

**THE IGBO-AFRICAN KOLA NUT AS A 'TYPE' OF HOLY COMMUNION:  
TOWARDS THE MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

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**Abstract**

*This paper is a comparative study of two major elements of worship from two major religions: African traditional religion and Christianity. The comparative method of investigation is, therefore, employed to study the relationship between the Igbo kola nut and the Christian Holy Communion. It strongly asserts that the Igbo kola nut, having been studied alongside the Christian Holy communion, is the Igbo Holy Communion in Igbo traditional religion. While it does not in any way equate the Igbo kola nut with the Holy Communion, it believes that the Igbo kola nut can be understood within the parameters of a typology of the Christian Holy Communion given to Ndi'gbo as a preparation for the gospel message. As already indicated, the method of research employed in this work is the comparative method of investigation, with an ascension theory, which heavily emphasizes that for evangelization to be fruitful, pastoral agents need to begin from what the people know to what they do not know. In this case, from the kola nut as a 'type', a 'copy', a 'shadow' to the Holy Communion as its fullness.*

**Keywords:** Kola Nut, Typology, Holy Communion, Culture, Gospel, Igbo, Management

**Introducing the Problem**

The relationship between the Christian gospel message and other religions and cultures has remained a relevant discussion on the table of missiology and in fact other related areas of study. This is very important as Christianity continues to confront new cultures every day and everywhere. A cursory glance at the historical evolution of Christianity reveals that it came into existence in a Greco-Roman world, with Judaism as its first encounter. This notwithstanding, these two worlds played significant parts in shaping its character and influencing its history, in the sense that Greek philosophy and culture shaped early Christian theological formulations, and the Roman world, with its rich organizational structures, shaped the organizational and practical dimensions of the life of the Christian church, and its religious impulses from the rich Jewish tradition.

As Christianity moved to the shores of Africa, its encounter with African traditional religion and culture, its sympathetic, non-derogatory and non-dominant touch was not felt in relation to its encounter with the Greek, Roman and Jewish cultures. There was a smugness toward African Traditional Religion and culture, which generated barrage of names for it. Names like primitive, pagan, heathen, magic, ancestor worshippers, juju, animists, Fetish, animism, etc (Kanu 2015a&b). This may have been partly the result of the developments in the areas of sociology and anthropology, evident in the writings of Linnaeus (1978), Gobineau (1915), among others. However, very interesting is the perspective of the Colonial Governor of Nigeria, Lord Frederick Lugard. His perspective was very influential as he was Britain's most valued African possession. His views expressed in his *The Dual Mandate*, which was a handbook for all British administrators in tropical Africa, and influenced British colonial policies across the continent.

In character and temperament typical African of this race-type is a happy, thriftless, excitable person. Lacking in self-control, discipline, and foresight. Naturally courageous, and naturally courteous and polite, full of personal vanity, with little sense of veracity, fond of music and loving weapons as an oriental loves jewelry. His thoughts are concentrated on the events and feelings of the moment, and he suffers little from the apprehension for the future, or grief for the past (p. 70).

Relegating the African to the level of lower animals, he writes:

His mind is far nearer to the animal world than that of the European or Asiatic, and exhibits something of the animals placidity and want of desire to rise beyond the State he has reached. Through the ages the African appears to have evolved no organized religious creed, and though some tribes appear to believe in a deity, the religious sense seldom rises above pantheistic animalism and seems more often to take the form of a vague dread of the supernatural (p. 70).

Focusing on the inability of the African to manage his own affairs, he writes further:

He lacks the power of organization, and is conspicuously deficient in the management and control alike of men or business. He loves the display of power, but fails to realize its responsibility ...he will work hard with a less incentive than most races. He has the courage of the fighting animal -an instinct rather than a moral virtue.....In brief, the virtues and defects of this race-type are those of attractive children, whose confidence when it is won is given ungrudgingly as to an older and wiser superior and without envy.....Perhaps

the two traits which have impressed me as those most characteristic of the African native are his lack of apprehension and his ability to visualize the future. (p. 70).

These perspectives limited the African personality to the negative stereotypes of the primitive, the savage, the inferior, and this shaped the missionaries' conception of the African religion and culture (Kanu 2019). The early missionaries, therefore, saw the African culture in the negative light. This encounter was a forced acculturation, which describes the situation in which the Christian culture imposed certain of its elements on the African people, thereby forcing the African culture to derail from its unique tract of cultural civilization (Kanu 2010a). The first strategy employed was that of disassemblage, concealed in the exploitative colonial ideology of benevolent paternalism (Ekwuru 1999). It was first an ideology of condemnation, which identified everything "good to be white" and everything "bad to be black" (Kwame, 1981). Some missionaries made no appraisal of our peculiarities, African languages enriched with traditions of centuries, our parables, many of them the quintessence of family and national histories; our modes of thought, influenced more or less by local circumstances our poetry which reveals the profundity of African literary wizardry. The drum were banned from sounding in most churches (Hastings, 1976). African names for baptism were rejected, and as a replacement, they encouraged the adoption of not only Christian names, but also European family names like De Santos.

This paper strongly believes that it is very difficult to engage with the African people within the context of evangelization without engaging with all the stories of the African people. They can be used as instruments to dispossess and malign. Stories can also be used to empower and humanize. Stories can break the dignity of people, but stories can also be used to repair that dignity (Kanu 2019b). This paper is an attempt to retell the African story in a sympathetic, non-dominant and non-derogatory manner. Its area of focus is the African kola nut which this paper strong believes was given to the African people as a preparation for the acceptance of the Holy Communion. It is in fact understood as the Igbo traditional Holy Communion. It does not in any way equate the Igbo kola nut with the Eucharistic meal, but emphasizes that the Igbo kola nut can be considered a typology of the Eucharistic meal.

### **Culture as a *Preparatio Evangelica***

Clement of Alexandria was born at a date not known, though it is estimated to be likely between 150-160, most possibly in Athens. Having studied with religious and philosophical teachers in Greece, southern Italy, and Syria, and settled in Alexandria

and Egypt. There he was deeply impressed by the teachings of Pantaeus, who had been converted to Christianity from stoicism and who was at the time head of the Christian catechetical school in Alexandria. It is generally thought that he died around 215 AD.

In Alexandria, Clement was at one of the leading intellectual centers of the Hellenistic world. Highly speculative and heretical Gnostic forms of Christian thought had been prominent there for decades among those who professed any form of Christianity. Gnosticism itself represented one way of synthesizing Christian faith with Hellenistic culture (Spanneut 2004, n.p).

Clement of Alexandria wrote several works during his life time, however, more interesting is his *Stromata* in which he addressed the issue of the relationship between Greek philosophy and Christianity. This was necessary at a time when Christianity had moved into the Greek world where Neoplatonism was the dominant idea. He began by criticizing those who say that philosophy is worthless or dangerous for Christians. Clement calls them babblers "who in their ignorance are frightened at every noise" (*Strom.* 1, 1). He goes further than earlier thinkers like St. Justin Martyr who thought pagan philosophy contained seeds of the Logos to argue that philosophy was given to the Greeks by God to prepare them for the coming of Christ, just as the Law was given to the Hebrews for the same purpose (Mirus 2015). He writes thus:

Accordingly, before the advent of the Lord, philosophy was necessary to the Greeks for righteousness. And now it becomes conducive to piety; being a kind of preparatory training to those who attain to faith through demonstration. "For thy foot," it is said, "will not stumble, if thou refer what is good, whether belonging to the Greeks or to us, to Providence." For God is the cause of all good things; but of some primarily, as of the Old and the New Testament; and of others by consequence, as philosophy. Perchance, too, philosophy was given to the Greeks directly and primarily, till the Lord should call the Greeks. For this was a schoolmaster to bring "the Hellenic mind," as the law, the Hebrews, "to Christ." Philosophy, therefore, was a preparation, paving the way for him who is perfected in Christ. (*Strom.* 1, 5)

His own interpretation of Greek philosophy is that it was not only necessary for the Greeks as an intellectual enterprise, but very useful in preparing Christians to accept the faith, as well as helping them to understand it better and defend it against error. His idea becomes clearer when we understand the early Christian thinkers used Neoplatonic concepts to clarify the Christian message, thus using philosophy as a vehicle for conveying the Christian message.

To give a divine origin to his perspective, Clement traced Greek philosophy to the prophecy of the Old Testament. He took his time to show that, through a comparative study, Plato learned much from the books of Moses. In this, he proved that all wisdom, whether of the Jews or the Greeks, has a common origin: God. Taking from the perspective of Clement of Alexandria, the Igbo Kola nut can be understood as a gift given to Ndi'gbo to prepare them for the understanding of the Holy Communion. Thus, for evangelization to be more fruitful, beginning from the understanding of the Kola nut in Catechesis is an advantage.

### **The Kola Nut in Igbo-African Religious-Culture**

Of the many cultural symbols in Igboland, none has received attention like the kola nut. It is very important and central to the life and ceremonies of the Igbo. For the Igbo, it goes beyond the red and yellow seed that you find in trays sold on the streets and in kiosks. It is not just the biannual crop grown and stored in sacks and baskets socked with water to preserve it. It is not just the seed crops grown in the central and western parts of Africa. It is more than all these. It is a food that must be eaten with relish; it commands adoration and many accolades and must be attended to with deserving feast. It is a holy communion that unites the living and dead. Obiajulu (2013) avers that:

Apart from economic and medicinal importance of kola nut, its metaphysical significance especially among the traditional Igbo Africans,...*Oji Igbo* is commonly held to be ontologically sacred to the extent that certain taboos are hedged around it. It is not an ordinary tree and so not rampantly seen like any other trees. This scarcity portends a signal that it is exclusively created for a purpose which Igbos generally construed to be a sure key to unlock the hearts of men and gods (p. 517).

Kola nut symbolizes a feast of togetherness, love and trust. The Kola nut is a symbol of Life *ndu*, this is why the Igbo say: "He that brings kola brings life" (*onye wetara oji wetara ndu*), and to share in it is to be part of the project of the preservation of life. It is, therefore, not surprising that the poetry of the Kola breaks the day for the typical Igbo (Nwachukwu 2015).

Every Kola can be broken into lobes, and these lobes signify numbers. And number is very important for the African. Some have 2 lobes, some 3, some 4, some 5 and some 6. Kola nut with two lobes is a dumb kola and is not eaten because it is understood as the

*Kola of the Spirits*. When it has three lobes, it is called the *Kola of the Valiant*. As a matter of principle it is eaten only by warriors, brave men, the consecrated or ordained. The Kola with four lobes is the *Kola of Peace and Blessings*. It is a sign of completeness and signifies four market days in Igbo society. The Kola with five lobes is the *Kola of Procreation, Protection and Good luck*. The Kola with six lobes is indicative of communion with the ancestors. No wonder the smallest part of it is not eaten but given to the ancestors (Ukaegbu 2015).

This notwithstanding, among the lobes, there is always a female and male lobe. When these lobes stay together they remain alive, but when they separate they die and dry off. Their togetherness is a symbol of life, and their separation, death. It's a symbiotic relationship in the sense that they need each other to remain alive. Here in, the concepts of co-essentiality and co-responsibility begin to make a profound meaning.

The kola nut is also a symbol of peace and goodwill. This is why the first thing an Igbo person offers a guest is Kola nut to indicate that the guest is welcome. It is sometimes an indispensable element when sacrifices are offered to the gods. It is also a sign of communion, not just among the living, but also between the living and the dead. It could be referred to, in a traditional sense as the Igbo sacramental communion, specially presented, broken, shared and partaken of. During the breaking of the kola, heaven and earth come together (Kanu 2015a).



*The Kola Nut*

This is evident in the invocation of God during the breaking of the kola nut (*Chukwu Abiama bia taa oji*), the heavens and the earth (*elu na ala bia ta oji*), the deities (*amadioha bia ta oji*), and the dead ancestors (*nnam... bia taa oji*). The study of symbols like the kola nut can enrich the study of African Traditional Religion (Kanu 2015b).

### **From Biblical Typology to an African Typology**

An interesting aspect of Biblical studies is the area of typology. Bullinger (1968) defines typology as “a figure or ensample of something future and more or less prophetic, called the ‘Antitype’” (p. 768). Muenscher (cited by Terry 1890) understands typology as a study of “the preordained representative relation which certain persons, events, and institutions of the Old Testament bear to corresponding persons, events, and institutions in the New” (Terry 1890, 246). In the contention of Broomall (1960): “A type is a shadow cast on the pages of Old Testament history by a truth whose full embodiment or antitype is found in the New Testament revelation” (p. 533). As a theological concept and method of investigation, there are several words in the New Testament scripture that forms its scriptural basis. Paul uses the Greek word *Tupos* in Romans 5:14 (which means a ‘type of’ in English), to speak of Adam as a type of Christ. A second word is *Skia* in Colossians 2:17 (which means shadow); Paul employs it to speak of the Mosaic system as a shadow of things to come. Related to these is *Hupodeigma* in Hebrews 9:23 (which means copy). *Parabole* in Hebrews 9:9 (which means parable) has also been used to speak of the tabernacle of the Old testament as a figure for the present time. Another word that points to typology is *Antitupon* in Hebrews 9:24 (which means figure, likeness or pattern). They were employed to denote the fulfillment of a prophetic picture or a correspondence between things, persons, events, etc., in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Moorehead (1930) brought out the distinctive features of typology thus:

What are the distinctive features of a type? A type, to be such in reality, must possess three well-defined qualities. (1) It must be a true picture of the person or the thing it represents or prefigures. A type is a draft or sketch of some well-defined feature of redemption, and therefore it must in some distinct way resemble its antitype, e.g. Aaron as high priest is a rough figure of Christ the Great High Priest, and the Day of Atonement in Israel (Leviticus 16) must be a true picture of the atoning work of Christ. (2) The type must be of divine appointment. In its institution it is designed to bear a likeness to the antitype. Both type and antitype are preordained as constituent parts of the scheme of redemption. As centuries sometimes lie between the type and its accomplishment in the antitype, of course infinite wisdom alone can ordain the

one to be the picture of the other. Only God can make types. (3) A type always prefigures something future (pp. 3029-3030).

Examples of types in the scripture include, the Passover, with its spotless lamb (Exodus 12:5) which was slain "between the two evenings" (12:6), i.e., between three and five P.M., without any bones being broken (12:46). It was a type of the death of Jesus (cf. 1 Corinthians 5:7), who was without spot or blemish (1 Peter 1:19), who died at about 3 P.M. (Matthew 27:46), and who had none of his bones broken (John 19:33ff). The feast of the first-fruits (Leviticus 23:10), i.e., Pentecost, was a celebration in which the initial produce of the harvest was offered to God as a token of the full crop to follow. This ritual typified: (1) the early influx of the Jews into the church of Christ (Romans 11:16); and, (2) the resurrection of the Lord Jesus as God's pledge of the general resurrection to ultimately come (1 Corinthians 15:20, 23). The feast of the tabernacles was instituted to commemorate Israel's sojourn in the wilderness (Leviticus 23:43). But it was also designed to remind us that we are but sojourners on this earth (1 Peter 2:11), and that someday we will lay aside this earthly tabernacle (2 Corinthians 5:1; 2 Peter 1:13, 14) for a more permanent abiding place (cf. Hebrews 11:9-13).

For instance, on the annual Jewish Day of Atonement, amidst numerous other rituals, the high priest presented two goats before the door of the tabernacle. After the casting of lots upon these animals, one was sacrificed as a "sin-offering" and the other was "set alive before Jehovah" (Leviticus 16:9, 10). The blood of the slain goat was taken into the most holy place where it was sprinkled upon the mercy seat. This, of course, was typical of the sacrificial death of Christ (Hebrews 9:11, 12). The high priest then took the living goat, laid hands upon him and confessed over him all the iniquities of the people. Subsequently, by an appointed servant, the animal was led away into the wilderness (Leviticus 16:21, 22). The two goats were, so to speak, two sides of the same coin. Both constituted the solitary offering of Christ. The one signified his death and the atoning effect of his blood, the other his resurrection (cf. Romans 4:25) and the complete removal of our sins (cf. Isaiah 53:4, 6; John 1:29) (Wayne 2019).

The flood of Noah's day (Genesis 6-8) typified the sudden destruction of the world yet to come at the end (Matthew 24:37-39). The miraculous water from the rock in the wilderness (Exodus 17:6) was a preview of the life-sustaining water provided by our Lord (John 4:14; 1 Corinthians 10:4). The manna from heaven in the wilderness (Exodus 16:14-16) was a type of that spiritual bread who came down from heaven to nourish humanity (John 6:32). The deliverance of Noah's family from a corrupted world, by means of "water," prefigured our salvation, through baptism, from the power of



darkness into the kingdom of Christ (cf. 1 Peter 3:20-21; Colossians 1:13). The brazen serpent, lifted up in the wilderness, through which the people found physical healing (Numbers 21:8) was a type of the lifted-up Christ (John 3:14; 12:32), through whom spiritual healing comes (Isaiah 53:5) (Wayne 2019).

Adam is a type of Christ in that as the former introduced sin into the world, even so, through the latter a system of righteousness was made available for mankind (Romans 5:19). Melchizedek, who was both king of Salem and a priest of God – **at the same time** (Genesis 14:18-20) – was a type of Christ. Jesus, at his ascension, began to reign on David’s throne and to simultaneously function as our high priest (cf. Psalm 110:4; Zechariah 6:12, 13; Hebrews 5:5-10; 6:20; 7:1-17). This point, incidentally, is disastrous for millennialism. If Christ is not yet king (as premillennialism asserts), then he is not yet a priest and we are **yet in our sins!** Moses, in his noble role of prophet, leader, and mediator for Jehovah’s people, was typical of the Lord Jesus who functions in a similar, though more exalted, capacity (cf. Deuteronomy 18:15; Acts 3:22; 1 Corinthians 10:2; Galatians 3:27; 3:19; 1 Timothy 2:5) (Wayne 2019).

Having understood typology as method of biblical studies and interpretation, it is easier to now understand typology from an African context. It is a little bit different from the biblical concept of it since it relates the Old Testament events, persons, things, places, etc., to New Testament events, persons, things, places, etc. In relation to African traditional culture and religion, the base for relationship changes from the Old Testament to the religio-cultural experiences, categories, events or persons in traditional African culture and religion which may find their fulfillment in the New Testament scripture. This is anchored on the fact that African traditional religion and culture is understood as a gift from God, given in preparation for evangelization. It holds that the events, persons and things in traditional African religion were not so much about the time of their expression but had the capacity for fulfillment in the future with the fullness of revelation in Christ Jesus. These patterns often have their greatest manifestations in the life of Christ or in the eschaton, but there may be one or more other fulfillments elsewhere in human history, especially in the immediate historical context.

The table below will, therefore, do a comparative study the Igbo kola nut and the Christian Holy Communion to see basic areas of relationship.

**Table 1: The Kola Nut vis-à-vis the Holy Communion**

No	Holy Communion	The Kola Nut
1.	The Holy Communion is made of bread, which was a common meal	The Kola nut among the Igbo is a common meal. Every Igbo home had kola nuts

	among the Jewish people at the time. There was hardly a home where the bread was not found, no matter how poor the home was. The use of bread, therefore, appealed to the senses and cognition of those who were at the Last Supper.	kept, even for unexpected visitors. Kola nut is found in the homes of both the rich and the poor. It is a meal that sends a message to the cognitive faculty of the Igbo each time it is seen. It is more than a meal; it is a welcome.
2.	The bread at the Last Supper and during the Mass is held with honour, held up into the sky as the priest consecrates it. Generally held in a posture that points it towards the sky.	When the kola nut is blessed, it is treated with great honour. It is held with the fingers, pointing it into the sky.
3.	Bread is made from wheat grass, which is cultivated for its seeds, a cereal grain. It is the product of the human effort at cultivating the earth.	The kola nut is from the evergreen kola tree, which is found in the rain forests of Africa. It is the product of the human effort at cultivating the earth.
4.	The Holy Communion is the Bread of Life. Jesus says:  Jesus says: <b>“I am the bread of life” (John 6:25-59).</b>  Jesus says also:  <b>“He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood shall have eternal life” (John 25:56).</b>	The Kola nut is a symbol of life. This is why it is said: “He that brings kola brings life”.
5.	Sharing in the Holy Communion should strengthen unity, respect and love among those who partake of it. Sharing in it reassures the partakers that they are one body.	The Kola nut and the accompanying ritual that goes with it symbolize the customs and signs of mutual respect and community. It welcomes the guest into the home where it is served.  “Among Igbo Africans, the aspect of

		communalism are celebrated with kola nut which is both a spiritual and physical symbol of unity. 'Ofeke', or the excommunicated or the unqualified or the socially stigmatized does not partake of the communion of kola. A condition of admittance is Igba Oriko a banquet of togetherness, a celebration indicating that the ostracized or the rejected or the excommunicated person is now free to relate with his brethren and enjoy the common wealth in sharing love and responsibility" (Obiajulu 2013, p.518).
6.	<p>Before Jesus broke the bread and gave it to His disciples, the Scripture says that He first gave thanks.</p> <p>Scripture says:</p> <p><b>"And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying 'This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me'" (Lk 22:19)</b></p>	<p>Before the breaking and serving of the kola nut, the person saying the prayer first of all gives thanks to Chukwu. The prayer of thanksgiving precedes the prayer of petition.</p>
7.	<p>To continue the offering of this sacrifice in memory of the Jesus Christ, he chose from among his followers, only men who would continue to offer this sacrifice.</p>	<p>The kola nut is only blessed by men in Igbo traditional society, and even till date. It is an abomination for a woman to break the kola nut.</p>
8.	<p>After the consecration of the bread, the priest breaks the bread as Jesus did and handed it over to His disciples.</p>	<p>After the kola nut has been consecrated, the kola nut is broken and shared to those present.</p>
9.	<p>During the prayer of consecration of the bread, the priest calls the names of the Saints, in their memory and asking for their intercession.</p> <p><b>"We venerate the memory of those whose fellowship we share:</b></p>	<p>During the consecration of the kola nut, the person leading the prayer invokes the presence and benediction of the ancestors of the community or the family. It all depends on the gathering. These ancestors are referred to as Ndichie.</p>

	<p>especially the glorious ever-Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ our God and Lord, blessed Joseph her husband, the blessed apostles and martyrs Peter and Paul, Andrew, James and John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Jude: Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian and all your saints. Through their merits and prayers grant us always the defense of your protecting help. (Through Christ our Lord, Amen.)” (Eucharistic Prayer 1)</p>	
10.	<p>During the consecration of bread, wine is also offered.</p>	<p>During the consecration of the Kola nut, liquor is also offered to Chukwu and the gods.</p>
11.	<p>At the end of the Eucharistic celebration, the participants are blessed.</p>	<p>The people present at the consecration of the Kola nut are blessed as well</p>
12.	<p>The Holy Communion is a sacrament, which speaks of an earthly sign with inward grace.</p>	<p>The Kola nut also has a sacramental dimension when it is consecrated. This is very important as the kola nut at this point acknowledges the archetypal patterns of the gods and ancestors in illo tempore.</p>
13.	<p>The priests presides at the Mass</p>	<p>The most elderly person present presides at the consecration of the kola nut. This does not in any way disrupt the equation of the idea of a priest in relation to an elder. Presbyter, a word used to cover many facets of the priestly mission and essence, comes from the Greek <i>presbyteros</i>, meaning elder.</p> <p>After the prayer and the breaking of the</p>

<p>14.</p>	<p>After the consecration of the bread, it is only those who are not in the state of sin that are allowed to partake of the Eucharistic meal.</p> <p>Saint Paul writes:</p> <p><b>“Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord. A person should examine himself, and so eat the bread and drink the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment upon himself. That is why many of you are ill and infirm, and a considerable number are dying” (1 Cor. 11:27-30).</b></p> <p>The Eucharist is the centre and summit of the Church’s life and prayer.</p>	<p>kola nut, those who have evil in their heart of have done something against their brother or sister avoids partaking in it because of the consequences.</p> <p>The Kola nut is the centre and life of Igbo traditional celebrations.</p> <p><b>“It is a sure key to unlock the hearts of men and gods... used whenever the spirits of the ancestors are being conjured or after libation has been poured in order to pacify a particular deity that is injured” (Obiajulu 2003, p. 11)</b></p>
<p>15.</p>		

This table has outlined basically the major areas of similarity between the Igbo kola nut and the Holy Communion. As already observed, this comparative study is not in any way to equate the Kola nut with the Holy Communion. Obviously, as much as there are areas of similarities, there are also various areas of differences. For instance, in spite of

the consecration of the kola nut, it still does not assume a person as the Holy Communion through the words of consecration becomes the body, blood, soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; while the elder presides at the blessing of the kola nut because of his age advantage, the Priest presides because of his ordination to the priesthood. There are several other differences that can be enumerated. However, that is not the preoccupation of this work.

### **Conclusion**

The foregoing has studied the Igbo kola nut in relation to the Christian Holy Communion, seeing the Igbo kola nut as a type of the Christian Holy Communion. This method of research has become very relevant as an attempt to retell the African stories that were poorly told by her colonial masters and missionaries, who saw anything black as evil and anything white as good, therefore, leading to the relegation of the African traditional religion and culture to the background of mere obscurantism. Rather than a clear condemnation of the African culture or the presentation of the African culture as an opponent of the gospel message, African culture and religion is here presented as a preparation for evangelization. This perspective is also anchored on the African worldview which holds that reality is related- each aspect relates with the whole. It, therefore, understands reality within the context of relationships and experiences of interrelationships and interconnections. Within this context, there is a relationship between culture and evangelization.

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