined honey and milk we have brought for you ... we beseech you accept this, our sacrifice (Kenyatta 1938:247).

Through sacrificial food offered to *Ngai* when facing the four mountains linked and connected the living people with their deity and ancestors who in return responded with blessings to them for “through them the visible world penetrates the invisible world and man [sic] symbolically presents or offers the visible world to the invisible world” (Mbiti 1969:146). Through this encounter between humanity and God, hypostatic union is reached since the people, their cosmos and their fruits of their labour participate in worshiping God within their cultural milieu. This intimacy with the ultimate, cosmos and the people enhance commitments and trust in God the provider of everything. Unfortunately, this symbolic cultural expression that is very important to the people’s understanding and practice of spirituality has not been adequately inculturated into the local people’s experience of the Christian faith bequeathed by the missionaries. This missing religio-cultural link is most visible in their experience of the sacrament of Holy Communion and the elements that are used as symbols.

The most common sacrifices in Kikuyu land were thanksgiving sacrifices and blessing sacrifices (Kibicho 2006). For instance, when the community had prayed for a bountiful harvest and God blessed them they offered sacrifice of thanksgiving to *Ngai* for answering and fulfilling their prayers. Another example of blessing sacrifice was *mburi ya guita maguta*, that is a ram for pouring out fat which:

Was a sacrifice to deity to offer blood and fat to him as a prayer for blessings, peace and prosperity. When the head of the family had pierced the breast and the blood gushed forth, it was caught in a half-gourd, and he proceeded to offer it to the deity saying ... receive this oh God; it is you to whom I pray on behalf of this my homestead (Leakey 1903:1093).

3.4. Kikuyu Religious Offices

Kikuyus give reverence to the religious specialist leaders within the society and this manifested in the special hospitality that religious leaders receive in their homes during and after performing their religious duties. During this colonial period, the community’s hospitality of welcoming important people in their homes and offering them gifts was systematically abused and the people robbed of their land (Thiong’o 1967:18). The Kikuyu regarded the missionaries as acting as ‘spiritual’ police for the colonial authorities. The Kikuyu therefore resolved, ‘*gutiri muthungu na mubia*’ meaning ‘there is no distinction between a colonialist and a missionary’ (Lonsdale 2000:194). In Kikuyu land there was no concept of priests per se as understood in the contemporary era. According to Mbiti this affirms that in some traditional societies priests are not found; instead ritual elders perform

the priestly function of sacrificing, leading rituals, praying blessing and acting as the link between people and God (1991:161). Kikuyus had the sacrificial elders who performed priestly duties (Middleton and Kershaw 1972:63; see also Kenyatta 1938:242). These religious duties suggest Waweru were, “that of sacrificing to *Ngai* as it was the duty of the elders to conduct all the sacrifices at these times” (2005:172). Some of the religious offices in Kikuyu community were that of medicine-men and women, diviners and seers.

3.4.1. Medicine-Men and Women /Andu ago

The medicine-men and women in Kikuyu land were known as *andu ago* in plural while in singular *mundu mugo* (Muraya 2013). These specialists played a significant role in the Kikuyu society for they were community doctors in modern-day terms. Kikuyus believed *Ngai* the divider of everything that is God’s providence endowed them with special power. Kariuki maintained that:

The power included the ability to perform magic [*kiama*]. The magic of healing a person could be attributed both to *mundu mugo*’s intuitive knowledge of the patient’s psyche and to the psychological influence of the patient’s belief (2006:129).

They mostly used the local herbs from the forest, for they had special knowledge to discern the healing herbs through apprenticeship from the existing *mundu mugo* for a considerable number of years (Muraya 2013). Though training was the most common way of becoming *mundu mugo*, some inherited these powers from their parents through long experience of accompanying (this is another form of training) their parents while executing their duties. For one to qualify to become *mundu mugo* he/she was “expected to be trustworthy, upright morally, friendly, willing and ready to serve, able to discern people’s need and not be exorbitant in their charges” (Mbiti 1969: 163). Hence *mundu mugo* “used herbal medicine, or magic which was a kind of miraculous healing and sometimes would combine both to treat a sick person” (Waweru 2005: 174).

As doctors in the community, they superseded some modern-day physicians, for their healing was holistic (Muraya 2013). In spite of most Kikuyus visiting the modern day hospitals for conventional medicine, when healing is not forthcoming they turn to traditional means. They do this because *mundu mugo* duties included,

Divination, offering sacrifices and prayers during times of crisis, performance of cleansing ceremonies to remove ritual uncleanness, curing diseases which had failed to respond to herbal treatment and making charms and medicines to counter misfortune (Karanja 1999:23).

Those ailments that modern day physicians failed to cure *mundu mugo* would give specialist attention. He/she did sacrificial purification of the sick person or the community from any *thahu* through “the commonest form of ceremonial purification by means of the ceremony known as *gutahikio* meaning to cause to vomit ... which varied considerably according to the nature of the uncleanness which was to be purified and removed” (Leakey 1903:1242). This vomiting ritual was a form of public confession of sin and cleansing and had the potential to be utilised as a fertile ground for inculturating this rite into the Church’s teachings to foster a deeper understanding of public and private confession of sins among Christians.

3.4.2. Diviners [Araguri]

These religious people were concerned with divination in the society as agents of disclosing mysteries in human life. Though some were still medicine men and women their role in the society involved forth-telling people’s problems either after ‘being bewitched’ or uncertain of their peculiar suffering that they were experiencing. Waweru argues that they were:

Specialized in telling the cause of malaise to supernatural causes and then would practice curing by means of cleansing. Were also expected to practice and specialize in protective magic, so that they could exercise the power to protect a homestead, or cattle, goats, sheep and crops (2005:174).

To those who consulted them for protection of either their homestead or family members they were given charms and amulets known as *githitu* to bury in their land, tie around their waist or put on their house’s doorpost for safety purposes (Muraya 2013).

3.4.3. Seers /Arathi

The seers were the religious specialists believed to have direct communication with *Ngai* for He revealed to them events to come through dreams. It was widely believed among the Kikuyu that:

These specialists were endowed with powers beyond those of ordinary human beings. They are held to be in direct communication with *Mwene-Nyaga* who gives them instructions, generally during their sleep. *Mwene-Nyaga* assist and directs them in their sacred duty (Kenyatta 1938:242).

The powers so endowed to them were for the common good of the society and not for personal gain. One of the key seers / *murathi* in Kikuyu was Mugo wa Kibiru who had foretold the community of a coming long snake from the East, heading to the West swallowing and vomiting people along the way (Thiong’o 1965:2). This was interpreted to mean the symbolic expression of the coming of the train as a mass transport that was realized

by coming of colonialists who built the Kenya-Uganda railway in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Seers are equated with the Old Testaments prophets in the Jewish context. Kibicho observed that Kikuyus had such prophets and a good example is Mugo wa Kibiru who had prophesied the coming of the colonists (2006:28).

3.5. Kikuyu Concept of a Meal

The Kikuyu meals, either at family or religious gathering, entails produce such as bananas, sweet potatoes, yams, arum lily, millet, sorghum, *Njahi (dolichos lab lab)*, sugarcane, cow peas, maize and beans which came in the early twentieth century (Sorrenson 1967:4). Some of these produces such as mixture of maize and beans known as *githeri* are mixed with green vegetables to make *irio /mukimo* (mashed food), or maize is milled or grounded to have flour to make *ugali* that is a type of food usually eaten with vegetable stews. In light of this, the main staple food among the Kikuyus is *githeri* and *ugali* that one finds and prepares for nourishment when hungry. While bread is to the Jewish as their staple food to the Kikuyus it is *githeri* and *ugali*. This suggests that if Jesus was initiating his last meal (Luke 22:14-20) within the Kikuyu context then *githeri* or *ugali* would be the symbols of nourishment that he would have used.

The coming of British Christianity and colonists in the nineteenth century transformed the Kikuyu ways of life, including eating habits (Tignor 1976). Silvana Bottignole argues that the Kikuyu were absorbed in large quantities into the patterns of western culture (1984:30). Culture as a dynamic thing saw Kikuyus embracing new menus in their meal such as *chapatti* and rice during this colonial era. As indicated in chapter one, *chapatti* was an Indian food brought into Kenya through the importation of Indian migrant workers. Over time, this meal has acculturated into the Kikuyu menu such that in most celebrations, *chapatti* is present. However, the Kikuyu staple foods, *githeri* and *ugali*, are still the dominant symbols of nourishment.

Beside farm produce eaten as food, meat is another form of food in the Kikuyu menu and this includes the animal blood (Routledge 1910:46; Githieya 1999:236). While everybody in the community eats meat, there is taboo related to it in term of age and gender. Leakey states that:

Although from every animal that was slaughtered there were certain joints that belonged by right to the children, others that belonged to the women, and yet others to the men, it was seldom that a father did not give bits of his own portions to his children and wives (1903:2).

The animal blood was another prevailing practice before the influence of Christianity and western modern health practices condemned it for being unhygienic and constituting a biblical taboo. However, the deeper meaning attached to blood as a symbol of life in the Kikuyu religious worldview still holds deep meaning to the people. As symbol of life, animal blood is used to propitiate *Ngai* when calamity strikes the community (Kenyatta 1938). Moreover, the symbol of blood sealed an everlasting covenant such as marriage and this suggests why in Kikuyu society divorce was minimal (Waweru 2011:173-174). This symbolic expression of blood is integrated in the Holy Communion meal where the symbol of wine depicts the blood of Christ that atones for human's sin (Hebrew 9:11 - 14), the way the animal blood in Kikuyu custom atoned for the sins of the community (Githiga 2001:54). Adrian Hasting articulates this when he observed the revival group known as East Africa Revival Brethren cutting across all the cultural divides in Kenya [*But also traced in the East Africa countries like Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania*] assimilated the phrase 'washed by the blood of Christ' in their Christian religious practices (1976:102). Therefore, the revival Brethren influenced deeply by Kikuyu religious symbol of blood to atone for human sin, perceived that the blood of Christ supersedes all other forms of blood. This includes the blood of animals because Christ "entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption" (Hebrews 9:12). This signifies that the symbol of blood could have offered a deeper understanding of the Holy Communion symbol of wine to communicate the atonement of human sin in the diocese of Thika.

For the drinks, gruel/porridge from millet and sorghum play a very important role, because in every rite of passage known as *hindi ya mambura* or celebration the women would prepare it. The local traditional brew *muratina* is the other drink that accompanies Kikuyu meals, especially during occasions such as initiations, marriage or religious activities (Thiong'o 1965:11). There are two brands of beer, one brewed from sugar cane for ordinary drinking purposes such as hospitality and refreshment and honey beer or mead brewed "only for special occasions such as ceremonies connected with initiation, marriage or religious purposes" (Leakey 1903:295). This implies that the religious 'wine' for the Kikuyus according to Leakey was the honey beer, but with the coming of the missionaries this was also condemned as unholy and not worthy for use at the Lord's Table in spite of the religious significance that it played in the life of Kikuyu people. Traditionally, beer drinking was the privilege of those eligible by age factor and status in the society. Therefore, one had to have

his/her children attain initiation age for him/her to qualify for drinking, otherwise breaking this tribal custom was met with severe consequences (Leakey 1903:239). This can be contrasted with the practice during the Holy Communion meal because only the baptised and confirmed members are allowed to participate according to diocesan canon law in the constitution (ACK Diocese of Thika 2006).

The traditional Kikuyu brews were branded as ‘unholy’ in spite of the fundamental roles that they played in the society. To cite a few of the roles, the *muratina* and honey beer linked and connected the people with their ancestors through libation and it sealed the marriage relationship when the elders from both sides of bride and bridegroom shared the beer together. In addition, it enhanced friendship among community members. Nevertheless, with the introduction of Christianity by evangelical missionaries, most Kikuyu Christians were taught to desist from taking traditional brew as a virtue. In order to participate in a meal within Kikuyu community it was highly depended on age factor and one’s status in the society.

3.5.1. Meals as Symbol of Initiation into New Life

Initiation in Kikuyu land is one of the most important rites in one’s life because it serves as the gate to participate in community life. Some of the initiation rites that a Kikuyu had to undergo were rebirth or second birth that is known as *guciarwo na mburi* and circumcision/*irua*. There was also initiation to various position of leadership in the community such as: council of peace/*matathi*, governing council/ *maturanguru* and religious council/*kiama gia guthathaiya* (Hobley 1938:210; Lumbert 1956:83; Middleton and Kershaw 1972:33). The significance of these rites according to Mbiti is to “introduce the candidate to adult life... [for] they are now allowed to share in the full privileges and duties of the community” (1969:118). The rite of rebirth was meant to re-enact the birth of a child by her mother and it involved the whole community coming together. In the Kikuyu rites of passage, rebirth/*guciarwo na mburi* fostered initiation into community life and circumcision /*irua* engendered initiation into community responsibilities. This thesis is of the view that these rites could also be properly inculturated to converse with the Church’s rite of Holy Communion as a Christian meal. This is because *guciarwo na mburi*/ rebirth was equated to the Christian baptism where one is initiated and welcomed as a member in the Christian community. *Irua* that is circumcision became equated with the confirmation rite. In the Anglican Church, according to Bishop Githiga and Maxwell Anikwenwa, the baptized child

become an adult through confirmation and therefore mature in their understanding and practice of the Christian faith in the aspect of salvation history (2001; 2002:71).

In rebirth, a goat would be slaughtered to provide the skin that will cover the initiate and the animal intestine to be used for purification and cleansing purposes (Middleton and Kershaw 1972:56). The rite was marked by roasting and eating the meat by the family members and invited guests. Also gruel/ *ucuru* and *njahi* beans were symbolically taken together by the parents to suggest that:

Parents had given new life to their child, for him/her to become a complete person/ *mundu mugima*. From then on the child was independent of its mother and was a complete person in its own right (Leakey 1903:559).

Similarly, those initiated into various Kikuyu councils had to give out goats to be eaten and beer for drinking in order for them to be assimilated in these councils (Middleton and Kershaw 1972:36). Meals among the Kikuyus are used to initiate a person from one stage of life to the other. At the initiation stage, it is a learning opportunity for the initiates who will assume new duties and responsibilities in the society. Githuku states that “rituals and rites of passages were an ideal school of learning [because] at every stage of life, every member of the community was once a student” (2012:36). The tribal customs, laws, taboos and religious matters were taught to the initiates who after initiation become the custodians of the tribal morals, core values, laws, taboos et al (Thiong’o 1965:26). Within the Christian faith, catechetical instruction plays a crucial role to the initiates of the Holy Communion meal, where the meal in form of wafers and wine as symbols of food are interpreted for their significance and relevance in their Christian life. This insinuates that at catechetical training, the prospective initiates of Holy Communion symbols reaffirm their baptismal vows and upon confirmation by the bishop are admitted to the Holy Communion meal (Anglican Church of Kenya 2002).

3.5.2. Meals as a Symbol of Friendship

Kikuyus are known in Kenya to be friendly people who open their homes to welcome visitors whenever they meet. Such meeting is accompanied by sharing a meal together as one way to assert friendship. For example, when the Europeans came to Kikuyu land, they made friendship with chiefs such as Kivoi and Waiyaki and they ate together to seal their friendship, though later Europeans proved otherwise (Kangethe 1988:28; Gathogo 2011:109). In the marriage rite also this symbol of friendship is featured when the two marriage partners

share their intents to marry with their parents and set a date for the boy's family to visit the girl's family for eating and drinking together during a ceremony known as *kuhanda ithigi*/ engagement ceremony. The engagement ceremony marks the beginning of friendship between the two families, followed by subsequent visits to the girl's family for the bride price to enhance friendship, as marriage is a process of building covenantal relationship in Kikuyu.

At the time for the bride price to be agreed, both families invite their friends from their clan. The bridal family slaughter goats depending on what was brought by the bridegroom's family, gruel and other Kikuyu foodstuffs are prepared for both families to eat together, because now they are officially friends. The in-laws' friendship is nurtured by frequent visits, as Kikuyus say during marriage negotiation *ndugu ni makinya* that is friendship is making frequent visit to your friend's place (Barra 1994). Therefore, the bride price "was never given in full, the reason being it was supposed to help in creating a long-lasting relationship between the two families" (Waweru 2011:174). This is in spite of how affluent the bridegroom family may be, because they have to follow this tribal custom. Meals as symbols of friendship also featured among the age-mates eligible for drinking beer, because they could plan to meet for *njohi ya urata*, that is "friends' refreshment." Certainly, drinking beer together became the token of friendship or esteem among the close friends because non-invited member were abhorred unless one was invited by a friend to join in.

In view of this, a meal becomes the source of bringing people together where they care for one another, as depicted in the marriage process among Kikuyus. This means that a meal builds a community with a sense of belongingness. The Holy Communion meal, according to Jurgen Moltmann and Michael Welker, is experienced in a liberated community that Christ initiated among his disciples and his friends (1978:86; 2000:8). This meal represents the token of friendship between Christ and the community he established. Like in the Kikuyu meal where friends meet quite often to share the meal together as a family and to cement their friendship, Christ in the Holy Communion meal unites the community of believers with his invitations to frequently celebrate his life and death through the meal. As is written, "as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (I Corinthians 11:26).

3.5.3. Meals as Symbol of Unity/ Bonding

The other understanding of a meal among Kikuyus is the concept of unity bonding two people or families. Eating and drinking together of families acts as a bond of sealing them as

friends as well as a legal binding contract between those getting married. In marriage, the bonding factor is the animal blood that is shed to signify that the two families are now one and both their children entering in the marriage life are no longer two but one theologically (Waweru 2011:175). Klans Muller and Ute Ritz-Muller argue that the power of the meal is to unite and solidify all people sharing in it, whether it is a religious or family event (2000:334). The bonding of two communities was also common in Kikuyu land when there were tribal raids²³ and women were captured (Njeru 2011:136). To adopt and integrate the captured women in the Kikuyu community and way of life, a goat was slaughtered and eaten by the families concerned to integrate those women as their wives and members of Kikuyu community (Njeru 2011:136; Gathogo 2011:90).

When the European Count Teleki arrived in Kikuyu he was “welcomed by Waiyaki Hinga, in a solemn ceremony, Teleki and Waiyaki took the oath of blood brotherhood as was customarily done to all non-Kikuyus viewed as ‘outsiders’ with the goal of initiating and integrating them in the community” (Kangethe 1988: 28). The meal became the symbol for adopting the ‘outsiders’ and integrating them in Kikuyu ways of life, in the same way as the two families are united during the marriage rite. The symbol of unity was also evident when the Maasai warriors raided Kikuyus’ livestock and steal, leading to a strained relationship. To restore the harmony and peaceful co-existence between Kikuyus and Maasai people the sacrificial elders had to share a reconciliation meal together and vow to end hostility between the two tribes (Trillo 2002:169; Gathogo 2011:90). In light of this, this suggests sharing meal together among the Kikuyus play a reconciliatory role between two or more people in rivalry or who have been in a strained relationship.

With this in mind, the Holy Communion meal becomes a symbol of bonding and uniting the liberated community initiated by Christ. For John Howe and Sam Pascoe argue that in the Holy Communion meal eaten in remembrance of Christ, Christians are bonded and united with Christ, one another and his meritorious death that reconciles them back to him (2010:84). This implies then, at the Holy Communion meal Christians dine with Christ as his friends because they are liberated from their sin by him. This means the Holy Communion meal is a unity meal where humanity and God taste union with one another and anticipate fuller union with Christ at his eschatological meal (Küng 1967:217).

²³ Enosh Njeru (2011:136) argues that this was a common source of friction between Kikuyus and Maasai because Maasai believed all cows belonged to them. He observed through intermarriages, marriage institution becomes an effective way of bringing warring communities into amicable coexistence and as a way of reducing hostility.

3.5.4. Meals as a Symbol of Communion and Blessings

Meals among Kikuyus also serve as a symbol of communion and blessings to the recipients with their deity and ancestors. As a symbol of communion, the meal penetrates the invisible world when shared together with the deity and ancestors through libation (Mbiti 1991:146). Mbiti notes that for Kikuyu “libation and giving of the food to the departed are tokens of fellowship, hospitality and respect; the drink and food so given are symbols of family continuity and contact” (1969:9). In terms of the Holy Communion meal, the wafers and wine become the source of God’s blessing to humanity for they feed on Christ in their heart with thanksgiving. To Kikuyus the drink most often offered to *Ngai* was beer that signifies communion with Kikuyu people. This was done in every rite of passage because the Kikuyus believed that the presence of *Ngai* in every undertaking ensured security of the people’s life and as a way of invoking blessings from *Ngai* and the ancestors (Middleton and Kershaw 1972:57). Similarly, children also sought blessings and communion when they offended their parents. Kenyatta argues that,

If a son wrongs his father, he appeases his father’s anger by giving him a sheep or a he-goat and two or three calabashes of beer; and in this way he holds a communion with his father and the ancestral spirits who are represented by the father (1938:145).

After eating and drinking together, the father forgives and again accepts the repentant child and then invokes blessings for the child.

Sharing of meal as a source of blessings was also evident in Kikuyus way of life. Kikuyus believed *Ngai*, ancestors, the elders or the parents to be the source of blessings. For instance, during the initiation stage for circumcision, boys and girls were supposed to visit their uncles and aunts respectively for blessing before undergoing the cut. When the uncles and aunts shared a meal together with the prospective candidates for initiation, they invoked blessing upon them, before they proceed with the rite. During the engagement ceremony / *kuhanda ithigi* the prospective bride and bridegroom seek for *Ngai*’s, ancestors’ and parents’ blessings in their marriage and as a sign of seriousness with marriage (Sobania 2003:138). Waweru states that:

The young man’s father orders a small quantity of beer to be brewed on a given day, and in the afternoon of that day he takes a small he-goat, which is slaughtered in the courtyard in front of the hut of the mother of the young man who is going to get married. The goat is to be strangled and the father of the young man comes and pierces the chest for blood to spill out on the ground. The

blood is collected in a small gourd and holding it, the father prays to *Ngai* so that his son's wife will become a blessing to the family (2011: 178).

In view of this, one observes that the Kikuyu concept of meal become a source of blessing in the society to the recipients and the givers. While the blessings in the Kikuyu concept of meal were finite, the blessing of God in the Holy Communion meal are infinite and beyond human imagination because God established an everlasting covenant and friendship with humanity in this meal.

3.5.5. Meals as Symbol of Hospitality

Kikuyu people are a hospitable community, for a visitor is seen as a source of blessing rather than a curse or bad omen. This hospitality is evident in the Kikuyu proverb that asserts that *mucii ukuuga ngagurwo*, meaning that whenever a visitor comes in a home, the first thing one does is to welcome him/her with something to eat or drink (Barra 1994). This is clear in Gathogo's argument that Gikuyu,

Have a tremendous spirit of welcoming in their culture ... the host or hostess will drop everything to welcome the visitor, make the guest feel at home, enjoy a friendly conversation, and serve food and drink (2001:23).

The symbol of hospitality among Kikuyu is the gesture of giving a glass²⁴ of water signifying that one is welcomed in that homestead. When offered a glass of water this signifies that something special might be on the way for entertaining the visitor. This ranged sometimes to slaughtering of animals and brewing of beer to eating and drinking together as friends (Gathogo 2011:89; Leakey 1903). In Kikuyu community, the invitation to participate and share a meal together is viewed as a sense of acceptance in that family, while for the visitor also to agree to share a meal signified that he/she has reciprocated that acceptance and warm welcome. Failure to share in a Kikuyu meal when invited to do so is interpreted to mean arrogance, an enemy, disregard or one is a witch for there is always plenty to share with any unexpected visitor who may turn up during the meal time (Mutiso-Mbinda 1984:2; see also Gathogo 2011:89). In this regard, the Holy Communion meal in the Christian faith depicts the symbol of abundance where Christ invites all to dine with him, as there is more than enough for all. Therefore, the wafers and wine in this meal become the sign of God's hospitality to humanity (Cumming 1994:158).

²⁴Though a glass is referred here, traditionally it was a gourd that was used. However, with time the term glass has been assimilated and thus dominated today's way of life.

3.5.6. Meals as Symbol of Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving was a very common phenomenon in Kikuyuland, for anything good that was received from deity, ancestors or a friend was highly appreciated. For instance, if the sacrificial elders had prayed for a bountiful harvest in the land and *Ngai* responded by providing such a harvest, the community joined hands together in a thanksgiving sacrifice to *Ngai* (Kibicho 2006). The community used to bring their harvest together and they slaughtered goats as appreciation of the goodness from *Ngai*. Leakey cites an example of the “sacrificial ram ... one to be sacrificed at a later date in thanksgiving when the prayer had been answered” (1903:1083). The community had to give some of their harvest to *makumbi ma Ngai* that is God’s granaries near their place along the highway as a form of appreciation. Kibicho, explaining this further, states that:

The granaries were built before the main ceremony of sacrifice ... after the ceremonies were over and the people were allowed to begin harvesting, each person would prepare portions of his or her first harvests for God as a token of gratitude for his blessings of rain and the harvest (2006:39).

Thanksgiving is also featured after successful rites of passage among the Kikuyu and a case at point is in the marriage rite when the bride’s and bridegroom’s families eat and drink together in thanksgiving to God for giving them children who have united them. Thanksgiving is also expressed by the bridegroom’s family in the form of the dowry payment, for this is not supposed to be interpreted in other ways apart from a sign or gesture of appreciation to the girl family.

In the Holy Communion meal, the gesture of thanksgiving permeates this meal manifested by providence of God in the form of wafers and wine. The symbols of wafers and wine become the spiritual food to humanity, even though they are not worthy to partake. As when Christ invited humanity to dine with him in spite of their unworthiness it not only reminds them of God’s gift of spiritual food but also the gift of Christ to die for their sin (Schreiner and Crawford 2010:1). Gordon Smith argues this gesture invites humanity to thank God for his work in Christ Jesus, reconciling humanity to God with his amazing grace that reaches out in his love that conquered sin and death (2005:104).

In light of the above, one notes that the diocese of Thika is a Church diocese located within the cultural context of the Kikuyu people where by virtue of its locality, it is influenced and shaped by Kikuyu worldview. This means that Kikuyu thought systems and religious systems shaped the understanding and practices of the sacramental rite of Holy Communion in this

context. It is worth noting then, that it is in this cultural context the CMS missionaries introduced the understanding and practice of the sacramental rite of the Holy Communion meal using wafers and wine. As a new religious practice and central ecclesiastical identity in the Anglican tradition in the context of Thika, this study seeks to examine the extent to which the Holy Communion symbols in this holy meal speak and communicate to diocesan Christians rooted in Kikuyu context. As a new religious practice among the Kikuyus, this study examines how this central identity and practice in the Anglican Church has been rooted or it has remained as a potted plant in the diocesan context, as Ashley Smith (1984) posed in the case of Caribbean Christianity.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter located the Kikuyu people as one of the largest ethnic groups in Kenya, mostly settled in Kiambu, Murang'a, Kirinyaga, Nyandarua and Nyeri counties, though they can be encountered in other counties in Kenya. They are mostly agriculturalists, though they keep livestock for social, religious and economic activities. Land plays a fundamental role, for it is not only an economic factor of production but has religious connotations for it sustains them and links them with their ancestors and *Ngai*. Religiously, Kikuyus were and are monotheists, had various sacrifices offered to *Ngai* and religious specialists such as *andu ago*, *Arathi* and *Araguri*. Meals play a significant role in the life of Kikuyu people for it was and is at the meal that the cultural value systems were and are inculcated and strengthened for the survival of individuals and the society, because they are linked with certain rites of passage. As culture is dynamic, these cultural value systems are changing, having been influenced by Christianity and modernity, either for good or for worse. However, the meal has continued to be a symbol of initiation, friendship, unity, communion/blessing, hospitality and thanksgiving among Kikuyus.

Therefore, these concepts of meal in Kikuyu community became a fertile ground, as Nyamiti observed that the African tradition has become the source of articulating Christianity in the African context. To this end, the Kikuyu concept of meal translated into a deeper understanding of the Holy Communion meal through inculturation of its symbols as symbol of initiation for Christian maturity to the communicants. As mature Christians, it becomes the opportune time to assume Christian responsibilities in the Church. Friendship was the other evidence in the Holy Communion meal where Christ dines with his friends in the liberated community of the faithful. This friendship is nurtured by frequent celebration of this meal in

remembrance of Christ's meritorious death. This chapter also highlighted that the Holy Communion meal is a gesture of hospitality, where Christ is the host of this meal and the communicants are his guests, invited to receive the gift and blessing of his death on the cross with thanksgiving.

In conclusion this chapter highlighted the following: One, there is dire need for serious investigation of the inherited and perceived Holy Communion symbols as orthodox in the Anglican tradition in different contexts and particularly in the diocese of Thika. And if at all the main goal of the Christian faith and practice is to communicate to the people in their own context, then there is need to appropriate the Holy Communion symbols in the Kikuyu way of life in Thika. Two, it is in this sense, there is a need to re-examine the effectiveness of these symbols used in the diocese of Thika in spite of them being so central to the Anglican ecclesiastical identity. Though this may be divergent from the orthodoxy in this sacramental rite, this study perceives it is a good premise to investigate the extent to which the Holy Communion symbols as meal have been inculturated in the diocese of Thika. Thus the Kikuyu concept of meal in this chapter became the best model for inculturating the Holy Communion symbols and its understanding in Thika. The next chapter will analyse the understanding and practice of the sacramental rite of Holy Communion symbolism in the ACK.

Chapter Four

The Holy Communion Symbolism in the Anglican Church in Kenya

“Anglican Eucharistic Theology is multiform, that is there is difference of voice and view and indeed a multiformity of philosophical assumptions.”

(Douglas 2012:9).

4. Introduction

The previous chapter located this study within the local ecclesiastical context of the diocese of Thika inhabited by Kikuyu people. It established that these people’s worldview has influenced and shaped the understanding and practice of the Holy Communion meal. The big question is how is this understanding of the Holy Communion symbols in the ecclesiastical context of Thika has been inculturated, in a context where these symbols are perceived as orthodoxy.

In light of this introduction, this chapter anticipates to analyse the understanding of the symbols used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion in the Anglican Church in Kenya. Key areas to be analysed are tracing the use of wafers and wine as symbols in the Holy Communion, their understanding, nature of Holy Communion theology and the practice as bequeathed by the CMS missionaries in Kenya.

4.1. Historical development of Bread to Wafers in the Ecclesiastical Setting.

It is worth noting that bread formed part of the Jewish staple food. It was their source of daily nourishment whenever they had a meal. Uzuku (1980:376) then states that, bread was not only source of their nourishment but also formed part of their religious life. As during their religious rites became the food offered for thanksgiving and sacrifice. However, with time Howe and Pascoe (2010:81) argue Jesus re-interpreted the significance of the bread to Jews and gave it a broader understanding to the wider global communities. This meant the bread was viewed as the body of Christ that was broken for the atonement of humankind sin (Anglican Church of Kenya 2002). As such, bread became the common element used by Jesus’ apostles and the Early Church whenever the Community of believers met to break the bread on the Lord’s Day (Verdiere 1996:143).

While all along the bread was been used in the Holy Communion, there was introduction of wafers according to Janny De Moor (1993:119 - 123) in the 4th Century that saw this bread type been adopted for Church use by stamping it with the Greek letters xp for Christ. With

time, the Community of believers became elaborate and this saw the community divided into two blocks namely the Eastern and Western Christendom. It was prompted by doctrinal issues and supremacy battle between Constantinople and Rome. In this case, the use of bread or wafers whether leaven or unleaven in the Holy Communion in 8th century became a contentious issue that brought a tag of war between the East and West (Dowley 1990:265). Though this contentious debate may be ascribed to the East and West block of Christianity, Hague (1932) notes that it also emerged later in the Western block of Christianity particularly in England when it stopped paying loyalty to Rome by cutting off ties.

When the Church of England was formed, it continued to use unleavened bread rather than wafers in the Holy Communion (Allmen 1969:42). However, this attracted a lot of criticism and divisions in England at its formative years between those who opts wafers rather than bread (Hague 1932:276). It is only during the reign of Queen Elizabeth as the Head of State and Church of England, that she arrested the escalating rivary. She brought reforms in the Church of England and parts of these reforms touched the liturgical life of the Church (Dearmer 1917). Sacraments been the borne of contentions, the Parliament through an act recommended the use of wafers rather than bread in the Church of England. The reason been it is by “far more convenient than common bread and involves smaller risks of irrelevance” (Dearmer 1917:314). Certainly, wafers became the official type of bread for use in the Church of England and in the other mission Churches that it established abroad. Unfortunately, wafers disappeared due to breaking of the Second World War and only to be re-introduced later in the nineth century according to Meyer (1994:46). In this note, when the English missionaries introduced the sacrament of Holy Communion in Kenya, the wafers formed part of the elements used as the section below elaborates.

4.2. Use of Holy Communion Symbols (Wafers and Wine) in the Anglican Church in Kenya (ACK)

The ACK is a member of the global body of the Anglican Communion²⁵ that traces its origin to the sixteenth century reformation in the Church of England. This insinuates that the Anglican Churches in the globe share a Roman Catholic rootedness as part of their identity because the mother Church, the Church of England, had a Roman Catholic beginning

²⁵ According to W.G. Wilson (1980:203), Anglican Communion is the body or families of Churches (known as Anglicans) in communion with the Church of England.

(Crockett 1998:308; Coleman 2004:2; Pobee 2009:9). The implications of this phenomenon are evident in ecclesiastical practices. A good example is the understanding and practice of the sacramental rite of Holy Communion that is shaped and influenced by Roman Catholic identity. Colin Buchanan (1983) concurs with this sentiment and cites the order and structure of the Holy Communion rite in his work *Eucharistic Liturgies of Edward VI*. Other areas of commonality, according to Dale Coleman (2004), Githiga (2009) and Pobee (2009), are the seven sacraments in the High Anglican tradition known as Anglo-Catholic (where a good example of such a Church is the Anglican Church in the Southern Africa). In contrast, the Low Anglican tradition known as Evangelicals, like the ACK, place emphasis on two sacraments [that is Baptism and Holy Communion] while the other five are referred to as sacramental ministries of grace (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:54).

In the mission of the ACK, like in the other members of the Anglican Communion, they strive for the pure word of God to be preached and the sacraments duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all things that are of necessity (Vasey 1996:84). In this worshipping Church in Kenya, the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion are celebrated according to Christ in his Gospel for his Church because they are needed by all for fullness of life (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:54). In this regard, the Holy Communion according to Paul Avis acts as the centre and summit of Anglican worship (2005:16).

In the sacrament of Holy Communion, the ACK uses the imported and inherited wafers²⁶ and wine as taught by the CMS missionaries. These two symbols are delivered and administered unto all persons under both kind. This means that both wafers and wine are given to the communicants as affirmed in the Thirty-Nine Articles of Faith by Thomas Cranmer in Article XXX, that beseeched the Church to grant communicants the cup of the Lord, as Christ commanded the Church to be doing to all faithful Christians (Hague 1932:226; Evans and Wright 1991:424; Welchman MDCCLVII:66).

To this end, it is worth noting that it is unfortunate for the ACK that when English missionaries established daughter Churches in Kenya and other parts of Africa they never took the context of the people seriously. This is in spite of Charles Long's observations that the Anglican Church in the globe is rapidly outgrowing its Englishness, yet the mother Church seems not ready to "establish its own identity as a multiracial, multilingual and

²⁶ According to Janny De Moor, types of bread were initially baked by women at their homes before the Church adopted them for sacramental use (1993:119-123).

multicultural family” (1988:4). Therefore, what prevails is the English Church understanding and practice being replicated outside the British Isles as ecclesiastical orthodoxy to be emulated.

This imperialistic ecclesiastical orthodoxy and practice prevails especially in the symbols used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion where the use of wafers and wine permeates the Anglican Communion in spite of its diverse contexts. Smith and Taussig, dissatisfied with this imperialistic and ecclesiastical practice in the Anglican Communion, lament that:

In the broad scope of global Church today and even within many congregations where great diversity exists, emphasis on one standard and immutable Eucharist is bound to do injustice to some particular groups. Surely the gospel and the Church are not to alienate people and individuals from the particular strengths of their culture or social situation. It seems difficult to imagine that a God of the good news of love and justice would want a central sacred meal that Africans or Asians all to act like European. Even if there are moments for expression of unity through a common Eucharistic practice, to generalize such a service and make it the single kind of Lord’s Supper violates the integrity of many cultures and social institutions (1990:88).

From Smith and Taussig’s argument, it is evident that there is ecclesiastical tension on the use of wafers and wine in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion as orthodoxy in different contexts outside the British Isles. This raises the questions of embracing diverse symbols in the sacrament of Holy Communion because the use of wafers and wine in other contexts like the diocese of Thika in Kenya is unjust and culminates in alienation of the diocesan Christians. This suggests the need for the Churches to use alternative, locally available foodstuff in the Holy Communion that communicates to the local people in the same way the wafers and wine communicate to the Euro-American Christians. However, what one notes is that uniformity is enforced and what ultimately prevails in the Anglican Communion is English²⁷ Church overseas. As McCoy argues, “Anglicanism has often been criticized, from within and without, as being too English, too middle class, too tied to the social and political establishment of the day” (2006:37). This means English Church understanding and practice of celebrating the sacramental rite of Holy Communion using these two symbols wafers and wine spilt abroad. Mugambi concurs with this and argues that these symbols in the sacrament of the Holy Communion were a new cultural and religious experience to the African people when the CMS missionaries introduced these symbols in Kenya (1989:104-105).

²⁷ This means that Anglican Churches overseas were carbon copies of the Church of England. This paternalism and imperialism was enhanced and a good example according to Karanja (1999:1) is the Kikuyu Anglican Church that became replica of her mother Church in England adhering to the thirty nine articles, the Book of Common Prayer and the three fold order of ministry. See also Chilongani (2006:64).

Therefore, it is right to allude that the Holy Communion symbols in the ACK were inherited from the mother Church in England when the CMS missionaries introduced Christianity in Kenya. Though Pobe notes that Anglicanism accepts the incarnation paradigm and principle in article XXIV, it is ironical because one would wonder if the use of foreign symbols in a different context is not repugnant to the gospel of Christ (2009:12). In this note, the next section will now explore the understanding of the Holy Communion symbols in the ecclesiastical context of Kenya.

4.3. ACK Understanding of the Holy Communion Symbols (wafers and wine)

The understanding and practice of the wafers and wine in the Anglican tradition is that these are visible signs of invisible realities. As such, they point beyond themselves, as Macquarrie shows their nature to bring the transcendent within the range of human understanding (1997:31). This implies that whenever believers receive the symbols they not only take ordinary bread and wine but also should note that:

Our Savior Christ called the material bread that he broke, his body, and the wine, which was the fruit of the vine, his blood. And yet he spake not this to the intent that men should think that the material bread is his very body, or that his very body is material bread; neither that wine made of grapes. But to signify unto us, as St. Paul saith, that the cup is a communion of Christ's blood that was shed for us, and the bread is a communion of his flesh that was crucified for us (Meyer 1961:53; Cranmer 1987:8).

This indicates that these symbols represent the body and blood of Christ that nourishes believers both physically and spiritually. Through partaking in these symbols every human being is physically fed and nourished in his body by meat and drink, even so is every good Christian spiritually fed and nourished in his soul by the flesh and blood of our Savior Christ (Cranmer 1987:16; see also Grudem 1994:990). It becomes certain then that these symbols provide spiritual strength to believers in their Christian faith.

Besides spiritual strength, these symbols saturate Christians' life with God's grace, such that they unite Christians both vertically and horizontally. This unity bonds Christians with Christ and one another, as evident in the breaking of bread. In this act of breaking bread, Christians share one bread and one cup as sign of their unity and they affirm their oneness, because despite being many they are one body for they all share one bread (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:82; Mutiso-Mbinda 1984:2; Holeton 1994:46; Montaya 2009:139). While believers united with one another, they also encounter God in the Holy Communion because the self-emptying God (Kenosis) and self-surrendering humanity meet one another. This

encounter with God by believers in the Lord's Table culminates in "individual union with God, and both God and man, in whom the self-giving of God and the self-surrender of man meet" (Lampe 1982:165).

The encounter with the self-emptying God not only unites believers with God but also guarantees eternal life to believers and vice versa. Cranmer was emphatic that "touching this meat and drink of the body and blood of Christ, it is true, both he eateth and drinketh them, hath everlasting life, and also he that eateth and drinketh them not, hath not everlasting life" (1987:4; see also Smith 2005:60). For wafers and wine proclaim the message of God's salvation to all those who faithfully partake of them and lead a new life in Christ. To this end, Cranmer suggests that these symbols have a vertical dimension in them in the sense that they connect humanity to God, the author and provider of fullness of life. While Cranmer and Smith (2005) focus on the vertical dimension of salvation through forgiveness of sins, Davies and Moloney complement this by providing the horizontal dimension of salvation. They perceive the socio-economic and political liberation in the Holy Communion (1993:180; 2009:156). This is amidst living in a world characterised by inequality, ethnic tensions that divide our countries along tribal lines between 'us' and 'them' (Oucho 2002:4) and corruption, among other social evils in our societies. The message of Holy Communion then communicates to us about liberative salvation that Mugambi perceives as the restoration of hope and human dignity to the young people, children and discriminated women with no social status in our patriarchal societies, that do not speak of the life that Christ brought to humanity (1997:74).

This dimension of salvation in the Holy Communion brings true communion with God and the abolition of all injustice and exploitation. This signifies that liberative salvation in the Holy Communion ensures that believers are not only nourished spiritually, but also physically. Among thousands starving and dying of hunger, this rite condemns and challenges all the unjust structures and powers that threaten life in abundance for Christ the bread of life came for all to have life in totality. This is because in the Lord's Prayer where we pray for 'our daily bread,' it means God provides enough bread for all humanity in the universe; it is only our unjust systems that make some sleep hungry while others have more than enough and run to waste out of human selfishness (World Food Program 2015). In this note, the Holy Communion meal should communicate to us life to the dying, peace to those in war-torn countries and equality to those discriminated against because of their race, gender, age or religion. In addition, it communicates physical nourishment to the hungry lest

celebration of this meal in our vast cathedrals become sweet poison rather than a wellspring of life to our communicants (Bujo 1992:100).

Consequently, the bread and wine in the sacrament of the Holy Communion point towards eschaton. William Crockett (1989) argues that the Lord's Supper is an anticipation of the eschatological meal of the Messiah where the communicants look towards the future. In this future anticipation of the coming Christ, believers are assured of full communion with Christ and one another. In addition, believers eternally dine with Christ as their host and them as Christ's guest. In honour and remembrance of the eschatological anticipation, the ACK continues to celebrate this meal in imitation of what Jesus did, in remembrance of Him until He comes again. Mbiti perceives that regular celebration of this meal becomes a rich experience of the eschatological bliss, where any disappointment over the delay of Christ's coming is again neutralized at the Holy Communion meal (1971:102). On the other hand, eschatology is about the installation of the reign of God on earth where, in the words of Jürgen Moltmann, is the hope in God for the creation of the world (1996:xvi). In this understanding of eschatology, Moltmann projects the transformation of the world where God will destroy the present condition and out of the old world create a new world whose nature is imperishable (1996:270). This means that in our society characterized by corruption, ethnic cleansing, inequality, discrimination and environmental degradation, the Holy Communion meal gives us hope of God's creation of a new world that is an egalitarian society. In this society, men and women dine at the same table as equals without cultural bias, everyone in the society has enough to feed on because the Lord's Table provides abundance and hospitality to the human race (Gathogo 2011:158-159). It communicates healing and reconciliation of our broken society amidst the HIV and AIDS pandemic, ethnic cleansing, xenophobic attacks, greed for power and corruption.

In light of the above, it is true to say that the Holy Communion symbols communicate the message of God's grace, unity among the believers, spiritual nourishment, salvation and anticipation of the coming kingdom of God, on earth as it in heaven. This being the understanding of the Holy Communion symbols in the ACK it is now right to evaluate the nature of theology advanced in the ACK.

4.4. The Nature of the Holy Communion Theology in the ACK

Scholars such as Cocksworth (1991) and Douglas (2012) maintain that the nature of Holy Communion theology in the wider Anglican Communion is multiform. This means that there

are diverse natures of the Holy Communion theology, varying from one Province to the other in the Anglican Communion. A good example is the nature of ACK theology that differs from theologies in other provinces within the Anglican Communion. The Evangelical teaching bequeathed by CMS missionaries when the Church was introduced in the nineteenth century influences it. This section analyses the nature of ACK theology of the Holy Communion.

4.4.1. Thanksgiving

One of the central theological understandings of Holy Communion rite in the ACK is a thanksgiving service to God where the Christians give thanks to God because of God's provision of physical and spiritual food to them in the form of wafers and wine for spiritual nourishment. This is affirmed in the Holy Communion liturgy that asserts: "Through your goodness, Lord, we have this bread and wine to offer, the fruits of the earth and the work of human hands; they will become our spiritual food ..." (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:80; see also Hodge 1960:618; Buchanan 1985:188; Thurian 1985:101; La Verdier 1996:181). As such, God's providence becomes the source of thanksgiving among the Anglican Christians in Kenya, as they see this sacrament as portraying God as the author and provider. However, the use of foreign and imported food products in the ecclesiastical context of Kenya in the form of wafers and branded 'altar wine' raises questions how can Kenyan Christians rejoice and claim wafers and wine are the fruits of their earth and work of their hands while they are imported food products from Europe? In the Holy Communion, the European food products were used, rather than locally produced food products. Do these imported food products form a part of thanksgiving or alienate Kenyans as recipients?

Another reason that invokes thanksgiving in the Holy Communion among the Anglican Christians in Kenya is the honourable invitation to dine with Christ in spite of their unworthiness. Christ welcomes the Christians to feed in his Table even if they do not deserve such a privilege, the way Justin Martyr observed that God invites humanity to this holy meal, though unworthy to participate in it, but in this regard it becomes an opportunity for humanity to thank God for having deemed us worthy of these gifts (Kaye 1912:65). This means that our hospitable God welcomes all in the household of God to dine with Him. The exclusion of some people in the ACK in this life-giving meal raises questions. This prompts one to ask: if all humanity are unworthy, is the Church qualified to include and exclude others in this holy meal?

4.4.2. Sacrifice

The ACK is a Church ascribed to the apostolic teaching according to the creeds. It thus derives the sacrificial element from the Early Church. Yngve Brillioth notes that “it is in Didache that the word sacrifice is first used of the Eucharist; not indeed in the prayer, but in the exhortation to confession of sin before the breaking of bread” (1930:45). This insinuates the idea of encouraging believers to examine their lives before participating in this rite lest the Church sacrifice be unacceptable and adulterated. Therefore, like the Early Church Fathers Cyprian and Cyril of Jerusalem, the ACK describes the nature of sacrifice in this sacrament as “a spiritual sacrifice, a bloodless service, a propitiatory sacrifice, offered by the way of intercession for all who are in need of help” (Bethune-Barker 1903:410). In this note, the sacramental rite of Holy Communion in the ACK is a thanksgiving sacrifice where Christ made a full atonement for the Christians’ sins in term of this rite, viewed as the perfect sacrifice offered once for all with infinite intrinsic value of cleansing believers to be outstanding before God (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:81).

In light of the Holy Communion rite perceived as the perfect sacrifice in the ACK, the Church elaborates further the kind of sacrifice evident in the Holy Communion sacrament. Cranmer argues “the first kind of sacrifice Christ offered to God for us; and the second kind we offer ourselves to God by Christ. And by the first kind of sacrifice Christ offered also us unto his Father; and by the second we offer ourselves and all we have, unto him and his Father” (Moreton 1987:48; see also Neill 1947:65). The Holy Communion rite provides to believers the opportunity to remember the atoning death of Christ on the cross. Similarly, ACK holds that believers receive the benefits of the meritorious death of Christ on the cross, while on the other hand are invited to live a life of holiness that is acceptable to God as a living sacrifice.

4.4.3. Memorial

Another function of Holy Communion in the ACK, according to the bishop emeritus Gideon Githiga, is memorial (2009:74). This understanding of Holy Communion as a memorial is borrowed from Jesus’ command to his disciples when he instituted this sacrament (Luke 22:14-20). This follows from the way the disciples were charged by Christ to be celebrating the Holy Communion meal quite often, as the Gospels assert “... do this in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19). Hence, the members of the ACK perceive themselves obliged to do so. Though this memorial meal is celebrated occasionally in the ACK, it remains a token to

remember Christ until the day he will return in glory (Mbiti 1971; see also McGrath 2001:527). As a token of remembrance to believers, Eugene La Verdere discloses that whenever believers celebrate this meal it becomes a memorial of Christ's incarnation as well as his suffering and death (1996:182; see also Hague 1932:186). For in it Christians remember Christ becoming like us [incarnation] with the purpose of atoning for our sin. The Holy Communion acts as the locus of remembrance of Christ's meritorious death on the cross that calls upon believers to proclaim the mystery of our salvation. In this mystery, Howard Mashall sees believers invited to participate in it where they are transformed and become the preachers until Christ comes again (1980:113). They are then sent to the world to love and serve the Lord, in the same way Christ was sent by the Father into the world (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:81).

4.4.4. The Grace of God

The ACK teaches that the wafers and wine as symbols point beyond themselves and convey the grace of God. Welchman describes the wafers and wine as the sacraments ordained by Christ not only as a badge or tokens to Christians but rather they should be certain sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace in God's goodwill toward humanity (MDCCLVIII: 61). Through these symbols, the ACK holds that God works invisibly in humanity, not only to quicken but also to strengthen and confirm their faith in God (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:55). This implies that the grace conveyed by the Holy Communion symbols is God's gift to humanity that strengthen and make humanity inclined toward God. Stephen Neill suggested that this grace of God should be exercised for the good of the body of Christ and not for self-edification (1947:62; Lampe 1982:143).

To receive this grace of God, believers are called upon to participate in eating and drinking in the Holy Communion meal. Through participation as well as eating and drinking the bread and wine, Wayne Grudem stresses that "a person participates in faith, renewing and strengthening his or her own trust in Christ for salvation, and believing that the Holy Spirit will bring spiritual blessings through such participation" (1994:954). The ACK continues to teach that this grace works in a mysterious way, for neither the sinners receive it nor the administration of the wafers and wine by a morally contemptible priest, hinder its efficacy to convey the grace of God in the life of those who receive them by faith. For the sacraments are

efficacious, that is *ex opere operato* and not *ex opera operantis*.²⁸ This means “on account of the work which is done. Here means the efficacy of the sacraments is understood to be dependent upon the grace of Christ, which the sacraments represent and convey” (McGrath 2001:515). Consequently, the Article XXVI of Thirty Nine Articles of Faith ascribed to the Anglican tradition, that ACK also shares, clarifies this doctrine of *ex opere operato* further as follows:

Although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometime the evil has chief authority in the ministration of the word and sacraments; yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their name, but in hearing the word of God, and in receiving of the sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ’s ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God’s gifts diminished from such, as by faith and rightly do receive sacraments ministered unto them, which be effectual, because Christ’s institution and promise, although they may be ministered by evil men (Welchman MDCCLVII: 61-62).

Therefore, the Anglican tradition cautions that the sacraments do not produce their effect automatically to the recipients but depend on their faith in Christ. For there are the *res* and the *sacramentum* of the sacrament, that Crockett explains to be “the *sacramentum* and the *res* [respectively are] the outward signs are received by the mouth and enter into the stomach. The inward grace of the sacrament is only eaten by faith” (1989:276 see also Cox MDCCCXLIV:203). Hence, the ACK as a Church influenced by the reformers’ idea of justification by faith argues that these symbols are transformed into the body and blood of Christ by faith and those who receive these symbols faithfully and are repentant in their heart receive *res* and *sacramentum* if unworthy. This means that the faithful believers receive the body and blood of Christ by faith referred to here as *res*, while unworthy believers only receive the material bread and wine referred to as *sacramentum* (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:55).

4.4.5. The Presence of Christ

Finally, the ACK attests to the presence of Christ because in the liturgy the prayer of Saint Chrysostom says that where two or three are gathered in his name, God will be in their midst (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002: 15). This means in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion the presence of Christ is evident and especially in the symbols that represent the invisible and divine presence of the body and blood of Christ (Githiga 2009:75). This implies that the ACK Christians encounter the presence of Christ in the sacrament of the Holy

²⁸ This was the teaching of the Donatists who insisted that the validity of the sacrament depended upon the moral standing of the priest administering the sacraments.

Communion by faith to all those who receive these symbols worthily. The ACK as an evangelical Church does not hold to the doctrine of transubstantiation like the Roman Catholic tradition, consubstantiation like the Lutherans or like the other reformers as this chapter articulates here in the next paragraph.

In the Early Church, the presence of Christ in the Holy Communion symbols was not a point of debate, as by default Christ was present in the wafers and wine spiritually after invocation of Epiclesis. This argument featured most in Cyril of Jerusalem who maintained:

That which appear to be bread is not bread ... even though it is bread to the sense of taste, but the body of Christ; and that which appears to be wine is not wine even though the taste will have it that it is, but the blood of Christ. The invocation of the Holy Spirit and his descent upon the elements set out upon the altar hallows them and changes into the body and blood of Christ (Bethune-Baker 1903:410; Palmer 1957:197).

However, in the 16th century, the mysterious transformation of the symbols into the body of Christ elicited theological debate among reformers on the presence of Christ. The Roman Catholic Church taught the doctrine of transubstantiation. This doctrine was defined in the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 and it argues that:

This theory of transubstantiation affirms that the accident of bread and wine [outward appearance] remain unchanged at the moment of consecration, while the substance changes from that of bread and wine to that of the body and blood of Jesus Christ (McGrath 2001:524).

While the ACK subscribes to the spiritual presence of Christ by faith, the Roman Catholics taught on the real presence of Christ in the Holy Communion, such that upon consecration of symbols, communicants receive the real body of Christ. Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologie* put this explicitly:

The place that surrounds the appearances of the bread is not empty, because nature abhors a vacuum. Now, the substance of the bread is not there, as we have already seen, but only the body of Christ. Therefore, the body of Christ fills the place. Now whatever fills a place is in it locally. Hence the body of Christ is locally in this sacrament (1965:109).

Martin Luther condemned this doctrine in his works *Babylonian Captivity of the Church*.²⁹ One of the reasons for its condemnation was that it “is only to be understood by experts in philosophical terms and in connection with a highly technical theory of existence, it was probably never understood by masses of the people” (Bethune-Baker 1903:394). Another reason for its condemnation according to Crockett was that the Roman Catholic Church mass

²⁹ See Bornkamm, Heinrich (Translated by Martin H. Bertram). 1958. *Luther's World of Thought* (Saint Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House), pp. 100-102.

was no longer the action of the whole people of God, but it was an action that a priest did on behalf of the people while the people watched as spectators (1989:122). Similarly, Anglican tradition also condemned this doctrine of transubstantiation in the Thirty Nine Articles of Religion, Article XXVIII (Palmer 1957:180). Due to all these accusations of this doctrine during the reformation era, the Roman Church called the Council of Trent to reaffirm transubstantiation as the Roman Catholic Church teaching and stance. Karl Rahner emphatically expressed the Council's resolution that:

The whole Christ is present, and wholly present under each species: his body and blood *vis verborum* of the consecration, but the whole Christ with body and soul, humanity and divinity, because he is the man transformed and raised from the dead, and because a separation of humanity and divinity is impossible on account of the hypostatic union (1974:292).

However, today Roman Catholic Church theologians are also registering their discontent in this doctrine, led by Edward Schillebeeckx who admitted that the Aristotelian philosophical framework underlying this notion causes difficulties to many modern people (2005:102).

Among the Lutherans, they embraced the doctrine of consubstantiation. Luther advanced this doctrine when he argued:

While the natural substance of bread and wine remain, there is present also at the same time the body and blood of Christ. In and under the consecrated elements Christ is therefore actually present, his very body and blood; and everyone who receives the elements receives Christ, to his benefit or to his hurt (Bethune-Baker 1903:394; McGrath 2001:527).

From this doctrine of consubstantiation, Luther came to agree with Roman Catholics on the real presence of Christ in and under the consecrated symbols. This made Rahner say,

It seems to me that with regard to transubstantiation, there is no essential difference between the Catholic and Lutheran faith. For Lutheran confession also teaches a real presence, by which it is 'truly, really, vitally', present in the sacrament; it uses '*vere et substantialiter*' to characterize this presence, it rejects the '*in figura*' or the mere '*in virtute*' just as much as Trent (1974:294).

What distinguished Lutheran from Roman Catholic teaching is their insistence that the body of Christ is present everywhere, while Rome maintained it is locally available and confined where the sacrament is been celebrated. Luther understood the words of Jesus 'this is my body' literally, as Louis Berkhof clearly illustrates:

Though they admit that Jesus was speaking figuratively. According to them the figure was not a metaphor, but a synecdoche. The Lord simply meant to say to his disciples, where you have the bread, you have my body in, under and along with it, though the substance of both remain distinct (1974:649).

Luther continues to argue that:

As in Christ the divine and human natures are united, so also in the sacrament in a corresponding way the bread (and wine) and the body (and the blood) of Christ are united. Thus Luther asserted the real presence of Christ with a simple and scriptural sense of reality i.e. scripture realism meant the bodily presence of Christ in the sacrament (Bachman 1960: xv).

Zwingli differed from Luther who understood the words of Jesus literally and he desired that Luther would see the light for “the idea of a bodily eating of Christ is a ‘most noxious and idolatrous opinion’. The words of institution are figurative, ‘is’ can only mean ‘signifies’” (Fischer 1961: xiii). To Zwingli the words ‘this is’ suggests that they need to be interpreted figuratively for they symbolize the body and blood of Christ. The Holy Communion to Zwingli then was a memorial of the meritorious death of Christ on the cross to be remembered always. However, he agreed with Luther on the presence of Christ but disagreed on the manner of presence and reception by believers. As Crockett put it, “he agrees with Luther that Christ is present in the Supper, but present in the souls of the believers by faith, not in the elements” (1989:154). To Zwingli, therefore, Christ is present spiritually and not bodily like for Luther and Rome. This argument is put that:

It is an expression of the very heart of Zwingli’s faith, then, when he insists that the ‘spiritual presence’ of Christ’s divinity in the sacrament is the most that scripture permits, and that Luther’s view is still enmeshed in Romanism (Fischer 1961:XX; see also Berkhof 1974:653).

Calvin, like Zwingli, emphasized that the words of Jesus Christ should be embraced figuratively. Calvin, in his *Institute of the Christian Religion*, maintained that “there is no reason for anyone to object that this is a figurative expression by which the name of the thing signified is given to the sign” (McNeil 1967:1370). This means that both Calvin and Zwingli agreed there is no bodily presence of Christ in the sacraments, therefore both criticised Luther and Rome on their understanding of the real presence of Christ for they believed Christ is in heaven. Crockett singled out their diverging point between Luther and Rome when he argued:

Calvin rejects the idea of bodily presence, and a local presence, or a substantial presence. He agrees with Zwingli ... that since the body of Christ is in heaven in virtue of Ascension. It cannot be contained also be in the element ... a bodily, local or substantial presence of Christ in the Eucharist threatens the sovereignty of God and puts the presence of Christ at our disposal. Such an understanding of the Eucharistic presence makes presence of Christ into an object, whereas Christ is always present in the Eucharist as subject Christ cannot be contained, carried about, or disposed of (1989:168-169).

Thus, Calvin’s understanding of Christ presence in heaven is summarized:

For though he has taken his flesh away from us and in the body has ascended into heaven, yet he sits at the right hand of the Father that is, he reigns with the Father's power and majesty and glory. This kingdom is neither bounded by location in space nor circumscribed by any limits. Thus Christ is not prevented from exerting his power wherever he pleases, in heaven and on earth. He shows his presence in power and strength, is always among his own people and breathes his life upon them, and lives in them, sustaining them, strengthening, quickening, keeping them unharmed, as if he were present in the body (McNeil 1967:1381).

Anglican reformers led by Cranmer synthesized all the above teachings on the presence of Christ in the Holy Communion and adopted a new doctrine of reception by faith. Cranmer influenced by St. Augustine on justification by faith came up with this doctrine. His argument was that “doubt not but our Lord Jesus Christ is everywhere as God and as a dweller he is in man that is the temple of God and he is in a certain place in heaven, because of the measure of a very body” (Cox MDCCXLIV:94; Lampe 1982:170). Therefore, it can be deduced that this doctrine by Cranmer drew from reformers such as Luther who believed that Christ is everywhere and Calvin who was convinced that Christ dwells in believers yet in heaven. Furthermore, like Zwingli, Cranmer did acknowledge that the communicants do receive the body and blood of Christ by faith. For he understood the words of Jesus symbolically as this is illustrated in the way he gave Jesus' words spiritual interpretation for he argued:

Although Christ in his human nature substantially, really, corporally, naturally and sensibly, be present with his father in heaven, yet sacramentally and spiritually he is here present. For in water, bread and wine, he is present as is sign and sacraments, but he is indeed spiritually in the Christian faithful, Christian people, which according to Christ's ordinance be baptized, or receive the Holy Communion, or unfeignedly believe in him (1987:32; Walton MDCCCLXV:85; Crockett 1989:171; Storr 1930:322; Welchman MDCCLVIII: 66; Neill 1947:54).

Sykes defended the choice of this doctrine in the Anglican tradition. He maintained that, “the Anglican reformers wanted worshippers to be in no doubt that they truly received the body and blood of Christ. But to avoid gross physical misinterpretations and superstitions added the word ‘spiritual’, with the witness of the early Church they taught the necessity of faith in the worthy reception of the sacrament” (1996:27).

In this regard, it is worth noting that the ACK inherited the doctrine of the reception by faith to the faithful recipients of the Holy Communion symbols from the mother Church in England. As an evangelical wing, the ACK places emphasis on the spiritual presence of Christ in this holy meal to the faithful recipients. This being the nature of ACK theology, it indeed affirms the multiform nature of this theology when ACK is assessed with other Provinces in the Anglican Communion. This study now turns to the prevalent practice in the ACK as far as the sacramental rite of Holy Communion is concerned.

4.5. The Practice in the Holy Communion in the Anglican Church in Kenya (ACK)

4.5.1. Participants in the Holy Communion Symbols

The Holy Communion in the ACK is not only the central sacramental rite in the Church's life but also marks the pinnacle of the Christian worship (Kiarie and Owino 2014:121). As such, the prevalent practice in the ACK as far as the Holy Communion symbols are concerned is for the confirmed Christians after attaining the discretion age and undergoing thorough training (Mugambi 1992:16; Githiga 2009:69). Partakers of the Holy Communion symbols are welcomed for the first time by the bishop on behalf of the local congregation to receive the Holy Communion symbols (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:63; Githiga 2009:74). In this note the ACK practice in this rite is what David Holeton terms as 'traditional pattern', that is the baptism-confirmation-communion model before the communicants are accepted to partake of the Holy Communion symbols (1991:20-21). This means that the prevalent practice in the ACK is that the communicants of these symbols, are those who are first baptized and confirmed before participating in this holy meal.

While other Provinces within the Anglican Communion like the Episcopal Church of United State of America (ECUSA)³⁰ have adopted the practice of admitting children to communion, the ACK has stuck to the inherited Anglican tradition and practice from the CMS missionaries who established the Church in Kenya. This is in spite of the Toronto Anglican Liturgical Consultative Conference in 1991 that resolved to include all baptized persons in the Holy Communion, because there should be no exclusion on grounds such as age, race, gender, economic circumstance or mental capacity" (International Anglican Liturgical Consultation 2005).

While this may be regarded as a good gesture in our present world characterized by equality and recognition of all people in the society, this practice in the Anglican Communion has sparked sharp debate and tension between the global North Churches and global South

³⁰ Other diverse practices have emerged recently in the Anglican Communion such as 'Open Communion or Open Table' especially in the Episcopal Church of United State of America (ECUSA). According to Donald Schell, this refers to the practice of making an explicit invitation to all present to receive communion (2012:247). The proponents [see Farwell 2007; Tanner 2009; Edmondson 2009] of this practice as noted by Michael Tuck (2012:507) argue for radical inclusion of all in Jesus' table fellowship because in our baptism we assume the responsibility of including all. However, scholars such as Thomas Breidenthal object to this new practice and maintain that human beings as sinners are incapable of inclusion without exclusion (2012:258). In addition, inviting all Christians in the Communion with or without baptism diverts from the historic tradition of the Anglican sacramental theology. Critics of this practice according to Martha S. Tatarnic say such a practice strips the sacrament of Eucharist of its core meaning and identity because of loss of connection between baptism and Eucharist and ultimately misleads potential Christians by minimizing the costliness and the radical commitment of discipleship (2014:292).

Churches within the Anglican community. Among the proponents for inclusion of children in Communion is Holeton who argues that there is no theological reason to exclude the baptized from the Eucharist but there is every reason, theological, historical and pastoral, to include all those who are baptized at the Lord's Table (1991:21). From Holeton, this study concurs with him that inclusion of children in the Holy Communion in the Anglican tradition is a theological, historical and pastoral issue that should be taken seriously, as children also belong to the community of believers by virtue of their baptism. Howe and Pascoe argue that children qualify to partake in Holy Communion. They believe that it is unscriptural to deny them such an opportunity because there is no such age or requirement found in the Scripture (2010:93). Moreover, a family does not give birth to children and then not feed them until they can pass a question on nutrition. The truth is that children learn at the table with the family and not in a classroom.

In light of this tension within the Anglican Communion, the ACK as a conservative Province objects to the inclusion of children in the Communion and argues that this involves quite a change from the received Anglican tradition, because the change needs careful study and research by the Province before it is endorsed (Gitari 1994:43). While the global North in the Anglican Communion articulates its theological stance out of their reflection on the place of children in the Holy Communion meal, the global South Churches, and in this case ACK, is still stuck at the received tradition, that is static in spite of its being dynamic. This challenges the ACK to deconstruct the received tradition in order to address the contemporary issues affecting the members. If it fails to deconstruct the received tradition, it can be projected that the ACK in the global South will be irrelevant and detached from the flock's pressing needs.

Another practice in the ACK is self-examination of the communicants of the Holy Communion symbols lest they be deemed to judgment (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:55). Richard Hooker put this explicitly, that communicants need to examine their lives and conversations by the rule of God's commandments, because receiving Holy Communion without proper examination will do nothing else but increase their damnation (Evans and Wright 1991:250; Wheatly 1858:297; Welchman MDCCLVIII:59; Macdonald 1930:26). However, St. Augustine argued regarding those who participate in an unworthy way of the holy sacrament: "The true ministration of the sacrament Christ is present spiritually, and so spiritually eaten of them that be godly and spiritual. And as for the ungodly and carnal, they may eat the bread and drink the wine, but with Christ himself they have no communion or

company; and therefore neither eat his flesh nor drink his blood, which whosoever eateth hath as Christ saith himself life by him, as Christ has life by his Father” (Cox MDCCCXLIV:203).

While the communicants have examined themselves and found themselves worthy to receive the Holy Communion symbols, they come to the Lord’s Table humbly, as the Liturgy of St. Cyril of Jerusalem c. 350 exhorted believers that:

Come not with thy wrist extended or thy fingers open, but make of thy left hand a kind of throne by placing it under thy right which is about to receive the king, and in the hollow of thy hand receive the body of Christ, reply Amen. Carefully hallow thine eyes with the touch of the holy body and then partake thereof, seeing to it that thou lose no particle. For whatever thou allowest to fall and to be lost is truly as though one of thine own member was lost. For tell me, if someone had given thee grains of gold, wouldst thou not guard them jealously lest thou let some fall and suffer loss? Wilt thou not take care, then with even greater diligence, that not even a crumb should fall from thee that which is more priceless than gold and most precious stones? (Palmer 1957:75).

According to ACK practice the communicants of the Holy Communion symbols are expected to kneel at the altar rail while receiving these symbols as the gesture of piety (Walton MDCCLXV:95). The piety by participants manifests reverence while approaching the Lord’s Table and in the manner of receiving the Holy Communion symbols. This signifies that in the ACK the whole rite is full of the atmosphere of reverence and holy fear because the prayer of Humble Access expresses this sense of deep unworthiness (Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:79; Brillioth 1930:214). However, in some Provinces within the Anglican Communion, communicants do receive the Holy Communion symbols while standing, as Howe and Pascoe argue: “from the earliest days there was recognition in the Church that standing is the posture of living people. Therefore many Churches direct that people receive Communion standing, in recognition that, by virtue of Christ’s death and resurrection Christians are eternally living people” (2010:90). In this regard, this manifests diversities in the Anglican Communion in this rite.

4.5.2. Priestly Roles in the Holy Communion

Like in other Anglican traditions, this rite in the ACK is exclusively a priestly role. Charles Hefling and Cynthia Shattuck note that it is highly clericalized because in the Anglican tradition it is wrong for lay person to celebrate the Holy Communion meal unless in the most abnormal of circumstances (2006:470; Lampe 1982:132). Martin Dudley illustrates this by citing the Anglican tradition’s Canon that:

Requires that the president at the Eucharist, must have been episcopal ordained priest. In doing so it carries on the teaching of the Church which was expressed

at Fourth Lateran Council 1215, but which goes back to the roots of Christianity, namely that the bishop or priest is the only minister of the Eucharist (1987:110).

The rationale of emphasizing the presidency of the person administering Holy Communion is the symbol of unity in the Church and the validity of the sacrament administered in the Church. According to the early Church Fathers such as Cyprian and Ignatius of Antioch, their argument is rightly expressed:

When Cyprian puts forward the episcopate as the symbol and instrument of the Church's unity, there lies behind his legal conception the same idea that we found in Ignatius, that episcopate is the guarantee of the validity of the sacrament and of unity through the sacrament (Brillioth 1930:30).

This clericalism in this sacramental rite of Holy Communion is entrenched during ordination to priesthood in the Anglican tradition. As the priest declares and vows "I ... do so affirm and accordingly declare my belief in the faith which is revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the Catholic Creeds and to which the historic formularies of the Church of England bear witness; and in public prayer and administration of the sacraments" (Davies 1984:95). This declaration is symbolized by handing over the Holy Communion symbols - wafers and chalice - to the priest, been ordained by the bishop while the bishop utters the commissioning word to the priest to be administering Holy Communion in the Church where he or she will be giving spiritual oversight.

In the ACK, the laity dominates the life of the Church due to shortage of clergy. This suggests that the Holy Communion rite is an occasional service rather than a regular service, only celebrated when the clergy visit their congregations for sacerdotal duties (Mbiti 1971:113; Mugambi 1995:146; Tovey 2004:41). In this sense, the priest according to the former Archbishop of Canterbury Michael Ramsey is described as the man or woman of the Eucharist because of the central role that they play in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion (1972:9-10). This depicts the exclusive role of the priest that distinguishes him/her from other members in the ecclesiastical context. In light of this, the priests in ACK are servants and shepherds of God's people who become the representatives of the whole Church. The clergy are ordained by the bishop to preside at the Eucharist and to pronounce in the name of the Church the reconciling and renewing forgiveness of God according to the Anglican Lambeth Conference of 1968 (Dudley 1987:109; Moreton 1987:48; Anglican Church in Kenya 2002:103). Lampe explains that the priest as a liturgical or ritual person, acts in that character, not only on behalf of the individuals who may at the moment be worshipping, but the whole community within which they so worship (1982:156). In this

note, the Anglican priestly role should not be belittled because they play a fundamental role in the life of their churches. Hooker argued that the Church “firmly believe and confess that anyone who believes and contends that can perform the sacrifice of the Eucharist without having first been ordained by a bishop ... is a heretic” (Evans & Wright 1991:105).

Though priestly role is conspicuous in this rite, the laity are involved in the ACK where lay readers assist the priest to distribute the consecrated elements during this service. In addition, the lay readers may sometime be sent to take consecrated elements to the sick, though this is not a common practice or phenomenon in the ACK. Today in the Anglican tradition there are dissenting voices from scholars such as Nicholas Taylor (2009) and Michael Jensen (2012) advocating for lay presidency or administration of Holy Communion. Jensen argues that it is theologically baseless to exclude laity in the administration of the sacraments because it is not scriptural and the scripture is silent on this matter (Jensen 2012:148). On the one hand, Taylor and Jensen further argue that failure to involve laity amounts to the Church being inconsistent with the reformed principle of the priesthood of all believers that the Anglican tradition claims to uphold (2009:204; 2012:149). On the other hand, he reflected on the Anglican doctrine of *ex opere operato* and dismisses the Church’s position regarding lay ministry involvement because he is convinced that any baptized member of the Church can preside at the sacraments, since the sacraments do not depend on the person who presides but on the grace of God (2009:203).

While presiding at Holy Communion the common practice in the Anglican tradition is that the priest is supposed to stand at the North side of the holy altar this being the right hand or upper side of the altar, that is certainly the most proper place for the officiating priest (Wheatly 1858:303; Brillioth 1930:208).

4.5.3. The Book of Common Prayer

The ACK priest uses the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) while administering the Holy Communion symbols for no other form of liturgy is permitted, as prescribed by the ACK Church Canon. This was clear during my ordination to priesthood. In the *Declaration of Assent* we vowed that “... in public prayer and administration of the sacraments, I will use the form in the said book prescribed and none other, except insofar as shall be ordered by lawful authority (ACK Diocese of Thika 2004; see also Davies 1984:95; Palmer 1957:179; Dillistone 1986:209; Heffling & Shattuck 2006:469).

This practice of using the 1662 Book of Common Prayer (BCP) translated into local dialects has spread widely in the Anglican Communion and in the ACK this is not an exception. Mombo put this clearly that “the establishment of Anglicanism in the colonies of Eastern Africa had as one of its main resources the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, written in the context of English tradition, imported and translated for use by the colonized” (2006:227). However, due to this book being imported and from another different ecclesiastical context Joseph Wandera (2006) notes that the ACK priests use it sparingly and especially during the Holy Communion service. This suggests that this liturgical book in Kenya is irrelevant unless it is fully incarnated in the Kenyan context. In addition, its use outside the British Isles according to Tovey is not only exploring the world but this liturgical book was also civilizing and colonizing it (2004:37). This is in spite of its focus at the time of publication being for the English worshippers in England and the colonists outside British Isles, because it was not intended for export (Idowu 1965:27).

Notwithstanding the above critics on the wide use of BCP in the Anglican Communion due to its Anglo-Saxon religio-cultural identity, Sykes defends its use in the Anglican Communion. He argues that it promotes a descent order and a godly discipline for the whole people of God and it protects the ordinary Christian from the whims and fancies of their local ministers (1996:25). Beside order and protection of the Christians it provides a uniform pattern of worship in the Anglican Communion, such that wherever an Anglican goes he or she feels at ‘home’ with the liturgy used. This is because the liturgical form of worship has a similar pattern but with diverse practices, due to appropriation to different contexts of the people in the globe.³¹ Today this liturgical book has been revised in most Provinces to suit the needs of the local context. In Kenya this saw the dawn of a new liturgical book entitled ‘Our Modern Service’ in English in 2002 under Archbishop Emeritus David Gitari, *Kitabu cha Sala* in Kiswahili and *Ibuku ria Mahoya na Magongona ma Kanitha* in Kikuyu in 2012, when it was launched by Archbishop Eliud Wabukala at St Andrew’s Cathedral in Thika.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter argues that the sacramental rite of Holy Communion in the ACK is central in its worship where wafers and wine are used. The CMS missionaries introduced these symbols when they first evangelized and established the Church in Kenya. With this inherited

³¹ I can ascertain this in my experience at St. Alpheges Anglican Church in Southern Africa, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg during my studies, where I was a worshipper every Sunday.

ecclesiastical understanding and practice of Holy Communion, ACK in Kenya has registered discontent with the symbols. Hence, ACK is calling for inculturation of these symbols into their respective people's way of life because the inherited Holy Communion symbols are not communicating effectively to their contexts. The chapter also argued that in these symbols believers are spiritually nourished, strengthened and united with God and their fellow believers as they anticipate dining with Christ at the eschaton. To this ends, the chapter concludes that the Holy Communion symbols are imported products in Kenya. Though foreign, there is resistance to replace these imported symbols in Kenya in spite of symbols been contextual. Notably, the question of unity in the Anglican Communion is central in use of the inherited symbols in the Holy Communion and thus the question remains if unity means uniformity? Therefore it is right to state that this chapter was able to realise one of this thesis objective that dealt with the theological understanding of the Holy Communion symbols in the ACK diocese of Thika. Before proceeding to analyse the interviews, it is important to outline the methodological procedure followed to collect and analyse data. This now invites chapter five on methodology.

Chapter Five

Research Methodology and Methods

“Research methodology is a way to systematically solve a research problem.”

(Kothari 2004:8)

5. Introduction

In the previous chapter, this study focused on analysing the understanding and practice of the sacramental rite of Holy Communion symbolism in the ACK. This study established that the ACK ecclesiastical identity was bequeathed from the Church of England. Therefore, its understanding and practice of using wafers and wine came as a new phenomenon, though gradually internalized in order to take a Kenyan face.

Erik Hofstee describes methodology as a map that shows the processes involved and the reasons for the choices made to arrive at conclusions in research (2011:107). This chapter intends to show the signposts of how this study was executed in order to get the socially constructed meaning and understanding of Holy Communion symbols. It will then delineate the methods used in sampling, data collection and analysis on the socially constructed meaning of the Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika. Sharlene Hesse-Biber and Patricia Leavy define research method as the techniques for gathering evidence through listening to informants, observing behaviours or examining historical traces or records (2011:5). Thus, it is good to reinstate the central research question that need to be answered as follows:

To what extent have the understanding of the symbols used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion been inculturated within ACK diocese of Thika?

This question was answered through the methodological process outlined below, because as Kothari observed research methodology entails a systematic way of solving a certain problem (2004).

5.1. Research Method and Design

According to James Harding research design “represent(s) a practical plan for the methods to be used ... incorporating areas such as sampling, data collection and data analysis” (2013:15; Selltiz 1962:50). This suggests a systematic process that was used for data collection, sampling and analysing the data. In light of this, Kevin Durrheim suggested that research design then should provide a plan that specifies how the research is going to be executed in

such a way that it answers the research questions (2006:34). With such an outline and plan of study, C.K. Kothari observes that it “facilitates the smooth sailing of the various research operations thereby making research as efficient as possible yielding maximal information expenditure of effort, time and money” (2004:32). To come up with a research approach that will yield maximal information in this study on Holy Communion symbols and the extent the symbols have been inculturated, Jane Philip and Patricia Davidson suggest that it is largely dependent on research questions and the aims of the study (2010:259). This study being an exploratory and critical investigation used open-ended questions for in-depth information.

5.1.1. Triangulation Method

Triangulation is a research method where researchers use multiple sources of evidence to investigate a particular phenomenon deeply (Robson 1999:173). This means that the construction of meaning of the Holy Communion symbols in the ACK diocese of Thika needed multiple sources in order to arrive at the constructed meanings. The advantage of using this method in this study on one hand according to Hesse-Biber and Leavy is its potentiality to look for convergence and divergence of findings. On the other hand, this method was also significant as it served to enhance the validity of research findings. In this note, this study used multiple sources as in-depth individual interviews, focused group discussions and self-administered questions to interrogate and examine the constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbols and the extent they have been inculturated in the ACK diocese of Thika. With use of this method, diverse meanings of Holy Communion symbols emerged such as symbol of body and blood of Christ, symbol of modernity, symbol of neo-colonialism and prohibited products. Therefore, this method became instrumental in this study because it provided diverse views of what are wafers and wine to diocesan Christians. Furthermore, converging and diverging views arose from diocesan Christians when this study was interrogating the place of indigenous symbols of nourishment in the Holy Communion.

5.2. Qualitative Method

This study used a qualitative approach to analyse the constructed meaning of the Holy Communion symbols used in the ACK Diocese of Thika. This involved seeking the meaning attached to the Holy Communion and symbols used by ACK Christians in the diocese. This being a qualitative study, Harding maintained it should involve collecting more detailed information from a smaller number of people and in this case an in-depth understanding of the Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika (2013:8). Sharan Merriam argues that

qualitative researchers are interested in how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and meaning they attribute to their experiences (2009:14). The qualitative approach best suits this study because it facilitates discovering the contextual hidden meaning of the Holy Communion symbols and the extent they have been inculturated. The rationale for using qualitative research was to unveil the contextually constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbolism within ACK by engaging the members of the diocese.

Michael Patton argues qualitative methods typically produce a wealth of detailed information about a much smaller number of people and cases (1990:14). Fred Lunenburg and Beverly Irby add qualitative research emphasizes understanding by closely examining people's words, actions and records, as opposed to a quantitative research approach that investigates such words, actions and records at a mathematically significant level (2008:89). Thus, the participants' stories that were obtained from the field became the vital tool to understand the respondents' social life and the way they socially constructed meaning around Holy Communion and its symbols.

Within the qualitative method, there are three approaches, namely hermeneutic, interpretative and social constructivist. Martin Blanche and Kevin Durrheim point out that a researcher may use one or more than one approach, because all of them are equally better (2006:9). Since all the qualitative approaches are interpretative and meaning making, the study opted to use a social constructionist approach because of its exploratory nature and its understanding that meaning is socially constructed in a social context. The social constructionist approach helped to understand how Christians have socially constructed meaning and their understanding of Holy Communion symbols and the extent to which this understanding of wafers and wine has been inculturated in the diocese of Thika. Through this approach, the socially constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbols were able to be derived from the data such as the body and blood of Christ, symbol of modernity, symbol of neo-colonialism, prohibited and foreign products.

Therefore, Schwandt argues, "the inquirer must elucidate the process of meaning construction and clarify what and how meaning is embodied in the language and action of social actors" (1994:118). A social construction approach takes language seriously, as it is seen as the embodiment of meaning. In this regard, Kikuyu language was vital in unfolding the meaning attached to wafers and wine by Christians in the diocese when these symbols were translated

in Kikuyu. With help of this approach, the foreignness of wafers was conspicuous as the translation of wafers in Kikuyu as *mugate* suggested that wafers are an imported or foreign product. Indeed, this is the meaning this symbol assumed in the diocesan context, as a foreign product. Through this approach, it enabled easier understanding of the data, analysis and interpretation through its “claim that reality is mind-dependent and is socially constructed through relationships, psychological activities and shared understandings that we all take part in” (Plowright 2011:177).

5.3. Why ACK Diocese of Thika as Case Study?

This study adopted the case study approach to examine the meaning of the Holy Communion symbols according to diocesan Christians and the extent to which they have been inculturated. Colin Robson describes case study as a strategy of doing research that involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence (1993:146; see also Mugenda1999:173). In this regard, the context of Thika, where these symbols were a foreign product to the indigenous, becomes a good premises to elaborate how they are understood and the process they undertook to assume meaning to the locals. The diocese is inhabited by Kikuyus, the majority ethnic group in Kenya, suggesting that this study will evaluate how their worldview has influenced the construction of meaning of the Holy Communion symbols since they were introduced. Moreover, its strategic location along the Thika Superhighway that connects Thika and Nairobi makes it a unique and contentious place to do study, due to its urban and rural set-up.

The importance of engaging this study in the ACK diocese of Thika is to generate new knowledge (Lawson 1999:6). As the first research done in the diocese, Hesse-Biber and Leavy suggest engaging in this study at Diocese of Thika provided an opportunity for me as a researcher to generate a holistic understanding of Holy Communion symbols and the need to inculturate them in the diocesan cultural milieu (2011:256). Thus through this research, it enabled one to understand how the Christians in the diocese have constructed meaning around the wafers and wine used in the Holy Communion. In addition, it showed the significance they attach to these symbols in the Holy Communion and the need to inculturate them by using cultural symbols that communicate to them effectively.

Another reason for engaging the diocese of Thika is its numerical growth rate of Christianity.³² This has posed a big challenge to meet the ever-growing population and ever-increasing demand for sound teaching on the subject of Holy Communion for there is little literature for pastoral guidance. In doing this study, the attempt was to respond to this challenge in the diocese. Therefore, using the ACK diocese of Thika as a case study on Holy Communion symbols according to Hesse-Biber and Leavy became a good opportunity to illustrate, identify sources of problems, solutions to problem and to describe and explore more on the Holy Communion symbols (2011:259).

Another reason is that no such a study has ever been done before on the constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbols and the extent to which they have been inculturated. Hence, the result of this study will become a primary reference in the diocese once completed.

5.4. Research Process

5.4.1. Participants

In this study, research participants were Christians from the ACK diocese of Thika. A total number of sixty-seven individuals participated in this study. The rationale for having six-seven individuals according to Creswell and Clark (2007:112) is that the larger the number of people, the less amount of detail will emerge while the key idea of qualitative research is to provide detailed views. Thus this number of individuals involved in this study ensured that it widely represent the mind of the diocesan Christians in terms of coverage in the diocese and groups involved.

5.4.2. Defining and Choosing the Study Sample

Durrheim (2006:49) notes that sampling is the selection of research participants from an entire population, with the aim of observing the selected sample that will be representative of the population that the researcher aims to draw conclusions from. In light of this, this justifies the need for a sampling that can achieve this goal. The study utilised purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability approach to sampling that was used to select the sixty-seven respondents. This required purposefully selecting participants in the diocese who could give deeper information on the Holy Communion symbols and the extent to which they

³²The diocese began with a population of 9,488 Christians in 1998. This has grown with over 30,000 Christians as at 2014, signifying an average growth of 9% per year, which is beyond the Provincial average of 6% per year. These figures were derived from the bishop's letter he wrote during a presentation on the state of the diocese on 18 February 2014.

have been inculturated (Creswell and Clark 2007:112). Therefore the communicants of the Holy Communion, who have been taught catechism before been admitted into this rite as communicants, became the participants in this study. As knowledgeable group this research was able to draw from them diverse views regarding their understanding of Holy Communion symbols. In addition, through purposive sampling the study was able to compare and contrast their views for the purpose of analysing the meaning that have been constructed over the years on the Holy Communion symbols. Furthermore, using purposive sampling saved time and money as the researcher identified the right individuals with deeper information on the study at hand. What follows is a demonstration of how the selection process of purposeful sampling was carried out and how data was collected.

First, data was collected through individual in-depth interviews. Twenty-one respondents (who form part of the sixty-seven participants) were interviewed from seven parishes in seven archdeaconries in the diocese of Thika, which are: Juja, Ruiru, Kiganjo East Memorial, Gituamba, Ndunyu, Chege and Gatura. Among these, four were clergy of different ages, gender, educational background and rank. There was one Archdeacon, a Canon, a retired clergy who was a member of a liturgical committee at diocesan and provincial boards, a theological Lecturer at university and an ordinary clergy with a strong background in the East Africa Revival Movement. All these clergy were chosen because of their wealth of experience and knowledge in Holy Communion and its symbols. The laity of different ages, gender and educational background were also interviewed from the seven parishes as follows, five men, seven women and five youth (See 5.6.1.1 for more details on Individual Interviews).

Second, data was also collected through three focused group discussions. The first was with the priests [clergy] alone. Second, with Christians from the diocese [laity] and the third with both priests and laity combined. The clergy focus group discussion had nine clergy from nine different parishes of which eight were men and one was a woman. The other two women who were invited for discussion did not manage to come. The group had one Archdeacon and one Rural Dean while the rest were ordinary parish priests. Their age and educational background were different, so that their responses/answers may be diverse.

The rationale for having this discussion was that the priests as theologians are the one supposed to engage theological issues and interpret them to their Christians. As such interviewing them provided the researcher with one, good basis for examining how

equipped they are to transmit their understanding of the doctrine of Holy Communion and its symbols. Second, evaluates the extent to which they have contextualized this doctrine and its symbols for easier communication to congregations they have been entrusted.

The laity focus group had six respondents from six different parishes in the diocese. Two were men, two women and two youth, all of different age and educational background. The two men and two women coincidentally were lay readers in their parishes while the two youth were youth leaders in their parishes. The significance of having this discussion is to explore how theological issues are articulated from below or at grassroot level where theology is practiced. Thus having an opportunity to listen laity critically engaging the theological issues of meaning making and inculturation became good grounds for gauging how they have interpreted the doctrine of Holy Communion and its symbols.

The clergy and laity focus group discussion had six respondents. Three respondents were clergy, an Archdeacon, a Rural Dean and a parish priest; of the three clergy one was a woman. To ensure healthy discussion they were of different age and educational background. Among the laity there was one man, one youth and one woman. I anticipated seven respondents but one did not come. With this discussion this study was able to assess the extent to which theologians and laity has been involved in doing theology. Since this discussion became an opportunity for both to learn from each other. Moreover, this stance raised questions if this has been the common practice while doing theology in our Churches or not.

In light of these three focus groups, they had nine, six and six respondents respectively. All these respondents in the three focus groups were heterogeneous. The significance of these heterogeneous groups with nine and six according to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:178) are appropriate “when the researcher want(s) a range of responses and is willing to sacrifice a more in-depth understanding of how a particular segment of the population experiences the topic under investigation.” Therefore, these groups were purposively sampled for the following purpose: One, in terms of managing the groups, as bigger groups are not manageable. Two, since this study is case study in nature, it required a small manageable size in order to get more deeper information of the Holy Communion symbols and its inculturation. Three, it gave the researcher an opportunity to compare and contrast the diverse views that emerged from these groups with individual interviews. This made the analysis of the data easier, as the researcher was able to identify the dominant themes emerging from the

data. The groups were held separately once due to time factor, cost and the logistics of bringing them together again. In addition, they were complementing the individual interviews held there before, thus they became like follow ups (See 5.6.1.2 for more details on Focus Groups).

Third, another model of data collection was through a questionnaire. Twenty-five questionnaires were sent to twenty-five respondents (who form part of the sixty seven respondents involved in this study) in five different parishes, namely: Mugutha, Gakoe, Juja Farm, Kiarutara and Gatanga. Five respondents were clergy (two women and three men). Of these five clergy, one was an Archdeacon, two Rural Deans and the other two parish priests. There were twenty respondents from the lay people of which five were vicar's wardens, five chairpersons of Mother's Union (MU), five chairpersons of Kenyan Anglican Men Association (KAMA), and five Kenya Anglican Youth Organization (KAYO) chairpersons. The rationale of choosing these Church leaders as key respondents was because the Anglican constitution allows them to hold office on account of having been communicants of the Holy Communion as well as most of them are decision makers in their respective local Churches. They qualified to be in positions of leadership for the diocesan constitution maintains "no lay person shall be eligible for election or appointment to the synod or other diocesan boards or committees or councils or the parish or local Church Council ... unless is a communicant member of the Anglican Church of Kenya" (ACK Diocese of Thika Constitution 2006:93).

In terms of coverage in the diocese, twenty-five parishes³³ were involved and all seven archdeaconries that make up the diocese. Four out of seven Archdeacons were engaged in this study and in total twenty-one clergy and forty-six laity in the diocese participated in the study. Other significant members of the diocese included members of the standing committee of the synod, synod delegates and lay readers, though this was not a requirement for one to participate in this study. The table below summarises the number of participants that were engaged in this study.

³³ The names of the parishes are Cathedral, Happy Valley, Swani, Makongeni, Kamenu, Kiganjo East, Kiganjo West, Mithiini, Ruiru, Juja, Juja Farm, Njagu, Mundoro, Ndunyu Chege, Gatura, Kiarutara, Chomo, Gakoe, Gatanga, Gituamba, Memorial, Thamuru, Mugumoini, Gathaiti and Mugutha.

Table 1: Sampled participants and coverage in the diocese

Archdeacons in the diocese of Thika	Parishes that participated	Clergy		Laity	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
7	25	16	5	28	18

The area covered in research questions was on the understanding and practice of Holy Communion in the diocese as well as the area of inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols. All these three areas were articulated clearly in all the research instruments [See Appendices 2, 3 and 4]. What was observed in the fieldwork is the first two areas on understanding and practice of Holy Communion were well understood by all respondents. This was manifested in the way participants responded during the interviews and in questionnaires. However, in the area of inculturation there was limited knowledge amongst some lay people in the diocese compared with the clergy. The lay people had limited knowledge on this subject/area because they did not have any theological background in their studies, unlike the clergy who were more knowledgeable. Such a predicament was also evident among Christians in earlier research done on inculturation from diverse traditions in Kenya and Tanzania (Magesa 2004). Magesa observed that this concept proved to be too much of a technical term (2004:11). However, my participants' contribution on inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols was healthy and informative because they had a translated term of inculturation in Kikuyu (see Appendices 7-10).

5.5. Gaining Access and Advertising the Research

After the university's ethical committee (See Appendix 5) approved the research, the next step was carrying out fieldwork among the Christians in the ACK diocese of Thika. To access the site for research a letter of request was written to the Administrative Secretary who acted as 'gatekeeper' in the diocese of Thika to grant permission undertake research in the diocese (See Appendix 1). Upon acceptance, the researcher contacted all the Parish priests of all the twenty-five parishes to request their consent and permission to interview them and members of their congregations as well as send twenty-five questionnaires. This was followed by personal visits to the sites/parishes for prior preparations for Kothari argues the interviewer must choose a suitable time and venue that participants are comfortable with throughout the interview session (2004:119). For sharpening the tools of data collection, a pilot study was

conducted with a few participants.

The respondents were contacted first through their cell phones and visiting them personally in order to obtain their consent to participate in the study. After introducing my study to them individually and explaining the ethical procedure, they accepted to participate in the research as respondents. There was also a consent form to read and understand what it expected of them. Among those who had little knowledge of English language but were informed of this study, the consent forms translated in Kikuyu were done. All of them accepted to participate in this study and a plan was made for the date, venue and time for interviews and when to send the questionnaires. No participants withdrew along the way, perhaps because they knew me as a clergy in the diocese, though they kept a critical distance in order to engage the matter objectively. After the interviews and completing the questionnaires, they signed the consent forms and returned them to the interviewer.

5.6. Data Production, Research Methods and Procedures

In this section, the study deals with the process of obtaining both primary and secondary data in order to understand how the Christians in the diocese of Thika have socially constructed meaning around the Holy Communion and its symbols.

5.6.1. Primary Data Collection Methods and Processes

To obtain the primary data this study engaged individual in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and sent questionnaires to participants as articulated below. These methods not only generated in-depth information on Holy Communion symbols but they also enhanced the validity of this study.

The questions used in these three research instruments were open-ended questions that gave respondents freedom to share their thoughts and feelings on the subject of Holy Communion symbols in the Anglican Church. The choice of this type of questions is justified by Creswell and Clark who argue qualitative data consists of open-ended information that a researcher gathers through interviews with participants (2007:6). Furthermore, open-ended questions provide an opportunity to probe for deeper information from the respondents. Therefore, open-ended questions were important in this study for they did not restrict the respondents to choose from a particular set of responses but gave them freedom to respond in their own words (Peter 1994:78).

5.6.1.1. In-depth Individual Interviews

The first tool of data collection used in this study was in-depth interviews. Keith Punch describes in-depth interviews as one of the main methods of data collection tools in qualitative research (1998:174). This study used this tool of data collection so that it may listen to diocesan Christians' ideas on how they have constructed meaning around the Holy Communion symbols in the ACK diocese of Thika. To understand the way Christians in the diocese of Thika have constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbols, listening to them was a necessity. Therefore, according to Minichiello and Kottler, interviewing diocesan Christians became an opportunity to learn what Holy Communion symbols mean to them and more importantly, why they use them in their Churches (2010:12). Then in-depth interview as a tool of data collection in this study involved a conversation between me as the researcher, with the participants where they were engaged in actively asking questions and listening to them (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2011:95). This process involved meaning making endeavour from the participants. Thus, this study engaged twenty-one respondents from seven parishes in the ACK diocese of Thika. It involved listening to the respondents and critically examining their understanding of the Holy Communion symbols, the practice prevalent in their Churches and how they have inculturated these symbols used in Holy Communion.

The researcher interviewed all the twenty-one respondents personally, by meeting them either at their homes or place of work [for instance parish offices] after prior arrangements. Nineteen respondents accepted to be recorded after attaining their consent while two declined to be recorded. The interviews were face to face with the respondents because Lunn and Smith maintained face to face interviews were the most widely used research method for collecting people's opinions, perspectives and ideas (2010: 210). The interviews lasted for about thirty to forty-five minutes per respondent. In these interviews, I used open-ended questions for in-depth information on Holy Communion from the respondents. This gave the respondents freedom to share their thoughts on the Holy Communion, its symbols and inculturation. These open-ended questions were semi-structured, such that the interview relied on a certain set of questions that guided the conversation to remain more loosely focused on these questions (Hesse-Bibber and Leavy 2011:102). This set of questions, known as the interview guide, used throughout my interviews was essential, for it made all my interviews successful. The importance of semi-structured interviews argues Harding is that the researcher has a guide to follow and the analysis is easier because there is a number of topics on which every respondent made some comment (2013:31). Therefore, the semi-

structured interviews gave me liberty as a researcher to modify the questions or leave out some of them according to Robinson, but this study followed the interview guides strictly without any modification or leaving out any question in my interview guide (1993:231). This method helped to have the respondents' broader and deeper understanding of the Holy Communion and its symbols and the extent to which they have inculturated these symbols, as Tim May maintains in-depth interviews provide an opportunity to understand how interviewees generate and deploy meaning in their social life (2011:135).

The importance of using this method of data collection with twenty-one respondents was to explore this area of Holy Communion symbols that has never been done before in the ACK diocese of Thika. Through this exploration, it gave me an opportunity to describe how the Christians in the diocese constructed meaning around the Holy Communion symbols and the way they have been inculturated. In light of this, Hesse-Bibber and Leavy saw the advantage of this method of data collection as yielding exploration and description of the data that may or may not generate theory (2011:95). The other advantage of using this method is its suitability for intensive investigation. This study being an investigation on how the symbols used in the rite of Holy Communion have been inculturated in ACK diocese of Thika, became a good premise to use this method of data collection. Through the use of in-depth individual interviews the study was able to obtain richer and deeper information on Holy Communion, its symbols and their inculturation in the ACK diocese of Thika (Kothari 2004: 98). Lastly, with this method of data collection it gave the researcher an opportunity to probe into some answers in order to explore further some ideas by respondents leading to rich and deeper information on the Holy Communion symbols and inculturation. Because in-depth individual interviews provide a way of overcoming a low return rate and lack of deeper exploration because the researcher can negotiate interviews with his/her participants for the convenient time and venue as well as have the room to probe the participants for clarity and deeper information (Lunn and Smith 2010:211; Harding 2013:22).

5.6.1.2. Focus Group Discussions / Interviews

Harding describes focus group discussion as a method of collecting qualitative data that usually involves engaging a small number of people in an informal discussion directed around a particular topic or set of issues (2013:23). In this study the discussion revolved around the Holy Communion symbols in the ACK diocese of Thika, how they are understood by Christians and how they have inculturated them. In the study, three focus group discussions were conducted, with clergy and laity separately while the third one brought

together the clergy and laity. The clergy focus group comprised nine respondents, while both laity and combined clergy and laity focus group comprised six respondents each. These respondents in each of these groups fit well the number required in a focus group as in academic research the participants should be between six and twelve to ensure proper interaction and input from the participants (Lunn and Smith 2010:213; see also Philips and Davidson 2010:266). These groups were able to generate discussion. The significance of having more than one focus group discussion in this study was to add the reliability and validity of the research findings, in spite of the tedious work involved (Harding 2013:43).

The focus group discussions were guided by topics on the understanding and practice of Holy Communion as well as inculturation (See Appendix 2). The question routes were open-ended questions that Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) argue such questions give research participants liberty to share their own unique experiences and use their language in ways meaningful to them. Hesse-Biber and Leavy stress the “open-ended format allows the group dynamic flows, creating a unique narrative whose power does not lie in conventional conceptions of generalization” (2011:180). The discussions took place in a serene environment to ensure that the respondents were at ease to share their thoughts. The clergy discussion and the combined clergy and laity discussion were both held at diocesan Cathedral hall for convenience of the respondents, who came from different parishes and archdeaconries in the diocese. The laity focus group discussion was held at St. Luke Makongeni Church conference room. These venues were chosen as they served as central meeting places for the respondents. According to Creswell and Clark these venues were of paramount importance in this qualitative research for the quality of the data depends on how comfortable, safe, and supported the participants feel while sharing what they are thinking, living, feeling, and perceiving (2007:20). The researcher moderated the discussions while a secretary took notes as recording of the proceedings continued. Harding recommends recording of interviews because recording the exact words of the respondents is essential if the researcher used discourse analysis as the method of data analysis. The three focus discussions lasted for at most two and a half hours each (2013:49).

The significance of using this method of data collection was to be able to gather more data from many participants within a short time, compared with one on one interviews (Berg 2009:165). Besides the large amount of information obtained from the respondents, the focus groups also provided an opportunity for reflective interaction with respondents according to

Philips and Davidson (2010:262). Through use of this method in this study, it helped to expose the converging and diverging views of the Holy Communion symbols and their inculturation. Through these discussions, the respondents were able to expose their predicaments when wine ran out unexpectedly or there were no wafers to celebrate the Holy Communion. In addition, conservative and liberal views became evident in the discussions. Thus, these discussions brought to the surface aspects of a situation that might not otherwise be exposed in other form of discourse in life (Punch 1998:177). Hesse- Biber and Leavy summarize the rationale of using this method that:

It gives a researcher depth and breadth to a subject about which very little is known. Reach that part that other methods cannot reach. They are extremely useful in identifying the language, definitions and concepts that the research participants find meaningful as they navigate through their daily life experiences. Focused group discussions are used as follow-up to in-depth interviews. It is appropriate to follow up in-depth interviews with Focused groups interviews to verify individual interviews' data, examine how individual responses differ in a group setting, expose individual interviewees to the group dynamic as a means of education or empowerment and include larger population that may not have been available for in-depth interview (2011:164-177).

5.6.1.3. Questionnaires

The last method of data collection used was questionnaires. They were self-administered questionnaires that required the respondents to answer several questions by completing the questionnaires individually (Bryman 2008:216). The questions used in the questionnaires were open-ended, which gave the respondents freedom to answer at whichever length they were comfortable. Twenty-five questionnaires were sent to five different parishes - to five parish priests, five vicar's wardens, five men, five women and five youth chairpersons. The reason for using this method is to have a wide coverage of the diocesan parishes and Christians' ideas on this subject of inculturation of Holy Communion symbols, as Kothari describes it as the appropriate and popular method of data collection when making big enquiries (2004:100). In addition to big enquiries in this method of data collection, this study used questionnaires because they are effective and commonly used to obtain significant information about a certain population and in this case, meaning and perceptions on inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in Thika diocese (Mugenda and Mugenda 1999:71).

The merit of using this method of data collection, is that it was the easiest and most cost effective in relation to the other methods of data collection (Peter 1994:64). Kothari adds that it is also useful for "large samples can be made use of and thus the results can be made more dependable and reliable" (2004:103). However, the challenge with this method of data

collection to a researcher according to Robson is the magnitude of the work expected while analysing the massive data obtained as it is demanding unless the researcher cuts down on open-ended questions or has a small number of responses to deal with (1993:243). To collect all the forms from the respondents it took four months, in spite of follow-up made through letters and phone calls. The parish priests were of great help in bringing all the filled forms together for the researcher to collect.

5.6.2. Secondary Data Collection Methods and Processes

5.6.2.1. Analysis of Existing Literature

On the secondary data, this study critically analysed the existing literature on Holy Communion symbols dealing with its understanding and practice in the Anglican Church as well as on inculturation in general. This literature helped in this study to identify the research gaps that need to be bridged by this academic work on inculturation of the symbols used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion in the ACK Diocese of Thika. Through critical analysis of literature, the study was able to show how this fits in the broader picture on inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols in relation to other studies done previously (see chapter one). Moreover, it outlined the appropriate depth and breadth of this work under consideration. All the literature used was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Library, St. Paul University Limuru Library, Kenya National Library Thika branch and Bishop Hannington Institute Mombasa Library.

5.6.2.2. Archival Documents

Besides the existing literature in the libraries, the researcher also visited diocesan and provincial archives where the synod documents, bishops' charges and letters, diocesan constitution and other relevant Church documents on this study on Holy Communion in the Anglican Church was used.

5.7. Procedure for Data Analysis

After collecting the empirical data, the next process was to analyse the data. According to Merriam, data analysis "is the process of making sense out of the data. Making sense of the data involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read as a process of making meaning" (2009:175-176). This study began to make sense of the data, how the Christians in the diocese of Thika have socially constructed meaning of Holy Communion, its significance and the meaning of wafers and

wine to them. The analysis of every interview was done immediately after ending with the participants. As in the qualitative method, there is no clear distinction between where the data collection ends and data analysis begins (Terre Blanche et al 2008:321). The importance of analysing data immediately after the interview is you move through data collection and if you have been analysing as you go, you will be able to check out tentative categories with subsequent interviews (Merriam 2009:183).

The first process was uploading all the data in the digital voice recorder and transferring it into the computer. The second was listening to the recorded data obtained from the fieldwork again and again in order to immerse in the data. The third process was to transcribe the data verbatim. The significance of playing the tapes over and over again was to go deeper into the minds of the respondents. To ensure reliability and validity of the data and its findings, reflection of the data generated was done while still engaging other sources such as literature on Holy Communion symbols and inculturation as well as bringing in personal and professional experience in the data. Now the following section embarks on thematic and discourse methods of data analysis by describing each in detail and how this study went about making meaning of Holy Communion symbols and inculturation of the symbols from the data.

5.7.1. Thematic Analyses

Thematic analysis is the first technique employed in this study to analyse the massive data obtained from field study in order to make meaning. Richard Boyatzis describes thematic analysis as “a process of encoding qualitative information” (1998:vi). This means that this method of data analysis involves finding themes that are emerging from the data. Charles Teddlie and Abbas Tashakkori suggest that the researcher must search for dominant themes of a phenomenon under study (2009:252). The importance of using this technique to analyse data is its “descriptive use of thematic analysis is desirable if the particular methodology chosen for a study requires enhancing clarity of results or findings and the ease of communication and expands the possible audience for communication and dissemination of ideas and results” (Boyatzis 1998:vii).

Transcribing the data after the interviews was the first most important process of thematic data analysis. Martin Parker suggests that it enables the researcher to develop an intimate contact with the data (2011:57). This process of transcribing research data was interactive and

engages the researcher in the process of deep listening, analysis and interpretations (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2011:304). The advantage of transcribing as observed by Pot McCann and Victor Minichiello helped to makes notes about the themes that were recognized in the first interviews, the issues the researcher wanted to follow up and ideas for improving the next schedule sessions of my interviews (2010:226). After transcribing the data verbatim, the next thing was reading and re-reading the data again in order to understand the data and make meaning reflecting on the participants' ideas on the Holy Communion symbols and inculturation. This helped to develop the general understanding of the data collected on the understanding, practice and inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese among Christians.

This phenomenon of reading and re-reading had two advantages. The first one, argue Kottler and Minichiello is “reading and reading the stories several times over a period. During this process ‘indwelling’ we immersed ourselves in the data taking notes on material we considered significant, highlighting comments that seemed to capture essence phenomenology, plotlines, and codes [as] this lead to the identification of initial themes” (2010:279). Through the process of making notes from the transcription, field patterns or categories from the data began to emerge. Such patterns and categories such as eating and drinking, togetherness, memorial, fellowship, inherited Church tradition, symbol of remembrance, body and blood of Christ were now conspicuous from the data. The second advantage notes Harding is it becomes the basic method to enhance the validity of research findings such that they reflect the actual original data (2013:139).

From the emerging patterns and categories in the data, this study began classifying or bringing together those codes that had the same patterns and categories in order to have themes and sub-themes. Jodi Aronson argues that the next step to a thematic analysis is to identify all data that relate to the already classified patterns (1994). All of the talk that fits under the specific pattern identified and placed with the corresponding pattern, then combined and catalogue related patterns into sub-themes. Therefore, bringing together components or fragments of ideas or experience, which often are meaningless when viewed alone, identify themes. Hence, the themes that featured in the data are illustrated here below in the table.

Table 2: Themes and sub-themes

Themes	Sub-Themes
1. Holy Communion	<p>Diocesan meaning of Holy Communion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Memorial Meal ○ Symbol of remembrance ○ Fellowship ○ Means of salvation
2. Wafers and wine	<p>Meaning of wafers and wine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Body and blood of Christ ○ Imported products ○ Prohibited products ○ Symbol of modernity ○ Symbol of neo-colonialism
3. Ecclesiastical Expectation	<p>Church requirements in use of symbols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Church rites as baptism, confirmation and wedding. ○ Priestly role ○ Personal integrity
4. Diachronic and synchronic response	<p>Transmission of symbols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unity of Church ○ Fear and taking Holy Communion lightly <p>Translation of symbols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ecclesiastical imperialism ○ Colonialism of mind

5.7.2. Discourse Analyses

Discourse analysis is the other technique used to analyse the massive data collected. Harding, quoting Muncie, describes discourse analysis as a detailed exploration of political, personal, media or academic ‘talk’ and ‘writing’ about a subject, designed to reveal how knowledge is organized, carried and reproduced in particular ways and through particular institutional practices (2013:139). In this case, the analysis attempted to know how the Christians in the diocese of Thika have constructed meaning around the Holy Communion symbols and how this impacts on their day-to-day life. In order to make meaning of the data and know how language has been used to construct meaning around the Holy Communion symbols, the researcher immersed himself in the data. The advantage of immersing in the data maintains Blanche *et al* is that it provides us with a tapestry of ‘ways of speaking’ that we can recognize, ‘read’, and dialogue with (2006:330). We can identify discourses, for we are part of a culture and because we are able to strike a critical distance from that culture.

From this immersion in the data, McCann and Minichiello suggest that the researcher has the opportunity of interrogating documents, conversation media and the practical environment as they relate to the social world (2010:221). Through this critical examination of the data in its social context such patterns or discourses as inherited tradition, this is what Christ used, this is our culture, this is what we found, symbol of body and blood all emerged. Therefore, this study was able to identify biblical discourses, Christological discourses, tradition discourses, socio-economic discourses and identity/liberative discourses from the language used. This helped in what Kevin Kelly says themes and discourses are both ways of apprehending aspects of situation, which connect it to other situations by virtue of inherent commonalities that bind together in spite of their contextual distinctiveness (2006:359).

The importance of using discourse analysis in this study as Earl Babbie and Johann Mouton argue is that, it allowed in this study the researcher to move beyond the obvious to the less, and yet completely obvious, so that the researcher can construct meaning from the discourses identified (2001:495). For instance, discourses such as yes they think what is *ngwaci* [sweet potatoes] or *nduma* [arrow roots]? Other discourses include: ‘plunge in the Holy Communion’, coming from all kinds of ah mud, our Church is modern, fulfilled the Church laws, it is like a culture and Anglican culture. All these discourses referring the use of wafers and wine affirmed the need to move from the obvious and construct meaning from diocesan Christians. Therefore, the need emerged for one to move beyond the literal understanding of

what is culture in order to get to the socially constructed meaning around the use of these symbols in the diocese. Also, when the participants refer to their Church as ‘modern’, such a discourse reveals a lot that need to be unpacked from such a term.

The other importance of using this method is what Minichiello and Kottler mention, that discourse analysis focuses on examining texts and talk /discourse within their cognitive, social and cultural contexts (2010:26). It seeks to analyse the hidden motives and meaning of ideas that dominate a society with particular focus on issues of power, manipulation and control. This came up clearly in the traditionalist/conservative views and liberative views that were two opposing forces in inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols within the cultural frameworks of the people. This was characterised by participants’ use of language such as: this is what we found; you know we are modernizing; this is our tradition; these are borrowed symbols; or this is not Anglicanism. Therefore, the issues of manipulation of power and control featured most in this study discourses as illustrated, helping to understand the social constructions of the Christian symbols of wafers and wine as sophisticated symbols that any modern Church should use. These discourses were integrated in the themes and sub-themes above, as articulated in thematic analyses.

5.8. Methodological Limitations

First, this study only purposively sampled the communicants of the Holy Communion in the Anglican Church and excluded the non-communicants. Though the communicants who participate in the Holy Communion are the same as those who have been taught catechism, including the non-communicants could have added more value in this study. However, this study was not able to include them, as the Anglican Church gives no recognition to the non-communicants on the basis that they are not full members of the Church (ACK Diocese of Thika, 2006).

Second, during the data collection in the field, the participants kept referring to Archbishop emeritus David Gitari as the one who came close to inculturation of Holy Communion symbols. Therefore, the researcher planned to engage him for insightful thought on this subject of inculturation, but he suddenly died before engaging him.

Third, time management by the participants was a challenge, especially in the focus group discussions. We did not begin at the time earmarked, as we had to wait for some members to arrive and begin together. Moving on from one parish to another was another hurdle, due to

the geographical distance, coupled by harsh rainy weather conditions. Thus connecting from one point to the other was a nightmare, as the researcher used public transport that was not reliable in some rural parishes.

Fourth, the study was done in the context of the Kikuyu people, where most participants were from this ethnic group in Kenya. This suggests that if other communities in Kenya and outside Thika were engaged, they could perhaps have enriched the study.

5.9. Ethical Considerations

Before undertaking this field study, the researcher obtained approval by the university ethical committee (See Appendix 5). The essential purpose of research ethics says Douglas Wassenaar is to protect the welfare of research participants (2006:61). Thus, the significance of having ethics in research argues Mugenda is “in the research process, ethics focus(es) on the application of ethical standards in the planning of the study, data collection and analyses, dissemination and use of the results” (2008:293). To conform to these standards, this study had a detailed consent form that outlined the topic of the study and its purpose. According to Bryman, the consent forms give respondents the opportunity at the outset to be fully informed of the nature of the research and its implications to them (2008:123). The significance of obtaining participants’ consent in the study maintains David Silverman is that good ethical practice produces better research (2010:157). In view of this, when the researcher approached participants to request them to participate in this study, they were briefed on the subject of study and its purpose.

When they accepted to be participants in this study, they were given the consent form to read and understand its content on their own for their participation as outlined in the consent form ‘is based on your free will’. Moreover, the researcher did not promise monetary reward to participants, for Wassenaar suggests the benefits of the research must be more direct to the community or the affected group and not individual, in terms of access to better skills and knowledge of the area of study (2006:67). All of the participants agreed to be part of this study; none of the participants declined the request to participate in this study nor withdrew along the way. The consent forms were written in English and translated into Kikuyu in order that all the respondents fully understand what they were engaging in. All the respondents were adults, as demanded of communicants of the Holy Communion in the Anglican Church of Kenya. The researcher requested them to allow recording the interview. While 19

respondents out of 21 in the in-depth individual interviews accepted to be recorded by digital voice recorder as the researcher take notes on a paper, two declined and thus the researcher took note as the interview continued. The participants were also assured that all the information they shared will ‘remain confidential to me as the researcher’. In the case of this study been published, the participants were assured their names ‘will remain anonymous and your personal identity and opinions will remain private and will not be referred to overtly, protecting your right and your agreement of participation’ (See Appendix 6). Though, they gave consent if the researcher wants to use their names as this study was not of sensitive nature. Therefore, after acceptance and participation in the study, all the participants signed the consent form and returned to the researcher.

Ethical issues relating to power relationships did not feature, especially when senior clergy in the diocese were interviewed or when the clergy and laity were brought together for discussion. As the researcher was able to clarify the importance of every respondent in this study thus all of them were made to understand that their role in this study is scholarly contribution. Hence respondents shared their mind without fear of the other respondents and this made interviews went smoothly. Likewise, on gender issues, women like men were treated with respect and dignity. To ensure all participants contributed and shared their thoughts freely during interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher ensured participants faced one another and sat on a round table facing one another. This brought the sense of equality as all the respondents were one among the equals. This necessitated the introvert and extrovert participants to fearlessly share their thoughts on their understanding of Holy Communion symbols and avoid being dominated by extrovert respondents. The participants were requested to allow others to share their thoughts and to be respected. Bryman argues the moderator should make it clear to the speaker and other group participants that other people’s views are definitely required and as for those who do not speak very much, it is recommended that they are actively encouraged to say something (2008:489).

5.10. Research Reflexivity

Merriam describes reflexivity as the process of reflecting critically, on the self as a researcher, the human as instrument for investigators to explain their biases, dispositions and assumptions regarding the research undertaken (2009:219). The importance of reflexivity in the research is to allow the readers to make sound decisions related to how sampling, data collection, analysis and interpretation of the data were done. Stephen Lapan *et al* suggest that

there are two positions of a researcher while doing studies and their implications, that is “insider or outsider status and the way status is negotiated can exert some influence on the ways the researcher is perceived, what information may change over time as insider or outsider status is renegotiated” (2012:72). In this study, the researcher was an ‘insider’ for he was collecting the data within the diocese that he ministers as a priest, among his own ethnic group, the Kikuyu.

The advantage as an ‘insider’ researcher was the potential to develop rapport and to win confidence with the participants, rather than an ‘outsider’ researcher trying to gain access to interview. As an ‘insider’ researcher in this thesis, this status helped to extract enormously rich data, because the researcher was able to benefit from being familiar with participants. As Kothari explains, the researcher should endeavour to create a friendly atmosphere of trust and confidence, so that respondents may feel at ease while talking to and discussing with the interviewer, thereby providing maximum opportunity for the voice of the participants to be heard and represented (2004:99). However, as an ‘insider’ researcher, a researcher has to keep distance to avoid any form of bias, for Kelly argues that as a qualitative researcher we want to understand the world from ‘inside out’ and from the out ‘side in’ (2006:350). This ensures the reliability and validity of the data collected, analysed and interpreted, reflecting the social context of the diocese of Thika. As an insider in this study, the researcher was able to overcome impediments to developing rapport and trust within different categories of Christians and clergy in the diocese of Thika (Denzin and Lincoln 1994:87).

On the other hand, as an ‘insider’ researcher, the researcher was disadvantaged, for Hesse-Biber and Leavy argue being an ‘outsider’ can actually be advantageous, depending on the research problem and population you are studying, because by being an ‘insider’ the researcher was vulnerable to be biased on certain issues which he could perceive as obvious (2011:119). Consequently, as ‘insider’ researcher would have taken some issues for granted or shared knowledge while the participants could have contrary views.

5.11. Conclusion

This chapter endeavoured to outline the methodological process of the entire study. It began by differentiating between methodology and methods as the roadmap to be followed in this research and the individual tools or techniques to be used respectively. The chapter delineated how the primary data was obtained from sixty-seven respondents who were purposively sampled in the triangulation method used. It also discussed the methods of data analysis

employed to articulate the diocesan understanding and practice of Holy Communion symbols, that is thematic and discourse analysis. The ethical consideration was ensured by securing ethical clearance from the university and the diocesan gatekeeper. On research reflexivity, this study articulately positioned the researcher as an ‘insider’, a phenomenon that was advantageous to the researcher for it helped win confidence and developed a good rapport with the respondents. However, the researcher kept critical distance to avoid being biased but being able to understand the issue of Holy Communion symbols and inculturation from ‘inside out’. The next chapter is the first in analysing the findings from the fieldwork.

Part Two

Findings, Discussions and Interpretation

The previous chapter is an outline of the methodology employed to collect and analyse the data. This second part of the study is a presentation of findings and discussions of the themes and sub-themes that emerged after thematic and discourse analysis of the data. The results and findings are presented simultaneously, in order to facilitate analysis and discussion together.

Chapter Six

Constructed Meaning of Holy Communion Symbolism in the ACK Diocese of Thika

In Systematic theology, the classical questions and answers will have to be reformulated in such a way that they become relevant to a new cultural and social context (Ott 2000:48).

6. Introduction

Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann and Robert Pazmino are in agreement that meaning is socially constructed in society by human beings because they are meaning-making beings (1966:1; 1999:161). This socially constructed meaning, according to Geertz (1973), is stored in symbols that may be in the form of objects, behaviours or stories, because they are powerful forces in human behaviour and central to religion. In light of this, this study anticipated analysing the socially constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika when they were introduced by the missionaries. As philosophers, Pojman and Rea argue that it is the task of theology to interpret religious symbols according to theological principles and methods (2013:54). This study then becomes better placed to interpret the meaning of Holy Communion symbols to the diocesan Christian because as Ott observed the classical questions of these symbols must become relevant to them (2000:48).

Therefore, this chapter will analyse and discuss the socially constructed meaning of Holy Communion by diocesan Christians as well as the socially constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbols, that is wafers and wine. Why use these symbols in the diocese in spite of being imported, who partakes of them and what is their significance to them and how are they administered in the diocese? With this in mind, the objective of this chapter is to investigate the socially constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbols in the ACK diocese of Thika.

6.1. What is Holy Communion?

In chapter four, this study argued that the rite of Holy Communion was a new experience to the diocesan Christians when introduced by missionaries. In time, the diocesan Christians socially developed and constructed their own meaning of what Holy Communion means to them. In order to understand how this rite was socially constructed, chapter five demonstrated the methodological process that was used, which involved interviews and sending

questionnaires to the participants to get their responses. The meanings they gave to Holy Communion were diverse from one participant to the other, as reflected here below.

6.1.1. Memorial Meal

The Holy Communion among the Christians in the diocese of Thika was perceived as a memorial meal shared by the worthy participants in remembrance of Christ's work of human redemption. Joshua Ngaruiya, a retired archdeacon and member of the provincial liturgical committee in Kenya, maintained that, "Holy Communion in other words we can call it the Holy Eucharist when we give thanks and celebrate in the memory of the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It holds what Jesus said that do this in memory of me inasmuch as you are gathered together. So in my understanding is that memory of the celebration of death and resurrection of Jesus Christ yah."³⁴ Another participant, Mary Njuguna, Mother's Union member at Kiganjo East Parish, added that:

Holy Communion is the remindance of the way Christ gave his body, when he was sharing the Last Supper with his disciples he told them 'this is my body' and when he was giving them wine he told them 'this is my blood'. So when we take Holy Communion we are actually remembering the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, so he offered himself as sacrificial lamb and therefore as we take we realize the great love God has for man [sic]. And as he was having the last Supper, he said we continue practising it because as often as we take it we remember him.³⁵

From these responses, they suggest that diocesan Christians' view of Holy Communion was a special memorial meal that welcomes Christians to give thanks to God for his goodness to humanity. This was rightly captured by Ngaruiya who retorted that "Holy Communion in other word we can call it the Holy Eucharist when we give thanks." This suggests that every moment this meal is shared, is a thanksgiving opportunity for the diocesan Christians because of what Christ did for them. This symbol of thanksgiving in a meal permeated the Kikuyu worldview and with integration of this concept in this memorial meal, it gave deeper understanding and meaning to the diocesan Christians. They attached the source of wafers and wine to God's providence and thus God's symbol of hospitality to humanity, that prompts them to give a gesture of thanksgiving. Gordon Smith justifies the rationale of thanksgiving that "in the bread and the cup we have the symbols of this plenty. They represent the things of this earth, all of the gifts of God that are poured out upon us. God is so good. We thank God for his work in Christ Jesus, for the cross and resurrection, for the

³⁴ Ven. Joshua Ngaruiya [retired] and was a member of the Provincial Liturgical committee interviewed by George Kiarie at Thika Town on 26 November 2013.

³⁵ Mary W. Njuguna, Mother's Union member interviewed by George Kiarie at Kiganjo East Parish on 27 November 2013.

amazing grace that would reach out in love and conquer sin and death” (2005:104). Holy Communion is also a memorial meal according to the diocesan Christians. It has become an opportunity for ‘celebration’, for the victorious Christ has conquered death and reigns forever, insinuating that it is the feast of victory that is celebrated in the diocese (Anglican Church of Kenya 2002:81). In this celebrative mood, David Dockery argues that:

The celebration of the Supper directs our attention backward to the work of Christ on the cross and also encourages a forward look to the second coming of Christ. It provides a time for believers to examine their own personal relationship with God as well as their relationship with other believers, while experiencing communion with the exalted Christ (2010: xv).

The other emerging issue is the sense of remembrance in this meal, as rightly said, ‘(In) Holy Communion we are actually remembering the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, so he offered himself as sacrificial lamb.’³⁶ This implies that whenever diocesan Christians share in this meal it becomes an opportunity of remembrance, visible in the sharing of the wafers and wine. This affirms that wafers and wine are symbols which express the Christian community’s past as they highlight the Holy Communion structure and rite in the past for the benefit of the society today (Mligo 2013:40).

The theme of Holy Communion as a memorial meal dominated the diocesan Christians’ discourse, with respondents using the term ‘remembrance’ in English to refer to memorial, or *kiririkano* in Kikuyu language more frequently. Since language is the powerful tool of communication, this symbolic term *kiririkano* in the Kikuyu worldview suggested that it is a continual rite in the life of Christians. It reminds them of a historical event in the past with intrinsic value that shapes and influences their lives as illustrated all about the sacrifice that Christ did on the cross ‘as sacrificial lamb’ for their redemption. According to Robert Wright what was actually done was “no gifts are actually offered, the one sacrifice of Calvary is re-represented rather than repeated, and the only sacrifice we offer is praise and thanksgiving, ourselves, our souls and body, our bounden duty and service” (2013:86). Therefore, the significance of this meal as memorial, argues Julie Gittoes, is to make God’s grace available to God’s people, as there is no need to define the manner in which Christ is made present at the Eucharist (2008:37).

³⁶Mary W. Njuguna, Mother’s Union member interviewed by George Kiarie at Kiganjo East Parish on 27 November 2013

6.1.2. Eating and Drinking Together

The Holy Communion was also understood by the Christians as symbolic eating and drinking together the body and blood of Christ. This symbolic expression of eating and drinking in the memorial meal was conspicuous from the respondent Esther Njoroge, a Mother's Union member from Gatura parish. She argued that:

Holy Communion, you know the Bible says that Jesus told the disciples to be eating bread and drinking wine in remembrance of him ... when I partakes them I am very glad for I eats the body of Christ in the bread and drinks his blood in the wine. Therefore, I feel I have received Christ in my life.³⁷

Another respondent, James Nduati, a youth member in Gituamba parish, added, "it is the Lord's Table where people eat together bread and wine in remembrance of the death of Christ."³⁸ Tabitha Muinamu maintained, "it is the remembrance of how the Lord Jesus Christ shed his blood and how he ate together with his disciples, so we remember the passion that Christ encountered."³⁹

The concept of eating and drinking together according to Njoroge's response shows that this was Christ command for "Jesus told the disciples to be eating bread and drinking wine in remembrance of him." This eating and drinking was symbolic in that the diocesan Christians remember the intrinsic value of Christ's sacrifice. For Holy Communion as eating and drinking together means that "to eat and drink metaphorically is to consume, to feast upon, to be nourished by, to draw one's strength from, to be absolutely dependent upon this living bread-Jesus ... by putting our faith in him" (Howe and Pascoe 2010: 85).

In the diocese the metaphor of eating and drinking together as Holy Communion featured during the missionaries era when they translated this memorial meal as *giathi kia Mwathani gia kuria irio cia hwai-ini* (Church of the Province of Equatorial Africa 1966:118). As through inculturation, there is enrichment of both culture and the gospel for there is borrowing and giving. The Christian faith appropriated the Kikuyu word *giathi*, literally translated as market place⁴⁰, but the deeper and symbolic meaning of *giathi* is official

³⁷Esther Wanjiku Njoroge, Mother's Union member interviewed by George Kiarie at Gatura Parish on 28 November 2013.

³⁸ James Maina Nduati, Youth Leader interviewed by George Kiarie at Gituamba Parish on 28 November 2013.

³⁹Tabitha Muinamu during Clergy and Laity Focused Group Discussion at St. Luke Makongeni, 5 December 2013.

⁴⁰According to Gathogo is the open place where everyone is free to visit at will for commodities and others like beggars is a place for hospitality from the strangers. For more see his article Julius Gathogo, 2014, "Extremist or an inculturationist? Retrieving Milkah Muthoni's (1948-2009) afro-Pentecostalism", *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, May 2014, 40(1), pp. 210.

gathering together for a common good of eating and drinking together the body and blood of Christ. Thus an opportunity to “feel I have received Christ in my life” as Njoroge submitted.

This concept of eating and drinking together was also strengthened by diocesan Christians’ assimilation of Saint Paul’s understanding of Holy Communion as the Lord’s Table. In spite of this symbol of a table bearing initial understanding from Paul, it has been entrenched in the diocesan Christians thought systems so that when the symbol of a table is invoked it arouses diocesan Christian’s consciousness or attention of feasting together on the body and blood of Christ, that is wafers and wine. Thus, to diocesan communicants of Holy Communion the symbol of the Lord’s Table communicates to them eating and drinking together, as Nduati pointed out during individual interviews. In this Table of the Lord, Christ invites and dines with his friends for he said “I do not call you servants any longer, because a servant does not know what his master is doing; instead, I call you friends ...” (John 15:15). This gesture of eating and drinking together at the Lord’s Table with his friends depicts the “act of acceptance, forgiveness, and mercy” (Smith 2005:14). To the Kikuyu recipient of Holy Communion there is an affinity with the Kikuyu concept of a meal in which only the invited guests and friends participate (Leakey 1903; Gathogo 2001). This means the Holy Communion meal found fertile ground to thrive among the diocesan Christians who integrated this new symbol of the Lord’s Table very well. For in it, the symbol of God’s hospitality is evident in the same way the Kikuyus concept of meal is a gesture and symbol of hospitality when one was invited to dine together.

6.1.3. Fellowship

The Holy Communion, according to diocesan Christians, was also understood as a fellowship of believers with Christ and one another. In this fellowship, believers gather to commune and share the meal in a celebratory mood. This is attested to by John Mbuthia who argues that, “Holy Communion is a fellowship of a Christian who believe in Christ. Whereby they celebrate the good thing that was done by Christ [who died] for them ... they celebrate in a holy manner as a reminder for the good things done for them using some elements which ... mark the body and blood of Christ.”⁴¹ Another respondent, Njeru Ileri, added that Holy Communion “is a fellowship meal where people draw together with a particular commonality to fellowship together. The idea of fellowship brings the aspect of remembering (the)

⁴¹ Ven. Canon John Mbuthia during Clergy Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 3 December 2013.

redemptive act of Christ.”⁴² For it is in this fellowship that Mwihaki Nguyai was convinced “the Holy Communion to how I know personally helps one to draw closer to God, if you have proper understanding of it.”⁴³ Hence, Holy Communion “is a communion more than a fellowship and in that fellowship there is elements we share that is bread and wine that symbolizes the body and blood of Christ.”⁴⁴

These responses suggest the kind of fellowship that Holy Communion entails by arguing that it is for those ‘Christians who believe in Christ’. Therefore, it involves celebrations of Christians being delivered from the bondage of sin to life accomplished by Christ on the cross. Clearly, these respondents are influenced by the evangelical nature of ACK that placed much emphasis on being born-again in order to qualify to celebrate this meal for they were convinced in their discourses that it was for ‘Christians who believe in Christ’. Smith suggests that communicants enter into a fellowship with the risen Christ who is the host of the meal while communicants experience both his welcome into the meal and his peace as they return to the world (2005:49).

Mancini and Benokraitis observed that symbols unite and divide, and in the Holy Communion where the wafers and wine bring communicants together, this unity results in a fellowship (2009:2631; 2015:45). The diocesan Christians describe it as ‘more than a fellowship’, implying its uniqueness in relation to other fellowships for it is a holy fellowship. This deep symbolic meaning of Holy Communion was derived from translation and incarnation of this meal into the Kikuyu worldview as *ngwataniro theru*, that is holy fellowship for those sanctified by Christ’s blood. This means that the Holy Communion is a holy fellowship of the faithful communicants with Christ and one another where Christ nourishes them with his body and blood at his table (Kinnamon and Cope 1997:186).

6.1.4. Means of Salvation

Neville argues that religious symbols are supposed to be instruments of salvation, or enlightenment or basic attunement (1996:2). In light of this understanding, the diocesan Christians perceived that Holy Communion to them was a means of salvation as echoed in one of the respondents;

⁴² Njeru Ireri during Clergy and Laity Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 5 December 2013.

⁴³ Mwihaki Nguyai, interviewed by George Kiarie at Gituamba Parish on 28 November 2014.

⁴⁴ Rev. Mary Gacambi during Clergy Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on December 2013.

Holy Communion according to catechism that I was taught is sharing in the Lord's Supper. It is the time you take bread and wine ... the time you receive Christ in your heart as your saviour and that the time you becomes deeply entrenched in faith as a strong Christian in the Church and by this you becomes a faithful follower of Christ in your Church so Holy Communion draws one nearer to God's salvation.⁴⁵

This argument was also evident in the Clergy focus group discussion. Gibson Muiruri, a Rural Dean at Makongeni Deanery, stresses, "it is whereby Christians join together to share the blood of Christ just to remind us what happened when Jesus was crucified and is just a mean of how we are saved."⁴⁶

The argument from these diocesan Christians was that Holy Communion was a means of salvation to the communicants whenever they participate in this memorial meal, for it becomes an opportunity of "receiving Christ in your heart as your saviour." It becomes an opportunity to communicants to know how their sins were atoned for by Christ on the cross by means of "remind[ing] us what happened when Jesus was crucified" whenever they participate in the Holy Communion rite. This signifies that there is redemption for the worthy participants, as Cranmer explained "touching this meat and drink of the body and blood of Christ, it is true, both he that eateth and drinketh them, hath everlasting life. And also he that eateth and drinketh them not, hath not everlasting life" (1987:4). Upon receiving God's salvation, Naftali Maina was also convinced that in the Holy Communion as a means of salvation communicants "become deeply entrenched in faith; strong Christian in the Church and by this you becomes a faithful follower of Christ in your Church." This suggests that Holy Communion as a means of salvation becomes the source of believers' strength in God.

6.2. What are Wafers and Wine?

Wafers and wine is the other theme that featured in this discourse on Holy Communion symbols. This study had questionnaires sent to twenty-five parishes and had individual in-depth interviews in the diocese inquiring into the symbols used in the Holy Communion and the meaning attached to them. The wafers and wine were identified as the exclusive symbols used in this rite of Holy Communion. Therefore, the socially constructed meanings of these symbols by the diocesan Christians were diverse and sociologist Benokraitis attributes this to the nature of symbols changing over time (2015:41). He observed that they communicate

⁴⁵Naftali Maina Parish Council member interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege Parish on 18 November 2013.

⁴⁶Rev. Gibson Muiruri, Rural Dean at Makongeni Deanery during Clergy Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 3 December 2013.

different meanings in different contexts and therefore change over time. Hence, the following emerged as the constructed meaning of wafers and wine to the diocesan Christians, namely:

6.2.1. Symbols of the Body and Blood of Christ

The diocesan Christians were convinced that wafers and wine were symbols representing the body and blood of Jesus Christ. This was clearly articulated that

These are symbolic instruments used to signify what Jesus did in the during the last supper. Within that time, it was the normal bread used for the dinner. But this time he gives it a new meaning and the wine, which was used to be taken by the Jewish also, gave a new meaning aah during that time yes.⁴⁷

Another respondent Teresiah Waiganjo, member of standing committee of synod and parish council member in Ndunyu Chege parish, thinks that these are “symbols of remembrance such that when consecrated by an ordained person who I respect they cease to be bread and wine and assume new meaning.”⁴⁸ She added that bread and wine “symbolizes the body and blood of Christ as we commemorate the last supper.”⁴⁹

According to these responses, it was evident that diocesan Christians have internalized the meaning of wafers and wine in their context, the way Ott perceives the role of Systematic Theology to re-interpret classical questions in different contexts for relevance. To diocesan Christians, these symbols were initiated by Christ who gave them new meaning from the Passover meal. While Christ used bread and wine that were typical Jewish food, he introduced new meaning in these symbols. As demonstrated by Howe and Pascoe, they symbolized Israel’s deliverance from corruption of Egypt, however Christ gave them new meaning to signify his body and blood broken and poured out to liberate humanity from the corruption of sin (2010:81). This affirms that symbols are layered with meaning and change with time, but to the diocesan Christians “these are commemorative meal’s bread and wine, representing the invisible and divine presence of the body and blood of Christ.”⁵⁰ For Arbuckle observed that symbol is more than just a sign where signs only point to the object signified but a symbol by its very dynamism, represents the object (2001:29). This means that when diocesan Christians see wafers and wine, these symbols not only point to Jesus, but represent the body and blood of Christ, because symbols have power in them. In light of this

⁴⁷ Peterson Karanja, coordinator of Christian Community Services (CCS) in Mt. Kenya Region, interviewed by George Kiarie at his office at Thika on 25 November 2013.

⁴⁸ Teresiah Waiganjo, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege Parish on 18 November 2013.

⁴⁹ Rev. Loise Nduta from Gakoe Parish, Questionnaire 01 on 20 December 2013.

⁵⁰ Rev. Gitaua from Gatanga Parish, Questionnaire 016 on 15 January 2014.

socially constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbols, they affirm that the diocesan Christians also share the universal understanding of these symbols as body and blood of Christ like other Christians in the body of Christ. Therefore, Bernard Cooke and Gary Macy postulate that some symbols like the wafers and wine in this case seems to be universal (2005:11). However, the big question remains why then did they have other meanings as delineated here below?

6.2.2. Foreign Products

As philosopher Aden argued, religious symbols do not have permanent meaning; this was evident in the diocese (2013:144). Besides wafers and wine understood as symbols that represent the body and blood of Christ, diocesan Christians also viewed them as ‘foreign’ food products since they are imported into Kenya. Wafers, though available in Kenya, still have a ‘foreign’ connotation, because its translation as *mugate* in Kikuyu bears a foreign language connotation, since this word *mugate* for wafers was borrowed from the Swahili word *mkate*. This perception of Holy Communion symbols as ‘foreign’ products was evident in diocesan Christians as one respondent Gladys Wairimu maintained “... for I believe even the wine and wafers were just brought ...”⁵¹ As imported products, says Peterson Karanja the Coordinator of Christian Community Services in Mount Kenya region, “...wafers is something that is imported to me and it has no major significance ...”⁵² In Clergy and Laity discussion, John Gitau, Archdeacon at Cathedral archdeaconry added that:

In Palestine, these elements were very significant to locals there. When the gospel was disseminated in other parts of the world they did not contextualize the gospel, such that when they came here in Africa they found no grapes, but we had oranges, they borrowed directly from Palestine, thus wheat was a Palestine product with significance.⁵³

In light of these diocesan Christians’ argument, it is true to affirm that these symbols carry with them foreign connotation as discourses like ‘just brought’, imported’ and ‘borrowed’ all depict foreignness and hence with ‘no major significant role’ in their lives. This implies that when used for celebrating Holy Communion meals they detach and alienate people from their context, for they do not communicate to the diocesan Christians’ hearts. This is because symbols’ significance are more attached to their place of origin than in other contexts and when transferred may result in insignificant influence in the life of the people in that new context. Towards this end, this affirms clearly that symbols are cultural and communicate

⁵¹ Gladys Wairimu, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ruiru Parish on 27 November 2013.

⁵² Peterson Karanja, interviewed by George Kiarie at his office at Thika on 25 November 2013.

⁵³ Ven. John Gitau during Clergy and Laity Focused Group Discussion on 5 December 2013.

adequately to the people in their context. Aden, in support of this idea, continues to say “even if ‘outsiders’ are told what the symbols represent, they still do not know what they mean. For those who are not immersed in the cultural context of the symbol, the relationship between the symbol and what it stands for may seem quite arbitrary” (2013:145). This understanding helps us to answer Oduyoye who urges the investigation of what makes African traditional oaths and covenants, especially the use of kola nuts more abiding than Holy Communion symbols (1979:113). In light of this study in symbols, the possible reason then is the symbol of kola nuts identify more with natives in West Africa, thus it communicates to their deeper senses than wafers and wine, that are foreign products.

Therefore, it is right to suggest that Holy Communion symbols are foreign products ‘with significance to their place of origin’ and there is need to inculturate them in the diocesan context in order to communicate deeply to the Christians in their cultural milieu. John Gatu, former moderater in the Presbyterian Church in Kenya, in arguing for foreignness of Holy Communion symbols argued that these symbols do not convey the idea of sacrificial offering which is central in the Kikuyu religious life where bulls, cows, sheep or goat were normally killed to provide this (2006:30). Gatu suggests the use of meat as substitute for bread since the symbol of meat communicates and invokes the Kikuyu sacrificial worldview more than bread.

6.2.3. Prohibited Products

The Holy Communion symbols were depicted as prohibited products in the diocesan context that Christians only encounter at Communion. Eliud Maina, a priest, during the Clergy Focus Group Discussion argues, “if you go to Cyprus wine is available in every meal but in our place here we do not use wine in all situations, only in the Church.”⁵⁴ This implies that these sacred products are exclusively for use in the Church and not elsewhere, as the CMS missionaries socially conditioned Kikuyu Christians when they introduced these symbols. Gatu clearly articulates this by arguing that “if one is found drinking this same wine in a restaurant or a pub this would amount to being in a state of inebriety, punishable by excommunication or temporary suspension from the Lord’s Table” (2006:29). Thus due to this prohibition, the diocesan Christians socially reconstructed meaning around these symbols as prohibited products only to be encountered at Communion. This diocesan meaning of Holy Communion symbols reveals the nature of symbols that “man does not live by symbols alone,

⁵⁴ Rev. Eliud Maina during Clergy Focused Group Discussion on 3 December 2013.

but man orders and interprets his reality by his symbols, and reconstructs it” (Firth 1973:20).

6.2.4. Symbol of Modernity

The diocesan Christians also socially understood these symbols of Holy Communion as vehicles of modernity. This is clear from the discourses such as comparison between the indigenous symbol of nourishment or food and wafers and wine as illustrated here that:

Nduma and *ngwaci* [these are arrow roots and sweet potatoes] these are very local products so to one who is taking the modern wine and bread they may see others as inferior and in fact they may also feel inferior those taking *nduma* because these are things that they have been brought up with from childhood to this level.⁵⁵

What can be deduced from this response is that ‘modern wine and bread’ are equated with modernity, while the local food products are viewed as inferior or primitive. Then these symbols disclose the social stratification in the diocesan context between the ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’, for it suggests that if a Church can afford to use these symbols it is perceived as a modern or civilized Church and vice versa. This was also reflected in the questionnaires where one respondent answering why their Church uses wafers and wine said “we are in a modern world.”⁵⁶ I observed that symbols do divide; this became evident in the diocese between the lucrative congregations that can afford these symbols and the poor congregations that struggle to make ends meet. In a context where most people live on less than one dollar a day, these symbols have become a source of identity in the society. Nabofa’s argument affirms that symbols play a role in mirroring social and religious reality and the reality in the diocese is wafers and wine are attached to modernity or civilization (1994:45).

6.2.5. Symbol of Neo-colonialism

Bujo earlier argued that use of wafers and wine in the Holy Communion served the commercial interests of Europeans. In light of this understanding, diocesan Christians were also of the opinion that these symbols are a form of neo-colonialism today. Sundermeier, in support of diocesan Christians’ reflections, argues symbols make one think and articulate life around his/her world (1998:40). When diocesan Christians reflected and articulated the use of wafers and wine in the Holy Communion, they concluded that these are symbols of neo-colonialism. For these symbols are overemphasized for the unity of the universal Church of Christ while they are a matter of discipline and not dogma. This prompted Kinuthia to pose,

⁵⁵ Joseph Githae, interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja Parish on 21 November 2013.

⁵⁶ Kenneth Kahora, Men’s Chairperson at Kiarutara Parish, Questionnaire 08 on 21 January 2014.

“we need to ask ourselves if universalism means colonialism or is part of neo-colonialism.”⁵⁷

Another diocesan Christians asserts:

... those who brought good news first had a hidden agenda, so even when bread was introduced they knew they had to convince this person that anything else is not good and that (is) why when we peruse what else to use (it) become(s) difficult as our minds have assimilated bread and wine. But if we may be taught and convinced that arrow root in Holy Communion is the best and the people appreciate that we can move away from multitude of problems.⁵⁸

From this response, one notes the aspect of colonialism is palpable in the respondent’s conviction that the missionaries who introduced these symbols had a ‘hidden agenda’ for emphatically asserted ‘anything else is not good’. This suggests diocesan Christians were cognitively conditioned that nothing else can represent the body and blood of Christ apart from the imported European food products perceived as orthodoxy. The missionaries succeeded to convince the diocesan Christians as Oduma-Aboh notes, one of the crucial role of symbols in the community is as powerful instruments to indoctrinate people with the prime goal of maintaining order and harmony (2014:140). Therefore, the respondent proposes the need to decolonize such a mindset among the Christians for this will enable them to ‘move away from multitude of problems.’

6.2.5.1 Why Wafers and Wine in the Holy Communion?

The wafers and wine were a new religious experience to diocesan Christians when missionaries introduced these symbols. For they were imported products in the diocese from Europe for use in Holy Communion; even today wine is imported from Cyprus as grapes do not grow in Kenya. But with time, Christians are contesting the meaning around them and use them in their Churches because “nothing else that we can compare with body of Christ for it is a sign pointing what Christ used that is bread and wine in the last supper. Thus Christ commanded us to follow his footstep in the same way the first believers of Church did.”⁵⁹ Another response by Joseph Githae from Juja parish suggests that “we try to use the same to bring you know we are human being by nature we want to bring ourselves closer to really what happened when Christ was here.”⁶⁰ While in the Clergy Focus group discussion, Patrick Mukuna, archdeacon in Thika Memorial argued, “I am saying we justify bread and wine today, one because Christ gave orders on them. Two they are available. Three the Church

⁵⁷ Rev. Dr. Regina Kinuthia interviewed by George Kiarie at Ruiru Parish on 27 November 2013.

⁵⁸ Rev. Samuel Mwangi during Clergy Focused Group Discussion, 3 December 2013.

⁵⁹ Naftali Maina, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege parish on 18 November 2013.

⁶⁰ Joseph Githae, interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja on 21 November 2013.

tradition is that we are to select something which will be used in and at large.”⁶¹ From these responses, three points are worth considering in order to expound the reasons for using wafers and wine in the diocese namely:

6.2.5.1.1 Christ’s Command

This suggests that Christians are highly persuaded that the diocese uses wafers and wine for this was what Christ commanded should be done. Peter Kanyandago would share the same thought in his argument that “the main reason for maintaining the use of bread and wine has been that the Church wants to remain faithful to what Jesus used to celebrate the Passover on Holy Thursday” (1998: 87). In this line of thought, diocesan Christians desire to be faithful to this teaching of Jesus and his command and to follow this to the letter. According to the Christians in the diocese, this ensured that they try as much as possible to re-enact, re-live and experience the very moment and event that Christ did when he initiated this meal. Such a stance from respondents was evident here when Githae said, “we try to use the same to bring, you know we are human being by nature we want to bring ourselves close to really what happened when Christ was here. We just want to ... it is symbolical so that we may try to visualize what happened then.”⁶² In so doing, the Christians are assured that they are observing what Christ commanded them to be doing according to the Scripture and retaining “the instruments mentioned and referred in the Bible.”⁶³ Thus, the diocesan Christians use these symbols for they are swayed that it is biblical to do so as Christ commanded, signifying imitating what Christ did and used in this rite.

6.2.5.1.2 Availability

Another reason for use of the wafers and wine in the diocese was their availability. For most of the members of the diocese were of the argument that bread was universally available in most places, unlike the wine imported from Cyprus. The availability as a factor of consideration was prevalent in respondents discourses such as “these are the only things readily available”⁶⁴ and “this is what we have.”⁶⁵ However, such argument on availability was not conclusive enough for if other readily available symbols were available it suggests that they could be considered for use in this rite. But what is experienced by Christians in the diocese was as Mary Njau responded “is not one or two times that we have gone to the

⁶¹ Ven. Patrick Mukuna, Clergy Focused Group Discussion on 3 December 2013.

⁶² Joseph Githae, Interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja Parish on 21 November 2013.

⁶³ Stephen Kirabi, Vicar’s warden at Mugutha Parish Questionnaire 023 on 18 February 2014.

⁶⁴ Rev. Mary Njau during Clergy and Laity Focused Group Discussion on 5 December 2013.

⁶⁵ Ev. Stanley Wainaina, Juja Farm Catechist, Questionnaire 014 on 10 January 2014.

bookshop [this is the only shop in the diocese that Churches purchase the Holy Communion elements], only to be told there is shortage of wine.”⁶⁶ This indicates that in spite of diocesan Christians arguing that these symbols are readily available there are occasions that they run out of stock and adversely affect those Churches that had purposed to have Holy Communion service. Ela concurs with this sentiment and laments, “have they forgotten the difficulties confronting communities when their expensive imported wine run out and can only be purchased in some faraway place” (1986:4)?

6.2.5.1.3 Inherited Church Tradition

The third rationale of using wafers and wine in the Holy Communion in the diocese was the inherited Church tradition. This inherited tradition in the diocese meant, what the missionaries brought and introduced as the symbols representing the body and blood of Jesus Christ needs to be preserved. To diocesan Christians these inherited symbols representing Christ are irreplaceable to them and should be given the reverence they deserved, for they were convinced that “nothing else that we can compare with the body of Christ.”⁶⁷ This prompts Elisha Mbonigaba to argue to the diocesan Christians the word of the Bible ‘this’ is not only interpreted to mean the gestures of breaking and eating bread and drinking wine, but also the very elements that Christ used when he initiated this meal (1994:30). According to Christians in the diocese their argument for inherited Church tradition was echoed in their discourses such as “we found them been taken bread and wine”⁶⁸, “this is the practice of Christianity”⁶⁹, “Because they are the one we are used to or accustomed”⁷⁰ and “this is our culture.”⁷¹ All these responses depicted strong connectedness with inherited Christian tradition as handed down by Christ up to the time missionaries introduced these symbols in Kenya. Therefore, this means that some diocesan Christians are conservative and ready to safeguard this inherited tradition from missionaries that ultimately ensures continuity right from what Christ used at the Last Supper, passed down to his apostles and what we use now (Osei-Bonsu 2005:104). This conservative attitude toward these symbols has made some diocesan Christians to be “pre-occupied with bread and wine such that if anything else is used, then Holy Communion is incomplete to them”⁷² because symbols play a significant role in preserving the community knowledge that is later transferred from one generation to the

⁶⁶ Rev. Mary Njau during Laity and Clergy Focused Group Discussion on 5 December 2013.

⁶⁷ Naftali Maina, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege parish on 18 November 2013.

⁶⁸ Teresiah Waiganjo, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege on 18 November 2013.

⁶⁹ Samuel Ndungu, a Youth at Kiarutara Parish, Questionnaire 010 on 21 January 2014.

⁷⁰ Agnes Macharia, a Mother’s Union Chairlady at Kiarutara Parish, Questionnaire 09 on 21 January 2014.

⁷¹ Joseph Wanyoike during the Laity Focused Group Discussion at St. Luke Makongeni on 5 December 2013.

⁷² Rev. Mary Njau during Laity and Clergy Focused Group Discussion on 5 December 2013.

other (Nabofa1994:45). However, there were some respondents with a contrary opinion. These respondents argued that the Church might use other food items as symbols of Holy Communion because wafers and wine are only symbols and it is prayer that sets them apart from ordinary use (see chapter 7).

6.2.5.1.4 Prestige

The way Christianity was introduced in Kenya was wrong, for it emphasized deserting the African way of life in order to embrace western lifestyle and manner of dressing (Githuku 2012:205). This western lifestyle was not restricted to the rite of Holy Communion, as this study observed on the use of wafers and wine attached with prestige in the diocese. In the diocesan Christians' discourses, this study perceived that western products were highly regarded as sophisticated while indigenous products were regarded as primitive. This is reflected in Githae, who argues that:

Nduma and *ngwaci* [these are arrow roots and sweet potatoes] are very local products so to one who is taking the modern wine and bread they may see others as inferior and in fact they may also feel inferior those taking *nduma* because these are things that they have been brought up with from childhood to this level.⁷³

Another argument from Maina depicts the wafers as prestigious symbol for use in the Holy Communion. For he says that:

According to the belief of the people in this area, especially on use of something foreign is more welcomed because people know that it has something unique. But if you may give a person *nduma* morning evening due to been accustomed they would not have any change. But if it is wafers when using them or the loaf of bread will see ... that *nduma* are readily available then viewed as local because they know where they came from so this might not portray a good picture when viewed by people.⁷⁴

According to these responses, issues of class arise from some diocesan Christians' discourses between the 'haves' and have nots', implying that African products were inferior for they are 'very local products' since they have grown up using them from childhood. Imported wine and wafers were equated with modernity and looked upon as 'the modern' with 'something unique', for they are prestigious products. This prestige is attested to by Okullu's suggestion that the affluent parishes may use dominical symbols⁷⁵ in the Holy Communion while the poor congregations in the rural areas turn to making their own local communion wine from local fruits rather than buying expensive imported wine (1974:57). Gatu also contributes to

⁷³ Joseph Githae, interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja Parish on 21 November 2013.

⁷⁴ Naftali Maina, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege on 18 November 2013.

⁷⁵ These are the symbols that Christ initiated in the Holy Communion during the last supper, that is bread and wine.

this debate by explaining that the exhibition of this prestige is the Communion vessels, the chalice, the plates and the cups, all expensive silver of the Victorian era (2006:29).

In this regard, the argument for the diocesan Christians was that ‘foreign’ products were prestigious to them and they would like to be identified with them, as it was evident from respondents. Such a deliberate move to adapt to modernity was highly depicted in this study. A case at hand was when there was a shortage of these symbols, such that substitutes were carefully chosen to reflect this modernity and according to respondents most use Ribena or a loaf of bread and not *nduma* or *ngwaci* (see chapter seven). This is in agreement with what makes Desmond Tutu lament that Africans often came through the process having learned to despise things black and African because they were condemned by others (1987:47). The worst thing says Klaus Fiedler is Africans shamelessly believed in this inferiority (1998:50). Therefore, it is right to suggest that to use wafers and wine in the Holy Communion among diocesan Christian was a prestigious exercise and vice versa.

This prompts Christians to believe that these prestigious symbols of wafers and wine trigger the mystery that makes everybody in the Church admire to join this rite in their life, as unfolded during the Clergy focused discussion that:

In its own uniqueness people tend even to admire and really enjoy it. Surprisingly, even people who do not take Holy Communion do come and celebrate. They do not take but they want to witness, to watch what is happening and now they want to be restored back to the Holy Communion because they have not been taking Holy Communion, why because inwardly there is mystery and this mystery they want also to participate in it. The mystery in the Holy Communion then bring people back to Christ, but suppose is an ordinary elements [laughter] they will say after all I have them at home but since it is unique actually, surprisingly it also make the whole Church say, do you know.⁷⁶

Due to this mystery associated with these symbols in the diocese most Christians aspire to be communicants. The rationale for aspiration to be communicants is association and not necessarily spiritual conviction. This mystery is advanced during catechism training where the candidates for catechism are forewarned not to share with non-communicants how these symbols taste. This increases the mystery with these symbols like in the Early Church tempting non-communicants to pretend to be communicants and participate in this rite as experienced in one Church.

⁷⁶ Rev. Zacharia Chege during Clergy Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 3 December 2013.

6.3. Significance of Holy Communion Symbols to Diocesan Christians

The Holy Communion sacrament is one of the central elements of worship in the Anglican tradition that transforms Christians' lives as this study witnessed surrounded by mystery in the diocese. Welker raises a seemingly simple question yet one very significant for this study. What really happens during Holy Communion? In response to this critical question, he observed that:

I had the impression that when the supper is rightly understood and rightly celebrated, it is something totally different from 'a sad colloquy'. Here the Church of Christ is in fact built up. Here human being experience God's vitality in peaceful, liberated community. Here the presence of God's spirit becomes available to the senses. A creative process takes place. Something happens in the Holy Communion which is difficult to grasp, but which is of elementary importance (2000:8).

According to Welker, it is right to say that at Holy Communion something unique happens in the life of Christians. In this study, diocesan Christians expressed their experience when they participate in this rite and their encounter at Communion was as highlighted here by Karanja that "there is spiritual renewal as you remember his sacrifice on the cross. Every time that we take the holy sacrament we become one with him and with his suffering as we can see it properly as he went through the cross to set mankind free."⁷⁷ From Karanja three points emerge for discussion on what happens at Communion namely: the spiritual renewal or nourishment, oneness with God and salvation to the Christians.

6.3.1. Spiritual Nourishment

According to Karanja's responses, spiritual nourishment was one of the key things that happens at Communion when communicants all join together to remember Christ's sacrifice on the cross. This conviction was evident in respondents' notion that at Communion "there is spiritual renewal." Another respondent Mukuna echoed the same by saying "spiritual nourishment is available to whoever is in."⁷⁸ This was no different from Church leaders with one of them stating that Holy Communion was "for spiritual nourishment and getting closer to God."⁷⁹ This spiritual nourishment is experienced at the Lord's Table where communicants feed on the body and blood of Christ, as Crockett argues the Eucharist was initiated for the nourishment of Christian believers by Christ's spiritual food and drink (1989:176). As spiritual food and drink these symbols then nourish diocesan Christians and this remains the

⁷⁷ Peterson Karanja, interviewed by George Kiarie at his office at Thika on 25 November 2013.

⁷⁸ Ven. Patrick Mukuna during Clergy Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 3 December 2013.

⁷⁹ David Mwaura, KAMA Chairperson at Gakoe Parish, Questionnaire 03 on 20 December 2013.

outstanding thing happening at the Communion Table.

6.3.2. Oneness with God

Another thing that happens at Communion according to a response by Karanja was that communicants “become one with him and with his suffering” as they celebrate their redemption on the cross. Oneness comes because God at His Table has accepted Christians as friends to dine with Him. This oneness or the unity of humanity with God was also echoed by Jane Odhiambo who asserted, “it is to be united with Christ in the work he did for us by dying for us.”⁸⁰ In doing this, Njuguna convincingly responded that the Holy Communion “make one realize or remember that you are counted as a child of God. I feel it is taken by those who believe, the believers and they are part of Christ.”⁸¹ Hence, this oneness brings fellowship between God and humanity as Luther maintained to receive the Holy Communion symbols is to receive a sure sign of fellowship and incorporation with Christ and other faithful saints (Bachman 1960:51). This oneness with God is conditional for it is subject to mutual relationship among Christians as Smith warns that if we are not at peace with one another, we commit a travesty, an affront before the Holy Table (2005:50). This oneness with God and communicants insinuates the unity anticipated among communicants. Since this oneness is conditional to humanity in the sense that love for one another is the bottom line and should be both horizontal and vertical.

6.3.3. Salvation

Salvation was the other thing that happens at Communion. This was expressed by the respondent’s narrative that Christ “... went through the cross to set humankind free.” This suggests that at Communion, there is liberation of human beings from their sins and Christ sets them free. Similarly, liberation was echoed by Maina who argues that at Communion “I remember that Christ died on my behalf so that I may have eternal life.”⁸² The salvation that Christ offers to humanity in the Communion is what Ignatius of Antioch perceived as the medicine of immortality and the antidote that makes us live forever in Christ (McGrath 2001:516). This signifies the salvation that Christ offers is a gift to humanity, because at Communion is a moment of praise and thanksgiving to God for giving us Christ to die on the cross. Thus at Communion it becomes an opportunity for diocesan Christians to see “the kind

⁸⁰ Jane Odhiambo, diocesan secretary, interviewed by George Kiarie at Diocesan Offices Thika on 25 November 2013.

⁸¹ Mary W. Njuguna interviewed by George Kiarie at Kiganjo East on 27 November 2013.

⁸² Naftali Maina, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege Parish on 18 November 2013.

of love God have for human race.”⁸³

6.3.4. Source of Strength

According to the respondents, another thing that happens at Communion in the life of Christians is to acquire spiritual strength. One respondent argued that Holy Communion “strengthens my Christian faith.”⁸⁴ This means that diocesan Christians are not only nourished spiritually at Communion but are also strengthened in their faith. This spiritual strength derived from Holy Communion symbols becomes food for our souls that gives us the strength to perform our duty, and leads us to perfection (Wesley 1986:429). As food for the human soul, communicants are strengthened for Christian service in the world as well as overcoming the evil that prevails in the universe. For Migliore was swayed that the Christian spiritual strength should be driven to human service in the world because the “Lord’s Supper marks the triune God’s ever new sharing of life and love that draws us more deeply into communion with God and each other and strengthen us for service in the world” (2004:288).

6.3.5. Opportunity to be Cleansed

Another unique thing that happens at Communion according to the participants was cleansing from sin. The participants believe that “as we progress in our life there are so many things that come along the way that may not be appealing to God, so is like a way of cleansing ourselves ...”⁸⁵ One respondent Solomon Thiga stressed that after taking Holy Communion there is “strength and cleanse of my soul.”⁸⁶ These respondents imply that human beings are vulnerable to sin. This disconnects them from God and necessitates the need for cleansing. The word cleansing when translated into Kikuyu, *guthera*, has a deeper meaning to Kikuyu Christians for it implies being right with *Ngai* and worthy to stand before Him. Therefore, at Holy Communion, diocesan Christians believe that they are worthy participants and in harmony with *Ngai* and without sin. This cleansing was in two ways such that Christians cleansed themselves first by re-examining their way of life in order to draw near to the Lord’s Table. This was rightly shared by Mbutia who equated the Holy Communion rite with “a service that you examine yourself and as you examine yourself if there is anything to repent, you repent, so it is like you are cleansing yourself throughout the service and you are

⁸³ Johnstone Kamau, youth at Gatanga Parish, Questionnaire 019 on 15 January 2014.

⁸⁴ Ev. Stanley Wainaina, parish Catechist at Juja Farm Questionnaire 014 on 10 January 2014.

⁸⁵ Joseph Githae, interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja Parish on 21 November 2013.

⁸⁶ Rev. Solomon Thiga from Kiarutara Parish, Questionnaire 06 on 21 January 2014.

evangelising yourself in course of this service.”⁸⁷ Second, after personal examination as a way of cleansing the participants are now worthy to partake at the Lord’s Table for God has cleansed them and now accepted to dine with him and their “hearts to be satisfied with the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ the righteous” (Anglican Church of Kenya 2002:79). Hence, at Communion is an opportunity for believers to be cleansed and be in communion with God again for their sins have been cleansed.

6.3.6. Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Forgiveness and reconciliation was also experienced at the Lord’s Table among those who receive these symbols faithfully. Diocesan Christians were under the impression that at Holy Communion “we are forgiven our sins.”⁸⁸ Furthermore, “it is sort of reconciling you with God because the spirit of repentance is needed so that you may walk with God.”⁸⁹ These concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation in the Holy Communion meal found fertile ground to thrive in the diocese because in the Kikuyu concept of a meal, there was forgiveness and reconciliation when two or more people in a strained relationship agreed to forgive one another and agree to set aside their differences (Kenya 1938). The epitome of forgiveness and reconciliation was sharing meals together to depict restoration of their friendship. In light of this, these concepts found continuity in the Holy Communion meal among diocesan Christians for participating in this sacrament implies that communicants have been cleansed from all their sins and they are now friends worthy to dine with Christ at His table as forgiven sinners. Smith illustrates this joy of forgiveness at Communion that “we do not simply choose to believe that we are forgiven; rather we experience the forgiveness of God. As we do, we are then empowered to forgive others, beginning with those with whom we are celebrating this meal” (2005:65). To Smith (2005) this forgiveness is both horizontal and vertical because God forgives humanity their sins while for human beings it is an opportunity to forgive others as the Lord’s Prayer requires us “to forgive others as we are forgiven our sins.” Upon this forgiveness the participants also enjoy the reward of reconciliation, for the broken relationship has been restored between God and humanity for they are “reconciled back to God through his Son.”⁹⁰ The communicants are therefore persuaded and assured they come to the Lord’s Table as his children (Anglican Church of Kenya 2002:79).

⁸⁷ Ven. Canon John Mbutia during Clergy Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 3 December 2013.

⁸⁸ Peter Mburu Murigi, KAMA chairperson at Juja Farm Parish, Questionnaire 015 on 10 January 2014.

⁸⁹ Teresiah Waiganjo, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege Parish on 18 November 2013.

⁹⁰ Bedan Njoroge Gatere, Vicar’s warden at Juja Farm Parish, Questionnaire 012, 10 January 2013.

6.3.7. Grace of God

At the Communion table believers also receive the grace of God such that “as we eat and drink our bodies are fuelled only modestly in terms of physical nutrition; in spiritual terms, we enter time and space saturated by grace and can be permeated, refreshed and fuelled by it” (Schmidt 2003:15). This efficacious grace of God conveyed to participants in the Holy Communion enables them to live Christ-like lives in remembrance of Christ’s death and resurrection. This argument for provision of God’s grace to the recipients of Holy Communion is rightly reflected here that, “the significance is, the talk of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ through that grace when Christians receive the elements. It is the grace of God at work in their life, to affirm the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.”⁹¹ Another suggestion by respondents was that Holy Communion “convey God’s grace pointing toward completed work of God in Christ Jesus.”⁹²

6.4. The Practice in Holy Communion Symbols in the Diocese of Thika

6.4.1. Who Partakes of these Symbols?

Earlier, this study (see chapter four) argued that this rite in the ACK was not instituted for all people but for those who have fulfilled the ecclesiastical demands. In the diocese it was right to observe that those who partake of these Holy Communion symbols according to Christians’ views were those who;

According to our Church those who are baptized and confirmed they are allowed to take Holy Communion. But, again when one takes Holy Communion he or she should ask for. He should feel that he does not just go straight to take Holy Communion before he repents and examines himself in order to feel that you do not have anything hindering you from taking Holy Communion, or you have not committed sin that should prevent you from taking Holy Communion.⁹³

Another respondent, a Kinuthia University lecturer and Ruiru parish priest agrees that it is for the baptized and confirmed, but she adds that it should not only be for the “confirmed, but should be for believers who need to be reminded of Christ death as well as for those repentant believers who want to fulfil Christ command.”⁹⁴ Therefore, the section below now turns to each requirement for partaking of these symbols.

⁹¹ Ven. Joshua Ngaruiya, interviewed by George Kiarie at Thika Town on 26 November 2013.

⁹² Rev. Dr. Regina Kinuthia, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ruiru Parish on 27 November 2013.

⁹³ John Kinuthia Mungai, Vice-Chairperson at Gituamba Parish interviewed by George Kiarie on 28 November 2013.

⁹⁴ Rev. Dr. Regina Kinuthia, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ruiru Parish on 27 November 2013.

6.4.1.1. Baptism

From these respondents, partakers of the Holy Communion symbols were first supposed to be ‘those who are baptized.’ Baptism as the basic requirement for the communicants became essential for it was a symbol of initiation into the Christian faith as a member, more or less in the same way as in the Kikuyu worldview one had to be initiated so that he or she is admitted in a certain age-group and qualifies to partake of certain food or drinks (Githiga 2009). The significance of this rite of baptism says Smith is to make us have unique identity as people of God, as through forgiveness we are re-united with Christ and others in his fold (2010:148). Thus, baptism gives communicants new identity as children of God, nourished at the Lord’s Table by the body and blood of Jesus Christ. For Richard Schmidt these two sacraments play a central role in the life of partakers. He argues: “our saviour Christ has not only set forth these things most plainly in his holy word, that we may hear them with our ears, but he has also ordained one visible sacrament of spiritual regeneration in water and another visible sacrament of spiritual nourishment in bread and wine” (2002:10).

6.4.1.2. Confirmations

The second requirement for partakers of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese was “those who are ... confirmed”⁹⁵ where the partakers undergo catechetical training for a duration of time before admission to Holy Communion. Bishop Maxwell Anikwenwa describes confirmation as a rite where the grace of the Holy Spirit is conveyed to the candidates who have fulfilled the requirements in the Church on full measure (2002:70). Kenneth Stevenson traces confirmation in the Anglican tradition as far back as the late thirteenth century, when it was made a prerequisite for Holy Communion in order to gain full recognition (1998:24). However, today in some Provinces like ECUSA partakers are not necessarily required first to undergo confirmation before admission⁹⁶ as this study argued in chapter four. But in the diocese, it has stuck to inherited tradition from the missionaries and all partakers are those who have undergone catechism.

Through confirmation, age becomes a fundamental factor for the partakers such that communicants of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese are those from twelve years and above (Githiga 2009:69). This Christian rite equated with *irua*/circumcision in the Kikuyu

⁹⁵ John Kinuthia Mungai, Vice-Chairperson at Gituamba Parish interviewed by George Kiarie on 28 November 2013.

⁹⁶ This Province convincingly believes on “font to table with all the accompanying theological reflection actually proves itself to be highly flexible liturgical and theological systems. In this system, we see room not only for radical inclusion and hospitality but also a personal, intimate relationship with God” (Tuck 2012:518).

worldview. The circumcised persons in Kikuyu culture graduated from childhood to adulthood and were now ready to assume community responsibility (Kenya 1938; Waweru 2011:39). It is the same thought passed down to the confirmed Christians who qualify to assume Church leadership by either being elected or become eligible to elect Church leaders (ACK Diocese of Thika 2006; Githiga 2009). These partakers range from Anglican members to other members of the Anglican Communion and sometimes from other churches with ecumenical agreements of sharing Holy Communion symbols together (Gibaut 1994:35; Githiga 2009:71).

6.4.1.3. Personal Examinations

The third requirement in the diocese according to these respondents was one “does not just go straight to take Holy Communion before he repent and examine himself in order to feel that you do not have anything hindering you from taking Holy Communion.” For one “have searched yourself and ascertained that you are walking in the right ways. So search yourself and go take it if you are clean.”⁹⁷ This suggests that in spite of the ecclesiastical demand for one to be baptized and confirmed one has to examine himself or herself to ensure that they are right with God, for St Paul (I Cor 11:28 - 31) had warned of severe consequences if you are not right with God.

This religious practice was congruent with the Kikuyu religious worldview where the community had an opportunity to search their life thoroughly before offering a communal sacrifice (Kenya 1938). On this note, when these symbols were introduced among Kikuyu Christians there was continuity for this practice which was not repugnant to the gospel of Christ. This enriched the Holy Communion rite such that diocesan Christians claimed to experience and encounter God at Communion as cited here that “if it was announced that there will be Holy Communion, one was able to prepare thoroughly and when you come to Church on that Sunday you saw in the Church that truly there is unique thing happening.”⁹⁸

If one was not fully prepared to receive Holy Communion symbols some diocesan Christians argued that one would opt to refrain from taking Holy Communion for he or she is not right with God. This is rightly put here that “... for the Christians who had the early tradition, if they are not right with God, they will not take Holy Communion, they feel I cannot take Holy Communion. Those who have been used to it take without caring about it.”⁹⁹ Mbiti affirms

⁹⁷ Lydia Wanjiru a youth member, interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja Parish on 21 November 2013.

⁹⁸ Mwishaki Nguyai, interviewed by George Kiarie at Gituamba Parish on 28 November 2013.

⁹⁹ Ven. Joshua Ngaruiya, interviewed by George Kiarie at Thika Town on 26 November 2013.

this practice in ACK and says most Africans opt to refrain from partaking the Holy Communion symbols if they are not right with God (1971). However, today this practice is dying out in the diocese for some communicants opt to partake Holy Communion symbols without thorough examination resulting to a crisis as discussed here below.

6.4.1.4. Holy Matrimony

The fourth requirement for partakers of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese is for “those who have fulfilled the Church rites such as wedded in the Church”¹⁰⁰ especially the married Christians. This was a controversial requirement for the respondents were of the opinion that most Christians in the diocese are repudiated to participate as communicants in this rite. The reason was they have not solemnised their marriage in the Church as disclosed in Kenyan Newspaper that “couples in ‘come-we-stay’ unions are also restricted from taking Holy Communion within the Anglican Church” (Aluanga-Delvaux 2013:27). However, diocesan Christians were of the opinion that the ‘repentant communicants’ who have examined themselves and ‘who need to be reminded of Christ death’ should be accepted to partake in the Holy Communion symbols. This controversial requirement affects the single mothers in the Church, men who eloped or in ‘come-we-stay’ unions and the polygamous who are baptized according to the diocesan *Canon XX on Baptism and Confirmation* but silent on their admission to Holy Communion rite.

This prompts one to suggest that there is discrimination in this rite as far as who should partake of the Holy Communion symbols on the grounds of status and gender in the society, in spite of inclusivity that Christ portrayed during his earthly ministry (Kiarie and Owino 2014). This requirement in the Church has brought segregation. For in a family set up all the entire family members may be communicants, with the exception of the father who is denied the opportunity to share the body and blood of Christ that reminds him of Christ’s death that atoned for his sin by virtue of him not solemnising his marriage. This Christian practice depicts discrimination and is against Kikuyu values. For as this study argued in chapter three on the Kikuyu concept of meal set up, all family members were welcomed without discrimination as always there was plenty, even for unexpected guests who may turn up during the meal (Gathogo 2001). Therefore, as Donatus Chukwu observes, the Church as extended family of God, needs to integrate this African value of hospitality where the gesture of Christ’s hospitality at his meal is embraced by all unconditionally (2011).

¹⁰⁰ Esther W. Njuguna, interviewed by George Kiarie at Gatura Parish on 28 November 2013.

6.5. Crises Regarding Holy Communion

In the diocese with an evangelical orientation from CMS missionaries, there is tradition of guarding against the ‘wrong’ people (these were well known people with unbecoming behaviour in the society in spite of them been communicants) from coming into the Lord’s Table. Such that ‘wrong’ people were passed over at the altar rail by the priest while distributing the Holy Communion symbols or removed from the altar rail by Church elders. This practice in the Christian faith is traced from the Patristic Father Ambrose of Milan who barred Emperor Theodosius who “coming to Milan, was going to offer himself at St. Ambrose’s Church to receive the Communion. But the good bishop, when he heard of it, met him courageously at the Church-doors, and obliged him to return, and first repent himself of his crime” (Wheatly1858:297). Fortunately or unfortunately, this practice has vanished in the diocese and the consequence is the Lord’s Table has been abused and taken lightly because ‘wrong’ people have unchecked access to this holy meal. Rev. Daniel Ndegwa Kiganjo, East parish priest and staunch member of East Africa Revival Movement (EARM), says *magatoboka giathi-ni na ndoro*¹⁰¹ that is ‘plunging’ in the Holy Communion with ‘mud’, [meaning unclean and unrepentant thus, not worthy to stand, receive or feast at the Lord’s table or before God’s presence]. The word that Ndegwa uses, *gutoboka* in Kikuyu, has deeper symbolic meaning than the English translation ‘plunging’, for it depicts uninvited, unworthy and unashamed gatecrashers into the Holy Communion. In other words, communicants have received Holy Communion without proper preparation and examination of conscience. This discourse depicts the magnitude of ‘sin’ and unworthiness of communicants nowadays in the diocese. This results in a crisis as indicated here “about the Holy Communion there is need for in-depth teaching that it can bring curse or blessing for we are perturbed when we see ‘wrong’ people lining up to receive Holy Communion while you remember what they did yesterday or where they were.”¹⁰²

The crisis in this rite in the diocese is that today communicants and elders are impotent for they ‘are perturbed when we see ‘wrong’ people lining up to receive Holy Communion’. This implies that life has changed, for elders cannot remove the ‘wrong’ people from the altar rail any longer the way it used to be. To the older generation in the church the Holy Communion symbols have lost their former glory for they are taken lightly. This was evident in Nguyai who asserted that;

¹⁰¹ Rev. Daniel Ndegwa [staunch adherent of East Africa Revival Movement], interviewed by George Kiarie at Kiganjo East on 27 November 2013.

¹⁰² Teresiah Waiganjo, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege on 18 November 2013.

It is only now that people have taken Holy Communion lightly. In the past it was very significant because if it was announced that there will be Holy Communion, one was able to prepare thoroughly and when you come to Church on that Sunday you saw in the Church that truly there is a unique thing happening. Not like today, where people go to the Church as custom because others are going, but in the early days it was very crucial.¹⁰³

Probing for further insights why these symbols' glory has vanished this study established that diocesan tradition according to Nguyai was,

When taking the Holy Communion some people do not understand the real meaning of the Holy Communion because you see when the liturgy of Holy Communion is over or you find other people have started the liturgy you are not supposed to go and take Holy Communion.¹⁰⁴

From this probing, two issues can be demonstrated in the diocesan norm and ethos that punctuality is highly emphasized during this rite. For if you come late and find Holy Communion liturgy has begun, communicants are supposed to refrain from partaking of these symbols. The other concern is that some communicants do not understand the significance of these symbols although they partake of them. In light of these arguments, it is right to draw from some diocesan Christians that they were aware that symbols lose meaning with time and it seems that these symbols have lost their meaning and power to some communicants, prompting the older generation in the Church to echo their precious memories when they used to 'experience unique thing.'

Thus this nostalgia in the Holy Communion symbols in the diocese suggests that today it is fashionable to be communicants. The factors that have led to this state according to some in the diocese are lack of teaching or poor teaching of communicants and diverting from inherited Anglican tradition of preparing communicants before Communion, as highlighted here below.

6.5.1. Fashionable to be Communicant of Holy Communion Symbols

The crisis in the Holy Communion today in the diocese is because of communicants 'plunging' to partake of Holy Communion symbols for it is fashionable to be a communicant. This is affirmed by such a sentence as "people go to Church as custom because others are going" as well as "... you go because you want people to see you that you are communicants ..."¹⁰⁵ meaning belonging to the Christian faith in the diocese is a prestigious thing to do. As this signifies that Christians are becoming partakers of Holy Communion symbols not out of

¹⁰³ Mwihiaki Nguyai, interviewed by George Kiarie at Gituamba Parish on 28 November 2013.

¹⁰⁴ Jemimah W. Maina, interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja Parish on 21 November 2013.

¹⁰⁵ Mary W. Njuguna, interviewed by George Kiarie at Kiganjo East on 27 November 2013.

conviction but for association in the society. As Galgalo argues, “in Africa, Christianity is for most part a religion of convenience, social identity, a way to be, and not necessarily a spiritual home and certainly not the only spiritual home for most professing Christians” (2012:6). In view of this, it is right to say few understand the distinctive purpose of partaking these symbols and that is why they partake of them as a lifestyle rather than as significant symbols to communicate the ultimate reality. Michael Green, cited by Tom Wright (1999) in his book *The Meal that Jesus Gave Us: Understanding Holy Communion*, avers that many within the Church go to communion from habit, but know very little about how it arose and what it means. Thus, many take these symbols for their own selfish end. To become a Christian in Kenya among the Kikuyu people during the missionaries’ era was not by conviction but because of what they reaped from the Church that was associated with progress, education and prestige (Bewe 1953:46).

6.5.1.1. Poor Teaching of Communicants

Tillich was emphatic that symbols are to be interpreted by people for them to grasp the deeper meaning they convey to them in their life (Brown 1965:96). However, what was conspicuous in the diocese was that Holy Communion symbols have not been adequately interpreted and taught to communicants, culminating in it being fashionable to be communicants. This became evident in diocesan Christian discourse that “about the Holy Communion there is need for in-depth teaching that it can bring curse or blessing for we are perturbed when we see ‘wrong’ people lining up to receive Holy Communion while you remember what they did yesterday or where they were.”¹⁰⁶ This suggests that catechetical instruction in the diocese that ought to deeply inculcate Holy Communion symbols and their fundamental role in partakers’ life is wanting, despite Christian faith being a teaching religion. In addition, there are no regular teachings and follow-ups as Lambeth Conference 1948 Resolution 111 *on Baptism and Confirmation* recommended the Churches to ensure those who have been confirmed have regular teachings from time to time that make communicants reaffirm their baptismal vows (Anglican Communion 1948).

Suggesting why there is poor teaching in the diocese Mugambi states that this is because of lay leadership in African Churches, due to the shortage of ordained priests (1995:146). This found support in the diocese where most catechism training is in the hands of catechists who are laity and with no theological training. In other words, although teaching ministry in the

¹⁰⁶ Teresiah Waiganjo, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege on 18 November 2013.

Anglican tradition is primarily the work of the clergy, this noble task is in the hands of the laity with no theological training. Therefore, to overcome this crisis in the Holy Communion one respondent was certain that proper training and follow up from time to time help for “...you would rather refrain if it means for a period of time until you feel that you are in a state of right with God.”¹⁰⁷ Because this culminates in restoration of Holy Communion symbols’ power and deeper meaning to partakers as Tillich was persuaded that we are faced with a desperate task in our Churches today to re-interpret Christian symbols and in this case wafers and wine so that they may become powerful again to the communicants (Brown 1965:96).

6.5.1.2. Diverting from Inherited Anglican Tradition of Preparing Communicants before Communion

ACK is nicknamed by the members as ‘Church of order’, since it was introduced by the missionaries. This order manifests in its religious practices, including the Holy Communion rite. As from the respondents, this study established that when missionaries introduced these symbols, the communicants were psychologically prepared on a specific Sunday there will be Holy Communion service. Ngaruiya cites that there were words read to Christians before Holy Communion in the liturgical Book of Common Prayer (1662 BCP) translated into Kikuyu. He argues that on Holy Communion Sunday when the priest invokes these words “all of you who repent of your sins, who love your neighbours and intend to lead a new life, following the way of Jesus, come with faith and take this Holy Sacrament to strengthen you” (see Anglican Church of Kenya 2002:78). They came alive and affirmed to communicants who were yearning for the body and blood of Christ. To the older generation in diocesan Churches, they claimed that during such services ‘you saw in the Church that truly there is unique thing happening. Not like today.’

However, this practice in the Holy Communion rite is dying out and consequently the communicants are taking Holy Communion symbols lightly and without thorough preparation. This Anglican concept of preparing communicants before Communion fitted very well with the Kikuyu religious worldview during the major religious activities that required communal cleansing prior to sacrifices to *Ngai*. However, the diocese has not integrated this practice fully in this rite for it seems to have diverted from the practice of announcing forthcoming Holy Communion. One respondent disclosed the Anglican norm

¹⁰⁷ Mary W. Njuguna, interviewed by George Kiarie at Kiganjo East on 27 November 2013.

that ‘it was announced that there will be Holy Communion, one was able to prepare thoroughly and when you come to Church on that Sunday you saw in the Church that truly there is unique thing happening.’ Unfortunately this is not happening today, leading to abuse of these Holy Communion symbols.

This implies that there is incoherence and disorder in this rite in spite of symbols playing a crucial role in maintaining order and coherence in the community and in this case the community of believers. The diocesan Christians concurred with this and argued the incoherence and disorder is as result of relaxed discipline in this rite and poor Church leadership for it has failed to stick to the inherited Anglican tradition and practice. This was evident in clergies’ responses that:

Today we prepare the table just like that. People do not even find themselves coming in. They just come and take and I think failure of not preparing them make them water down the aspect of that ... for the Christians who had the early tradition, if they are not right with God, they will not take Holy Communion, they feel I cannot take Holy Communion. Those who have been used to it take without caring about it.¹⁰⁸

Nowadays I can see sometimes in the past the communicants used to prepare themselves more, they were been announced early enough and they used to feel that as Moses was telling the children of Israel cleanse yourself three days in time you are going before the Lord yeah that one is not almost appearing that weight nowadays. Sometimes you find that a communicant might not have known that it is Holy Communion, and have just come in the Church and have not taken the cleansing or prepared personally but now is going to partakes Holy Communion.¹⁰⁹

6.6. Administration of Holy Communion Symbols in the Diocese of Thika

In the Anglican tradition, Holy Communion symbols are administered to communicants in both kinds, meaning wafers and wine are distributed to the communicants. While initially the diocese used the chalice to distribute the wine to all the communicants, the prevalent practice according to respondents is the use of small individual cups due to health reasons. However, scholars such as Ruth Meyer object to this practice by arguing that “these solutions undermine the symbolism of drinking from a common cup. Partaking of one bread and drinking from one cup are central to Anglican tradition, and modifications of this practice should be undertaken only after thorough consideration of the implementation of the implication of such variations” (1994:46). When I probed the reason for this practice in the diocese, the diocesan Christians were of the opinion that the Kenyan Province resolved to

¹⁰⁸ Ven. Joshua Ngaruiya, interviewed by George Kiarie at Thika Town on 26 November 2013.

¹⁰⁹ Rev. Daniel Ndegwa, interviewed by George Kiarie at Kiganjo East on 27 November 2013.

adopt this practice and the diocese was not an exception to implement this resolution. To the respondents they disagreed with Meyer that the unity of the universal Church would be undermined by use of small individual cups rather they saw unity been upheld. Their argument for unity was reflected in Githae who maintained:

To me we do not drift from what he taught because even the wine in the small cup are distributed from the main cup and here we are talking of you know there are things we cannot just operate very spiritually. From our understanding when you are praying for it before is distributed we understand that we are taking it from this cup just the way in our home we may cook from same *sufuria* but we do not feed the entire family from the same *sufuria* but that does not mean that you are not united or sharing.¹¹⁰

To Githae the unity is intact in spite of the diverse practices in this rite of Holy Communion in the diocese. From these diverse practices, they affirm the amorphous theology of Holy Communion in the Anglican tradition. (See my discussion earlier in chapter four). On the use of small individual cups according to the respondents, it worked to the advantage of the diocese for it was convenient and faster, owing to the high population of communicants. As this suggests that in the global South where the centre of Christianity has shifted justify the use of these small individual cups to meet the ever-increasing number of communicants in the communion. Thus to the respondents this practice saves time and checks the temptation of the greedy communicants, especially those who were alcohol addicts before their conversion.

Still on the administration of the Holy Communion symbols, this study established that the Christians in the diocese do receive this rite at least once a month. This signifying that this is an occasional service in most diocesan Churches, a phenomenon that characterizes most Anglican Churches in the global South (Tovey 2004:41). Two factors were raised by the respondents, namely the availability of the clergy and the cost of wine as indicated here,

It depends, ideally it could be received every Sunday but because the *mchungaji* [shepherd] the celebrant is not available, in some places they go twice a month and others may go long as once a month ... the interesting thing is economic reason hinder regular celebration because of ... its expensive yah.¹¹¹

The availability of clergy to administer these symbols is essential, as this study indicated in chapter four. However, in the diocese where there is a shortage of clergy it has become one setback for celebrating this holy meal occasionally as Tovey echoed. This is apparent in the Province for the latest statistics indicated “the Anglican population of about 3,711,890 Christians is served by only about 1,555 clergy, translating to clergy per Christians ratio of

¹¹⁰ Joseph Githae, interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja Parish on 21 November 2013.

¹¹¹ Ven. Joshua Ngaruiya, interviewed by George Kiarie at Thika Town on 26 November 2013.

about 1:2400” (Nkonge 2011:154). The rationale for such a great discrepancy in the ratio of clergy in relation to the Christians they serve according to Steve de Gruchy is the poverty that thrives in the developing countries, as this prompts small communities unable to have an ordained professional clergy (1997:58). In the diocese of Thika, this is no exception because most Kenyans live on less than one dollar a day. The cost of wine is another setback in the diocese for it is imported from Cyprus making it expensive for Christians to celebrate this holy meal at will in spite of the Scripture encouraging regular administration whenever Christians gather for worship.

Benokraitis pointed out that religious symbols are the object, but also include behaviours like kneeling or bowing one’s head (2015:267). In the diocese, Holy Communion symbols are partaken while kneeling at the altar rail, unlike in some Provinces that do receive these symbols standing. The symbolic meaning of kneeling in the diocese while receiving these symbols is a sense of reverence to God. While this practice originated from missionaries who evangelized in the diocese, it was enriched when it was introduced in the diocese, since in the Kikuyu worldview kneeling was a common practice where honourable personalities in the society such as kings or elders were addressed while one is kneeling down as sign of reverence. Therefore, this ought not to be interpreted as an oppressive cultural practice but as an honourable practice while receiving the body and blood of Christ, the *Muthamaki* (king), as Fr. Patrick Njoroge Wachege wrote on the Agikuyu understanding of Christ as *Muthamaki* or the Ideal Elder (1999).

6.7. Conclusion

This chapter attempted to present the diocesan understanding and practice of Holy Communion symbols. It discussed the diocesan Christians’ construction of Holy Communion as a memorial meal eaten and drunk by communicants for their spiritual nourishment and renewal, strength, cleansing and forgiveness. The Christians also constructed other meaning of Holy Communion as a symbol of eating and drinking together the body and blood of Jesus Christ, holy fellowship and means of salvation to the partakers of the body and blood of Christ.

It also identified wafers and wine as widely used symbols in the diocese but with diverse layers of meaning and connotation. Some of the meaning surrounding Holy Communion symbols - wafers and wine - that emerged was as the symbols of the body and blood of Christ, as universal Christian meaning attached to these symbols around the globe. However,

symbols change meaning with time and through new encounters with the Holy Communion symbols they acquired multiple meanings. These were constructed by diocesan Christians as foreign products with significance in their origin and not in the diocesan context, prohibited products only encountered at Communion, a symbol of modernity and a symbol of neo-colonialism. In light of these constructed meanings around these symbols, the chapter argued that they are used in the diocese because it is Christ's command when he instituted this holy meal. Inherited tradition was the other argument advanced by diocesan Christians regarding use of these symbols. Availability of these symbols was another factor, though there were instances when they ran out of stock, and finally because they are viewed as prestigious symbols in relation to indigenous symbols, because they are associated with modernity.

Furthermore, these symbols are exclusively for the baptized, confirmed and married in the Church (in the case of couples) in the diocese, who are expected to examine themselves before partaking of these symbols. However, for the couples [most often men] that have not solemnised their marriage in the Church, they are excluded from partaking of these symbols, in spite of diocesan Christians arguing that these symbols ought to be partaken by those who need to be reminded of Christ's death and atonement of their sin. On a sad note, Holy Communion symbols have become fashionable to some partakers such that Christians become communicants for association purposes and not for spiritual conviction. This has led to a crisis where 'wrong' people 'plunge' into the Holy Communion with 'mud', because there is poor teaching and the diocese has abandoned the practice of reminding congregants of a forthcoming Holy Communion service to ensure thorough preparation of the communicants. This has prompted the uniqueness and mystery experienced and encountered at Communion to decline in the Churches, hence the need for renewed teaching as the Christian faith is a teaching religion.

The chapter also argued that these symbols are administered by priests as required in the Anglican tradition. However, due to the shortage of priests in the diocese this rite is an occasional service. Furthermore, the cost of wine has been a factor contributing to occasional services in this rite. In this rite, the communicants receive these symbols in both kinds, while wine is distributed in a small individual cup due to health reasons (HIV and AIDS). Moreover, the communicants do receive these symbols while kneeling down at the altar rail as symbol of reverence to God.

In conclusion, this chapter notes: one, that the socially constructed meaning of the Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika was highly influenced by the social, historical religious, economic and political factors and aspects that affected Kikuyu people in pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial epoch. Two, due to the mentioned factors they defined who should partake these symbols, how often and who to administer them. This did not only dismantle the Kikuyu religious norms and values but also the social, economic and political fabrics of the society. Therefore, this chapter was able to answer the second sub-question and research objective respectively by unearthing the contextual understanding and practice of Holy Communion symbols used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion in the diocese of Thika. The study will now proceeds to chapter seven to explore how the diocesan Christians have inculturated these symbols wafers and wine.

Chapter Seven

Inculturation of Holy Communion Symbols in the ACK Diocese of Thika

“True theology is the attempt on the part of the church to explain and interpret the meaning of the gospel for its own life and to answer questions raised by the Christian faith, using the thought, values and categories of the truth which are authentic to that place and time” (Gilliland 1989:10-11).

7. Introduction

The previous chapter explored the socially constructed meaning of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese. It established that these symbols share the universal meaning with other Christians in the worldwide Church, but also acquired contextual meaning since symbols vary across cultures. Meanings such as foreign products, prohibited products, symbols of modernity and neo-colonialism were analysed and discussed.

In this chapter, the first objective is to examine the inculturative process of the Holy Communion symbols when they were introduced in the diocese. The second objective is to explore the inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika using indigenous symbols. Kenaleone Ketshabile and Lars Laaman state that inculturation is an indispensable exercise in Christianity due to the incarnational ministry like the master Jesus Christ (2000:45; 2006:14). The chapter will also analyse the importance of inculturating Holy Communion symbols in Thika as well as theological and cultural challenges faced in inculturation of Holy Communion symbols.

7.1. Inculturation of Wafers and Wine in the Diocese of Thika

At the onset, the pertinent question to ask is: in what ways has the diocese of Thika inculturated Holy Communion? The study discloses that when these symbols were introduced to diocesan Christians by CMS missionaries the first impression was that they were foreign religious symbols, since meaning varies across cultures. As religious symbols require interpretation, as Tillich observed, the CMS missionaries interpreted them to Africans as symbols representing the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Though in the Kikuyu religious worldview there was no concept of Trinity, Christ as member of the Godhead began making sense to Kikuyus. The symbols by virtue of representing a liberating God equated with *Ngai* found home in Kikuyu religious life for there was continuity discontinuity evident in these symbols, conveying reality about *Ngai*. These symbols were accepted and transformed in the Kikuyu religious worldview, because Sundermeier argues that religious symbols are accepted

when they are found satisfying to the people (1998:39).

As human beings are symbol making beings, the diocesan Christians began the process of enculturation, coupled with re-interpreting these religious symbols and assigning meaning to the wafers and wine. The meanings that emerged suggest hybridity from diocesan Christians because Riis and Woodhead (2010) observe that when symbols move from one context to the other their original meaning can be profaned or reversed, or can be amplified in a particular direction.

To examine how the wafers and wine have been inculturated in the diocese of Thika, Anscar Chupungco (2014) suggests three methods involved in liturgical inculturation. He identified creative assimilation, dynamic equivalence and organic progression. Creative assimilation entails what the culture has to offer being re-interpreted in the context of biblical standards. Dynamic equivalence starts with what exists in the Christian liturgy being re-expressed in the language, rite and symbols of a local community. Organic progression completes the unfinished agenda of liturgical inculturation (Chupungco 2014:275). From these three methods of liturgical inculturation one observes that Holy Communion symbols in Thika followed dynamic equivalence, as this involved translation of the message of these symbols wafers and wine into the local cultural pattern, because the diocesan cultural elements offered nothing apart from amplifying these symbols with multiple meaning from the universal Christian teaching (Chupungco 2014:267). Therefore, it is right to conclude that wafers and wine have been inculturated in the diocese through the method of dynamic equivalence.

The symbols have been inculturated through dynamic equivalence thereby assuming hybridity in the diocesan context. In this hybridity Frans Wijzen argues that there is an existential mix of African religion and Christianity where in this case the Holy Communion symbols assumed an indigenous meaning (2000:42). Thus in the mind of diocesan Christians Holy Communion symbols represent and point to the body and blood of Christ as universally shared Christian experience, in addition to the other multiple meanings that emerged from socially constructed meaning around wafers and wine. As culture is the way of life, either learned or assimilated with time, this has culminated in wafers and wine assuming a hybrid meaning that communicates to the indigenous people in their context. John Ikenye in his book *Decolonizing the Kenyan Soul* attributes this hybridity and transformation of Holy Communion symbols to the process of colonization, enculturation and inculturation that affected not only the ways of life of the people but also personal systems of Kenyan people

(2002:47). But Paul Gibson, having come from the global North, gave a more entrepreneurial reason. He attributes transformation of wafers and wine as indigenous symbols to the gradual globalization of trade over the past few centuries, meaning that ‘imports’ are now seen as being part of the culture (International Anglican Liturgical Consultation 2005). However, Gibson’s attributes have been a bone of contention in the global South, since globalization has been a tool of neo-colonialism and exploitation of poor countries. This implies the diverse indigenous meanings and the process of dynamic equivalence inculturation attributed to these symbols was by coercion in the countries that were colonized like Kenya. For as this study has argued, these symbols were not only religious symbols but were also a tool of colonialism.

To evaluate clearly how inculturation has taken place in any context, Schreiter suggests three indicators, namely the conversion or metanoia of both the faith and culture, evidence of heterogeneity at expense of homogeneity and lastly risk of loss and gain (1999:75). In this line of thought, Schreiter’s indicators become the framework for evaluating how the Holy Communion symbols have been inculturated in the diocese of Thika. On the first indicator conversion or metanoia, the study established that the wafers and wine in the diocese have been inculturated, assuming diverse meaning as symbol of body and blood of Christ, foreign products, prohibited products, symbols of modernity for a modern Church in the Kenyan context and eventually a symbol of neo-colonialism. This conversion affirms the nature of symbols changing and being transformed when they move from their context to the other, as meaning varies depending with context. Such a metanoia was evident in Jamaica where Hewitt cites the Ackee and salt fish from Africa and Canada respectively, which were inculturated there as part of the Jamaican diet (2012:53).

On heterogeneity, the Holy Communion symbols have assumed hybridity in the diocesan context for their understanding has been perceived to be partially African and partially Euro-American. This identity crisis and confusion in these traditional symbols was evident in the discourses of diocesan Christians who were divided between liberals and conservatives. In their discourses the liberals viewed these symbols as ‘foreign’, while the conservatives argued that these symbols have now become ‘indigenous’ to them with indigenous meaning that communicates to them in their context. Furthermore, the diverse meanings attributed to these symbols affirms the heterogeneous nature they acquired through social construction of meaning around them by diocesan Christians. Similarly, Shorter and Chupungco share the same sentiment with Schreiter, that when inculturation takes place there are risks taken as

well as gains achieved (1988:252; 1989:33). One of the gains that these symbols achieved when they were introduced in the diocesan context was that they lost their ‘foreignness’ and gained indigenous meaning that triggers mysteries that manifest their uniqueness and specialty to diocesan Christians, for they share a universal Christian experience of God. However, they lost their single meaning attached to them as body and blood of Christ when diocesan Christians re-interpreted them in their context, attracting other meanings as foreign products, prohibited products, symbol of modernity and symbol of neo-colonialism.

Therefore, the interviews have demonstrated an organic inculturation; the wafers and wine have been retained in their original form in the diocesan practice, but the meaning has been inculturated through a method that Chupungco calls dynamic equivalence. Two factors were attributed to this dynamic equivalence inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese. First, the influence of Euro-American culture that has shown that the diocesan Christians are more at home with wafers and wine than indigenous food. Second, different levels of acculturation and assimilation have taken place in the lives of Kenyans, as Ikenye argues, making them feel comfortable with wafers and wine and not indigenous food like arrowroots, sweet potatoes, *chapatti* or *muratina*, as discussed in detail later in this chapter (2002:77).

7.2. Do Indigenous Symbols have a Place in Holy Communion?

Dillistone, writing on *symbols and culture*, introduces this discussion by posing a question to us: “can a symbol, representing food and drink so characteristic of Mediterranean culture, be transferred into the worship of all other cultures? Or does an unchangeable transfer reduce it to no more than a sign, useful in its way but unable to touch the depth of human feeling” (1986:208-209)? This question posed by this scholar is so relevant and critical in the twenty-first century Church in a secularized and globalized society. This is because symbols speak to people in their own context, leaving ‘outsiders’ with a superficial meaning of that symbol. This was evident in diocesan Christians that constructed diverse layers of meaning toward wafers and wine in the Holy Communion as symbols of body and blood of Christ, a symbol of modernity, foreign products, prohibited product and symbols of neo-colonialism. In this line of thought, this section examines the question of whether there was any need to inculturate the Holy Communion symbols by using indigenous symbols of nourishment or food products well connected with Kikuyu people in the diocese.

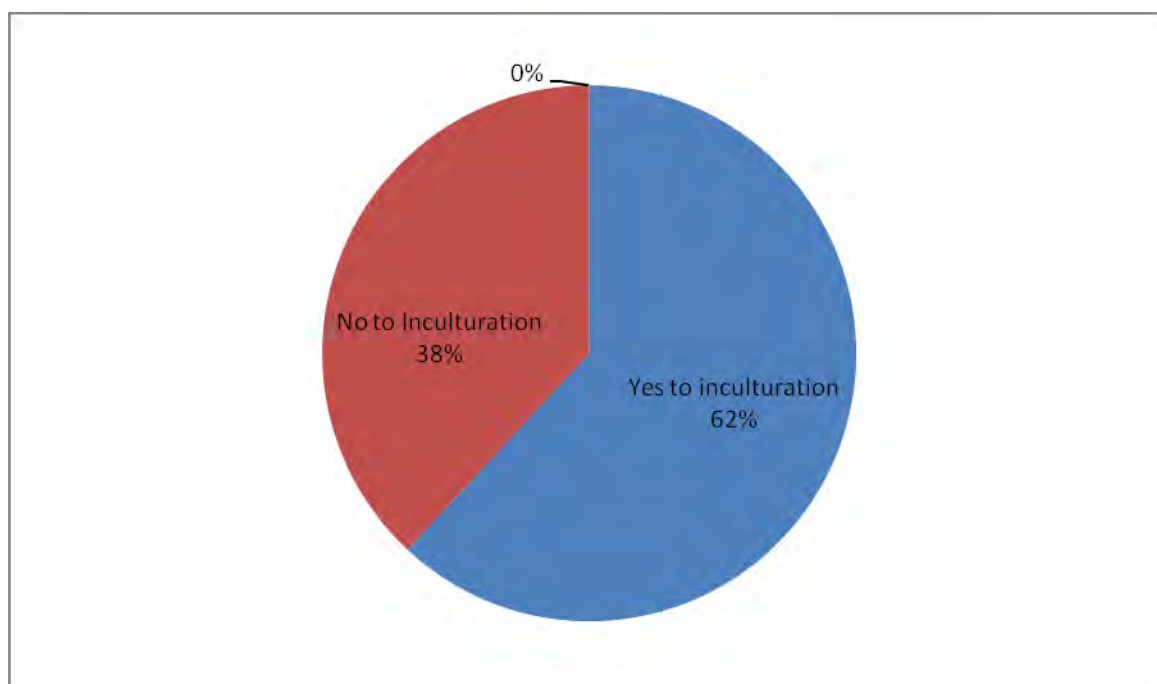
From individual in-depth interviews, 13 (62%) out of 21 respondents supported the idea of using indigenous food products in the Holy Communion, while eight (38%) objected. The tables below summarises the responses to in-depth interviews.

Table 3: Individual in-depth interview responses to inculturation of Holy Communion symbols.

Name	Parish	Gender	Position in Church	Age bracket	Education	Response to Inculturation
Naftali Maina	Ndunyu Chege	Male	Elder	Above 60	Secondary	Yes but...
Teresia Waiganjo	Ndunyu Chege	Female	Elder	50-60	Diploma	Yes
Peter Gicharu	Ndunyu Chege	Male	Youth Leader	20-30	Primary	No
Joseph Githae	Juja	Male	Member	40-50	Diploma	Yes
Jemima Maina	Juja	Female	Member	40-50	Secondary	yes
Jane Odhiambo	Memorial	Female	Member	30-40	Diploma	Yes but...
Ven. Joshua	Memorial	Male	Liturgical committee	Above 60	Masters	No
Peterson Karanja	Memorial	Male	Member	50-60	Masters	Yes
Gladys Wairimu	Ruiru	Female	Member	40-50	Diploma	Yes
Elvis Masibo	Ruiru	Male	Member	20-30	Primary	No
Rev. Dr. Regina	Ruiru	Female	Priest	40-50	Doctorate	Yes
Rev. Ndegwa	Kiganjo East	Male	Priest	50-60	Bachelors	Yes but...

Joseph Ndungu	Kiganjo East	Male	Member	30-40	Primary	No
Mary Njuguna	Kiganjo East	Female	Elder	40-50	Secondary	Yes
James Nduati	Gituamba	Male	Youth leader	20-30	Secondary	No
Mwihaki Nguyai	Gituamba	Female	Member	50-60	Primary	No
John Mungai	Gituamba	Male	Elder	Above 60	Diploma	Yes
Esther Njoroge	Gatura	Female	Elder	50-60	Primary	No
Samuel Muruthi	Gatura	Male	Member	30-40	Primary	No
Lydia Nyokabi	Gatura	Female	Member	40-50	Diploma	Yes but...

Figure 1: Individual in-depth interview responses to inculturation of Holy Communion symbols, in percentage.



In the focus group discussions, the laity agreed that it is not good while both clergy discussions agreed 100% that there is a need to use indigenous food products, though they cautioned that care should be taken. However, with the clergy and laity combined, their group was sharply divided, as shown below.

Table 4: Laity Focused Group Discussion Response to Inculturation

Name	Parish	Gender	Position in Church	Age Bracket	Education	Response to Inculturation
Peninah Mburu	Happy Valley	Female	Lay Reader	50-60	Secondary	No
Joseph Guchu	Mithiini	Male	Lay Reader	50-60	Diploma	No
Agustana	Kamenu	Female	Youth	20-30	College student	No
Nyaga	Kiganjo West	Male	Youth leader	20-30	Diploma	No
Perminus Muiro	Makongeni	Male	Lay Reader	50-60	Secondary	No
Emmah Nyoro	Cathedral	Female	Lay Reader	30-40	Diploma	No

Table 5: Clergy Focused Group Discussion Response to Inculturation

Name	Parish	Gender	Position in Church	Age Bracket	Education	Response to Inculturation
Ven. Mukuna	Memorial	Male	Archdeacon	50-60	PhD Candidates	Yes
Rev. Z.C	Mugumoini	Male	Priest	30-40	Bachelor	Yes
Rev. Eliud Maina	Kamenu	Male	Priest	30-40	Bachelor	Yes
Rev. Mary Njeru	Chomo	Female	Priest	30-40	Diploma	Yes

Canon Mbuthia	Gatura	Male	Archdeacon	50-60	Diploma	Yes but...
Rev. S. Mwangi	Mundoro	Male	Priest	30-40	Diploma	Yes
Rev. Gibson Muiruri	Kiganjo West	Male	Rural Dean	40-50	Diploma	Yes but...
Rev. Jesse Kamau	Gatuanyaga	Male	Priest	40-50	Diploma	Yes
Rev. Michael Gicheru	Gathaiti	Male	Priest	50-60	Diploma	Yes but...

Table 6: Clergy and Laity Focused Group Discussion Response to Inculturation

Name	Parish	Gender	Position in Church	Age Bracket	Education	Response to Inculturation
Ven. Gitau	Happy Valley	Male	Archdeacon	40-50	PhD Candidate	Yes
Rev. Mary Njau	Thamuru	Female	Priest	40-50	Bachelors	No
Rev. Nduati	Gituamba	Male	Priest	30-40	Diploma	Yes
Carol Wanjiru	Kamenu	Female	Member	30-40	Diploma	Yes
Tabby Muinamu	Swani	Female	Member	40-50	Certificate	No
Njeru Ileri	Chomo	Male	Member	30-40	Diploma	Yes

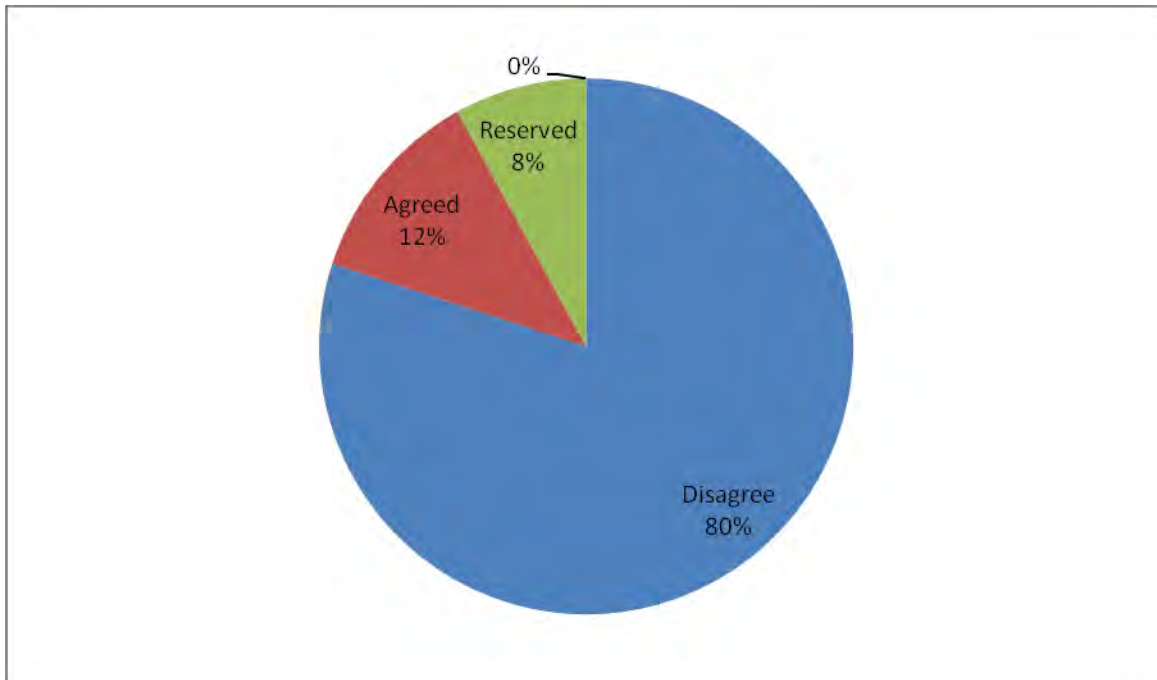
In the questionnaires, 20 (80%) out of 25 respondents did not support the idea of using traditional foods that were used in Kikuyu sacrifices while three (12%) supported the idea and the other two (8%) agreed to support the idea with reservation. The figures below summarize the diocesan Christians views.

Table 7: Questionnaires response in regard use of indigenous Kikuyu sacrificial food in Holy Communion.

Name	Parish	Gender	Age bracket	Position in Church	Education	Response to Inculturation
Rev. Thiga	Kiarutara	Male	40-50	Rural Dean	Bachelor	Yes
Elias Gikeri	Kiarutara	Male	50-60	Vicars warden	Primary	No
Agnes Macharia	Kiarutara	Female	50-60	Chairlady MU	Secondary	No
Kenneth Kahora	Kiarutara	Male	50-60	Chairperson KAMA	Secondary	No
Samuel Ndungu	Kiarutara	Male	20-30	Chairperson KAYO	Secondary	No
Rev. Loise	Gakoe	Female	30-40	Priest	Bachelor	No
Rosemary Njoki	Gakoe	Female	50-60	Vicars Warden	Secondary	No
David Mwaura	Gakoe	Male	Above 60	Chairperson KAMA	Secondary	No
Lydia Wanjiku	Gakoe	Female	40-50	Chairlady MU	Diploma	No
Philip Mwangi	Gakoe	Male	30-40	Chairperson KAYO	Diploma	No
Rev. David Mungai	Juja Farm	Male	50-60	Priest	Diploma	No but...
Bedan Gatere	Juja Farm	Male	Above 60	Vicars Warden	Secondary	No
Teresia Muciri	Juja Farm	Female	50-60	Chairlady MU	Diploma	No
Stanley Wainaina	Juja Farm	Male	20-30	Chairperson KAYO	Secondary	Yes
Peter Murigi	Juja Farm	Male	Above 60	Chairperson KAMA	Primary	No

Rev. Gitaua	Gatanga	Male	40-50	Priest	Bachelor	Yes
Simon Ngaruiya	Gatanga	Male	50-60	Vicars Warden	Diploma	No
Jane Karuru	Gatanga	Female	50-60	Chairlady MU	Diploma	No
Simon Ngaruiya	Gatanga	Male	50-60	Chairperson KAMA	Diploma	No
Johnstone Kamau	Gatanga	Male	30-40	Chairperson KAYO	Secondary	No
Ven. Joyce	Mugutha	Female	40-50	Archdeacon	Masters	No
Stephen Kirabi	Mugutha	Male	40-50	Vicars Warden	Bachelor	No
Mary Njogu	Mugutha	Female	40-50	Chairlady MU	Secondary	No
Eliphas Nyaga	Mugutha	Male	50-60	Chairperson KAMA	Diploma	No
Stephen Irungu	Mugutha	Male	30-40	Chairperson KAYO	Diploma	No

Figure 2: Questionnaires response in regard to use of indigenous Kikuyu sacrificial food in Holy Communion, in percentage terms.



In view of the data findings summarized in the figures above, there is an apparent need to suggest that diocesan Christians have varied views on the inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols. Kinuthia, a parish priest in Ruiru and theology lecturer, argued that “yes if the symbols are understood to signify the body and blood of Christ.”¹¹² Kinuthia’s argument was that it was alright to use the indigenous symbols as long as they retain the initial meaning and significance as the body and blood of Christ. Gitau, Cathedral archdeacon and Happy Valley parish priest agreed that it was worth using indigenous symbols of nourishment in the Holy Communion for he argued “I don’t see any problem with having our own symbols that will be more relevant. Let’s look at the ordinary person and we want to communicate to him/her the significance of Holy Communion, I think it will be so important to that particular person if he/she is shown the Holy Communion with familiar symbols and therefore I says it is possible.”¹¹³ According to Gitau, he was persuaded that this exercise was acceptable as long as it was for conveying the message of Holy Communion in the language that was understandable to the people in their own context. Such a thought was also captured by Solomon Thiga, Rural Dean and parish priest at Kiarutara who maintained that “yes

¹¹² Rev. Dr. Regina Kinuthia, parish priest and University lecturer in Theology, interviewed conducted by George Kiarie at Ruiru Parish on 27 November 2013.

¹¹³ Ven. John Gitau’s contribution during Clergy and Laity Focused Group Discussion at ACK Thika Cathedral on 5 December 2013.

because this is what is more cultural to us.”¹¹⁴

However, there were dissenting voices from some respondents who were of the view that the diocese ought to stick to the inherited tradition and Christ’s command (see chapter 6). Their diverging point with others was “no, because if we say we can be using our traditional food people may take lightly the issue of Holy Communion and perceive Holy Communion symbols as ordinary things. So we need to be using those things of Holy Communion which have been set apart because Holy Communion need to be followed in the right way.”¹¹⁵ This can also be observed from Peter Gicharu, Youth chairperson at Ndunyu Chege parish who fears that these symbols might be disrespected or lose their uniqueness and power, which they have in the life of believers. Another view was that “I think we may not be able to do that, first we have to know the source, because Holy Communion is something sacred. So we cannot come with anything from anywhere and bring it in the Holy Communion, it must be something that is well known its source and its preparation as Holy Communion is something that ought to be special.”¹¹⁶ What emerged from Joseph Wanyoike, a lay reader at Mithini Parish was that he was sceptical and suspicious of indigenous food. He was emphatic that Holy Communion symbols are so special and unique that any selection and choice should be carefully done. This argument was congruent with Peter Mburu’s argument who maintained “no because they are not the one that Jesus was likened with to represent his body and blood.”¹¹⁷ Another dissenting view on the use of local products was those who perceive Holy Communion symbols as prestigious products for a civilized Church as Mary Njogu, Mother’s Union chairlady at Mugutha parish said “no because we changed into modern ways.”¹¹⁸ Such an idea suggests that the use of locally available products in Holy Communion was viewed by diocesan Christians as a sign of primitivism and backwardness.

True theology is the attempt on the part of the church to explain and interpret the meaning of the gospel for its own life and to answer questions raised by the Christian faith, using the thought, values and categories of the truth that are authentic to that place and time (Gilliland 1989:10-11). From the above responses by diocesan Christians, it would be right to suggest

¹¹⁴ Rev. Solomon Thiga, response from Kiarutara Parish Questionnaire 06, on 21 January 2014.

¹¹⁵ Peter Gicharu, Youth chairperson interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege on 18 November 2013.

¹¹⁶ Joseph Wanyoike, Lay Reader from Mithini Parish during Laity Focused Group Discussion on 5 December 2013.

¹¹⁷ Peter Mburu, Juja Farm KAMA chairperson, Questionnaire 015, on 10 January 2014.

¹¹⁸ Mary Njogu Mugutha, parish MU Chairlady, Questionnaire 024, on 18 February 2014.

that the Christians are divided between liberals¹¹⁹ and conservatives. The two positions cut across age, positions in the Church and parishes from a urban and rural set up. According to the statistics these two groups are divided into twenty-five (approximately 37%) and fifty-two (approximately 63%) participants respectively. This affirms the characteristic of symbols to divide and unite, marking the borderline between distinct groups. In addition, these statistics postulate two points. One, the inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika is informed more by gender because males (sixteen out of twenty-five that translates into 64%) appeared to be the majority of liberals when compared with females (nine out of twenty-five, that translates into 36%). This is despite women being the minority due to the diocese being more patriarchal as the questionnaires demonstrate those in leadership position (see figure eight). Two, the diocese is a conservative one because fifty-two (translates into 63%) participants out of sixty-seven were persuaded that the Church in the local context of Thika should continue using the European imported food products as bequeathed by the first CMS missionaries.

Therefore, these two groups holding diverging views on Holy Communion symbols were influenced by two kinds of logic. Andrew McGowan in response to the Liturgical Commission in the Anglican Communion *on Eucharistic Food and Drink* describes these two types of logic that influence Christians and prompt some to be conservative and others liberal. He argues that some Christians are aligned to transmission. This means the diachronic logic of conscious tradition where the Church receives and imitates the actions of Jesus in specific ways it understands him to have given and intended them to be used. When translated, this means the synchronic logic of conscious inculturation where the Church seek to re-enact the meaning of the actions of Jesus anew in each context (International Anglican Liturgical Consultation 2005). Reflecting from these two types of logic, this study learnt that some diocesan Christians are adamant to change the traditional symbols, for they would like to emulate what Christ used and did, meaning sticking to traditional symbols. Others perceived that there is *spermatikoi* in every culture and using this line of thought they can appropriate cultural food for use in the Holy Communion. Therefore, these divergent views on inculturation of Holy Communion symbols depict polarization and compartmentalization in African theology according to Ikenye, as the Africans are divided between those who idealized the West and others who perceive the West as imperialistic and exploitative (2008:93). However, Ikenye concludes that it is worth noting that both the West and Africa

¹¹⁹ See my definition of this term in the glossary.

have gifts to offer for cross-pollination.

7.2.1. Liberal Views on use of Indigenous Symbols

The liberals (which include both laity and clergy informed more by gender and educational backgrounds) influenced by the synchronic logic of conscious inculturation were at home with indigenous symbols of nourishment being used in the Holy Communion. They argued that as long as the ‘symbols used retain the original meaning’ of the traditional symbols, that is the body and blood of Christ, when this meal was instituted by Christ then indigenous symbols of nourishment are welcomed. This depicts that liberals were optimistic that culture has something to bring and offer to the Christian faith with the primary goal of effective communication and deeper understanding. Thus, there is a necessity for dialogue between the Christian faith and the host culture, as this affirms the words of Mbiti how the gospel is naked yearning for clothing by the culture it encounters. This suggests that liberals saw Kikuyu culture as the guide to explore the right indigenous symbol of nourishment that must be reappropriated through re-interpretation of indigenous symbols of nourishment that are culturally and contextually relevant to people since inculturation as translation has to move beyond the superficial level to the reappropriation level. In support of this argument, de Mesa in his work on *Inculturation as Pilgrimage* saw this fundamental role of culture as the guide in the inculturation exercise and proposed that inculturation should be movement from translation to reappropriation through the guidance of culture (2012:10). He argues that “reappropriation or new interpretation requires fresh categories, new perspectives that the local culture can bring or offer” (2012:19). In light of this, the Kikuyu symbol of nourishment (that is *ugali*) should be reappropriated and as delineated here below Christ become Jesus Christ *ugali* of life.

Moreover, those who support material inculturation continued to argue that it is long overdue for the Church to shift to indigenous symbols of nourishment that communicate to indigenous people in their particular context. K.P. Aleaz maintains the Christian message becomes not only intelligible to the local people but also becomes conceived because it is responding to their deepest aspirations (2011:244). This means that when Holy Communion symbols are indigenous they will really communicate to diocesan Christians and they will be relevant to them, unlike in the present state where Christians are still using the imported and foreign symbols that speak more to those who introduced them than to the indigenous people. Gatu in support of indigenous symbols of nourishment concurs with the liberals and argues that in the

Kikuyu worldview the symbol of meat, rather than bread, speaks and communicates deeply to the Kikuyu consciousness (2006:30). For it indicates the presence of blood and the idea of offering and sacrifice that were so central in Kikuyu religious ceremonies, bringing home once again the hope of new life. This suggests that through inculturation, by using indigenous symbols of nourishment, diocesan Christians experience their *Ngai* in a more revitalized way, since the primary goal of inculturation according to de Mesa is to make people experience their God within and through the instrumentality of their culture in a unique way (2012:24).

7.2.2. Conservative Views on the Use of Indigenous Symbols

Among the conservative respondents (including also laity and clergy informed by the educational background of the participants) influenced by diachronic logic of conscious tradition they stood their ground that the diocese needs to stick to and nurture the Anglican tradition inherited from the missionaries and never depart from this practice. Their stance was strengthened more by Christ the initiator of the traditional symbols as well as His command to be doing this in remembrance of Him. Their argument was rightly captured by Osei-Bonsu that “it is argued that the use of these elements all over the world ensures a continuity between what Christ did at the last supper, what believers have done from time of Christ up to our times and what we do” (2005:104). Since symbols play the role of preserving the community knowledge and passing it over to the next generation, using indigenous symbols according to conservative Christians will empty this cherished tradition. The implication of using indigenous symbols of nourishment is to delink them from what Christ used as well as from what missionaries taught them as ecclesiastical orthodoxy. Such discourse as ‘this is our culture’ depicts people holding fast to the inherited tradition without distorting it in spite of culture being dynamic and not static. With this static understanding it depicts symbols that reveal a particular understanding of theology and in this case evangelical theology as far as the Holy Communion sacrament is concerned in Thika (Davie 2013:123).

The conservatives also argue that these traditional symbols are so unique in the life of the diocesan Christians that to change them and introduce indigenous symbols of nourishment will water down their uniqueness and result in these symbols being taken lightly by Christians. What may be deduced from conservatives is that for them these religious symbols acquired a sense of sacredness and profound respect. Therefore, whatever happens to wafers and wine has an intrinsic impact on them that may devalue the innate powers that symbols have and in return may cease to move people spiritually. In light of this, what prevails in

conservatives, according to Aden, is that the physical symbols of the wafers and wine are very closely attached to their spiritual meaning, insinuating that what happens to these Holy Communion symbols happens to Christ who they represent (2013:144). Because of this intimate relationship between the conservative Christians and the symbols of wafers and wine, they perceived nothing else ‘comparable with them’ as well as to be ‘likened with Christ’. Consequently, any attempt to use indigenous symbols of nourishment rather than traditional symbols instituted by Christ will ultimately result in loss of power and significance of Holy Communion, since symbols lose power and meaning with time and change in encounter.

Another argument was being doubtful of the sources of these indigenous symbols of nourishment since they were convinced that their origin had to be established. However, Charles Wheatly discloses that in the Anglican tradition Holy Communion symbols were first provided by clergy and parishioners before it was resolved that the concerned Church to be providing these symbols (1858:374-378). This depicts that in spite of conservatives’ stance of establishing the source of these symbols, there is a need to learn the simplicity of Jesus Christ, the initiator of this meal. As Cumming rightly says:

In designating which food would contain his presence, Jesus did not choose something out of the ordinary. He did not insist on something exotic or imported, instead he was content to use the bread and wine of Passover meal - ordinary everyday items ... these were the staple food of the populace at that time, their common daily nourishment (1994:157).

With this simplicity of Christ in initiating this meal, Christ welcomes the conservatives to Him so that God may be experienced again in every context through indigenous symbols of nourishment that would speak and communicate his reality.

Arbuckle, in his book *Earthing the Gospel: An Inculturation Handbook for the Pastoral Worker*, makes a good distinction of symbols, where some are powerful and others powerless (2001:33). In the diocese, the imported Holy Communion symbols are viewed as powerful symbols in relation to indigenous symbols of nourishment. Though absolute power corrupts, everyone in the diocese aspires to be part and parcel of this power by using wafers and wine. In light of this argument, this study drew from conservative Christians that they do not want to move away from wafers and wine since they were a symbol of ‘modernity’, associated with western civilization and admired by all. Thus they refute the use of indigenous symbols of nourishment in Holy Communion, due to their simplicity linked with powerlessness,

despite Eugene La Verdere indicating that these symbols were very ordinary among the Disciples of Christ when they gathered to eat and drink together in memory of Jesus Christ (1996:5).

7.3. Choices for Substitutes for Wafers and Wine in the Holy Communion

Following the diverse views by diocesan Christians on the use of indigenous symbols of nourishment in the Holy Communion, the question now remains: if wafers and wine were to be substituted, what would be used? In this section, the study will explore the diocesan Christians choice for substitution of wafers and wine.

A survey conducted in the Anglican Communion in twenty-nine Provinces indicated that the question for substituting bread and wine has arisen and this has taken place both officially and unofficially in some Provinces (International Anglican Liturgical Consultation 2005). In Kenya, this is no different because Nkonge, commenting during an interview with *Standard Newspaper* correspondent Lillian Aluanga-Delvaux, argued that, “there has a debate over what elements to use but it is not been a major point of departure within the Anglican Church” (2013:27). Perusing why there is this increase in substituting the traditional symbols of Holy Communion in the Anglican tradition within the Communion, Gibson cited that:

The following factors such as cultural adaptations. For some Anglicans their local culture reads very different meaning into bread and wine as these are ‘foreign’ imports. Other elements from the local culture convey the notion of celebratory meal far more than bread and wine, the unavailability of wheat bread or fermented grape wine. Some Provinces find themselves governed by Islamic governments who have outlawed all alcoholic drinks. In other Provinces wheat bread (wafers) and grape wine must be imported and this is far too expensive. In yet other places alcohol is associated with drunkenness and local Church teach (and insist on) total abstinence (International Anglican Liturgical Consultation 2005).

The above factors that prompt the rise for substitution of traditional symbols in the Holy Communion in the Anglican Communion were similar in the diocese of Thika, as Njau summarized:

It is not one or two times we have gone to the bookshop, only to be told there is shortage of wine. Other Churches to buy a bottle of wine really cost them for it is very expensive. Another thing is about the availability of wafers is tedious, so if we have locally available elements, we will know to access them is easier and are readily available for some Churches do dilute wine with water to get much of it.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ Rev. Mary Njau during Clergy and Laity Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 5 December 2013.

This prompts diocesan Christians to conclude that due to the shortage of traditional symbols of Holy Communion in the diocese, indigenous symbols of nourishment can be substitutes in this rite. As this study discussed earlier in chapter three, Kikuyus cultivated food products such as bananas, sweet potatoes, arrowroots, yams, arum lily, millet, sorghum, *Njahi [dolichos lab lab]*, sugarcane, cowpeas, maize and beans. Diocesan Christians suggest the use of these Kikuyu food products, for they have symbolic meaning to them and are available. For instance, Maina suggests, “we use sweet potato, arrow roots and yams but for wine I have no idea what locally we can use ...”¹²¹ For wine Wairimu suggests substitution with “the local brew and juice may be Ribena for it is closer to wine or soda.”¹²² Another suggestion was the use of “bread and juice or soda as long as prayer is made for the purpose of communion.”¹²³ All these responses affirm the liberal and conservative views in regards to the use of indigenous symbols of nourishment. Among liberals they were at home with Kikuyu food for use in Holy Communion, while conservatives suggest use of a loaf of bread and biscuits for wafers while for wine to use juices available, Ribena and soft drinks, specifically Coke soda.

7.4. Benefits of Inculturating Holy Communion Symbols in Thika

In light of the above discussion in inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols in the diocese, the liberal Christians were found to be at home with indigenous symbols of nourishment. They expressed their views on the benefits of using inculturated indigenous symbols of nourishment in Holy Communion as follows.

7.4.1. Christ Becomes Closer to Communicants

The Christians in the diocese were of the opinion that when there is use of acceptable indigenous symbols of nourishment in Holy Communion Christ becomes closer to them. This thought was shared by Kinuthia who argues, “we own Christ in our culture that is see Christ closer home”¹²⁴, for he is incarnated in the local context of the people. For instance, during the study a theological student at St. Paul University Mombasa Campus and a parish priest at Taita Taveta diocese Humphrey Maina, in class discussion on inculturation of Holy Communion symbols, retorted that “the people in the Middle East or Palestine used bread because that what was available and that what was seen as food. So today what we see as

¹²¹ Naftali Maina, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege Parish on 18 November 2013.

¹²² Gladys Wairimu, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ruiru Parish on 27 November 2013.

¹²³ Stephen Irungu, Youth chairperson at Mugutha Parish, Questionnaire 025 on 18 February 2014.

¹²⁴ Rev. Dr. Regina Kinuthia, interview conducted by George Kiarie at Ruiru Parish on 27 November 2013.

food is *ugali*, so I remember once preaching to my Christians that ‘*Yesu ndiye ugali wa uzima wa milele*’ [that is Jesus is the *ugali* of eternal life].”¹²⁵ From this student one acknowledges that Christ has being inculturated as ‘*ugali* of life’ meaning He is the daily food of the people that nourishes and sustains them. This was no different in the diocese where maize is cultivated because if one is hungry *ugali* is the food that nourishes diocesan Christians. Meaning that *ugali* is the staple food in the diocesan context and if Christ was to visit, *ugali* would be the likely meal to be given.

As religious symbols reveal the transcendence and immanence reality to humanity, it is right to conclude that reappropriation of Christ as *ugali* of life bring the immanence of Christ in the diocesan context by becoming one of them in the form of physical and spiritual nourishment. Christ who became the bread of life to Jews, in the diocesan context becomes Jesus Christ *ugali* of life. Cumming observed, “the Eucharist is the ultimate epiphany, or appearance of God as purely material reality in that world” (1994:157). Thus diocesan communicants encounter Christ anew and his words “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20) become relevant and experiential to them, for they have been experiencing an abstract Christ for too long. However, despite this African Christology from below communicating more to the people in their context, Bundi (2009) cautions on emphasizing more on immanence at the expense of transcendence; rather, he advocates for a balanced transcendence and immanence of Christ.

Through this theological incarnation of Jesus Christ as ‘*ugali*’ of life and His immanence evident in the life of participants in the Holy Communion, we affirm the WCC argument that “when faith is contextual there is recognition that the gospel speaks to Christians in their language, connects with their symbols, addresses their needs and awakens their creative energies” (1999:189). Besides Christ speaking to diocesan Christians through their language and symbols of nourishment as ‘*ugali* of life’, David Ngong observes that this culminates into piety, for the major purpose of Christian theological construction has been to influence piety (2012:347). In this case, Christ becomes closer to home to diocesan Christians than before and vice versa, since inculturation should be ethno-centric and mission-oriented in order to challenge people to accept Christ and bring them closer to God (Mathew 1991:154). Marc Boucher-Colbert also shares the same sentiment and concludes, “community-supported farming draws us close to the body of the Lord, the mysteries of the cosmic Christ in all its

¹²⁵ Humphrey Maina during a class Lecture on Christian Worship on 15 December 2013 at St Paul University Mombasa Campus.

phases, so that our liturgies concentrate and make potent the Christic food we eat daily, physically and imaginatively” (1994:127).

7.4.2. Deeper Meaning to Indigenous People

Waliggo notes that any inculturation must culminate in a deeper understanding of Christianity and the local culture (1986:26). In this line of thought, the use of culturally acceptable symbols of Holy Communion is supposed to give deeper understanding and meaning of these symbols to indigenous people. Jemimah Maina, a mother’s Union member in Juja parish contributing on the usefulness of using indigenous symbols of nourishment, suggests that “you know when you are teaching with something touchable people seems to understand better than when you are just preaching. I think as we use those things people see they will see as if it is that time when Jesus was sharing that bread with his disciples. So it keeps us nearer to God than when we do not use those things.”¹²⁶ The Coordinator of Christian Community Service Mount Kenya region, Karanja had a similar thought when he added that, “yes it would give proper understanding, that we are not in any way bringing in something imported or that we do not understand or we do not grow in our land.”¹²⁷

Maina and Karanja’s point of view was that local symbols communicate clearly to the people, for they are socially constructed and socially acceptable to convey meaning to them. Maina cites Christ’s model of teaching that was exemplar in the Jewish society, where Christ used the Jewish symbols that were well-known to people, but gave those symbols new meaning that challenged the status quo of the day. Christ did this for he was aware that symbols and society are interwoven into one another and each influences the other (Dillistone 1986:16). Since symbols stem from people in their culture, Bevans and Schroeder argue that culture become a hermeneutical tool that aids understanding Christianity more profoundly (2006:60). This would result in diocesan Christians having a deeper understanding of the Holy Communion symbols, for Arbuckle observes that symbols communicate and speak to human hearts and imagination (2001:29). If the connection between the symbol and the society does not exist, the cosmic connection becomes abstract and thus non-experiential to the people. This has prevailed in Kenya and Africa at large, where imported symbols have been used. The consequences have been “the loss of such rich cosmology in the modern world has impoverished the Eucharist and robbed it a living connection to the cosmos, with which it

¹²⁶ Jemimah Maina interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja Parish on 21 November 2013.

¹²⁷ Peterson Karanja, coordinator of Christian Community Services (CCS) in Mt. Kenya Region, interviewed by George Kiarie at his office at Thika on 25 November 2013.

might renew the world” (Boucher-Colbert 1994: 123), resulting in superficial understanding of Holy Communion symbols by diocesan Christians. Therefore, it has become a false theology to the recipients of these symbols, because true theology as observed by Gilliland answers people’s need in their own context (1989).

7.4.3. Healthy

The other benefits attached to use of inculturated indigenous symbols of nourishment in the Holy Communion is health. Ngaruiya maintained “yeah for health reason, something like cassava is highly nutritious, it has some elements good for the body and of course it also bring to mind something unique. Banana has its own qualities and coconut, so all these things will benefits both the body but when we come to the spiritual aspect of it, theological aspect of it will need interpretation so that people can see the relevance.”¹²⁸ The argument by Ngaruiya was that African staple foods are so rich nutritiously and if used in Holy Communion they will not only nourish us spiritually, but also physically. The example of cassava was a case in point; also the indigenous brew *Muratina* is rich in ingredients like honey. Therefore, use of these indigenous symbols of nourishment in the Holy Communion will leave diocesan Christians stronger physically and spiritually.

7.4.4. Economic Empowerment

Mveng Engelbert observes that Africa in relation to other continents has been subjected for too long to ‘anthropological poverty’ and it is only through liberation that anthropological dignity can be restored (1994:156). In the process of liberating the diocese from this anthropological poverty to anthropological dignity, economic empowerment is a significant step. Lydia Wanjiru, a Diocesan youth member in Juja parish, argued that if indigenous symbols of nourishment are used in Holy Communion there would be economic empowerment, for there is no need to import Holy Communion symbols. This study succinctly illustrates her arguments: “yeah there may be benefit because again for example those of Kisumu using fish somebody will be told to come and bring them they will give as offering the way we do. I think they will get somebody get them from them, then sell it to the Church, and then that will tend to be like promoting business to them.”¹²⁹ In light of these insights by Wanjiru, she seem to suggests that a Church that is using its products without

¹²⁸ Ven. Joshua Ngaruiya [retired] and was a member of Provincial Liturgical committee, interviewed by George Kiarie at Thika Town on 26 November 2013.

¹²⁹ Lydia Wanjiru, a youth interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja Parish on 21 November 2013.

borrowing or importing elsewhere is a self-propagating, self-supporting self-governing and self-theologizing Church that does not need to be spoon-fed for it is self-reliant. Such a Church become self-theologizing for it can make meaning of the locally available products the way the diocesan Christians viewed Christ as *'ugali'* of life. This self-theologization becomes a form of liberation theology that tries to help victims of oppression as Tutu observes to assert their humanity (1979:168). In addition, through use of locally available food products the Church will be able to afford the Holy Communion symbols. This suggests that these symbols will be within the means of Kenyan Churches and therefore facilitate regular celebration of this holy meal. Indeed this can fulfil Gilliland's projection of a true theology, because the Church is able do self-theologization in order to address its own problems and find solutions.

7.5. Theological and Cultural Challenges to Inculturation of the Holy Communion Symbols in Thika

Rahner observes that inculturation is the duty of the local Church in any given context (1991:109). This implies that every local Church should endeavour to communicate the good news of Christ in the language coherent to her people's culture. In this study, I inquired from diocesan Christians how the diocese has been advocating inculturation of Holy Communion symbols, especially use of indigenous symbols of nourishment, and their responses were as follows. One of the diocesan Christians, Nguyai from Gituamba Parish said that "I have never heard, I heard it from you."¹³⁰ Nguyai represents 1 of 13 out of 21 [62%] in-depth interviewees who are laity, who responded that they have never heard the diocese advocating use of indigenous symbols of nourishment in the Holy Communion. To those who have heard about it they were convinced that "I don't think we have reached there, you know theology is brought about by the needs that are felt. And those needs are taken by the leadership and are discussed."¹³¹ However, Karanja claimed to have come close to such inculturation from late Archbishop Gitari and he argued that

To my knowledge the diocese has not, but I have been proud to see the late Archbishop David Gitari using the local song, sang in Kikuyu about the last supper and him breaking the bread, a normal loaf of bread not the wafers. And I think I have always looked forward for him to whenever he is presiding the Holy Communion to use that kind of administering the Holy Communion. Because is so beautiful and it makes a lot of sense as he broke the bread and sing around

¹³⁰Mwihaki Nguyai, interviewed by George Kiarie at Gituamba Parish on 28 November 2013.

¹³¹ Ven. Joshua Ngaruiya, interviewed by George Kiarie at Thika Town on 26 November 2013.

about the last supper and why it is done and Jesus command to his disciples that do this in my remembrance it comes with a lot of spiritual renewal.¹³²

As such, it is right to say that the late bishop Gitari drew close to inculturation of the symbols. While in the diocese, the advocacy is probably negligible, as illustrated by Kinuthia that “Only through Gitari but no such a discussion on inculturation, probably I guess the Church has not been sensitive, the Church is traditional and the Church is ignorant.”¹³³ From diocesan Christians interviewed (twenty-one), it was only Wanjiru who was of the opinion that the diocese has been advocating inculturation of Holy Communion symbols. She argued “... I think so because I remember it was during Easter and that time I did not attend because I remember, I do not know whether *mchungaji* was serious or joking, he told us he need one person to bring one dry *chapatti*. I do not think he can do that if at all he does not have authority from the diocese.”¹³⁴

According to these responses from diocesan Christians, it was evident that the diocese has not been advocating inculturation of Holy Communion by using indigenous symbols of nourishment. Their argument was that there is no need to use any other symbols because the traditional symbols are available and there is no shortage to cause the diocese to think otherwise. This suggests the diocese is at home with traditional symbols introduced by missionaries. Furthermore, this affirms diachronic logic conscious of tradition is deeply entrenched in the diocese, in spite of the Gitari’s model of inculturation in this rite. Thus it is right to say the diocese is not sensitive to cultural appropriation, meaning that it is a conservative diocese and unfortunately ignorant of the context. To give justification to this, the following section discusses the theological and cultural challenges associated with inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika.

7.5.1. Theological Challenges to Inculturation of Holy Communion Symbols

7.5.1.1. Lack of laity involvement in doing theology

The role of doing theology is for the whole household of God, both laity and ordained. What was conspicuous from the diocese was that theological articulation was the reserve of theologians since they were not engaging their congregations, resulting in a considerable number of Christians confessing they have never heard about inculturation of Holy

¹³² Peterson Karanja, interviewed by George Kiarie at his office at Thika on 25 November 2013.

¹³³ Rev. Dr. Regina Kinuthia, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ruiru Parish on 27 November 2013.

¹³⁴ Lydiah Wanjiru, interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja Parish on 21 November 2013.

Communion symbols. John de Gruchy attributes this failure to the priest and theological educator as he argues:

We often bemoan the fact that our congregations and denominations do not 'think theologically' about issues, or that many Christians today are theologically illiterate ... the fault lies with us as theological educators and with those whom we train to be ministers and pastors. For if ministers are not doing theology and equipping their congregation to do so with them then is not surprising that their members are theologically illiterate and ill equipped for the task of being the Church in the world (2011:24).

This phenomenon prevails in the diocese and the result is theologically illiterate congregations as de Gruchy says. As what emerges is discrepancy between theory and praxis because the whole household of God is not engaged in doing theology. Shorter says this culminates into inculturation being clerical rather than concern for the whole household of God and the result is inculturation being too cerebral and too remote from the real life of the community (1988:266). This means that despite our African Church leaders' claim that the 'Church has come of age' our theological reflection of our Christian faith is wanting and there is a dire need to critically reconstruct our own theology, lest we continue being spoonfed theologically. For scholars such as Mugambi (2000:94), Nthamburi (2000:117) and Gifford (2008:19) observe that inculturation in Africa was and is highly advocated by missionaries or non-Africans and not the natives.

7.5.1.2. Unity of Universal Church

Symbols unite and at the same time divide. From this dialectical phenomenon of symbols, the diocesan Christians were of the opinion that diverse use of symbols of Holy Communion would tear apart the unity of the universal Church. This was expressed by Joseph Githae, a member at Juja parish that;

Exactly because a times we have been having forums whereby we meet at deanery level ... at the whole archdeaconry and this information will be shared as you are saying to support you and may bring some disharmony. Even some people may be degraded those who are taking *nduma* might be seen to be very inferior, yet we are talking of the same faith into Christ ... so it may bring that kind of whereby we may have classes within the Church. There are classes of *Nduma* they might be deemed and others the modern one taking the bread yeah.¹³⁵

Reflecting on this response, it affirms symbols divide, as Githae feels that it will bring social stratification based on class in the diocese and in the universal Church, while this meal through its symbols should lift all barriers in the society. Although indigenous symbols of nourishment communicate adequately to people in their context, the question remains if we

¹³⁵Joseph Githae, interviewed by George Kiarie at Juja Parish on 21 November 2013.

need to emphasize more on universality at the expense of these symbols communicating and leading people to experience God anew. Shorter, in his writings *Inculturation: Win or Lose the Future*, dismisses the emphasis on uniformity in the universal Church of Christ and argues that the future of the Church depends on inculturation of the gospel in people's ways of life (1999:56). Shorter like Phan (2003:xii) summarized that inculturation is opposed to uniformity. Furthermore, Chukwu adds that inculturation is a necessity for he dreads if the Church bury its head in the sand in the name of division in the Church, it risks to fall into historical error (2011:175). Therefore, the emphasis on the traditional symbols in the global Church and especially in Africa where these symbols are viewed as powerful in relation to indigenous symbols, suggests a form of colonialism. In fact, this study perceives wafers and wine not only abolished our indigenous symbols but also annihilated them, unless reclaimed. Kinuthia posed that "we need to ask ourselves if universalism means colonialism or is part of neo-colonialism."¹³⁶ Uniformity is stressed, while the primary goal should be the significance advanced by these symbols in the universal Church of Christ.

Therefore, Lumbala and Chukwu conclude that this is an on-going debate or an open-ended discussion in the universal Church of Christ, because in spite of inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols being dismissed it will not vanish (1998:57; 2011:173). However, Valentin Dedji proposes to break this stalemate on the use of diverse symbols of Holy Communion as he suggests to Christians not to ascribe to the materiality of the products authorized by the Church as orthodoxy but on the significance of the symbols that enters into celebration of the sacrament of the Holy Communion (2003:229). This idea found vehement support from Clergy and Laity focus group discussions when Gitau argued:

I should say every culture to look for what is suitable to them and can communicate to them ... for you are looking for relevance in the Holy Communion. We have what we eat and drink. For Kamba *muthukui* will be a common meal because it will bring relevance to that community and wherever were are, we are aware they are doing that because is bringing them home. Coming to another community the same and we will all understand of unity in diversity. Because of these diversities we will agree whatever is bringing them home is that food and at the end of the day what we have in Kikuyuland, Luoland the significance will be the same but the type of food will be different. So when we are meeting they have a common meal and we have a common meal but the message coming to Kikuyuland is the same message in Kambaland, is the same message in Luoland.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ Rev. Dr. Regina Kinuthia, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ruiru Parish on 27 November 2013.

¹³⁷ Ven. John Gitau during Clergy and Laity Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 5 December 2013.

In view of this idea, Lumbala also shares the same sentiment and he continues to argue that the Church of Christ should not attach so much significance to the symbols used at expense of the significance these symbols communicate (1998:54). For the key idea advanced by these symbols should be remembrance of the death and resurrection of Christ for atonement of human sin, that culminated into reconciliation with God and not remembrance of Mediterranean agriculture.

Magesa, contributing to this debate on universal unity of the Church as far as inculturation was concerned, argues that the argument was one of the weakest (2004:228).¹³⁸ He cites the fear that prevailed in the Roman Catholic Church when it introduced the local dialects in the mass. He observes that instead of breaking the unity of the Church it enriched it with diverse cultural aspects that spoke and communicated to the people more deeply than Latin language. In light of these arguments, it is right to summarize that unity in diversity is inevitable and it will prevail in the Holy Communion rite using indigenous symbols of nourishment that communicate to people's heart and imagination leading them to experience God anew. In the Anglican tradition, George Mathew foresaw plurality¹³⁹ of rites within the Anglican Communion, measured by the Lambeth Quadrilateral and the Lambeth Conference resolutions being evident (1991:154). This fulfills Ian Bunting's projection of rich variety of expressions in the Anglican way in future and in this case and re-appropriates indigenous symbols of nourishment for celebration of Holy Communion in different contexts (1996:231). Interestingly, Bediako perceives translatability as universality. To this end, he contends that the incarnation of the Christian faith will be different in different contexts, yet it will preserve elements that unite them all. As sharing in a common reality, attribution of ultimate significance to Jesus Christ and a sense of belonging to a people of God extending beyond the

¹³⁸ Magesa is right in his argument that it is ironical that 'middlemen' perceive the unity of universal Church at stake if indigenous symbols are used, in spite of prevailing divisions in the Holy Communion where Holy Communion in some Churches is exclusively for their members and excludes other members of the body of Christ when sharing this meal. This is evident in our denominations that we do not welcome other communicants from other Churches depicting the level of divisions in different Christian traditions. This happened to me and others as ecumenical students at Bossey Ecumenical Institute Geneva in 2006 when we went for a study visit to the Vatican under invitation of the Pontifical Council for promoting Christian Unity. In spite of us been communicants from diverse traditions, the Roman Catholic Church declined to share Communion with us. This featured in our reflection when we came back to Bossey and the well-known Lima text BEM's [Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry] challenge became evident in its longing according to Kinnamon and Cope (1997:189) for the time the divided Church will come closer and be visibly reunited around the Lord's Table.

¹³⁹ Chukwu (2008:160) in support of plurality argued that when reformers embraced languages other than Latin in Europe there was plurality and freedom from the Roman Church, since inculturation began to take place in different contexts where the reformers came from.

local context and in the midst of whom God's activity in the universal Church is recognised (1995:109).

Therefore, it is right to conclude that the solution to the unity of the universal Church is unity in diversity as all the diversities manifest different faces of God in the world Church. For according to Ola Tjørhom, unity is a divine gift to the Church of Christ because human effort cannot create unity as purported by ecumenical endeavours (2002:121). As Küng and McGrath argue, that unity should be understood theologically and not sociologically in terms of conformity and uniformity, as argued earlier in the inculturation of Holy Communion symbols that the Church should not place much emphasis on the materiality of the symbols used but on the theological significance advanced by diverse symbols used in different contexts (1967:273; 2011:393). When diversities are embraced in the universal Church of Christ without subjection of one Church and we can pray together, hear the word of God, confess our faith together and share our meals together, only then can we speak of one Church. This is because we do confess one Lord and not many, one spirit and not many, one God and not many (Küng 1967:282).

7.5.1.3. Theological Formations of Diocesan Clergy

Hillman argues that African clergy including diocesan clergy are less aggressive to inculturation and are alienated from their own cultural heritage (1993:43). This cultural alienation of African clergy is evident and attributed to theological formation they receive, as Mugambi (2013), Houston (2013), Wandera (2006), and Galgalo and Mombo (2008) argue that it is western conditioned¹⁴⁰ with no relevance to African concerns. This means that it lacks a contextual approach that would encourage African clergy to engage their context critically while doing theology, and thus inculturation is not encouraged¹⁴¹ resulting in alienated priests detached from African realities. This is in spite of the Lambeth Conference of 1988 commending and encouraging authentic inculturation in the Anglican Communion.¹⁴² Bill Houston cites that this alienation is perpetuated in most theological

¹⁴⁰ However, the global South Anglican Churches have noted this and have resolved to come up with contemporary and contextual theology. This was reflected in their meeting in Kigali, Rwanda in 2006, "the time has come for the Anglican Churches in the Global South to initiate and take responsibility for theological formation and education programs, in order to be faithful to God's call as salt and light to the communities and nations, and contribute effectively to theological reflection in the Anglican Communion" (Global South Anglican 2006).

¹⁴¹ This is no different to other Churches in Africa; for instance in the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria James Reynolds (2012:153) admitted that there is a lack of contextual approach in the theological curriculum of their seminary.

¹⁴² See *The Truth Shall Make You Free: The Lambeth Conference 1988*. (London: Church Publishing), 8.

colleges in Africa by faithfully teaching the knowledge that was and is generated in the West in Western textbooks (2013:109). While pushing this debate further than Houston, it is clear that articulation of this theology using foreign language rather than indigenous languages adds insult to injury. In spite of the significant role of language as a tool of doing theology, it touches the core values of the people. When theology is articulated using people's language it identifies with people's context and responds to their questions in life, while foreign language asks irrelevant questions and answers question not asked in that context. The solution to this challenge, according to Mugambi, is the need to encourage and support theological publications of African theologian works, primarily for consumption of African readers because the African theologians will be addressing the African context and issues therein (2013:124). Moreover, the formation of Global South Anglican Theological Education Task Force (TEFT) that met first in 2006 in Kigali, Association of Theological Institutions in East Africa (ATIEA) and The Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) among others bodies are worth mentioning, as they are a step forward toward arresting this problem of western theological education in theological institutions in Africa. These bodies are in place to articulate a theological curriculum in most African theological institutions suited for the need of the African Church. With a prime goal to inculturate, theological approaches and content are taught.

7.5.1.4. Ecclesiastical Imperialism

Another theological challenge is ecclesiastical imperialism in the diocese and the province at large, such that effort and endeavour by pro-inculturationists are summoned and punished. A good example in the diocese is Canon Mbutia's pastoral experience where he narrated that:

I know there is a day we used tea in Ngong and I could remember a panel called me to ask why [laughter]. All diocesan Evangelists were there, and I was to celebrate that with tea because I could not get wine [interrupted] yes black tea. I could not get any wine anywhere and I had announced that there will be Holy Communion and people were prepared, so I used yellow *ugali* and black tea and we did it, but when we came here [sic] the whole panel called me Mbutia you celebrated Holy Communion with what? Because the Evangelists were amazed and they wanted to tell everybody, I remember I and Ven. Mutonga were the celebrants. We had to answer questions and we were not condemned because we justified why?¹⁴³

This ecclesiastical imperialism is prevalent in other parts of Africa, as Dillistone had given an example of the Archbishop of Canterbury who demurred the Ugandan Church (1986:208). Tovey cites one Roman Catholic bishop, Dispont from the diocese of Pala, Chad who

¹⁴³ Ven. John Mbutia during Clergy Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 3 December 2013.

celebrated the Eucharist with millet bread and millet beer while there was a shortage of these traditional symbols in that country, only to be relieved of his office (2004:46).

Darrell Whiteman and Kwon Pui-Lan, contributing to this debate, observed that this imperialism resulted in ecclesiastical hegemony (1999:49; 2000). This is because most of Africa's mainline Churches' inculturation has to be approved by their mother Churches in Canterbury, Scotland, America or Vatican, as Osei-Bonsu (2005:103) and Okoye¹⁴⁴ observed. This ecclesiastical hegemony provoked Ngugi wa Thiong'o to argue that the African continent was taught to look on Europe as her teacher and the centre of man's civilization, and herself as the pupil (1986:100). To deconstruct this trend, Hewitt proposes partnership in mission between the global North and global South Churches, because mission is the responsibility of the whole people of God and not a few enthusiasts (2011:85). In addition, Hinga suggests the African Church be given time and space to do inculturation, even if she make mistakes (1994:17). For Ben Knighton observes Christian faith propagated by natives and not outsiders and so this necessitates the natives construct their own local theology (2007:52). Therefore, Bediako perceives the ball is now in the African Christians' court, to determine the development of their Christian faith coherent with their thought form, the way the Greco-Roman world did in their Hellenistic Church (2000:56).

While ecclesiastical imperialism prevails in the diocese, the African Instituted Churches¹⁴⁵ (AICs) like Kimbanguist in DRC are free from this and are much further ahead. For Muzorewa (1990:171), Young (1993:2) and Parrat (1995:60) argue they have shown in many respects a more African approach to the Christian faith, because they are free from ecclesiastical imperialism. However, the AICs creativity and innovation has two immense setbacks according to Mugambi. One, because "in the Christian circles, the AICs can hardly influence theological orientations, in view of the fact that they are marginal or absent in the Christian world communions" (1998:12 see also Tovey 2004:79). Two, what AICs offer to the universal Church of Christ has not been broadly received with honour (Mugambi 1997:74; see also Mashall 2003:126). As Shorter notes, ecclesiastical imperialism prevails as

¹⁴⁴ "The Eucharist in African Perspective" in www.sedosmission.org/web/index.php?option=com (Accessed on 20/08/2014).

¹⁴⁵ These Churches are also referred to as African Indigenous Churches or African Independent Churches. They emerged in Africa due to white domination in the mainline Churches, leading to schism. A good example in Kenya is Legio Maria splitting from the Roman Catholic Church in Nyanza. Other factors that lead to their emergence were cultural practices such as female circumcision in Central Kenya in 1929 and polygamy leading to the establishment of Africa Independent Pentecost Church of Africa (AIPCA) in Kenya, and healing, especially in Aladura Church in Nigeria and Kimbanguist in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), then Zaire.

the ecclesial communions are culturally biased in favour of Europe and are not ready to allow authentic inculturation to take place without censorship (1988:247). However, in spite of all these obstacles in the AICs this study would cite the words of Michael Harper, an Anglican priest in England, who commented on Kimbanguist that it ‘have much to teach us’ like in the ACK diocese of Thika in our effort and attempt to inculturate the Holy Communion symbols (Quoted by Pobe and Ositelu 1998:47).

7.5.2. Cultural Challenges to Inculturation of Holy Communion Symbols

7.5.2.1. Fear

Fear of inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols was one of the cultural factors expressed by diocesan Christians. Teresia Waiganjo, a synod delegate and member of Ndunyu Chege parish, singled out her fears and said “the danger is only been accused. For instance, a Christian may accuse us that we are not doing according to the bible and begin politicking which may mislead some young Christians in the Church ... but according to me there is no danger.”¹⁴⁶ From Waiganjo, her fear is being accused that they have diverted from the Church tradition and biblical standards that people have been socially conditioned into, that wafers and wine are the exclusive symbols to be used in Holy Communion. Like Paul in Corinth (see I Corinthians 8:9-13), she was careful not to distort the faith of younger Christians. Therefore, fear of breaking away from inherited tradition of the Church prevailed in the diocesan Christians discourses as highlighted by Waiganjo.

However, de Gruchy sees no point of worry, for in doing theology we need to stretch our tradition for the newer and fresh things to emerge, as he argues that:

Continually testing the boundaries and sometimes pushing them beyond the accepted orthodoxies that others defend. In fact, part of the task of critically retrieving tradition is to break out of the boxes of the past, while yet taking the tradition seriously and in some sense as normative. It is akin to participating in a paradigm shift whereby the new always remains in continuity with the old, but in creative tension so that something new, fresh and vibrant emerges (2011:9).

de Mesa agrees and supports de Gruchy in stretching our traditions and pushes the debate further for he was persuaded that the cherished and guarded tradition in most Christian traditions is a series of local and inculturated theologies (1999:124). This suggests that the cherished inherited tradition is foreign theology articulated in a different context. This means that since theology is contextual our inherited traditions have to be re-appropriated in our

¹⁴⁶ Teresiah Waiganjo, Synod delegate interviewed by George Kiarie at Ndunyu Chege Parish on 18 November 2013.

context and in the words of de Gruchy by stretching it to derive the good in it that speaks and communicates to our context.

Besides fear of breaking away from tradition, some diocesan Christians were also sensitive of abuse of alcohol, a thing that ACK has been fighting since colonial times. The missionaries (CMS) who brought Christianity into Kikuyuland condemned and branded the local brew as illicit brew. Such fear still prevails in the diocese, as Karanja argues;

There is the fear of the misuse and especially with the people who do not understand and with freedom of worship, some of these element can also be abused. Kenya is contending with the issue of alcohol abuse and without the safeguard people can use bible to give eh a tick to wayward behaviour and this is what again the Church is fighting against and therefore it has to be good measures to safeguard misuse ah of these instruments versus why we are taking them that means proper understanding.¹⁴⁷

Scholars such as Hillman (1993), Gitari (1994) and Mbonigaba (1994) reflecting on inculturation advanced contrary opinion from diocesan Christians and dismiss any fear in the discourse of inculturation. To Hillman he attributes the fear of inculturating the Christian faith to fear of innovation at the grass root level (1993:41). Indeed this manifested clearly in Waiganjo's argument that for her is all right but people 'may accuse us that we are not doing according to the Bible.' This suggests that innovation at the grassroots has not been encouraged in the Church or any attempt being thwarted at inception stage, thus attracting fear of innovation. Oduyoye disagrees with Hillman, for the contrary happens in Churches while she remarks "Christianity employs the language of the powerful seeking to control diversity and achieve conformity with their own standpoint. While mooting approval to inculturation from above, clearly discourages inculturation from below" (2003:47).

This implies that inculturation at the grassroots level is alive among the ordinary Christians who practice theology as Mombo had alluded. The setback they face is lack of Church goodwill to shape and strengthen their practice. Mary Nwagwu, in support of this idea, notes laxity of Church leadership, coupled with fear of ordinary Christians going too far in the process of inculturation, resulting in strict control of ecclesiastical authorities that tend to dampen the enthusiasm of those engaged in inculturation initiatives (2001:61). Therefore, the Church authority becomes a big stumbling block to inculturation, and prompts Gabrielle Russell-Mundine and Graeme Mundine to refer to Church authority as 'middlemen' [sic] who inhibit and stall true inculturation in the Church of Christ by appointing themselves as the arbiters of all that is seen to be the correct expression of faith (2014:102).

¹⁴⁷ Peterson Karanja, interviewed by George Kiarie at Thika on 25 November 2013.

Gitari and Mbonigaba introduce another concept of fear characterized by African Churches due to her historical injustice during colonialism (1994:37; 1994:23). They identify it as fear of losing the acquired western ‘civilized’ identity as Anglicans. Since the wafers and wine are symbols of civilization Hebert Moyo referred to them as the ‘holy thing’ for the ‘holy people’ in the ‘holy place’, the way they were understood in the Lutheran Church of Zimbabwe during the missionary era (2014:5). This suggests that being an authentic Anglican in the diocese is sticking to the ethos and norms passed down to us by CMS missionaries. Perception that Pui-Lan postulates that in many cases, mimicry of the ‘mother Church’ serves not as the mockery of colonial authority, but as a sign of privilege of association (2000:57). Therefore, responses such as ‘this is our culture’ or ‘that is not Anglicanism’ all depict colonialism of the mind, for you cannot separate Holy Communion symbols with European imperialism and their culture. Since African products were labelled primitive and European products civilized, this stimulates most Christians to opt to identify with imported products. Oduyoye concurs with this argument and observes this as a widespread practice in the western established Churches compared with AICs, because Christians in these western established Churches protest against anything they perceive to be returning to African religion (2003:40). Indeed this is what prevails among some diocesan Christians for they want to be detached from African religiosity, but be associated with western religiosity that alienates them, however much they try to ape its practices. Due to this great desire to identify mostly with the western products and lifestyle linked with missionaries who introduced Christianity to Africans, Mbiti could not hesitate to conclude that Africans became more Anglican than English people or more Roman Catholic than Italians and more Lutheran than Germans (1986:19)! Observably, the diocesan Christians are guarding what they received from missionaries uncritically. On the contrary, Hillman, Gitari and Mbonigaba suggest that it is worth exploring the best practice in Holy Communion for inculturation.

7.5.2.2. Holy Communion Lightly Taken

As symbols lose meaning and consequently die, the diocesan Christians hesitantly disapproved inculturation of Holy Communion symbols for fear of losing these vital religious symbols and their significance in the life of the Church. When these symbols lose their initial meaning and significance, the diocesan Christians were dreadful of Holy Communion lightly taken by Christians because “symbols give us our sense of identity, value, self-worth and order both as community and individual” (Stevenson 1988:184). Nguyai, a diocesan Christian, observes that if we use indigenous symbols of nourishment “people will see as if

they are ordinary food they are used to and they might not be pleased with them.”¹⁴⁸ This indicates that Nguyai guards the uniqueness she attributes to these symbols, since familiarity brings contempt. The other thing that emerges from her is the relationship between the indigenous symbols of nourishment being perceived powerless and primitive in relation to the wafers and wine as foreign and imported symbols linked with power and modernity. This perception also prevails in focus group discussions that established that the Holy Communion would be taken lightly. In a group discussion with the clergy, Canon Mbuthia argues, “the value of Holy Communion may be misused because having a common thing brings about the whole value of what is Holy Communion.”¹⁴⁹ Jesse Kamau supported this view arguing that, “there can be danger of losing the meaning, speciality of the Holy Communion yah.”¹⁵⁰ The diocesan Christians perception of danger of losing the meaning was “anytime a new thing is introduced there must be a problem. For instance people begin asking why and in that one occasion people may disrespect and make Holy Communion lose its meaning.”¹⁵¹ Ultimately, we can lose the essence of Holy Communion and be viewed “as if it is a party and not Holy Communion”¹⁵² if indigenous symbols of nourishment are used or suggested for use in Holy Communion. Finally, some diocesan Christians felt that the Holy Communion mystery will be lost, as echoed by Zacharia Chege that:

In its own uniqueness people tend even to admire and really enjoy it, surprisingly even people who do not take Holy Communion do come and celebrate. They do not take but they want to witness, to watch what is happening and now they want to be brought back to the Holy Communion, because they have not been taking Holy Communion, why because inwardly there is mystery and this mystery they want also to participate in it. The mystery in the Holy Communion then bring people back to Christ, but suppose is an ordinary elements [laughter] they will say after all I have them at home but since it is unique actually, surprisingly it also make the whole Church say, do you know.¹⁵³

In light of these responses, it is right to deduce that diocesan Christians are deeply attached to wafers and wine as symbols in the Holy Communion. For it seems to suggest that change of these inherited symbols to then mean also change in the value and uniqueness of who they represent, that is Jesus Christ. This implies Holy Communion and its symbols will lose meaning, become a mere ritual and ultimately the embedded mysteries that move and inspire

¹⁴⁸ Mwhaki Nguyai, interviewed by George Kiarie at Gituamba Parish on 28 November 2013.

¹⁴⁹ Ven. Canon John Mbuthia during Clergy Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 3 December 2013.

¹⁵⁰ Jesse Kamau during Clergy Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 3 December 2013.

¹⁵¹ Emmah Nyoro, a lay reader at Cathedral Parish, during Laity Focused Group Discussion at St. Luke Makongeni on 4 December 2013.

¹⁵² Augusta, a Youth at Kamenu Parish, during Laity Focused Group Discussion at St. Luke Makongeni on 4 December 2013.

¹⁵³ During Clergy Focused Group Discussion at Thika Cathedral on 3 December 2013.

people will vanish. Neville, in attempts to disclose why this drastic influence of the Holy Communion symbols is declining in the communicants' lives argues, "people engage in meaningful behaviours, because of the meanings and motives carried by the meanings in the symbols shaping the behaviours, and these behaviours are meaningful in terms of one another because of the network character of symbolic meaning" (1996:23).

This means that some diocesan Christians are conservative, who uphold the status quo in spite of life being dynamic. Consequently, this resistance to a new established order suggests that some diocesan Christians perceive change negatively and therefore it comes to break the cherished structures and behaviour already existing. Ikenye, in his book *Pastoral Theology: Rediscovering African Models and Methods*, help us conclude and discern a divided self among some diocesan Christian, due to colonialism (2008:11). He suggests that this is as a result of colonization of the personal and communal soul. Where there is a dualistic experience between the real and ideal self, it results in shame in the real self for having failed to live up to the standards of the colonizers; the ideal self in this case is using the inherited symbols (wafers and wine), perceived as orthodoxy.

7.5.2.3. Preparations of Indigenous Symbols

Another challenge of inculturation in the diocese is the preparation of indigenous symbols of nourishment. To illustrate this setback Wanyoike remarked that "I would say it is not good, for what I may come with or the other person is not well known how is prepared."¹⁵⁴ The diocesan Christians had several reasons regarding preparation as a challenge. The first was that the indigenous foodstuff might be overcooked as illustrated here;

Okay, well sometimes they may be good but their preparation may be a big challenge to many. For instance, preparation of sweet potatoes may be overcooked, but something like a loaf of bread is good because before the introduction of wafers we were used to it. So if we use a loaf of bread or wafers they are already prepared. Therefore preparation of our traditional food is a big challenge and is for this reason that we need not to use our traditional food.¹⁵⁵

The second was that, some foodstuff has to be used instantly after being prepared, such that they cannot be kept for future use, as argued that "... if you use things like arrowroots, sweet potatoes and whatever ...you need to use it there and there. And again the way you handle it is sticky and that bread is not sticky at all and hygienically it is good."¹⁵⁶ Third, hygienically

¹⁵⁴ Joseph Wanyoike during Laity Focused Group Discussion at St. Luke Makongeni on 4 December 2013.

¹⁵⁵ Naftali Maina, Parish Council member, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ngunyu Chege Parish on 18 November 2013.

¹⁵⁶ Ven. Joshua Ngaruiya, interviewed by George Kiarie at Thika on 26 November 2013.

it is wanting on some indigenous food for they are sticky to handle. Kinuthia, contributing to this challenge, shares the same sentiment and argues “hygiene of these elements is wanting due to low level of technology though spiritually I see no danger because symbols only point to God’s grace.”¹⁵⁷ Therefore, to some diocesan Christians it is a worthwhile exercise to inculcate Holy Communion symbols, but as one student Bishop Amos Lewa from Joy Ministries Church in my Christian Worship class argues, “I am for the idea but what I fear is their preparation. So if you want us to use local food prepare them in the right way.”¹⁵⁸ Therefore, preparation of the indigenous symbols of nourishment is a big impediment in the diocese and this study suggests elsewhere in Africa also, because a related research done in Zimbabwe by Amadi cites the same limitation (2008:261).

7.5.2.4. Colonialism of the Mind

Bujo observed that colonialism robbed Africans of their cultural identity and filled them with an inferiority complex, making them hate what is of African origin (1990:121). The consequence of this colonialism, according to Ikenye, is shame, doubt, feelings of danger and threat, feelings of rage, and paranoid vigilance (2002:17). This is no different in the diocese of Thika as this translates into colonialism of the mind. This form of colonialism is a big challenge as far as inculturation of Holy Communion symbols is concerned. This was evident in the way some diocesan Christians responded to the question of inculturating the Holy Communion symbolism. This was noted by one respondent who argued that “am not sure if there is any danger, the only danger is in the mind of believers...”¹⁵⁹, because they are “pre-occupied with bread and wine such that if anything else is used, then Holy Communion is incomplete to them.”¹⁶⁰ This colonialism prompted responses such as “I have heard these funny stories that instead of wine why not use *muratina* [laughter] *njohi* that is alcohol but in the real sense this person is talking something. Well I do not know how *muratina* is but I believe with teaching for I believe even the wine and wafers were just brought, for it is okay and there is no danger as long as it is harmless.”¹⁶¹

Gladys Wairimu represents many Christians in the diocese, her scepticism portrayed in her laughter when she mentioned *muratina* or local brew that was and is used traditionally by Kikuyus in their religious activities. Since it was condemned by missionaries as illicit brew

¹⁵⁷ Rev. Dr. Regina Kinuthia, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ruiru Parish on 27 November 2013.

¹⁵⁸ Bishop Amos Lewa from Joy Ministries during a class Lecture on Christian Worship on 15 December 2013 at St Paul University Mombasa Campus.

¹⁵⁹ Ven. Joshua Ngaruiya, interviewed by George Kiarie at Thika on 26 November 2013.

¹⁶⁰ Rev. Mary Njau during Clergy and Laity Focused Group Discussion on 5 December 2013.

¹⁶¹ Gladys Wairimu, interviewed by George Kiarie at Ruiru Parish on 27 November 2013.

she was not sure if it was right to use it, but when digging up on translation of the Kikuyu religious brew *muratina* by missionaries this study established that traditional religious brew was referred to as *njohi*, that is alcohol, while missionaries' alcohol as *divei* or wine. These two brands of alcohol were attached with different symbolic meaning, such that *muratina* was viewed as a symbol of unholiness, ungodliness and evil. Thus Kikuyu Christians abhorred drinking *muratina* in spite of the religious significance it had in Kikuyu society. *Divei* /wine was viewed as a symbol of holiness and godliness, however it was exclusively for Church use, for any attempt to drink it elsewhere attracted Church discipline, as Gatu retorted earlier. This left many Kikuyus confused and what prevails is that some secretly drink both brands of beer in secluded areas lest they be noticed and then be excommunicated or disciplined.

The translation of the local brew and missionaries' alcohol into Kikuyu language brought huge disparity in Kikuyuland, leading to change of perception on *muratina* in relation to wine, that is *muratina* is inferior while wine is superior. This scepticism was evident in most respondents, this translating into the level of colonialism of the mind, as echoed in a clergy focused group discussion by Samuel Mwangi that:

... those who brought good news first had a hidden agenda, so even when bread was introduced they knew they had to convince this person that anything else is not good and that why when we peruse what else to use become difficult as our minds have assimilated bread and wine. But if we may be taught and convinced that arrow root in Holy Communion is the best and the people appreciate that we can move away from multitude of problems.¹⁶²

In the words of Mwangi, his argument was their minds have been socially conditioned that it is only wafers and wine that should be used in Holy Communion and nothing else, as Njau observes that some diocesan Christians are 'preoccupied with bread and wine.' However, if diocesan Christians' minds are liberated according to Mwangi, this can solve enormous problems.

Therefore, it is true from some diocesan Christians' responses that "inculturation can be done; it is only in our mind that we are thinking the bread and the wine should be in that context."¹⁶³ This suggests a form of colonialism that Tutu termed as 'religious or spiritual schizophrenia' (1987:47). To overcome this form of colonialism, some scholars (such as Wiredu 1998, Osha 1999, Ikenye 2002 and Hotep 2003) advocate for decolonization of the African soul and mind. These scholars are convinced that there are good things to be derived

¹⁶² During Clergy Focused Group Discussion, 3 December 2013.

¹⁶³ Rev. Mwakoma from ACK Taita Taveta diocese during a class Lecture on Christian Worship on 15 December 2013 at St Paul University Mombasa Campus.

from African and European culture. Moreover, Uhuru Hotep argues in decolonization there is a demand of dismantling white supremacy belief and the structures, which uphold them in every area of African life in an effort to recover and reconnect with the best traditional African culture as a means of ending dominance of the African psyche (2003). However, scholars like Byang Kato, dissatisfied with this concept of decolonization, criticize the African theological trend of branding everything as colonialist or neo-colonialist (1975:50). To the contrary, it is worth dismissing Kato's criticism and affirming that the main arguments by scholars of decolonization and African theology are synthesizing the best practices in the African context and the West to incorporate and integrate them in the people's way of life, after deconstructing Western theology in order to reconstruct African theology relevant to the people. As Pobee noted, the main goal of African theology is interpretation of the essential Christian faith in authentic African languages in the flux and turmoil of our times, so that there may be genuine dialogue between the Christian faith and African cultures (1979:22).

7.6. Conclusion

As was anticipated in this chapter, to establish how the Holy Communion symbols have been inculturated in the diocese, this was achieved in this chapter as it argued that the Holy Communion symbols have been inculturated through the dynamic equivalence method. This is because the prevalent practice in the diocese is the use of wafers and wine, but with the indigenous meaning of being the body and blood of Christ in spite of other meanings that were constructed around these symbols. These symbols after the acculturation process between the missionaries and Kikuyu culture assumed indigenous meaning, though it was by coercion, for there was no mutual dialogue.

The chapter also argued that diocesan Christians had diverse views regarding inculturation of Holy Communion symbols that saw emergence of two groups. The first group, conservatives, were influenced by diachronic logic, conscious of tradition where they wanted to uphold the historical symbols that were introduced by Christ and handed down to them by the CMS missionaries. The other group, liberals, were influenced by synchronic logic of conscious inculturation. Liberals argued for reappropriating the Holy Communion symbols according to people's context. For they were swayed that use of indigenous symbols of nourishment speak and communicate to the people effectively, since in every culture there is something good to

bring and offer in the Christian faith. However, they were of the opinion that caution be taken, thus this discussion remain open for further discussions.

On the other hand, the argument was advanced that Christ appropriated as *ugali* of life in the diocesan context ensures the immanence and transcendence of God evident in the life of Christians in the diocese, because the basic goal of inculturation is to enable people to experience God in their context in a more revitalized way. This ensures deeper meaning of these symbols, provides good health to the Christians and is an economic empowerment of the Christians in the diocese.

Though, this chapter notes that inculturation has taken place in the form of dynamic equivalence, there are theological and cultural challenges facing this endeavour in the diocese of Thika. Such challenges are absence of laity while doing theology, threat to universal Church unity, ecclesiastical imperialism, fear, taking Holy Communion symbols lightly, preparation of indigenous symbols and colonialism of mind. The next chapter brings the whole thesis to the conclusion.

Chapter Eight

General Conclusion of the Study

8. Introduction

Sara Davis and Mary Gergen noted that “one can ask questions about the world, but one cannot claim to have discovered the truth. The best one can expect is that a new interpretation, a different perspective, or an interesting slant can be created” (1997:7). This observation forms the foundation for the general conclusion of the study on how the Anglican Christians in the diocese of Thika are constructing meaning of the Holy Communion symbols. It shows that no one can claim with absolute certainty that they have grasped all the ‘truth’ on the understanding and practice of people in their study or the phenomenon under their microscope; in this case, Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika.

The intention of this chapter is to concisely present a synthesis of some of the major findings in this study as a conclusion. Finally, the contribution the study has made to the creation of new knowledge is demonstrated, as well as making some suggestions and recommendation of possible areas for further research.

8.1. An Empirical Study on Holy Communion Symbols in the ACK Diocese of Thika

This study had two sections that were all geared towards answering the key research question of this study: *To critically investigate to what extent the understanding of the symbols used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion have been inculturated within ACK diocese of Thika.* The first section of this study was to locate the study within the broader context so that it may identify the gaps to be filled by this study. This was clearly articulated in chapter one under literature review while in chapter two the theoretical framework that informed this study. In chapter three, the Kikuyu concept of meal was dealt with. This was good basis to draw deeper meaning and fuller understanding of Holy Communion as a meal in the Anglican Church Diocese of Thika. Chapter four attempted to critically analyse the understanding and practice of the sacramental rite of Holy Communion symbols in the ACK. In this section, the inherited understanding and practice of Holy Communion symbols in the ACK was evaluated. In chapter five, the study articulated the methodology employed. The second Part outlined the major significant findings of the study from the fieldwork in two major chapters - chapters six and seven. The following is a summary and conclusion of each of these chapters.

8.2. Chapters' Conclusion and Major Findings of the Study

The first chapter gave a road map of this study by highlighting the motivations of this study. It earmarked the construction of meaning and inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika as the scope and limitation of this study. In this regard, it gave more attention to symbols where it described symbols as the visible signs of the invisible reality in human life. The chapter found that symbols are designed to be contextual, for they communicate effectively to people in their context. However, this chapter established that when Holy Communion symbols were introduced in Kikuyuland and in other parts of the globe by Euro-American missionaries, their religious symbols were condemned as primitive and pagan and therefore unfit at the Lord's Table. This motivated African and Asian scholars to argue for inculturation of Holy Communion symbols because the inherited symbols in this rite have become a source of alienation and economic exploitation of the people. This chapter identified gaps in previous studies as demonstrated. First, it noted the earlier studies did not give inculturation of Holy Communion symbols enough attention it deserved as the subject was discussed in the footnotes. Second, it was only a snap shot of studies that were done on various Churches in Africa on large scope without limitation, this necessitating the need for an in-depth study on inculturation of Holy Communion symbols.

The second chapter focused on theory that informed this thesis that is inculturation. This entailed the on-going dialogue between the gospel and the culture of the people in their respective context. The five conceptual frameworks were discussed in this theory, namely missio-cultural, incarnation, translation, liberation and symbolism. The chapter demonstrated that through inculturation there is continuity of discontinuity when the gospel and culture of the people encounter one another. The reason being in inculturation there is borrowing from both culture and the gospel as well as there is baptizing of the cultural practices into Christian faith. This was evident in the good practices in the Kikuyu worldview that were integrated and accommodated in the Holy Communion rite, while repugnant practices were discarded.

The third chapter brought up the Kikuyu worldview that encompassed their creation myth, language, land, religion and food. The Kikuyus claimed one ancestral origin in Gikuyu and Mumbi as the first parents created by *Ngai*. This myth had similarities with the biblical creation account in the book of Genesis, since both acknowledge the fundamental place and the role of Supreme Being. Kikuyu was the language widely spoken by this community. It was so crucial in this study for it was the medium of communication used during the

administration of Holy Communion symbols. This means the translation of the Holy Communion and its symbols into Kikuyu language gave deeper and fuller understanding of this rite. However, there were limitations linked with this process of translation, where the original meaning was lost.

The place of the land was so great in that it was the source of life. All community activities revolved around their land since it was the economic factor of production as well as having a religious connotation. The land nourished and sustained the community and linked them with their maker *Ngai* and ancestors through sacrifices and libation respectively. In view of this, the Kikuyu's connection with land and its produce for life and sustenance became good premises and rationale for proposing the use of indigenous symbols of nourishment that is local foods, in the Holy Communion, in order to ensure hypostatic union. It is right to conclude that all these components of the Kikuyu worldview were interconnected and permeated all the aspects of the people's ways of life. On the significance of meals among Kikuyus, it established that in spite of the influence of Christianity (among other religions in a pluralistic society), modernity, postmodernity and globalization the Kikuyu concept of meal still stands. Thus, in this chapter, the concept of meal in the Kikuyu worldview became a good premise for deeper and richer understanding of the Holy Communion meal in Christian faith, after proper and effective inculturation.

The fourth chapter discussed the inherited understanding and practice of the Holy Communion rite in the ACK tradition. It revealed that the ACK recognize two sacraments, namely Holy Communion and baptism. The sacrament of baptism initiates the believers into Christian faith while the sacrament of Holy Communion is for spiritual nourishment and sustenance. In the sacrament of Holy Communion the use of wafers and wine as the symbols are highly preferred as the tradition and practice of the ACK is that these two symbols are administered in both kinds. However, today this inherited tradition in the Anglican tradition is critiqued by the mission-based Churches established abroad by the Church of England, as being not only culturally insensitive but also oppressive. This has seen the unofficial diversion from traditional symbols in some Provinces in the Anglican Communion.

The fifth chapter earmarked the methodology used to collect and analyse data. Sixty-seven participants were engaged from twenty-five parishes in the diocese of Thika. The participants comprised ordained clergypersons and Christians within their respective parishes in the diocese. These included canons, archdeacons, priests, lay readers, synod delegates, as well as

departmental leaders at the local Church level, comprising of the Youth, the Mothers' Union and Fathers' Association. The study applied semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires as tools for data collection, conducted between November 2013 and February 2014.

The major findings of this study about the place and role of the Holy Communion symbols in the life of the ACK diocese of Thika are in chapters six and seven. Chapter six established that Holy Communion symbols acquired diverse meanings to diocesan Christians, because when symbols move from one context to the other they are re-interpreted and their meaning may vary from their place of origin. This chapter disclosed that the wafers and wine have been understood as symbols representing the body and blood of Christ, this being the universally shared Christian experience in the globe. However, diocesan Christians constructed other meanings around these symbols as foreign products, prohibited products, symbol of modernity and symbol of neo-colonialism. As symbol of modernity adored in the diocese, they are associated with sophistication and to an extent mark the test for defining if a Church is modern or civilized if it uses them. For these symbols are associated more with social identity with European custom and advancement in life rather than spiritual conviction.

As symbols unite and divide, this study observed that the use of the traditional symbols of Holy Communion, that is wafers and wine, have resulted in social stratification in the diocese, affirming the nature of symbols to divide. Therefore, class issues arose that divide the communicants between the 'haves' and 'have nots', in spite of Holy Communion symbols lifting all hurdles that inhibit oneness in Christ. In our society today that is pluralistic and advocating for inclusivity of all without discrimination, Mancini and Elena Mirashnikova note that religious symbols have brought conflict in the public domain (2009:2629; 2013:325). This was no different with Holy Communion symbols in the diocese as the study discloses exclusion of many diocesan Christians in the Holy Communion in spite of Church been understood as family in Kikuyu context. While Christ invites all to this meal, diocesan requirements such as baptism, confirmation, personal examination before partaking of these symbols and holy matrimony have become a stumbling block to many. For instance, children born out of wedlock become a symbol of sin to their parents (Mombo 2013:864), as their parents who have not solemnised their marriage in Church do not qualify to partake of Holy Communion symbols. Here men are the big casualty as far as exclusion from Holy Communion is concerned, since women are re-admitted to Communion if they were confirmed before eloping. The diocesan Church argument for exclusion of men is that they

are the one with the upper hand in marriage to correct their union plight by coming for renewal and blessings of their marriage.

Another observation is that it has become fashionable in the diocese to be communicant of Holy Communion symbols, not necessarily for the sake of spiritual conviction but for association purposes. This is attributed to poor teaching in the diocese as well as that the diocese has abandoned the inherited Anglican tradition of preparing communicants before Communion. The consequence as a result of these failures is ‘wrong’ people partake of the Holy Communion symbols, the symbols are taken lightly by the Christians and ultimately the initial glory that communicants used to experience in the Holy Communion service has declined. This necessitates the need for re-interpretation of Holy Communion symbols in order for them to become powerful again through teaching in the diocese, because the Christian faith is a teaching faith. This study suggests the need for reincarnation of the Kikuyus’ understanding of Christian adherents during the missionary era as *athomi*,¹⁶⁴ meaning learners (Kiarie 2011). For this signified that *athomis* were engaged in continuous learning about the Christian faith; Mugambi says it lasted for four years for one to qualify to become *Muthomi* in singular and consequently a full member of the Church and partaker of the Holy Communion (Mugambi 1992:17).

The seventh chapter established that the Holy Communion symbols have been inculturated through the method of dynamic equivalence. The study findings indicate that the prevalent practice in the diocese is the use of the wafers and wine and not the indigenous symbols of nourishment like *chapatti*, arrowroots, sweet potatoes, or *muratina*. Dynamic equivalence inculturation of wafers and wine thrived in the diocese because in the process of inculturation, that entails acceptance and transformation of these symbols was by coercion for in the process of acculturation there was no mutual dialogue between the missionaries’ religious symbols (wafers and wine) and Kikuyu religious symbols. The indicators of dynamic equivalence inculturation were conversion or metanoia, heterogeneity as well as loss and gain. On metanoia or conversion as an indicator that inculturation has taken place, this study established that the initial meaning ascribed to these symbols by missionaries was amplified by some diocesan Christians, now assuming multiple meanings. The multiple

¹⁶⁴ Athomi [singular *muthomi*] is a Kikuyu word for readers but the symbolic meaning is learners. When the CMS missionaries came to Kikuyuland and the natives began converting to Christianity their relatives used to refer to them as *athomi* (Karanja 1999). This is because the missionary method of evangelism began by teaching the new converts how to read with the prime goal of enabling them to read the Bible on their own. Therefore, writing was not emphasized much like reading.

meanings of the Holy Communion symbols implied heterogeneity, because they assumed hybridity as partially African and partially Euro-American symbols. This suggests that in spite of gaining universally shared Christian experience across the Christian faith as symbol of the body and blood of Christ, they too lost their single meaning attracting multiple meanings because they have been re-interpreted in a different context from their origin.

On inculturation of the Holy Communion symbols by using indigenous symbols of nourishment, the study found that diocesan Christians had diverse views. As symbols unite and divide, there emerged liberal views and conservative views. The liberals, influenced by synchronic logic of conscious inculturation, were convinced that Kikuyu culture has something to bring and offer to Christianity. They argued that indigenous symbols of nourishment, in the form of people's food, communicate effectively to indigenous people well, as they touch their deeper consciousness and their hearts in relation to imported or foreign food products. Furthermore, through indigenous symbols the immanence and transcendence of God is manifested and evident because God identifies with people and becomes the source of their life and nourishment to them. Lumbala affirms that Christ as Emmanuel feels comfortable taking our food for he is not a God on a special diet while outside the Jewish context such that he would carry his 'sandwich' wherever he goes (1998:56). The other thing through use of indigenous symbols of nourishment is hypostatic union is realized and experienced as the priest, the Holy Communion symbols used and the people's cosmos bring heaven and earth together in praising God through provision of the fruits of the earth in the form of people's food.

However, conservatives influenced by diachronic logic conscious of tradition emphasized conserving the historical symbols used by Christ as they were hesitant to support the use of indigenous symbols of nourishment. The conservative, being conscious that symbols can lose meaning with encounter with change, feared that the use of indigenous symbols in the Holy Communion would emanate to Holy Communion being taken lightly. This posed the risk of traditional symbols that were introduced by Christ losing their value, meaning and mystery in the life of the communicants.

This thesis also identified theological and cultural challenges linked to inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika. Theological challenges such as involvement of laity while doing theology were conspicuous in most of the diocesan Christians' response, where some heard about inculturation of Holy Communion symbols as a theological debate

for the first time. This is in spite of the high rate of substitution of traditional symbols in the Anglican Communion been registered, though this affirms that the diocese is a conservative one. However, there were those who came across inculturation of Holy Communion symbols through the late Archbishop Gitari's model, though this has vanished with his death. In this line of thought, lack of involvement of laity while doing theology discloses theologically illiterate congregations, meaning that the inculturation done is superficial for it fails to involve both clergy and laity while doing theology. Unity of the universal Church of Christ was another challenge, though this thesis argued that inculturation is opposed to uniformity but welcomes plurality or unity in diversity, evident after reappropriation of the Christian faith in different contexts. Thus, this thesis argued the Church emphasis should be on the theological significance advanced by Holy Communion symbols and not their source as this has become economic exploitation and a form of neo-colonialism to the Churches that have to import these symbols. Ecclesiastical imperialism is another theological challenge to inculturation of Holy Communion symbols. For this thesis found that the diocese effort to reappropriate the Holy Communion symbols has to be approved elsewhere in spite of inculturation being the task of the local Church. This imperialism also pervades in theological institutions that saw diocesan clergy receive western theological formation that alienates them from their context. Fortunately, it was worth noting the Anglican Church through bodies such as TEFT addressing this theological challenge.

Consequently, cultural challenges such as fear of the Church leadership to give congregations freedom to express their faith in their own unique contexts, is hampering inculturation of Holy Communion symbols. While Kurgat believes that effective inculturation is from below upward and not vice versa, this thesis established that efforts at the grassroot level may be thwarted before they kick off (2009). Moreover, due to wafers and wine being associated with modernity, this thesis discloses that some diocesan Christians feared to lose western acquired civilizations that give them identity. This thesis also discloses that Holy Communion symbols risk being taken lightly, as some diocesan Christians were persuaded that change of symbols mean change and distortion of the meaning these symbols represents. The preparation of the Holy Communion symbols in the diocesan context was another cultural challenge because of low technology and health issues associated with indigenous foods suggested for use. Colonialism of some diocesan mind was the other cultural challenge hindering inculturation of Holy Communion symbols for they are pre-occupied with these symbols despite alienating them, as symbols are contextual. This thesis argued for

deconstruction of this cultural challenge through decolonization of the diocesan minds, in order to accept and transform their food and reappropriate them in the Holy Communion rite.

8.3. Conclusion of the Major Findings

Therefore, in light of this it is good for this thesis to conclude: One, that wafers and wine are the prevalent symbols used in the diocese of Thika and the Christians safeguard the use of these symbols lest they lose their acquired western ‘civilized’ identity. Two, this showed that the diocese is a conservative one which intends to retain the inherited Anglican liturgical and ecclesiastical identity from CMS missionaries, despite these symbols being from other contexts. Hence not communicating effectively to the recipients of these symbols and thus detrimental to their religious way of life that lead them live dualistic life. Three, the Kikuyu way of life particularly the concept meal is so fundamental as far as deeper understanding of the Holy Communion meal is concerned. However, there are some areas that have not been fully exploited and particularly the symbol of meat that invokes Kikuyu sacrificial worldview that is not repugnant to the Gospel of Christ.

8.4. Contributions to New Knowledge and Areas for Further Research

The prime significance of any scholarship is contribution of new knowledge to scholarship, and this thesis has attempted to do the same. The first contribution of this study is the selective inculturation being experienced in the ACK diocese Thika and other mission established Churches in Africa. This selective inculturation only touches the areas considered innocuous to the so-called mothers Churches. This postulates that the colonial ecclesiastical roots in Africa are not dead but alive, despite the continued struggle of African Christianity to find a home within the African worldview (Williams 1993:7). Second, inculturation is multifaceted in that it has happened but continues to happen in different ways, even within the members of the same church. This means that inculturation happens differently depending on the maturity and educational background of the believers. This study cannot claim to have exhausted all the areas in the Holy Communion symbols and inculturation. There are various degrees and areas of inculturation that call for further research on Holy Communion symbolism. As this study identified dynamic selective inculturation of Holy Communion symbols in the diocese of Thika it did not explore theologies underpinning this method of inculturation in the diocese, therefore remaining an area for further studies. In addition, this study was limited to the diocese of Thika inhabited by the Kikuyu ethnic group. Therefore,

another research in more cosmopolitan dioceses like Nairobi, All Saints or Mombasa, with more than two ethnic groups, is worth considering.

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¹⁶⁵ See appendix 11 with all the names of the sixty-seven participants in this study.

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Appendix 1



DIOCESE OF THIKA

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF KENYA

BISHOP: Rt. Rev. Julius N. Wanyoike
DIOCESAN OFFICES: Next to St. Andrew's Cathedral
Kenyatta Highway (Opp. Thika High School)
Email: info@ackthikadiocese.org
Website: www.ackthikadiocese.org

P.O BOX 214
Tel: 067 31634
020 2328850
Cell: 0722 423455
0732578640
Thika

29th October 2013

KWA -ZULU NATAL UNIVERSITY
SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Sir,

RE: REV GEORGE KURIA KIARIE

Christian greetings from Kenya.

We write to confirm that the above named who is a doctoral student in your University pursuing Systematic Theology has our blessing to come and carry out his research in the Diocese of Thika.

God bless.

Yours faithfully,

Ven. David Karethiu
Administrative Secretary
Diocese of Thika

Phil. 4:13 I can do all things through Him who gives me strength

Departments: Mothers' Union, K.A.M.A, K.A.Y.O, Brigade, Sunday School, Education, T.E.E,
Mission & Evangelism, Christian Community Services, Human Resource, Justice & Peace, Stewardship

Appendix 2

Consent Form

Introduction

I am George Kiarie, currently a registered doctoral student at the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. My area of focus is Systematic Theology with interest on how studies of Systematic Theology (in this case the sacrament of Holy Communion) can be applicable to us and initiate change and transformation in our African context. The focus is therefore theological and contextual.

The Study and its Purpose

As an institution of higher learning, the academic process of completing this degree at the University requires me to conduct a study and write a thesis on my findings. The proposed topic of my study is **An Inculturative critique of Holy Communion symbols within the Anglican Community of the Diocese of Thika Kenya.**

The aim of this study is to conduct a research and critically analyse the understanding and practice of the elements used in the Holy Communion in the ACK Diocese of Thika, and to explore how the Diocese can indigenize these elements and what will be the theological significance of indigenizing them in the Diocesan context. The study seeks to involve the members of the ACK Diocese of Thika both clergy and laity. Therefore, the study intends to investigate to what extent the understanding and practice of the elements used in the Holy Communion in the Diocese of Thika have been indigenized.

Your participation towards the success of this study is therefore requested.

1. Informed Consent Signed

To participate one will have to sign this informed consent form before taking part in the interview. This will indicate that I have explained the details of the research to you and that you agree to participate in this study.

2. Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is based on your free will. You can stop this interview at any point should you not want to continue. However, your participation to the end of this study will be fully appreciated. The interview will last utmost one hour and your cooperation will

be highly valued. In case there is need for follow up, you will be kindly requested to participate again.

3. Identification to Participate

You were identified to participate in this study, because the researcher believed that you have been an Anglican member in the Diocese of Thika. In addition, you have been selected since the researcher is confident that you have the relevant information on the elements used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion. Therefore, your participation will enrich this study and that why you were chosen.

4. Privacy and Confidentiality

I wish to assure you that the information obtained from your ministry will remain confidential to me as the researcher. This consent form will not be linked to the questionnaire and your answers will remain confidential. In all the subsequent dissemination of my study findings in the form of finished thesis, oral participations or Publications you will remain anonymous and your personal identity and opinions will remain private and will not be referred to overtly, protecting your right and your agreement of participation.

5. Risk Factor

You are assured that any decision because of this study will not in any way affect you negatively. I assure you that the data and information obtained from you will remain confidential and the same will securely be disposed off after the thesis has gone through the examination process with the faculty office at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

6. Potential Benefits

I do not want to promise you any monetary benefits or financial gifts for taking part in this interview. However, this study is purposed toward contributing to academic and theological knowledge. Hence, since this study will seek to contribute towards change and transformation in the Diocese among the Christians, I will report my study findings to the churches involved and in the Diocese, so I will make my findings available to those who practically intend to apply the proposed suggestions on indigenization of the elements used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion.

7. Questions

For more information or queries you may contact:

Research Student: Rev. George Kiarie

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8. Agreement to participate

I..... (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

Appendix 3

In-depth Individual Interview

These are interview guides (schedule) that will be used during the in-depth interview in the ACK Diocese of Thika. Twenty-one participants will be interviewed for in-depth information on the understanding and practice of elements used in Holy Communion, and to what extent these elements have been indigenized in the Diocese of Thika. The interview will be conducted on face to face questioning of the participants. This will be achieved by probing questions on elements used in Holy Communion, their understanding and practice and on indigenization.

Section A. Understanding and Practice

1. What is Holy Communion?
2. What is bread (wafers) and wine to you?
3. Why do we use them in the Holy Communion?
4. What is their significance to you as a Christian?
5. How often do you take them in your Church?
6. Who participate in taking them?
7. What are the requirements for you to take them?
8. (a) Who administer these elements in your Church?
(b) Why?
9. Which form/ mode of taking wine do you use (e.g. dipping, sharing one cup, individual cups or all of them)?
9a. why the practice you have mentioned above?

Section B. Indigenization

1. Do we need to inculturates/ indigenize the elements used in the Holy Communion?

2. Why inculturates/indigenize the elements used in the Holy Communion?
3. What are benefits of inculturating/indigenizing the elements used in the Holy Communion?
4. What are the benefits of using inculturated/ indigenized element in the Holy Communion?
5. Are there dangers of inculturating/ indigenizing the elements used in the Holy Communion?
6. What is the disadvantage/s of using inculturated/ indigenized elements in the Holy Communion?
7. (a) Has the Diocese been advocating for indigenization of the elements used in Holy Communion?
(b) If yes how has it been doing?
(c) If yes which elements has the Diocese been recommending to be used in place of wafers and wine?
8. If the Diocese has not been advocating for inculturation/ indigenization of the element used in the Holy Communion, why?
9. If we may have shortage of wafers and wine in the country what can we use in Holy Communion?

Appendix 4

Focus Group Discussion

These are questioning route that will be used during the focus group discussions in the ACK Diocese of Thika. I will have three groups for discussion on the understanding and practice of elements used in Holy Communion, and to what extent these elements have been indigenized in the Diocese of Thika. The objective of these questions is to guide researcher to access data on the extent the understanding and practice of elements used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion have been indigenized in the Diocese of Thika. As well as help the researcher, who will be the moderator in the focus group discussions to probe for in-depth information.

Section A. Understanding and Practice

1. What is Holy Communion to you?
2. Why do you participate in Holy Communion?
3. What are the benefits of participating in it?
4. Why do we use wafers and wine in this rite?

Section B. Indigenization

1. Can we come with our own food from home to use in Holy Communion?
2. What can we come with from home to use in Holy Communion?
3. What is the importance of using what we have at home in Holy Communion?
4. How often can we come with our own food for Holy Communion celebration?
5. Have any of our Church/ Parish used food from our own home in the Holy Communion?
6. What was the feeling of the Christians?
7. Will there be any danger/ problem of using our own food in Holy Communion?
8. Will this practice of using our own food affect the other Churches in the diocese or Province?

Appendix 5

Questionnaire

These questionnaires will be sent out to twenty-five Christians within the ACK Diocese of Thika. The objective of this questionnaire is to investigate to extent the understanding and practice of elements used in the sacramental rite of Holy Communion have been indigenized in the Diocese of Thika.

Kindly answer all the following questions to the best of your ability

Section A. Background

1. What is your gender?
2. What role do you play in your Church?
3. What is your age bracket?

Section B. Understanding and Practice

1. What do you use to celebrate Holy Communion in your Church?
2. Why do you use what you have mentioned here above?
3. What is the meaning/ understanding of the elements you have mentioned?
4. What is the importance of taking these elements in your Christian life?
5. a) Who administer these elements in your Church?
b) Why?
6. How often do you receive these elements?
7. What mode/ practice of administering wine do your Church use i.e. dipping, individual cups, one cup or all of them?

8. Why does your Church use the mode/practice of administering wine you have said?

Section C. Indigenization

1. Apart from what you said (**in section B**) used in your Church, do you use any other elements (certain food and drink) as elements in the Holy Communion?

a). If yes, what do you use?

b). Why do you use what you have said above?

c). How often do you use these elements?

2. Do the elements you have mentioned above, have the same meaning/ understanding with the elements you mentioned in section B?

3. Which were the Kikuyu food used to offer traditional sacrifices?

(a) Can we use them in the Holy Communion in place of wafers and wine?

(b) If yes how?

(c) If no why?

4. Will these foods you have mentioned have the same meaning/ understanding like bread and wine?

5. If wafers and wine disappears what else can we use in Holy Communion?

Thank you for taking your time to fill this form. God bless you.

Appendix 6

Ethical Clearance



05 November 2013

Rev George K Kiarie (213520664)
School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/0839/013D

Project title: A missio-cultural critique of the understanding and practice of the sacramental rite of Holy Communion within the Anglican Church of Kenya, Diocese of Thika

Dear Rev Kiarie,

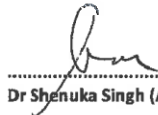
Expedited Approval

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



.....

Dr Shenuka Singh (Acting Chair)

/ms

cc Supervisors: Rev Dr Roderick Hewitt and Rev Dr Raymond S Kumalo

cc Academic Leader Research: Professor P Denis

cc School Administrator: Ms Catherine Murugan

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

Appendix 7

Translated Instruments and Consent Form into Kikuyu

Kikuyu Consent Form

Fomu ya kuhoya kunyitanira gwaku thiini wa githomo giakwa

1. Kwimenyithania

Nii njitagwo George Kiarie, na gwa kahinda gaka ndimurutwo wa githomo kia iguru wa cukuru wa Religion Philosophy and Classic thiini wa Universiti ya KwaZulu-Natal South Africa. Ndirathomira theoronji yegemaine na ruhonge rwa mirutanire ya kanitha (Systematic Theology). Wira wakwa munene urahutania na giathi kia Mwathani gia kuria irio cia hwai-
ini, uria kingitauka wega na kuri ithui ta akristiano and gicenjie miturire iitu ta andu airu o haria turi

2. Githomo giki na muoroto wa kio

Ta murutwo wa githomo kia iguru thiini wa university, thukuru yakwa niyendaga o murutwo woothe athuthurie uhoro muno thiini wa ruhonge ruria arathomera na andike maundu maria amenya megemaine na uthuthuria wake. Riu nii githomo giakwa kirathuthuria **Munytire na mutaratara wa giathi kia Mwathani gia kuria irio cia hwaini thiini wa Kanitha witu wa Anglikani ya Kenya thiini wa diocesi ya Thika** kana na githungu **An Inculturative critique of Holy Communion symbols within the Anglican Community of the Diocese of Thika Kenya.**

Muoroto munene wa githomo giki ni gutwiiria na guthuthuria munytire na mutaratara wa uria mugate na ndibei itaukaga akristiano giathini thiini wa diocese ya Thika. O hamwe na uguni uria mugate na ndibei irehaga kuri akristiano, na kana no ciguithanio na unduire witu wa ugikiyu ni getha itaukwe wega makiria. Githomo giki gitanyite kuhoya unyitaniri na amemba oothe a diocese ya Thika mari atungatiri na akristiano thiini wa uthuthuria uyu wa giathi kia Mwathani gia kuria irio cia hwai-
ini.

Kwo uguo unyitaniri waku thiini wa githomo giki ugukorwo uri uhotani munene.

3. Kuria unyitaniri waku na witikire gwikira kirore

Wetikira kunyitanira na nii githomo ini giki na kunjokeria ciuria iria kunguria ningukuhoya witikire gwikira kirore giaku formu ini iria kunguhe mbere ya ciuria. Uhoro ucio niukuga ati ninguhuire rutha o mbere na ndakumenyithia matanya ma uthuthuria uria ngukorwo ngiika githomo –ini giakwa.

4. Kwirutira hatari marihi

Kwirutira gwaku thiini wa githomo giki ni kwenda gwaku hatari kuhatiririo ona hanini. Wina wiathi kwieheria o hindi o yoothe hatari na mukana, no kwirutira gwaku nginya muthia wa uthuthuria uyu niguo wega muno. Uthuthuria uyu ukuhuthira ndagika o nini itakirite ithaa rimwe na unyitaniri waku niukwamukirwo na gitio. Hangikorwo no hendeke kurimira uhoro uyu makiria ni ukorio na gitio uetikira kunyitanira ringi.

5. Guthura aria me kuhuthika githomo-ini giki

Urathurirwo thiini wa githomo-ini giki ta mundu umwe wagiriire tondu wa mbere uri muanglikana wa diocese ya Thika. Na wa keeri ni undu, muthuthuria ari na uuma nawe ati wina uhoro mweka na murikuru wigii giathi kia Mwathani gia kuria irio cia hwai-ini. Niundu ucio unyitaniri waku thiini waa uthuthuria uyu niugwikira hinya githomo giki na niko ndiraguthurire.

6. Kuiga uhoro uyu thiri-ni gatagati gaku na nii

Nikwenda gukwihokera ati uhoro uria woothe tukuaria nawe thiini wa uthuthuria uyu ugukorwo uri o wa githomo giki kiumbe, kwoguo uria woothe tukwaria nawe ni thiri itu nawe. Koguo thiini wa wandiki wa githomo giki riitwa riaku nirikugitirwo makiria ati ritikihuthika uru riu kana riria wira uyu ungiandikwo na njira ingi thutha uyu.

7. Ugwati o woothe

Ningukwihokera ati uria woothe ukuuga thiini wa uthuthuria uyu ndugukurehera ugwati o woothe ona hanini. Uyu niundu uria woothe nguoya kuuma kuri we ugukorwo uri thiri-ini na niugathario na uthungakio biu thutha wa githomo giki kiagerio ni thukuru na wafici ya Universiti ya KwaZulu-Natal

8. Umithio o woothe

Ndikwenda gukwirira ati kwina umithio wa mbecha thutha wa kunyitanira na nii thiini wa uthuthuria wakwa. No ingienda umenye ati unyitaniri waku umithio wago wi thiini wa kuongerera uugi githomoini giki, tondu Muoroto munene wa uthuthuria uyu ni kurehe ugaruruku mwega thini wa akristiano othe thiini wa diocese iitu ya Thika. Gitumi ni tondu maundu maria makoimira thiini wa uthuthuria uyu nimakamenyithanio makanitha-ini maitu na ningi na njira iria ingi ciothe.

9. Ciuria

Kungikorwo kwina kiuria kana nganja o ciothe no urie andu aya me haha:

Muruto uria urathuthuria maundu:

Rev. George Kiarie

PhD. Candidate, School of Religion Philosophy and Classics;

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg

Email yake: kiarie_george@yahoo.com **kana** 213520664@ukzn.ac.za **Namba ya thimu:**
+27 845904826 **Kana** +254720930453.

Aria marugamiriire uthuthuria uyu ta Research Supervisors:

1) Prof. Raymond Kumalo

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2) Prof. Roderick R. Hewitt

Academic Leader for Theology and Ethics

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University of Kwa Zulu Natal, Pietermaritzburg

Em: Hewitt@ukzn.ac.za

Tel: 033 260 62 73

10. Uiguithanio wa kuhuthika githomoini giki

Nii..... (Riitwa riaku riothe) haha nindoiga ati ninjui maundu moothe megie uthuthuria uyu na ati ninjitikirire kunyitanira wira –ini uyu ndiendeire o uguo tuhu hatari kuringirio kana kuhatirio ona hanini. Na ninjui ati ndinarutha na wiyathi kwieheria thiini wa uthuthuria uyu o hindi iria ingienda gwika uguo.

Kirore kia munyitaniri uthuthuriani uyu

Muthenya

.....

.....

Appendix 8

Individual in-depth Interviews

Ici ni ciuria iria igutongoria ndereti ndikiru thiini wa diocese ya Thika. Ndereti ino igukorwo na akristiano mirongo iri na umwe maitho kwa maitho kwi aria mathiaga giathi-ini kia Mwathani. Ndereti igutenderia uria giathi kia Mwathani kiiyukitio na mutaratara uria uhuthirwo gutumirwo makanitha-ini ma Thika. Na kana irio iria ihuthagirwo thii-ini wa igongona riri niicirathinitio na unduire wa ugikuyu. Ndereti ino niyabata tondu ciuria iria igukorwo iri kiriganirigiaga na mweke wa kwandandurwo makiria.

Section A. Understanding and Practice

1. Giathi niki?
2. Mugate na ndibei ni kihari we?
3. Tucihuthagira niki?
4. Bata wacio niki kuri mukristiano?
5. Uciamukagira maita maigana kanitha-ini wanyu?
6. Nia magiririirwo ni guciamukira?
7. Ni maundu mariku mundu abatairenikuhingia niguu etikirio kwamukagira?
8. (a) Nu uciheanaga kanitha-in wanyu?
(b) Niki?
9. Ni mutugo uriku mwamukagira naguo kanitha-ini wanyu?
9. Niki muhuthagira mutugo ucio?

Section B. Indigenization

10. Nitubataire kuiguthania na unduire witu (indigenize/inculturate) irio iria tuhuthagira giathi-in kia mwathani na unduire witu wa ugikuyu?
11. Niki?
12. Umuthio wakuiguithania irio cia giathi kia Mwathani na unduire wa ugikuyu ni ki?
13. Umithio wakuhuthira irio cia unduire witu giathi-ini kia mwathani ni uriku?

14. Ni kuri ugwati wakuiguithania irio cia giathi kia Mwathani na unduire witu?
15. Uru wakuhuthira irio ciguithanitia na unduire witu giathi-ini kia Mwathani ni ki?
16. (a) Niugwiciria kana diocese nikoretwo iri muhari wa mbere wa kugathiriria tuhuthire irio ciguithanitia na unduire witu thiini wa giathi kia Mwathani?
(b) Ongorwo ni ii ni atia ikoretwo ikigathiriria?
(c) Niki igathagiriria kingihuthirwo diocese-ini handu ha mugate na ndibei?
17. Angikorwo diocese ndikoretwo ikigathiriria tuiguithanie mugate na ndibei na unduire witu-ri niki hihi?
18. Mugate na ndibei ingiaga bururi-ini witu biu-ri niki tungihuthira handu-ini ha cio cieri?

Appendix 9

Focus Group Discussion

Ici ni ciuria iria igutongoria ndereti ndikiru thiini wa diocese ya Thika. Ndereti ino igukorwo na akristiano mirongo iri na umwe maitho kwa maitho kwi aria mathiaga giathi-ini kia Mwathani. Ndereti igutenderia uria giathi kia Mwathani kiiyukitio na mutaratara uria uhuthirwo gutumirwo makanitha-ini ma Thika. Na kana irio iria ihuthagirwo thii-ini wa igongona riri niicirathinitio na unduire wa ugikuyu. Ndereti ino ni yabata tondu ciuria iria igukorwo irikiriganirigiaga na mweke wa kwandandurwo makiria.

Section A. Understanding and Practice

5. Giathi kia Mwathani kihari we?
6. Uthiaga kwamukira niki?
7. Umithio wa kwamukiria niki?
8. Tuhuthagira mugate na ndibei niki?

Section B. Indigenization

9. Notuke na irio ciitu kuuma micii itu tucihuthire giathi-ini kia Mwathani?
10. Ni irio iriku tungiuka nacio kuuma micii-ini itu?
11. Wega wakuthira irio ciitu Gia thiini kia Mwathani ni uriku?
12. Ni maita maigana twagiriirwo ni guka na irio ciitu kuuma micii itu tucihuthire giathi-ini kia Mwathani?
13. Ni kuri kanitha hihi uri wahuthira irio kuuma micii-ini itu giathi-ini kia Mwathani?
14. Ongorwo ni kuri ri, andu maciyukirie atia?
15. Ni kuri ugwati kana thina wakuhuthira irio ciitu giathi-ini kia Mwathani?
16. Mutugo uyu wakuhuthira irio kuuma micii itu no uthukie uria makanitha maingi mamenyerete?

Appendix 10

Questionnaire

Ciuria ici igutumwo kuri akristiano mirongo iri na atano a diocese ya Thika. Muoroto wa ciuria ici ni guthuthuria uria mugate na ndibei thiini wa giathi kia mwathani citaukagwo ni akristiano na gitumi gia cio na mutarara/Mutugo uria uhuthiragwo makanithaini ma Anglican na ni atia utauku na mutaratara/mutugoucio wa mugate na ndibei ikoretwo ikiiguithanio(indigenization/inculturation) na unduure wa ugikuyu thiini wa diocese ya Thika.

Section A. Background

1. Wi mundu murume kana mundu wa nja?
2. Ni utungata uriku wihokeirwo kanithaini waku?
3. Ukuru waku wigatagati ka miaka igana?

Section B. Understanding and Practice

4. Muhuthagira ki thiini wa Giathi kia Mwathani gia kuria Irio cia Hwaini kanithaini wanyu?
5. Niki kana ni undu ki Muhuthagira uguo woiga kiura-ini kia mbere?
6. Utauku kana bata wakiria muhuthagira giathi-ini kia mwathani ni ki kuri we?
7. Umithio wa kiria Muhuthagira kanitha-ini wanyu niki hari we?
8. (a) Nu uheanaga irio cia giathi kia mwathani kwanyu kanitha-ini?
(b) Niki?
9. Ni maita maigana mwamukagira giathi kia mwathani kanitha-ini wanyu?
10. Kanitha wanyu muhuthiire mutugo kana mutaratara uriku wa kwamukira kiria muriaga na munyuaga Giathi kia Mwathani iria muheagwo?
11. Kanitha wanyu uhuthagira mutaratara kana Mutugo ucio niki?

Section C. Indigenization

12. Ni Muhuthagira kindu kingi gia kuria kana gia kunyua kanitha-ini wanyu kana no iria ugire haria iguru o kiambiria?
- (a) Ongorwo ni muhuthagira kindu kingi , no uuge niki muhuthagira?
 - (b) Na Muhuthagira kindu kiu kana indo icio woiga haha iguru niki kanitha-ini wanyu?
 - (c) Muhuthagira ta maita maigana kwa mweri?
- Kindu kiu kana irio icio wagweta muhuthagira Giathi-ini kia Mwathani gia kuria Irio cia Hwai-ini ri, niiri Utauku utiganite na iria ugwetire o kiambiria?
13. Agikuyu- ri mahuthagira indo iriku (muthemba irio) kurutira Ngai magongona na cio?
- (a) No tuhuthire indo icio woiga cia ugikuyu thiini wa giathi kia mwathani gia kuria irio cia hwa-ini?
 - (b) Ongorwo woiga niguo, atia?
 - (c) Ongorwo tutingicihuthira-ri niki?
14. Irio ici cia ugikuyu-ri ingihuthirwo Giathi-ini kia Mwathani-ri ciagia na urutani umwe na mugate na ndibei iria ihuthikaga kanitha-ini?
15. Kungirwo gutiri migate na ndibei ri niki tungihuthira giathi-ini kia mwathani gia kuria irio cia hwaini?

Mwathani akurathime niundu wa wiheani waku wa kuiyuria form ino.

Appendix 11

Research Participants

Name	Parish
1. Naftali Maina	Ndunyu Chege
2. Teresia Waiganjo	Ndunyu Chege
3. Peter Gicharu	Ndunyu Chege
4. Joseph Githae	Juja
5. Jemimah Wamutiri Maina	Juja
6. Lydia Wanjiru	Juja
7. Jane Odhiambo	Memorial
8. Ven. Joshua Ngaruiya	Memorial
9. Peterson Karanja	Memorial
10. Gladys Wairimu	Ruiru
11. Elvis Masibo	Ruiru
12. Rev. Dr. Regina Kinuthia	Ruiru
13. Rev. Daniel Ndegwa	Kiganjo East
14. Joseph Ndungu	Kiganjo East
15. Mary Wanja Njuguna	Kiganjo East
16. James Maina Nduati	Gituamba
17. Mwihaki Nguyai	Gituamba
18. John Kinuthia Mungai	Gituamba
19. Esther Wanjiku Njoroge	Gatura
20. Samuel Muruthi	Gatura
21. Lydia Nyokabi	Gatura
22. Ven. Patrick Mukuna	Memorial
23. Rev. Zacharia Chege	Mugumoini
24. Rev. Eliud Maina	Kamenu
25. Rev. Mary Njeru	Chomo
26. Ven. Canon John Mbuthia	Gatura
27. Rev. Samuel Mwangi	Mundoro
28. Rev. Gibson Muiruri	Kiganjo West
29. Rev. Jesse Kamau	Gatuanyaga
30. Rev. Michael Gicheru	Gathaiti

31. Ven John Gitau	Happy Valley
32. Rev. Mary Njau	Thamuru
33. Rev. Timothy Nduati	Gituamba
34. Tabby Muinamu	Swani
35. Carol Wanjiru	Kamenu
36. Njeru Ileri	Chomo
37. Peninah Mburu	Happy Valley
38. Joseph Guchu	Mithiini
39. Augustana Njoki	Kamenu
40. Jeremiah Nyaga	Kiganjo West
41. Perminus Muiru	Makongeni
42. Emmah Nyoro	Cathedral
43. Rev. Solomon Thiga	Kiarutara
44. Elias Gikeri	Kiarutara
45. Agnes Macharia	Kiarutara
46. Kenneth Kahora	Kiarutara
47. Samuel Ndungu	Kiarutara
48. Rev. Loise Nduta	Gakoe
49. Rosemary Njoki	Gakoe
50. David Mwaura	Gakoe
51. Lydia Wanjiku	Gakoe
52. Philip Mwangi	Gakoe
53. Rev. David Mungai	Juja Farm
54. Bedan Njoroge Gatere	Juja Farm
55. Teresia Wanjiru Muciri	Juja Farm
56. Evangelist Stanley Wainaina	Juja Farm
57. Peter Mburu Murigi	Juja Farm
58. Rev. Erastus Gitaua	Gatanga
59. Simon Ngaruiaya	Gatanga
60. Jane W. Karuru	Gatanga
61. Simon Ngaruiya	Gatanga
62. Johnstone Kamau	Gatanga
63. Ven. Joyce Kabuba	Mugutha
64. Stephen Kirabi	Mugutha

65. Mary Njogu	Mugutha
66. Eliphas Nyaga	Mugutha
67. Stephen Irungu	Mugutha