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From Shared Meal to Interreligious Shared Communities: Interpretation of Eucharist in Luke 22:14-20, Tradition of *Makan Patita* and *Fayatat* as a model for Peace Maintenance of Maluku

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Abstract

The Maluku conflict from 1999 to 2004 provides valuable data for building interreligious shared communities. In the pursuit of peace, religion and the local culture of Maluku played a significant role. This article explicitly analyzes the religious and cultural texts that contribute to maintaining the peace of Maluku. This article argues that the Eucharist (Luke 22:14–20) and the shared-meal traditions of *makan patita* and *fayatat* in Maluku share common values—sharing, hospitality, sacrifice, and peace—that can be woven together as a model for sustaining interreligious harmony in Maluku. The celebration of the Eucharist is an essential part of Christian tradition, and interreligious people in Maluku still practice *makan patita* or *fayatat*. This shared narrative can contribute to building shared interreligious communities. The shared community could become a space to build a life together that embraces each other. This study uses a qualitative research approach by analyzing three main themes, namely exploring the meaning of the Eucharist in Luke 22:14-20; analyzing the practice and value of eating patita or fayatat in Maluku; and ending with the construction of contextual theology by intertwining the Eucharist and *makan patita* or *fayatat* as a model for maintaining peace in Maluku.

Keywords: Eucharist, *Makan Patita* and *Fayatat,* Shared Interreligious Communities, Luke 22:14-20, Maluku

Introduction

The Maluku community in eastern Indonesia needs approaches and strategies that can serve as models for maintaining peace in Maluku. The Maluku community experienced trauma from the bloody conflict between Christians and Muslims from 1999 to 2004. This traumatic experience continues to influence the emotions and relationship patterns of the Maluku community in the post-conflict period (Lestari & Parihala, 2020; Riyanto, 2023). In 2025, there were conflicts between communities of different religions in various regions in Maluku, namely the conflict at the Trikora monument in Ambon City, the conflict in the Seram Islands, and most recently between the Muslim community from Hitu and the Christian community in Hunut, Ambon City in August 2025 (Barends, 2025). All clashes or conflicts involve young people and adolescents, who constitute the Maluku golden generation. Among this younger generation, the lack of cultural literacy and religious teachings regarding the tradition of brotherhood in Maluku makes them susceptible to conflict (Parihala et al., 2019a). Therefore, the cultural identity of the Maluku people as fellow brothers and sisters needs to be continuously maintained through various social, cultural, and religious activities.

Several previous studies, such as those by Jusmianty Garing et al., and Pattipeilohy et al., have examined the importance of strengthening ties of friendship and brotherhood among communities in Maluku. Maluku's cultural language and local wisdom, such as *pela* and *gandong*, can contribute to peacebuilding (Garing et al., 2023). This local wisdom and *pela-gandong* culture also shape community behaviour in public spaces (Pattipeilohy et al., 2024). Other strategies that have been studied in building peace in Maluku are through *masohi* or working together between communities of different religions (Saimima et al., 2023), peace education (Hasudungan et al., 2020; Iwamony et al., 2019), grassroots community involvement in reconciliation (Shofiyah & Cangara, 2023), the role of local Maluku music in peace (Lestari, 2025), and the strategy or role of religion in maintaining peace in Maluku (Iwamony, 2020; Parihala & Busro, 2020).

In contrast to previous research, which predominantly focused on the analysis of either cultural or religious elements in Maluku, this article presents strategies and models for fostering peace through equal dialogue among religious and cultural texts in Maluku. This strategy and model are realized by creatively linking the central Christian theological concept of the Eucharist with the cultural shared meal, *makan patita* or *fayatat* in Maluku. The Eucharist and *makan patita* or *fayatat* are two distinct traditions. The former stems from Christian theological traditions and teachings, while the latter stems from Maluku cultural traditions. Both can be woven into the shared values offered, such as the values of sharing food and life, brotherhood, hospitality, sacrifice, shared memory, and peace. Both take the form of seemingly similar yet distinct celebrations: the fellowship of eating and drinking together to nurture life within a sense of hospitality and peace.

Thus, the main thesis of this research is that the Eucharist and *makan patita* or *fayatat* reflect the tradition of sharing a meal together in theological and cultural texts that contribute as a model for maintaining peace in Maluku. Christians continue to practice the Eucharist as an essential part of the Gregorian liturgy, and the celebration of the meal of *patita* or *fayatat* is still practiced in the interfaith communal life of all Maluku communities. The meaning of the Eucharist is analyzed through a historical-theological interpretation of the Gospel text of Luke 22: 14-20. This text, as explained by John Nolland (Nolland, 1993), Nolland, 1986, p. 41) and Tom Jacobs (Jacobs, 1986, p. 41), remains the primary reference for the implementation of the Eucharist in the Christian tradition to this day. Meanwhile, the practice and meaning of *makan patita* or *fayatat* are analyzed as a cultural text of the Maluku people that is still preserved today. Thus, this article contains three main components: exploring the meaning of the Eucharist in Luke 22:14-20, an analysis of the practice and meaning of *makan patita* or *fayatat* in Maluku, and concludes with a theological reflection on weaving separate threads to preserve peace in Maluku.

Literature Review

Religious Conflict in Maluku

The Maluku conflict occurred between 1999 and 2004. The first incident occurred on January 19, 1999, coinciding with the Eid al-Fitr celebrations. Initially, the conflict was sparked by a fight between two public transportation drivers of different ethnicities and religions. It didn't take long for ethnic and religious differences to become instruments that triggered and escalated the conflict throughout the Maluku region (Pieris, 2004). Researchers and analysts of the Maluku conflict concluded that the conflict was triggered by various factors, including the legacy of colonial history, post-New Order political conflicts, power struggles between central and local elites, and social inequalities and injustices. However, the conflict escalated and spread only when religious differences and various religious symbols were used as instruments and fuel for the conflict. The burning of houses of worship, churches, and mosques, the conflict actors who clearly identify themselves as the jihadist militia and the Christian militia and the involvement of religious figures in Maluku peace efforts are all strong indicators that the Maluku conflict is indeed religious (Pieris, 2004; Trijono, 2001; Al-Qurtuby, 2013; Pariela, 2008). Religion seems to have a dual face. On the one hand, religion promotes peace, and on the other hand, interfaith conflicts continue to occur due to differences and conflicts in religious doctrine and practice. Religion and violence are two things that are actually opposites, as opposed to darkness and light. However, it cannot be denied that religion is often accused of being a source and motivation for conflict among followers of different religions (Schumann, 2011, p. 487; Setyawan, 2017). Religion is often used as a trigger for conflict for various interests (Natar, 2019).

The Role of Religion and Culture in the Peace Process

In various studies on the peace process in Maluku, the contribution of religion and local cultural mediators is a crucial factor in conflict resolution (Hasudungan et al., 2020; Lestari, 2020; Mannitz, 2017). An in-depth discussion of the role of religion and culture can be found in John Ruhulessin's dissertation on *Public Ethics*, which explores the *pela* cultural tradition in Maluku. Ruhulessin asserts that religion and culture can be integrated in the public sphere to build a peaceful society, as has happened in Maluku (Ruhulessin, 2005, p. 1). Since ancient times, from the ancestors of Maluku, the people of Maluku, who embraced different religions, have been united within the Maluku cultural institution, namely, *pela-gandong*. The word *pela* refers to the meaning of stopping (*peia*) from fighting, and the word *gandong*, derived from the word *kandungan* (womb), indicates that the Maluku people who share the bond of *gandong* come from the same mother's womb, making them brothers. In this cultural institution, the Maluku people strive to build a harmonious and peaceful life, despite their diverse religious backgrounds (Iwamony et al., 2019; Y. M. Lattu, 2022). In this context, religions in Maluku must develop contextual theologies that transcend differences in religious doctrine and be willing to embrace religious diversity.

During the Maluku conflict, religions experienced acute politicization, leading to the strengthening of solidarity and in-group sentiment within each religious community, which led to acts of violence and physical attacks on each other. To transform conflict situations, religions play a crucial role in building peace. Religions in Maluku are inextricably linked to the cultural heritage and existence of Maluku, thereby contributing to the revitalization of cultural and religious values of brotherhood and peace. Peace in Maluku was concretely built through civic engagement, which then became social capital in two forms: formal relations and ties (such as relations between the government and the people, and others), and informal ties through daily encounters or through cross-border interactions between ethnicities and religions (T. Pariela, 2008, p. 59). Here, religion and culture significantly contribute to strengthening social cohesion as a force for reconciliation and uniting citizens in their diversity.

Method

This research uses a qualitative approach to explore knowledge from a constructive perspective (i.e., multiple meanings of the individual, socially, and culturally), with the intention of developing a theory (Creswell, 2014, p. 18). This study is conducted through field research and a literature review. Through field research, data and analysis regarding the culture of eating together in Maluku were collected at four research locations in four regencies or cities in Maluku, namely in the town of Masohi and Oma village of Central Maluku Regency; in Elaar Village (*Ohoi*) Southeast Maluku Regency; West Seram Regency located in Kamal and Waisarisa Villages; and Ambon City, specifically in Amahusu Village.

Data collection at each research site was conducted through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). Using purposive sampling, we identified 20 informants to participate in the FGDs at all four research sites. Informants were selected to support the research objective of exploring the meaning of *makan patita* or *fayatat* within Maluku cultural practices. Therefore, the 20 selected informants included community leaders, village officials, religious leaders, and youth. Meanwhile, a literature review was used to explore the meaning of the Eucharist through a historical-theological interpretation of Luke 22:14-20. This text has been a primary reference for the celebration of the Eucharist in the Christian tradition to this day.

The research data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involves three stages, as proposed by Creswell: 1) collecting open-ended data; 2) emerging data with the primary intention of developing themes; and 3) naming informative themes in a final report (Creswell, 2014, p. 18). We also employed hermeneutical analysis to deepen our understanding of the key themes in the biblical text and the cultural text of *Makan Patita* or *Fayatat*. The hermeneutic approach we used, as proposed by Segovia and Tolbert, is an integrated hermeneutic that critically integrates the meaning of the biblical text with its socio-cultural context, so that the theological meaning remains relevant to today's readers (Segovia & Tolbert, 1996, p. 34). Pete Ward stated that theological research and fieldwork or ethnography in a qualitative approach are not easily related. However, theologians involved in ethnographic research can act as mediators between the theological voices generated through fieldwork and existing theological texts. According to Ward, conducting qualitative research as theologians is also a theological task in itself (Ward, 2022, p. 7).

In this study, trustworthiness is a crucial indicator for assessing data quality. We applied four indicators: 1) Credibility, emphasizing data accuracy through participant confirmation, clarification, and validation. 2) Transferability, with detailed descriptions of participant characteristics, sampling strategies, and the research context. 3) Dependability, relating to data consistency, is maintained through 4) Confirmability, emphasizing the objectivity of findings by matching participant statements with data analysis results. These four dimensions collectively strengthen the validity and credibility of the research findings, ensuring that the study's findings are scientifically sound.

Therefore, this article presents three main discussions: exploring the meaning of the Eucharist in Luke 22:14-20, analyzing the practice and meaning of *makan patita* and *fayatat* in Maluku, and concluding with a theological reflection on weaving separate threads to preserve peace in Maluku.

Result and Discussion

The Meaning of Eucharist in Luke 22:14-20

The Eucharist comes from the Greek *eucharistos*. This word is formed from two syllables, *eu* as an adverb means well, good, happily, and rightly (Moulton, 1978, p. 171), and the word *charis* means free favour, gift, grace, etc (Moulton, 1978, p. 433). From those two words, *eucharistos* means grateful, pleasing, thankful (Moulton, 1978, p. 177). In the context of the last supper of

Jesus and the apostles, the word *eucharistesas* as participant aorist refers to prayer before eating (Luke 22;17, 19). It seems to be different from the practice of the Jewish Passover meal of praying blessings before and after meals (*berakha*/ *barek/ eulogein*). Joachim Jeremias asserts that the use of *eucharistesas* for the thanks giving after the meal is tolerable (Jeremias, 1966, p. 177). The institution of Eucharist in the Church practice comes from the tradition of Jesus' last supper. The event of Jesus' last supper derived from the Jewish custom.

Although derived from Jewish tradition, the historical meaning of eucharist is related to the existence of Luke's community, which included both Jewish and non-Jewish Christians (Parihala, 2021). The Eucharist, which refers to Jesus' sacrifice at the Last Supper with his disciples, has the meaning of building a fellowship of Christians in the face of rejection and conflict from other communities. (Esler 1989, p. 26). Samuel B. Hakh explains that the theological points of Luke's gospel in its historical context are good news to Gentiles, concern for the poor, and respect for those who are marginalized (Hakh, 2019, pp. 293–296). In our opinion, Luke emphasizes the table fellowship to embrace the readers who believe in Jesus, both as Jews and Gentiles to live together as disciples. Based on the literary and historical context above, the Eucharistic narrative in the Gospel of Luke 22: 14-23 is exposed by emphasizing three different, but interrelated main points: the meaning of the Eucharist of Jesus in the Passover setting; Eucharist as anamnesis; and the Eucharist as a table of hospitality and reconciliation. The context of Passover originally referred to the Jewish Passover, but Luke refers to the events of Jesus' death and resurrection. Anamnesis refers to the early church tradition of remembering Jesus' death, and hospitality is the church's mission to embody Jesus' teachings of caring, compassion, and peace with the world.

The Eucharist and the Passover of Liberation (Vv. 14-18)

Joachim Jeremias mentions two traditions behind the narrative of the last supper of Jesus, namely the Jewish Easter tradition at the time of Jesus and the early church's tradition (Jeremias, 1966, pp. 122–123). First, Luke expressed Jesus' desire to have the Passover meal before His suffering (Vv. 14-18). Second, Jesus entertained the apostles by presenting Himself as a sacrifice and a new covenant for the world's salvation (Vv. 19-20). Sharon H Ringe interprets this narrative as a double cycle of the Jesus meal, both in the context of Jesus' ministry and in the early church's life (Ringe, 1995, p. 261). Luke begins this narrative with an adverb of the time, "when the hour comes" (*kai hote egeneto he hora*,) which asserts that the Feast of Passover is near (v. 1), or what is also called the feast of unleavened bread (v. 7). The Jews celebrated the Passover to commemorate God's work that liberated them from oppression and slavery in Egypt (Exodus 12). The Passover celebration takes place by offering a lamb sacrifice, breaking unleavened bread, dividing it, then eating together while drinking the vine accompanied by a prayer of blessing before and after meals. Initially, Easter celebrations were family-centered but later evolved into a temple-based festival (Deuteronomy1d:7) (Nolland, 1993, p. 1033). At the time of Jesus, the Jewish Passover celebration combined both. During the day, they sacrificed the lamb in the courtyard of the place of worship. In the evening until the night, people shared a banquet both at home by each family and in the areas available of Jerusalem for large group gatherings. Craig S. Keener mentions that Judaism in the era of Jesus still celebrated the Jewish Easter hoping that a new exodus could occur again when God freed them from the Roman empire (Keener, 1993, p. 236).

Luke describes a situation in which Jesus sat with the disciples - whom Luke calls apostles, in contrast to Matthew and Mark, who still call them disciples. The apostle's name is Luke's distinction (cf. Luke 6: 12-16) to emphasize this setting in life narrative on the existence of a church that is sent to continue the Eucharistic ministry established by Jesus. In the report of the Passover meal, Luke uses the Greek verb "to recline" (*katákeimai*), which is not found in Matthew and Mark, to denote Jesus' informal sitting position, disregarding a particular posture. It is also

used when Jesus is with a number of tax collectors and other men are enjoying a friendly meal at Levi's house.

The situation indicates that Jesus was establishing a warm and welcoming relationship with the apostles. Gonzále asserts that the word *katákeimai* is used for 11 times in Luke's narrative to show that Jesus' reclining while taught and built a fellowship of friendship with everyone at the dinner table (Luke 7:36, 49; 9: 14,15; 11:37; 12:37; 13:29; 14:10; 22: 14,27; 24:30) (González, 2015, p. 80).

Jesus taught the apostles that this Passover meal was proleptic of the sufferings he would experience (22:15; 9:27; 17:25). The phrase "before I suffer" refers to the image of the blood of the Passover lamb that was sacrificed as a covenant for the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt (Exodus 12:13). The blood of Jesus was offered as a sign of the new covenant that was shed for the world's salvation (22:20). Luke understood that the early church did acknowledge and believed that Jesus was the Passover lamb who was sacrificed for the liberation and salvation of the world (cf. 1 Corinthians 5: 7).

The word 'suffer' in Greek *paschô* is almost the same as the word for Passover - *pascha*. Jesus is pointing to his suffering and resurrection as the eschatological fulness of the kingdom of God (Alexander, 1995, p. 419). Luke affirms that the Jewish Passover takes on a new meaning in the events of Jesus, as the new covenant, which fulfils God's work of liberation and salvation.

The Eucharist as the Memorial of Jesus (verses 19-20)

The celebration of the eucharist in the early church aims to remember the sacrifice of Jesus. Luke reiterates the words of Jesus, "Do this in remembrance of me," for the church continues to remember and celebrate the Eucharist in its mission to the world. The primary expression of Jewish Passover is the prayer of thanksgiving (*eukaristo*) or a prayer of blessing (*eulogein*) that contains praise - thanksgiving - supplication. However, in this story, Luke only depicts that Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the Apostles. Luke gives more emphasis on the words of Jesus when sharing the bread and wine. The words of Jesus have significance for the ministry of the church. Jeremias mentions that this expression is a liturgical expression of the church to celebrate and remember Jesus' surrender in His death on the cross (Jeremias, 1966, p. 155).

Jesus shares the bread for uniting the apostles with Himself, and the apostles who receive the bread are immersing themselves in the unity of faith with Jesus. Jesus surrenders totally to God in His death for the sake of salvation the world. It also has meaning for the church to participate in fellowship with God in Jesus, who offers himself. In some ancient Greco-Roman texts, such as Thucydides (History 2.43.2); Libanus (*Declam*. 24.3), the act of giving one's body is an image of death because of infinite love for the sake of someone else who is very loved (Nolland, 1993, p. 1054). This death is a memorial. Jesus' death on the cross is interpreted as a New Testament, which is the same as the covenant made by Moses to the nation of Israel in Exodus 24: 8. Mark added, "is poured out for many," while Luke refers to sole the church. It means that through the church, the work of God's love to save the world in Jesus' death is carried on by the church in the world.

The Eucharist for Hospitality and Reconciliation

Jesus' meal with the apostles is a deed of hospitality. In the preceding story (Luke 22: 7-13), Luke presents Jesus and the disciples as guests who receive a room in the city of Jerusalem from a host (*oikodespotê*). To Jesus and the disciples, *oikodespotê* has prepared water for washing the

feet, the upper room for the guests, and the furnishings. In the tradition of Jewish Easter celebrations, many diaspora Jews participate in various festivals, such as the celebration of sacrifice at the temple and banquets together. All homes are filled with guests who gather and build friendships and family bonds. The tradition of welcoming guests – the hospitality started with preparing water to wash the feet and body, preparing the room, and banquets. Likewise, Jesus and his disciples were guests who occupied a space in Jerusalem (Luke 12: 10-12).

After being in the room, Luke shows Jesus as a host, the owner of the Easter banquet that serves the apostles. Jesus' action is a continuation of the practice of hospitality. In the last supper, Jesus didn't just benefit the apostles by dividing bread and wine. More than that, Luke narrates the most profound value of Jesus' hospitality, namely offering Himself, His body, and blood for the other. This most profound value is as expressed by Jesus, "this is my body which is given up for you ... likewise," this cup is a new covenant by my blood which is shed for you "(verses 19-20). Dennis E. Smith emphasized that the teachings and actions of Jesus set an example for the apostles (or for the church). The apostles are called and sent to continue to build hospitality and fellowship that serve one another, as do all believers. The hospitality of Jesus manifests God's Rule, which brings good news to the poor, frees those who are captive, and builds friendships with the excluded, and grants forgiveness to those who repent of wrongdoing (Luke 4: 18-19; see also 5: 27-32; 6: 20-26; 7:22, 34; 14: 15-24; etc.)(Smith, 1987, p. 613). Everyone is invited to experience the hospitality of Jesus, which embodies the Kingdom of God on earth (Case, 2019, p. 9). At the last meal, the hospitality of Jesus showed the divine hospitality, who offered himself to humans and His creation. Hans Boersma said that hospitality does not only refer to human goodness but especially to the virtue of God (Boersma, 2004, p. 27).

Luke wants to reaffirm the meaning of Jesus' surrender for the reconciliation and salvation of the world through the last supper. Luke and Mark refer to the Jewish tradition in Isaiah 53, which tells of the suffering of a miserable servant and dies not because of his fault but because of the mistakes and rebellion of others (Isaiah 53: 3-5) (Marshall, 1978, p. 804). Jesus' sacrifice means to atone and reconcile man to God. Ringe explained that this redaction of Luke is closely related to the situation of disputes over the boundaries of identity between Jews and non-Jews, rich and poor, rulers and people. The death of Jesus, which represents the meaning of reconciliation man to God - is also the church's kerygma to emphasize the importance of reconciliation of human beings (Ringe, 1995, p. 261). Luke narrates the story of Jesus' last supper in a vision that Jesus' ministry on earth is ended - and the life of the church delivered to commemorate Jesus' ministry on earth is beginning.

Form and Meaning of *Makan Patita* or *Fayatat*

The Maluku people have a tradition of communal meals called *makan patita* for the people of Ambon City, Central Maluku, Seram Island and Lease, or *fayatat* for the people of *Ohoi* Elaar, Kei Islands, Southeast Maluku Regency. The word *patita* comes from the word *pa'atita* or *tita*, which means advice, education, and orders, while the word *pa'* means walking towards. So, *pa'atitta* means walking towards advice, education, or orders. This is in line with the function of the place and tradition of communal meals for the Maluku people. This moment is a means for parents to convey good advice, education, and orders to children, or to all family members. In the context of indigenous communities, before the patita meal is held, the king or traditional elders always give advice and orders to maintain the brotherhood that has been built among them (Souisa, 2017). Advice is also usually delivered through pantun-patun or kapata-kapata, spoken to the rhythm of a song, so it sounds melodious and serene (Raja Oma, *interview*, July 8, 2025). The advice always contains a warning for all children and grandchildren to maintain a peaceful life (*baku bae*), avoid conflict (*jang bakalae),* and help each other (*baku bantu*).

The Elaar community in the Kei Islands, Southeast Maluku Regency, calls eating together *fayatat*, which comes from the word *vavayk*, meaning eating together or eating (as) a family (Reverend Sandi Borola, *interview*, June 29, 2025). The *fayatat* tradition has been passed down from ancestors to the present generation. *Fayatat* is carried out in a life cycle, starting from thanksgiving for births, weddings, to honouring the deceased through a tradition of *mangohoi rahan tel*, namely a fellowship of three clans from three generations, grandmother, mother, and child, to prepare *fayatat* together. Other events celebrated with fayatat are family or community gatherings to accompany *yelim*, the people meeting (*ohoi*), the Kei meti harvest, the traditional inauguration of the *Ohoi* chief and *Suban Rat* (royal oath), and religious events, namely the inauguration of churches and mosques (Dance Madubun, interview, July 16, 2025). This *fayatat* tradition is carried out continuously in communal life to strengthen fellowship and brotherhood. The *fayatat* tradition also teaches all *Ohoi* residents to have a habit of living with open hands (*velar*) to help others as brothers, and avoid the habit of living with closed hands (*ngugun liman*), which emphasizes the meaning of life for oneself.

The Practice of *Patita* or *Fayatat* as a Culture of Peace in Maluku

Makan patita or *fayatat* is considered one of the cultural practices that is still preserved today. In the cultural tradition in Maluku, *patita* is usually carried out in conjunction with various traditional rituals, such as *panas pela*, *panas gandong*, or joint rituals in the inauguration of kings, the inauguration of *baileo*, and the inauguration of houses of worship and other public facilities, during the harvest of garden produce, and various other public events (Matitaputty & Masinay, 2020, p. 315). The food prepared for *makan patita* is local food from Maluku, such as wrapped *papeda*, boiled cassava, boiled banana, boiled sweet potato, smoked fish, fried fish, *kokohu*, papaya leaf vegetables, papaya flower vegetables, yellow pickles, papaya sambal, meat cooked in bamboo, vegetables cooked in bamboo, and others. The tradition of cooking in bamboo has a deep meaning of brotherhood. When cooking in a modern pan like today, parts of the food or the sauce (such as water) can overflow and spill. However, cooking in tightly closed bamboo means that all elements of the food can be combined, showcasing the value of brotherhood, which should not be separated, wasted, or neglected. A single bamboo container used to cook all the food together symbolizes the mother's womb that carries and gives birth to her diverse children (C. Monaten, *interview*, July 22, 2025). Thus, with traditional Maluku food cooked in a bamboo container, all Maluku people celebrating the *patita* meal are invited to participate in maintaining this life of brotherhood.

The container used in the *patita* tradition is called a *lesa*. In Maluku, *lesa* comes from the word *lasa-a*, meaning "to arrange food on a leaf mat." This refers to the use of banana and coconut leaves as a place to arrange food. Over time, the word *lasa*-a evolved into *lesa*, which translates to a dining table without supports. Some are made from *kakoya* leaves or mats, but others are made from *gaba-gaba* fronds. This type of dining table is usually placed on the ground or floor when the family enjoys a meal together. As society has evolved, the *lesa* has transformed from a "leaf mat" to a "table," or a social space where everyone can gather and sit down to eat together, while discussing various positive things for the shared future (Tetelepta et al., 2019). The *lesa* is understood not only as a place to eat, but also as a place for deliberation, building fellowship, making promises of brotherhood, and as a place for fostering and educating the family and community (Reverend Luhukay, *interview*, July 25, 2025). People sitting in the *lesa* are always in a circle, which signifies a chain of interconnected lives, as well as a sign of the bonds of brotherhood.

Besides *makan patita*, the *fayatat* tradition for the people of the Kei Islands is a very ancient tradition from their ancestors, who began to build *Ohoi* (a village) in the spirit of working together

and a sense of family. Everyone who comes to eat together, regardless of their different surnames, religions, or ethnic backgrounds, is considered one family. In this study, *Ohoi* Elaar in the Kei Islands is known as an icon of peace, as it comprises three villages: Protestant (Elaar Lamagoran), Muslim (Elaar Let and Elaar Ngursuen, and Elaar Garara), and Catholic (Elaar Ngurwur).

All Elaar people understand themselves as fellow brothers, born from a single ancestor who was once Hindu. They refer to the *Ohoi* fellowship, which originates from a single mother egg (Dance Madubun, *interview*, July 16, 2025). In this religious diversity, the *fayatat* tradition of sharing meals together has always been a life-line for brotherhood.

The tradition of *patita* and *fayatat* is also a form of hospitality expressed by the Maluku people in welcoming guests or strangers (Reid, 2011, pp. 49, 50–51). A guest is usually welcomed by the host or hostess by providing a *patita* or *fayatat* meal. Before eating *patita* and *fayatat*, the homeowner first provides water for the guest to cleanse themselves after traveling from their place of origin to arriving at the host's house. In the past, in Maluku tradition, as an initial meal that signifies acceptance of a guest and acknowledgement of their presence as a relative, an appetizer is served in the form of traditional food and drinks, namely betel (*sirih*), areca nut (*pinang*), lime (*kapur*), and the local drink *sopi* or *sageru* (Maku Labetubun, interview, July 16, 2025).

When guests eat and drink this appetizer, their identity is no longer that of a guest, but rather that of a fellow relative, or as a member of the family and community. After that, a communal meal of *patita* and *fayatat* is held by all family members, including guests who have become part of the family (Nur and Udin from Elaar Let, *interview*, July 16, 2025).

In the *patita* or *fayatat* meal, everyone sits in equal positions, either on the floor or at the dining table, and begins with a speech of advice or counsel, and a decree or command to care for the lives of their relatives.

Eucharist, Cultural Shared Meal, and the Values of Peace in Maluku

The final section of this article attempts to weave the values of peace from the Christian tradition of the Eucharist and the cultural shared meal, *makan patita* or *fayatat*. Clemens Sedmak uses the phrase "weaving together the Gospel with particular situations" to demonstrate the meaning of contextualization (Clemens Sedmak, 2006, p. 95). The weaving of the meaning of the Eucharist and *makan patita* or *fayatat* is an effort to engage in contextual theology within a particular situation, namely, fostering peace in Maluku. Therefore, starting from the analysis of the Eucharist texts and *makan patita* or *fayatat*, we find several contextual theological visions below that can serve as primary models for fostering peace in Maluku.

Sharing Food, Sharing Life

Food and drink had a significant meaning for all of creation (Iwamony, 2025). Furthermore, in religious and cultural societies, a meal was a symbol of participation, friendship, and hospitality (Winarjo, 2023). The apostles were sent to continue building a fellowship of sharing and mutual support until the eschatological fulfillment in the future (Behm, 1964, p. 689). In the practice of *makan patita* or *fayatat* in Maluku, this fellowship of sharing food also occurred. The practice of *makan patita* and *fayatat* can be understood as a form of symbolic action that emphasizes the importance of building a social encounter space filled with hospitality. A space of encounter that transforms the stranger or the other into fellow brothers (Novitra Souisa, 2019, p. 8). In the cultural shared meal, food is a necessity for the body and for life, so sharing food is synonymous with sharing life and compassion for one another. In sharing food, barriers and ghettos, such as differences in faith or religion, ethnicity, and social class, are no longer an issue. Everyone mingles

in shared joy, from shared meals to interreligious shared communities. All those who are different eat while discussing, sharing ideas, and mutually strengthening life experiences.

Both the Eucharistic and the *patita* or *fayatat* meal offer the value of sharing food as an act of sharing life that sustains each other. During the Maluku conflict, there was the experience of the Caring Women's Movement in Ambon, and the Women's Movement in North Halmahera, who dared to take the risky path to meet one another, so they could share food for their daily needs both during the conflict and in overcoming the difficulties of life after the conflict. What these women did was a form of local hospitality that marked a new relationship between communities, overcoming fear, distrust, and even feelings of hurt and trauma caused by the conflict (Lakawa, 2011, pp. 2, 341). This new relationship marked a form of shared interreligious communities, which sought to escape the vortex of conflict and communal violence between religious communities in Maluku through the practice of sharing food for life.

Building a Space of Hospitality and Reconciliation at the Shared Dining Table

The Eucharist and the *patita* meal or *fayatat* are practices of hospitality and reconciliation. Boersma highlights the significance of eucharistic hospitality in Jesus' Last Supper, where the church was commissioned to build a community of reconciliation (Boersma, 2004, p. 208). Richard Sudworth states that Christian hospitality is the context of God's embassy to carry out the mission of reconciliation by contributing to the work of reconciliation in the world (Sudworth, 2014, p. 85). In the Eucharist recounted in the Gospel of Luke, Jesus and the apostles were initially guests welcomed by a kind host. During supper, Jesus plays the role of a host who serves the apostles. Jesus sits at the meal in a sitting posture that shows no difference in social status from the apostles. They sit back-to-back in an egalitarian, humble, and friendly manner in the fellowship of hospitality. Jesus not only shares a meal, but more than that, teaches and practices the deepest value of His hospitality: offering Himself for others. The broken bread and the shared wine are signs of His body and blood sacrificed for the liberation, reconciliation, and salvation of the world.

The practice of *makan patita* or *fayatat* evolved from the tradition of hospitality—a gesture of welcoming strangers and treating them as honored guests. The Maluku community practices it as a traditional ritual—a customary provision to celebrate the bonds of brotherhood with all people by sharing food (Andaya, 2015, p. 1). In the Maluku conflict, *makan patita* became a medium for building peace between religious communities through the act of meeting together, sharing food, and hosting one another. In practice, each person brings their own food and places it on the *lesa* provided for communal eating. For those who do not bring food, the *lesa* remains a table of hospitality and reconciliation open to all. The Eucharist and the meal of *patita* or *fayatat*) are two distinct traditions in their contexts. However, in terms of meaning, both emphasize the importance of building bonds of fellowship, hospitality, and reconciliation. Christians who celebrate the Eucharist and the Maluku people who celebrate the *patita* or *fayatat* meal can create a space of hospitality and reconciliation to end various forms of conflict and violence.

Eucharist and Cultural Shared Meal for Interreligious Shared Communities

The proposal to make the Eucharist an inclusive cultural shared meal remains within the framework of weaving separate threads. We are not attempting to Christianize the cultural traditions of *patita* and *fayatat*, or conversely, to secularize the Eucharist. However, the knitting of separate and differently colored threads certainly produces a unified and colorful weave. The union of the two is the construction of a shared space to celebrate life together in an inclusive and transcendental way. We are inspired by Miroslav Volf's idea of a space of mutual embrace. Volf

describes the celebration of the Eucharist as a celebration in which God provides a divine space for us and invites us to share in it. We, who God has been embraced, must make a space within us to embrace others, even enemies. In the space of encounter between us and others, including the enemy, God is present and embraces us, others, and even enemies (Volf, 1996, p. 129)

We argue that the Eucharist and the *patita* or *fayatat* are a space created by God, and God invites us—and others, us—and even our enemies, to participate in it. In this space, we—and others, us—and even our enemies, experience the work of reconciliation based on the eternal love of God, who offered himself for the reconciliation of the world. When the Eucharist becomes the meal of *patita*, we understand that we are inviting others, even our enemies, to participate in the space God provides to embrace us together in God's eternal love. Likewise, when the meal of *patita* becomes the Eucharist, we who have received God's gift of reconciliation are invited to create a shared space (*patita* or *fayatat*) to embrace one another, even in our diversity. The Eucharist can be a celebration for all, because God provides it through the sacrifice of Jesus for us and the world. In this shared space, all Maluku people can foster peace by continuing to share life, hospitality and brotherhood with one another – in the loving embrace of God.

Conclusion

This research ultimately seeks to emphasize that shared meals are a performative act that achieves reconciliation and is not only symbolic. The people of Maluku have emerged from the turmoil of the 1999-2004 conflict and are now enjoying a peaceful life. However, Maluku is a conflict-prone society, still very susceptible to relapse into horizontal conflict. Several conflict incidents that occurred in Ambon City, Seram Island, and other areas of Maluku in 2025 confirm that maintaining peace in Maluku remains a responsibility. This study seeks to strengthen bridges of peace through interpreting cultural and religious texts. This research shows that Christianity has a theological basis for building peace with all people, namely in the Eucharistic event shared by Jesus with the apostles, as recounted in Luke 22:14-20. Not only Christians, but all religions have teachings that promote peace. As part of the Maluku community that lives in a culture of *makan patita* and *fayatat*, all religious communities are invited to foster peace.

The Eucharist and the meal of *patita* or *fayatat* are two distinct texts, but in this study, they are woven together as separate, colorful threads, creating a beautiful weave. Both the Eucharist and the meal of *patita* or *fayatat* affirm a tradition of sharing a meal to build interreligious shared communities. The Eucharist and the meal of *patita* or *fayatat* are acts of sharing a meal and sharing life that sustains each other. The Eucharist and the meal of *patita* or *fayatat* are a table of hospitality and reconciliation—between humans and God, as well as humans and each other. The Eucharist and the meal of *patita* or *fayatat* are a space where God is present, embracing us with others, us with our enemies, to live together in God's love. In the tradition of the Eucharist and the culturally shared meal, we can find values of peace, as well as strategies and models for nurturing peace in the land of Maluku.

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