

**AN AFRICAN SYMBOLIC HERMENEUTICAL
CRITIQUE OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE
OF PENAL SUBSTITUTION THEORY OF THE
DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT IN
CHURCH OF CHRIST IN NATIONS (COCIN)
WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF JOS, NIGERIA**

By

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**SCHOOL OF RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY
AND CLASSICS**

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November 2018

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We, the undersigned, do solemnly declare that we have abided by the University of KwaZulu-Natal policy on language editing. The thesis was professionally edited for proper English language, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and overall academic style. All original electronic forms of the text have been retained should they be required.

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to God and the divine work of salvation expressed through God's act of condescension in Jesus Christ to identify with the human condition and to all who are victims of the world's changing contexts that are plagued with systemic and symbolic violence.

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ABSTRACT

This study is an African symbolic hermeneutical critique of the penal substitution theory, a theological concept that constitutes one of the ecclesial doctrines of the atonement as understood and practiced by the Church of Christ in Nations in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. The leaders and members live and practice this doctrine within Jos, a context plagued with systemic and symbolic violence. African symbolic hermeneutics is an ongoing broader perspective used in inculturating Euro-centric Christian doctrines within Africa. This perspective offers an afro-centric nuance in transmitting European cultured Christianity in Africa. Through the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective, this study interrogated the penal substitution theory as a missio-cultural tool that the church can utilise to respond to the violence-prone context. The study also examines the extent to which the leaders and laity are equipped with the African symbolic approaches that can adequately respond to the systemic and symbolic violence. The focus on the clergy leaders is because theologically they are trained to communicate the church's doctrines and disciplines to its members.

The penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement asserts that Christ took the legal responsibility of human sin and through his death paid the debt in order to satisfy the compulsory justice of God. In light of this, contemporary scholars have argued that this core teaching of the church has the potential for its followers to embrace violence as a method of demonstrating their allegiance to Christ and the church. Consequent to the retributive nuance contained within the doctrine, this study calls into question the context in which the doctrine was constructed and how this it was transplanted by the Western missionaries following the founding of the Church of Christ in Nations.

Contemporary scholars have proposed a shift from the traditional Penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement which presents Christ as one who was violently punished for the sake of fallen humankind to a perspective that presents him as one who identifies with God's love of creation. This assertion was made possible through an empirical research conducted within the Church of Christ in Nations in Jos, Plateau State where it was presented, analysed and interpreted. The symbolic hermeneutical perspective used in this study therefore seeks to appropriate the retributive understanding of the substitutionary work of Christ through the symbolic African

cultural experience of Pyem people, one of the ethnic groups within Jos, Plateau State, which can better serve as a medium through which the penal substitution theory can be expressed within the violence-prone context of Jos. This serves as an alternative model of the doctrine under consideration that can equip the missional identity of the Church of Christ in Nations to positively respond to the religio-cultural, socio-political and violent context of Jos so as to bring about a just peace among its religiously diverse population.

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CAN	Christian Association of Nigeria
COBATI	COCIN Bible and Agricultural Training Institute
COCIN	Church of Christ in Nations
CUMP	Cambridge University Mission Party
EKAN	<i>Ekklessiyar Kristi A Nigeria</i>
GTS	Gindiri Theological Seminary
LCC	Local Church Council
LGA	Local Government Area
NAM	Northern African Mission
PCC	Provincial Church Council
PST	Penal Substitution Theory
RCC	Regional Church Council
SIM	Sudan Interior Mission
SPM	Sudan Pioneer Mission
SUM	Sudan United Mission
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WCC	World Council of Churches

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCING THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

This introduction presents the motivation and background that informs the study, and includes, key concepts, statement of problem, significance and purpose of study, research questions, aims and objectives, theoretical framework, methodology, scope and limitation of the study. The project is focused on the penal substitution theory, a theological concept that constitutes one of the important components of the ecclesial doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by members and clergy leadership of the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. These church members and leaders live and practice this doctrine within a socio-political context that has been plagued by systemic and symbolic violence that threatens physical life.

Through an African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative approach, this study interrogates the penal substitution theory as a missio-cultural tool that the church can appropriate to respond to the violence-prone context of Jos. The study also seeks to examine the extent to which the church members and leaders are equipped with African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative approaches to contribute adequately in response to the systemic and symbolic violence. The focus on clergy leaders is because theologically they are trained to communicate and equip the members to the accepted church beliefs and doctrines. The penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement maintains that Christ took the legal responsibility of human sin and through his death paid the debt in order to satisfy the justice of God (Brummer 2005:71). In light of this, scholars such as Green and Baker (2012:15), Pugh (2015) and Kyle (2013:1-19) have identified the propensity of violence in this theory. Consequent to the retributive nuances observed by these scholars, this study calls into question the context in which this doctrine has been constructed and how it was originally bequeathed by the missionaries into the ministry and mission of the COCIN. Consequent to contemporary examination, these scholars have proposed a shift from the traditional penal substitution

theory of the doctrine of the atonement which presents Jesus Christ as one who was violently punished for the sake of fallen humankind to a perspective that presents him as one who identifies in love with creation (Torrance 2009:8). Accordingly, the broader African symbolic hermeneutical framework of this study seeks to inculturate the retributive understanding of the substitution work of Christ with the African cultural experience of the Pyem people, one of the ethnic groups from Jos, Plateau State. It argues that their religio-cultural symbols which convey their indigenous understanding and practice of atonement could serve as a more meaningful medium of expression and explanation of the concept for the COCIN to missionally engage with the violent context of Jos, Plateau State.

1.2. Motivation and location to the study

The motivation of this study is driven by several factors linked to personal, academic and professional experiences of the religio-cultural challenges posed by this subject within the context of Jos, Plateau State.

1.2.1. Personal motivation

This present study follows on from my Master's dissertation¹ where I identified some research gaps that required further study. In this earlier study, I identified the metaphorical symbol of the sprinkling of Christ's blood by some Evangelical and Pentecostal churches² in Jos that was used as a spiritual weapon to fight witches and wizards and provide protection from opponents during religious and political violence. Although this form of applying Christ's blood was not defined by Jesus, his disciples or even the later Western missionaries, it has nevertheless evolved into an important instrument of African symbolic hermeneutics as inculturation that enhances the

¹See: L. Y. Luxman, "A critical analysis of Christ's blood as means for protection from evil: A case study of some selected churches in Jos," Unpublished M.Th. dissertation, Theological College of Northern Nigeria, Bukuru, Jos, (2013).

² The selected Churches are: The Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN), Jos; Evangelical Churches Winning All (ECWA), Jos; Truth Embassy World Outreach Ministries, Jos, and Solid Rock Ministries, Jos. The data analysis reveals significant results and a clear understanding of the application of the blood of Christ having been altered due to inculturation and the violence taking place in Jos (Luxman 2013:46-56). The result of my master's research seems to suggest an expression of intolerance and violence instead of love and tolerance.

understanding and appropriation of the theological significance of Christ's blood within the context of Jos, Plateau State.

This study thus calls into question whether the COCIN possesses the missional will and capacity to inculturate its understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement through the appropriation of African symbolic indigenous resources.

1.2.2. Professional motivation

The second motivation for this study stemmed from my professional role as a member of the clergy that serves the COCIN. I have observed over many years that in the expressions of the ministry and mission of many local churches on the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement that was bequeathed by the missionaries in the founding of the COCIN were characterised by a triumphalist attitude expressed through intolerance and non-acceptance of people of other faith groups. Its missional posture seemed to thrive on the non-life affirming competition for membership growth and the use of judgemental words towards others in community building within the local pluralistic context. This is evident in the work of Boer (2014:14) where he identified competitiveness and superiority tendencies of Christianity over other religions by the founders of the COCIN. For example, Hermann Karl Kumm the pioneering leader who founded the COCIN in his motivational statement stated that:

We lay aside the newspaper and ask what does this means, this scene in the Central Sudan? Among semi-Moslem, semi heathen, wholly non-Christian people, what does this cheering for the white man mean? Simply that in the greatest, darkest, most suffering of all and ruled by Islam, Islam can rule no longer. The land of God is taking its power away (1907:15).

Although such superlative statements were meant to motivate people to give attention to the need of reaching North Central Nigeria with the Christian message, yet its missional posture and strategy advocated competition and judgment against the Muslims that communicates intolerance towards its membership. This could be misused by extremists as a means of sanctioning the use of violence against the followers of Islam and other religions.

Although COCIN serves as the oldest and largest denomination in Plateau state yet, its theology of Penal Substitution seems to posture intolerance and retaliation especially in its engagements with people of faith traditions. Uzodike and Obaje (2013:14) delineates instances where Christian and Muslim leaders engaged in reprisal attacks against each other. The attacks in part of Jos such as Kuru Karama and Dogon Nahawa is alleged to be retaliatory attacks by Christians and Muslims (Wika 2013:24). This calls into question COCIN's understanding and practice of the loving and forgiving atoning death of Christ in the violent context of Jos.

1.2.3. Academic motivation

The third motivation for this study was triggered by the model of the theological education of church leaders offered at the theological colleges that educate leaders of the COCIN on the understanding of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement that was bequeathed by the missionaries. This not only influenced the theological curriculum as argued above, but it also seemed to constitute the source that equipped its leaders with a triumphalist hermeneutic that presented the Christian faith as the only true and superior faith approved by the Christian scriptures in which God through Jesus constitutes the only path to authentic salvation for humanity.³ As a result, the church and its mission has been perpetually functioning in a 'crusading state' against those within the society that follow other belief systems. This study therefore postulates that it is this 'devaluation of the other' in the understanding of the doctrine that has contributed to the weak social cohesion within Jos that facilitates the disposition to embrace physical force as a way of expressing power and control over

³ Mohzo (2013:106) argues that the introduction of Hausa as an indigenous language in the traditional missionary curriculum was made compulsory due to the tendency of superiority by making the English language as the only means of communication. Rengshwat (2013:84) also attributes the insignificant response to the Christian message by the Muslims in Wase where the COCIN's ministry and mission first engaged with the culture by dismissing other religions as a fetish and less life-giving.

others (Boer 2014:16-17). The traditional teachings on the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement by the COCIN perceives the Christian faith as the only authentic and superior faith in which God sacrificially offered the life of Jesus his only son as the means to overcome the consequences of sin in the world (2014:16). In turn, this teaching seems to imply that it is a just and necessary price/cost to pay to punish the innocent in order that the offender/s is/are saved or a community is rescued from death.

To a certain extent, it can be argued that this doctrine seems to legitimise the use of violence that has contributed to the loss of innocent lives in the name of allegiance to defending a particular religion. Accordingly, this study argues that the missionary teachings on the finished work of Christ, which the COCIN leaders have embraced, seems to have inadvertently advanced the use of religious violence in defence of the Christian faith rather than serving as a peacebuilding asset within Jos. Hence, if peacebuilding is to emerge within the volatile context of Jos, then fundamental African symbolic hermeneutics as an inculturative approach is needed in the theological understanding of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement that is used in the theological formation of the leadership of the COCIN. This present study thus posits that without radical missio-cultural perspectives that promote life for all and is integrated into the curriculum that is used for the teaching of the penal substitution theory, then the ministry of the church within Jos may likely fail to be an effective peacebuilding and life-affirming missional agent.

1.3. Significance of the study

This research seeks to interrogate the ways in which the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN seems to exacerbate the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. The study investigates how the nineteenth-century missionaries constructed and transported the penal substitution theory into the COCIN's missional identity. It also argues that this process seems to contribute to the promotion of violence in Jos. Karl Kumm, the COCIN pioneering missionary stated, "simply that in the greatest, darkest, most suffering of all and ruled by Islam, Islam can rule no longer...God is taking its power away" (1907:15). These words seem to promote the idea that through Christian missionary activities, God has

forcible taken away power from the Muslims. In addition, this statement indirectly suggests that Christian missionary activity was a political act that supported regime change that contributed to power being taken away from one religious group and given to another. Kumm's statement therefore indirectly served as a conduit for symbolic and systemic violence because of the implicit intolerance and unhealthy competitiveness and judgemental attitude in responding to the presence of Islam and other religions in North Central Nigeria. Furthermore, the way in which the penal substitution theory is interpreted and practiced within the ministry of the COCIN also seems to perpetrate an attitude of intolerance towards other faiths that could be misused by extremist elements within the community to unleash violence.

Through this African symbolic hermeneutical critique of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement that has been bequeathed by the missionaries to the COCIN, this study seeks to contribute to the ongoing quest for peace in the violent context of Jos. This study thus argues that this doctrine seems to be uncritically embraced and practiced without adequate in-depth missio-cultural interrogation of its capacity to engender peacebuilding within the pluralistic context of Jos that has been plagued by violence. Accordingly, the African symbolic hermeneutical critique of the penal substitution theory through the broader African symbolic hermeneutics is intended to contribute in the growing literature by African scholars seeking authentic symbolic African traditional approaches to understanding Christianity within the context of violence and their quest for meaningful peacebuilding.

1.4. Location of the study

This study is located within Jos, the capital of Plateau state Nigeria. Jos is in the middle-belt between Southern and Northern Nigeria. The inhabitants were predominantly practitioners of African Traditional Religion, albeit with cultural and ethnic differences (Danfulani 2002:7). Due to the influx of Muslims from the Northern part of Nigeria because of Tin mining and the introduction of Christianity by the Western missionaries, Jos became a religiously-diverse metropolitan city that came to experience religious, cultural, social and political agitation and disquiet. Jos also houses, Orthodox Islamic sects are attracted in Jos (Higazi, 2011:6). One of these is the *Izala: Jama'atu Izalat al-Bidi'a wa Iqamat al-sunna* which means 'the Association for Suppressing Innovations

and Restoring the 'Sunna.' This sect ensures the practice of Islam that goes back to the roots by force. Alongside the practice of Islam, Christianity found a strong base because the missionaries made Jos their Headquarters to evangelize surrounding parts of the central North. Because most people in the Central plateau who practiced African Traditional Religion were resistant to other modern religions, became Christians and Muslims this gave Jos a pluri-religious context (Higazi 2011:6). Higazi (2011:6) observes that religious competition and fundamentalism emerged amongst both religions and this was seen and heard in their triumphalist utterances during open air preaching. Mwadwon has stated that:

Giving the pluralistic nature of Jos, members of the two main religions in the city, Christianity and Islam, have intimidated each other's adherents as well other citizens of the town. Practical examples are the blocking of major roads during the Sunday services of the Christians and the Friday prayers of the Muslims. The mounting of loudspeakers to proclaim religious teachings and in the process make provocative statements in order to oppose or antagonize the religion of other community is a common phenomenon (2001:60).

From the undergoing, it is clear that the attitude of the Christians and the Muslims towards each other are being shaped by their beliefs and practices, which are based strongly on their claims to absolute truth embedded in exclusivity. This calls to question how reconciliation and conflict resolution can be attained in such a scenario which is characterized by rancour and bitterness. The religious conflict in Jos therefore demands that other ways of interpreting the reality be explored as a matter of urgency to prevent on going religious informed conflict. In this study, Jos serves as the violent context in which the penal substitution theory is understood and practiced by the church of Christ in Nations. The approach of the study takes into consideration the pluralistic nature of Jos, particularly the religio-cultural experiences that constitute the different religion, cultural and ethnic groups within the city. The African symbolic hermeneutic employed by this study seeks to offer a contextual interpretation that takes root in the African religio-cultural experience that defines the African ways of life and how they respond to threats that deny fullness of life.

1.5. Definition of terms

The definition of the key concepts that underpin this study is aimed at attaining coherence in the way they function throughout the work. Understanding the meaning of the concept as described and analysed is geared towards achieving the aims and objectives of the study.

- i. **Atonement:** Atonement is an ecclesial construct which this study utilises as the broader concept that gives rise to other sub concepts. Its particular focus is on the penal substitution theory that constitutes the ecclesial doctrine of Church of Christ in Nations in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. Atonement is defined as “at – one – ment” which denotes the reconciliation of two conflicting parties (Ekem 2005:5; Torrance 2009:122). Atonement within the Old Testament utilises the Hebrew word *kipper* which means “to cover.” It entails an act of reversing the penalty of a wrong deed or action that can foster the restoration of the relationship between estranged persons. The New Testament *Koine* Greek word is *katallage* which means “reconciliation” (Eliot 1962:9-10). Due to the context being dynamic and not static, this concept has been interpreted and applied by scholars who have proposed a shift from the traditional understanding of atonement which presents Christ’s death on the cross as one who was violently assaulted to a contemporary understanding that represents love for fallen humankind (Green and Baker 2011:142). The retributive nuance identified within this definition is what this study utilises as a working definition that foregrounds and necessitates the construction of the penal substitution theory.
- ii. **Penal Substitution Theory:** The penal substitution theory evolved from the broader doctrine of the atonement. The word ‘penal’ connotes penalty or legal punishment, while the original Latin word *poena* means penal or compensation (Hamilton 2013: 395). The judicial terms were used to theologise the atoning death of Christ. The doctrine states in sum that through his death on the cross, Christ bore the penalty or punishment of fallen humanity. It is evident that this concept of the atoning work of Christ was constructed within a context of a development judicial system (Lenman and Parker 1979:140). Due to contextual variances, this concept has been re-conceptualised using various perspectives relevant to the context in which the theologising takes place (Pugh 2015:67, 82).

The construction of the concept of the atonement has been based upon Anselm of Canterbury's satisfaction theory and subsequent evolution during the Reformation period of Western church history (Green and Baker 2011:166). Alternative contemporary understandings and applications of this concept reveal attempts by scholars to divorce this loving act of God through Christ's death from the violent nuance it seems to represent. (Bartlett 2011:141-142). This definition is used in this work to show how due to contextual differences, the penal substitution theory as practiced by the Church of Christ in Nations within the violent context of Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria, has to be inculturated through a broader perspective of an African symbolic hermeneutics within the African milieu in order to offer a more life-giving response to the threats that deny fullness of life.

- iii. **Church of Christ in Nations:** The Church of Christ in Nations is an evangelical mission-founded Church in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. It was founded under the auspices of the Sudan United Mission whose Protestant missionaries came from Germany in Western Europe with the objective of engaging in mission work in the sub-Saharan region of Africa. They journeyed from Sudan to Nigeria (Rengshwat 2012:88). Originally, the church was named using the indigenous language *Ekklessiyar Kristi A Sudan* which translated means, "Church of Christ in Sudan" (Goshit 2013:2). The name was later changed to the "Church of Christ in Nations". This change was attributed to the spread of the church beyond the borders of Nigeria, other African countries, and Europe (2013:3-6). The Church of Christ in Nations as described in this study serves as the church where the penal substitution theory is understood and practiced within the violent context of Jos. In view of the Euro-centric oriented nature of its ecclesial doctrine as spelled in the aforementioned definition, this study aims at equipping the missional identity of the Church of Christ in Nations with a missio-cultural understanding that takes root in the Pyem African culturally symbolic heritage.
- iv. **Systemic violence:** Systemic violence is any action or lack of action that is a threat to fullness of life (Arbuckle 2004:7). It can be physical or psychological, depending on what its perpetrators may want to achieve. Violence is systemic when religious, economic and political power is applied to undermining human dignity. Such violence is subjective because it seeks to satisfy a selfish ambition

(Zizek 2008:12-13). The perpetrators of the violence in Jos utilised and applied this form of violence through the use of political, religious and economic privilege to undermine a certain group of people. Following the response of the Church of Christ in Nations to the continuing violence in Jos, this study interrogates how the penal substitution theory is practiced and seeks to contribute towards peacebuilding in Jos.

- v. **Symbolic violence:** This form of violence is ideological in nature and is usually expressed through communication. It is the use of language that inflicts fear and intimidation (Zizek 2009:12-13). The perpetrators of such violence are noticed during public speeches (Kaunda 2016:2-3). What particularly constitutes this form of violence is the violence of exclusion. For example, the exclusion of Black South Africans during the apartheid era was a form of symbolic violence aimed at inflicting fear and racial inferiority (Trisk 2011:84). In terms of this understanding, the study referenced the symbolic violence that engulfed the context of Jos through the circulation of threatening letters and pamphlets (Danfulani and Fwatshak 2002:243-244). From 2001 to 2010, the violence conflict that erupted in Jos has been associated to the non-life affirming relationships extant between the religious, ethnic and political communities (Higazi 2011:2). The sequence of violence from 2001 to 2010 is attributed to religious, ethnic, religious and political affiliations in Jos. Within this period there were cases of brutal killings between Christian and Muslim communities, the kidnapping and murder of innocent children taking place at an alarming rate (Higazi 2011:2). Despite recurring judicial commissions by the Plateau State Government to restore peace particularly in Jos, little real progress was achieved in reducing the violence (Danfulani 2006:7). Consequent to the continual violence in Jos, this study calls into question the missional identity of the Church of Christ in Nations and its capacity to engender peace in Jos.
- vi. **Peacebuilding:** Peacebuilding as used in this study connotes contributions by the Church of Christ in Nations and the Plateau State Government towards the realization of peace in the systemic and symbolic violent context of Jos. Peacebuilding is a collective effort within a violence-prone context aimed at managing and reducing violent conflicts (Nürnberg 1989:119). Peacebuilding involves the utilisation of multiple concepts and methods which are relevant to

conflicting parties (Querejazu 2016:3). It is in this light, that the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective employed by this study seeks to construct an African symbolic hermeneutical perspective as an alternative conception developed from within the Pyem indigenous religio-cultural experience that can contribute towards peacebuilding in Jos.

1.6. Literature review

The literature review begins with an in-depth review of the work of key scholars such as Ben Pugh (2015), Baker and green (2011), Anthony Bartlett (2011), Thomas Torrence 2009 and John Ekem (2005). These scholars wrote extensively on the Christian doctrine of the atonement that informs the understanding of the penal substitution theory. This concept constitutes a central doctrine of the COCIN that defines the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary as the means for human beings to be reconciled to God and to one another. This study examines how the COCIN understand and practice the penal substitution theory whether it has equipped its leaders and members to respond to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos from 2001 to 2010. This study interrogates the construction and interpretation of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement by sixteenth-century Reformation leaders in Europe such as Martin Luther (Pugh 2015) and John Calvin (Lenman and Parker 1993). The interrogation is necessitated by the retributive nuances identified from the background of the study and the said contemporary scholars who proposed a shift from the violent disposition of the penal substitution theory to an understanding which seeks to respond to threats that undermine human dignity. The literature review seeks to identify COCIN's insensitivity and uncritical assessment of the said doctrine into its mission thrust that functions within a context plaque with systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. This study thus argues that the Euro-centric 'Warrior-Saviour' that engaged in violent struggle with the earthly powers of darkness was uncritically transferred and embraced into the COCIN by the missionaries. Their brand of Christianity being a triumphalist monotheistic faith was intolerant of other faith traditions and therefore indirectly has contributed to the unacceptable state of violence that has enveloped the multi-religious context of Jos. Different literatures on violence and peacebuilding were also reviewed in order to identify their methodological

perspectives on how to overcome violence. Finally, the literature review is aimed at identifying possible gaps that correspond with the research problem of the study.

1.7. Theological reflections on the doctrine of the atonement

Scholars such as Torrance (2009:120) and Grudem (1994:181-182) have cogently argued that the doctrine of the atonement is central to Christian theology and as an ecclesiological construct its subsidiary theories include the main penal substitution theory and other theories such as ransom to Satan, moral influence, and the example theory⁴ (Grudem 1994:281-82). This study however gives particular attention to the penal substitution theory. Although the selection of scholars as pointed in the introduction was done on a general not yet the selective literature for this theological reflection was chosen from a systematic review of literature that involved scholars who have written on how the atonement was understood in the Old and New Testaments, the Early Church, the European Reformation and finally, the contemporary era.

In the light of the OT understanding, Grudem (1994:281-282), Ekem (2005:5) and Torrance (2009) as interlucating scholars on atonement defined the doctrine of the atonement as “at-one-ment,” thereby meaning the reconciliation of two estranged parties (2009:122). Since the Christian concept of atonement evolved out of the Jewish religio-cultural world as described in the Hebrew Bible, it is of importance to identify what are the key ingredients that constitute atonement (Cross 2001:1). According to Cross (2001:1), the estrangement based on the OT understanding was posed by sin and could only be atoned by the shedding of animal blood. He added that the OT Hebrew word for atonement is *kipper* which means “to cover” (2001:2). Brummer contends that “to cover” in the OT understanding entails an act to reverse the penalty of a wrong act for reconciliation or restoration of a relationship between the sinner and God (2005:65). Elliott (1962:9-10) adds that the OT atonement was purely God’s act of removing or covering the divine-human estrangement as a result of human’s disobedience. Another way of removing the estrangement based on the OT definition according to Smith (1906:418) is “to appease’ or ‘to wipe off.” The Hebrew word *kipper* which describes the acts of God in the OT therefore suggests that for Christian doctrine to be understood it must take root in the cultural experience of a particular people. It is in this light, that this present study employs the use of words proposed by Bujo as symbolic hermeneutics

to the African cultural experience to re-interpret the penal substitution theory for peacebuilding in the violent context of Jos (2015:82). Although these scholars are writing from the traditional way of understanding the atoning work of Christ, yet they seem to emphasise how the OT atonement symbolised reconciliation and the restoration of relationships. The utilisation of African symbolic cultural experience among the Pyem people⁴ therefore becomes relevant in contributing to peacebuilding in the context of Jos since it posits that words can be translated as cultural symbols for reconciliation. Writing from the OT understanding of atonement, Ekem (2005:5) and Pugh (2015) have argued that the Early Church Fathers and the generation of theologians after them, seemed not to conform to the OT understanding that portrayed love and reconciliation, but rather interpreted the atonement message within an imperial context with systems of power characterised by inequality and injustice. This failure could be attributed to the religio-cultural and politico-economic realities of the different contexts that influenced the construction of the doctrine of the atonement. Therefore, for the COCIN to offer a missio-cultural response to the violence in Jos, its understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory as bequeathed by the missionaries to the COCIN must take into account the religio-cultural, socio-political, symbolic and systemic violence context of Jos.

From the forgoing, Cross (2001:1) holds that the OT Hebrew word for atonement, *kipper* is translated in Greek as *katallage*, meaning reconciliation (2001:1). Torrance (2009:5) on the other hand, understands the NT atonement being where Christ death is prefigured as the High Priest and the Lamb sacrificed in fulfilment of the OT sacrifice to atone for sin. According to Torrance (2009:5-6), the priesthood and the symbolic representation of Christ as the lamb described Christ's incarnation as God's ultimate plan to restore his relationship with the fallen humanity (2009:5-6). In both the OT and NT understanding of atonement as posit by Cross and Torrance denotes forgiveness and reconciliation. The African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative process of re-interpreting the penal substitution theory within the cultural experience of the Pyem

⁴ The Pyem people are one of the ethnic groups in Plateau State, Nigeria. The name Pyem stands for "the people of land." It also stands as the language of the people. The word Pyem also represents Ba-pyem "for the people" and Di-Pyem "for the language" (Daspan 2002:1). They are an ethnic group in Plateau State well known for their hospitality. This is expressed through their adage "*Do ta chalai ram*" which means "humanity is more important than land" (Tempel 1965:120).

people therefore focused on cultural symbols as medium of expressing a life-giving message for peaceful co-existence in relation to God and humanity. Arbuckle (2001:29) holds that symbols are informative because they stimulate deeper imagination and meaning to an event. Although Arbuckle is writing from the anthropological perspective, his concept of symbols is relevant in the process of articulating the penal substitution theory using African cultural symbols as medium of expression. Torrance (2009:100) further adds that in the NT understanding of atonement Christ's blood symbolises the covering and wiping away of sin as the fulfilment of the OT sacrifice for atonement. According to Torrance (2009:100), this is reflected in the Apostle Paul's concept of the atonement which teaches that the sinner who is restored becomes righteous and at peace with God through Christ's death on the cross. The NT understanding of the atoning work of Christ is therefore seen as the fulfilment of the OT atonement which presupposes the restoration of relationship and peace with God through reconciliation. Although the concepts of reconciliation and restoration are judicial terms, they nevertheless offer a symbolic connotation that can be a resource for the for the African symbolic inculturative process in restoring relationships within the violent context of Jos.

In the Early Church, the atoning work of Christ on the cross was interpreted as an antidote to fight evil emanating from the Roman system considered to be a deadly threat to the fullness of life. Pugh (2015:4) accentuated this while highlighting the context that influenced the conceptualisation of Christ death on the cross by the Early Church Fathers, where Jesus was seen as the "Word of God"⁵ revealed in the world to defeat evil. It can thus be argued that the idea of fighting and defeating promotes the propensity of symbolic violence. Symbolic violence according to Arbuckle (2004) can be words or actions that undermine human dignity.

In articulating the penal substitution theory in the light of the Early Church Fathers in the violent context of Jos may exacerbate symbolic violence rather than promoting peace. According to Green and Baker (2011:142) the understanding of the atonement in the context where evil was prevailing was what constituted the various interpretations

⁵ This assertion is attributed to the Bible, where Jesus is described as one who is coming to destroy the works of Satan (1 John 3:8).

that led to the development of other theories of the atonement. Ekem (2005:5) contends that although the Early Church Fathers interpreted Christ's death as a substitute, yet their theological reflection was within their religio-social context characterised by the consciousness of evil. For example, the ransom to Satan theory of the doctrine of the atonement propounded by the Early Church Father, Irenaeus, entails that Christ's victory over evil was interpreted as a price paid to Satan (Green and Baker 2011:144). Although these scholars wrote from the contemporary perspective, their arguments and evaluation of how the atonement was understood during the Early Church period was basically influenced by their context. This denotes that context always plays centre-stage in the process of articulating Christian doctrines within a particular context (Bevans 1992:1). The African symbolic hermeneutical re-interpretation inculturation of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement therefore should take root in the context of Jos by embracing the African religio-cultural life-affirming experiences as an African symbolic hermeneutical method for understanding and practice of the doctrine under consideration.

In the contemporary understanding of the atonement, Green and Baker (2011:28) argue that the finished work of Christ on the cross of Calvary should no longer be interpreted as a wrathful God demanding blood sacrifice but should be understood rather in terms of a compassionate God who is in solidarity with the suffering and the marginalised people of God's creation. Indeed, this perspective correlates with the religio-cultural lens of the people in Jos as it relates to peacebuilding that creates reconciliation. Jennings (2009:2) has observed that the popular way of speaking about the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross as his atoning sacrifice has either become incoherent or has acquired meanings that are inconsistent with the practice of the Christian message.

The assessment of the contemporary understanding of the atoning work of Christ by the aforementioned scholars suggests that the hermeneutical method for translating Christian doctrines is not static (Segundo 1977:66). This is because the praxis of theology always takes cognisance of the context in which one is theologising (Bevans 1992:10). In the work of Bartlett (2001:141-142), atonement is interpreted as what is attributed to the end of violence in the world through God's compassion in the sacrificial death of Jesus. Hebrews 9:28 is centred on the sacrificial death of Christ

when it states that: “*He died once for all and there is no need for others to die to reconcile or save the world.*” Kirk (2006:136-137) advocates that non-retaliation must be embraced as an effective strategy to end violence. However, it could be argued that the idea of non-retaliation in the face of systemic or symbolic violence can only be effective if it is not based on the vulnerable always being sacrificed. Indeed, the qualitative difference in Jesus’ life, work and death had the intentional purpose of overthrowing systems of death, be they religious, economic, social or political that deny people fullness of life (Matthew 12:11-12).

These various contextual shifts of both the traditional and contemporary understanding of the doctrine of the atonement highlighted above informed an African symbolic hermeneutic engagement with the COCIN’s missional identity. The African culturally symbolic imagination of the penal substitution theory of the atonement is foundational to seeking alternative theological interpretation informed by indigenous knowledge in the systemic violent context of Jos.

1.7.1. Theories concerning the doctrine of the atonement

Although there are many theories of the doctrine of the atonement, this study has chosen to focus on the sub-theories of the ransom to Satan theory, the satisfaction theory, and the moral influence theory as integral components that best explain the doctrine of the atonement during the period of the Early Church Fathers. In particular, the study is aimed at identifying those key elements that served as backgrounds to understanding the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement.

1.7.1.1. The ransom to Satan theory

This theory according to Green and Baker (2011:144) was first postulated by Irenaeus (AD 130-202) who contextually noted social and political evil as threats to life that also contested against the Lordship of Jesus and his saving work on the cross.

There are three key elements identified in this theory:

- i. It maintains that Jesus’ victory over sin through his death can be interpreted as a ransom payment to Satan who held all humankind captive because of sin (Green and Baker 2011:144).

- ii. According to Pugh (2015:5), Christ's death on the cross as a ransom payment to Satan served to represent fallen humanity in order to set them free from Satan. Pugh (2015:5) further notes that Irenaeus identified this process of reconciliation as recapitulation from the Latin root word *Capto* which in English means heads or representatives. It can be argued that this theory seems to be deeply influenced by the Apostle Paul's teaching on the incarnation (1 Corinthians 15:45) and his emphasis on the role played by Adam and Jesus in facilitating the reconciliation of the sinful humanity with God. Adam's disobedience against God symbolised the chief of head of human (sinfulness) disobedience. However, Jesus Christ's obedience through his death on the cross represents the head of salvation of what God requires for human beings to be restored to their full status of being reconciled (Pugh 2015:145).

- iii. Gregory of Nyssa further attempts to develop the Irenaeus theory of ransom to Satan by describing how God out of his justice deceived Satan through Christ's death and resurrection and thus it became a form of a ransom paid to Satan and functioned as a symbolic bait in a hook that enabled God to deliver humankind from Satan's captivity (Mattison 1987:65). In their assessment about this theory, Green and Baker (2011:50) have argued that although Irenaeus, Origen and Gregory of Nyssa employed ransom and payment as symbols from the NT and tried as much as possible to interpret the saving work of Jesus on the cross based on their context, they nevertheless denied God of his power over Satan (2011:150). The use of ransom and payment in the Bible according to Mattison (1987:65), should only be interpreted as metaphors that described the magnitude of sin and demonstration of God's grace to all humanity and not payment to Satan. Grudem (2000:581) countered this theory of ransom paid to Satan by pointing out that the theory was not fully accepted by the Early Church, because there was no biblical support for the teaching that sinners owed Satan. This theory was deemed to be inadequate because it failed to regard Jesus' death as a propitiation offered to God. Accordingly, this perspective on the doctrine of the atonement failed to gain theological credibility in the church because it is God and not Satan who requires justice with regards to sin. It can also be argued that this view of the doctrine of the atonement is inadequate because it failed to

capture the full application of the finished work of Jesus on the cross and also to recognise God's sovereignty by ascribing more power to Satan than God.

In spite of its inadequacy as assessed by different scholars, this study has exposed the risks and limitations that are possible in any contextual understanding of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement (Ho 2011:120). These factors must be taken into account in the utilisation of the broader African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework of this study, ensuring that symbolic cultural experiences within the context of Jos used in the African symbolic hermeneutical process do not negate the main tenets of Christianity.

1.7.1.2. The moral influence theory

According to Grudem (2000:581), it was Peter Abelard (A.D 185-254) who constructed this theory. There are two elements that are identified in this theory. First, it details that Jesus death on the cross was simply God's demonstration of his love for humankind and not as payment of the penalty for sin (2000:581). Taylor (2006:4) argued that Abelard was extremely subjective in his interpretation of the atonement since his emphasis was only on what the finished work of Christ on the cross did in humankind alone. Abelard's systematic rejection of the ransom to Satan concept of the atonement could be considered as one of the elements because he argues:

If a slave of any master seduces his fellow slave by subtle suggestion and makes him depart from obedience from his true master, the seducer is looked upon by the slave's master as much more guilty than the seduced? And how unjust it would be that he who seduced the other should deserve, as a result, to have any special right or authority over him! (Green and Baker, 2011:162).

While Satan deceived humankind, this does not make him above humankind or have the right to demand anything from God. It can be argued that Peter Abelard seemed to be inconsistent in his perspective that led to a total condemnation of Irenaeus' ransom to Satan theory without considering the context from which it emerged. The African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative critique of the COCIN understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory as bequeathed by the missionary tradition, acknowledged the context and culture from which it was transported and transplanted into the COCIN missional identity. For example, Bate (2002:27) has argued that what

characterised human life is one's experience within a particular context. In their assessment, Green and Baker (2011) have observed that Abelard failed to contextualise his concept of the doctrine of the atonement through his abstract interpretation and application of the work of Christ.

Vlach (2009:4) while assessing the penal substitution theory in conversation with other concepts of the doctrine of the atonement has argued that due to extreme emphasis on the subjective nature of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, the attributes of God's justice and holiness seemed to be relegated to the background. The individualistic character of Abelard's concept of the atonement places emphasis on only how the person is reconciled to God through Christ's death and not with members of her/his own community (Green and Baker 2011:164). Although these scholars wrote from a contemporary perspective, if reconciliation with God does not include other members of the human community as projected in this theory, then it limits the *missio Dei* which represents love and reconciliation not only with God but also man and ones' neighbour (Bosch 1991:10).

1.7.1.3. The satisfaction theory

This theory was propounded by Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109) (Pugh 2015:52). The elements that constitute this theory include the understanding of Christ's death on the cross as substitutionary to satisfy God's justice (Green and Baker 2011:152). According to Green and Baker (2011:151), Anselm developed a more substantive view that took into account the notion of Christ's death being offered as a satisfaction to God. Another element identified in this theory was Anselm's emphasis on Christ's divine and human nature and his obedience to offer his life as a ransom offered to God (Green and Baker 2011:154). Ray (1998:51, 2015:46) viewed Anselm's concept as God being wicked to have allowed the innocent Jesus to suffer in order to be accorded with the honour due to God. However, according to Ray (1998:51, 2015:46), Anselm's contribution cannot be underestimated especially if the finished work of Christ on the cross can be fully interpreted and applied within the Christian. Pugh (2015:56) contends that Anselm portrayed God as sovereign and does not need to negotiate with anyone—not even Satan—in order to save humankind from the wages of sin.

Additionally, the theory focused on how Anselm's context influenced his concept of the finished work of Christ on the cross. This is shown in the way Anselm employed extensively symbols from the feudalistic system of government to shape his interpretation of the atonement theory (Green and Baker 2011:153). However, it should be noted that Anselm's interpretation and application of the finished work of Christ was influenced by the context which was characterised by how the relationship between the Lord and the vassal was restored (2011:157).

Although Anselm tried to converse with his own feudal world culture to contextualise his theology, he nevertheless failed to explore other elements that shaped his context. The use of symbolic features or experiences as contained in Anselm's concept should not be underestimated because the African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative examination of the theory under consideration employed cultural symbolism as key instruments for translating Christianity. The pluralistic context of Jos that informs the missional identity of the COCIN takes into account the religio-cultural, socio-political realities that breed violence. Therefore, a more contextually relevant theoretical framework that addresses the atonement theory is required to adequately respond to the context of Jos.

This concept of the doctrine of the atonement and debates on its classical and contemporary perspective demonstrates God's love and the role that humanity has played in formulating the theological understanding conditioned by contextual realities experienced within a particular community. Furthermore, the idea of substitution in the nature of the death of Jesus constitutes a key tenet in the theory under consideration. Focusing on methods of interpretation used within these theories, the choice of a broader African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative theoretical framework is purposely used to critically examine the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as the most contextually relevant lens that can equip the COCIN to offer a viable response to the religio-cultural, socio-political context of Jos that is plagued by violence.

1.8. Understanding the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement

This section of the study focuses on exploring an understanding of the penal substitution theory, the scholars that postulated the theory and the context that influenced the construction that gave rise to the traditional and contemporary understanding of the doctrine under consideration. The study examines and focuses on the works of Protestant reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin. They are selected because their theological teachings have had a major impact on the ministry and mission formation of the COCIN. This section also captured the debates surrounding the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement especially within the contemporary understanding by conversing with the work of scholars such as Pugh (2015:69-80); Green and Baker (2011:166-189); Ekem (2005); Torrance (2009); Trisk (2011); Bartlett (2011:141-142), and Hamilton (2013).

1.8.1. The classical understanding of the penal substitution theory

The penal substitution theory maintains that Jesus Christ took the legal responsibility of human sin and through his substitutionary death paid the debt in order to satisfy the compensatory justice of God (Hamilton 2013:395). The classical understanding of the penal substitution theory as used in this study is addressed as a concept within the broader doctrine of the atonement. According to Ekem (2005:5), the word ‘penal’ involves penalty or legal punishment while the Latin word *poena* can mean “penal” or “compensation” (2005:5). Accordingly, the penal substitution theory is based on the classical understanding that Christ through his death bore the punishment which fallen humanity was to suffer for. The use of the words ‘penal’ and ‘legal’ as judicial terms suggest that the justice system is what influenced the conceptualisation of the penal substitution theory (Lenman and Parker 1979:140). Symbolically, the words may facilitate the use of violence especially in the context of violence such as Jos. This study has utilised a nonviolent and symbolic cultural term, *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war,” among the Pyem People to re-interpret the penal substitution theory so that it can better equip the COCIN to offer a nonviolent/peacebuilding engagement within the context of Jos to overcome violence and conflicts.

The debates linked to other theories of the doctrine of the atonement have all presented an idea of substitution by viewing Jesus death on the cross as a sacrifice of his life on behalf of humankind. The construction of the concept of the atonement has been based upon Anselm's satisfaction theory and subsequent evolution during the Reformation period (Green and Baker 2011:166). Pugh (2015:70) postulates that the understanding of the finished work of Christ in the Roman Catholic Church tradition is embedded in the images of the cross and the Eucharist among other sacraments. This laid the foundation upon which the Reformers such as Luther reinterpreted the death of Jesus on the cross and its implication for the salvation of humankind. The significance of images of the cross from the Roman Catholic perspective can thus become a medium for expression (Mbiti 1991:25). Luther's struggle with the spiritual effects of sin, asked the question, "How may I be sure that I am justified?" This was in response to his study of Galatians 3:13 in which Christ is presented as taking the place of humanity that has committed sin against God. According to Luther, in Christ he found a sinner who took upon himself the sins of all humanity. He did not see his other sins in him. Therefore, God let him die on the cross (Pugh 2015:57). In addition, Brummer (2005:71) contends that Luther's teachings on Psalm 72 and Isaiah 45 and his perspectives on the magnitude of sin which Jesus took on behalf of humankind shaped his theology and the subsequent construction of the substitution concept of the doctrine of the atonement. Luther's experience which informed his understanding of Christ's death on the cross reveal that African traditional and cultural experience as symbol can influence one's own perceptions. The perception of the warring communities in Jos can therefore be transformed if their cultural experiences are used as a symbolic medium of translating the penal substitution theory.

Calvin's contribution to the penal substitution theory according to Pugh (2015) was fully conversant with his socio-political and religious context which was characterised by an unjust criminal system. Pugh (2015:74) further notes that it was an era in which the peasant that lived on the margins of society suffered greatly. Unlike Luther, Calvin placed greater emphasis on God as an avenging judge who would prevent the law from being violated by those who have committed wrongs (Pugh 2015:67-82). Lenman and Parker (1993:140) in their evaluation of criminal law in early modern Europe have argued that a number of executions were overseen by Calvin whose experience as a

lawyer contributed in his interpretation of the penal substitution theory. Accordingly, Calvin entrenched penal substitution within his concept of punishment, which must be carried out on those who have committed wrong, and only grace (unmerited favour/gift) from the judge can compensate for such wrongdoing. Rengshwat (2012:81) explained that Karl Kumm, the missionary leader that founded the COCIN came from a German protestant Lutheran background whose understanding of the finished work of Christ was especially shaped by concepts drawn from the works of Luther and Calvin. The legacy of the symbolic ‘violent act’ developed in Reformed theology which argues for a loving God avenging sin by demanding Jesus to take the punishment on behalf of creation in order to restore peace between God and creation has produced negative consequences in the local context of Jos. This study therefore argues for the notion of African symbolic hermeneutical inculturation to help the local people experience penal substitution theory as a call to peaceful co-existence.

1.8.2. The contemporary understanding of the penal substitution theory

Ukpong (2000:17) is one of the key contemporary scholars whose African biblical hermeneutic has postulated three approaches to incarnate the finished work of Christ in conversation with one’s context. The approaches are as follows:

- i. The intended meaning of the author of a text;
- ii. The meaning of the text as it encounters the reader;
- iii. The context of the reader in dialogue with the text (2000:17).

This method suggests a praxis or doing of theology that takes into account the context one is theologising and that the recipient can only understand the text if it is expressed through her or his cultural symbolic experience (Arbuckle 2010:121). This study therefore gives attention not only to the context of Jos but also to the people’s cultural experience as a medium through which the penal substitution theory can be expressed.

The classical understanding of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement according to Green and baker (2011:171) has left room for criticism, especially the violent nuances it presents. They further note that in order to address

social issues that are threats to life in this contemporary era, religio-culturally relevant symbols and metaphors need to be employed.

Concurring with the methodology of metaphors as tools for articulating the work of Jesus on the cross, Taylor (2006:16) has postulated that metaphors should be verified to ensure that they are relevant to the context. It is in view of this that Buthelli (2015:782-783), has challenged the church in Africa about its contribution in promoting peace in those contexts which are plagued with systemic violence. Buthelli's understanding of Jesus death on the cross on behalf of humankind, endorses selfless love as the transforming instrument for peacebuilding in African countries where threats to life are at alarming rate (2015:782-783). This contemporary understanding of the substitution theory becomes relevant to this study because the African symbolic hermeneutic inculturative approach employed posits that African cultural symbols are relevant to biblical metaphors that represent the death of Christ on the cross and can be utilised in translating the Christian message. The symbol of love can best be understood through Bujo's concept of African ethics where every person is a promoter of life for all (2015:86). It is through this African symbolic concept of life for all that the penal substitution theory within the violent context of Jos can be articulated.

Bartlett (2011) provides an alternative contemporary understanding of substitution atonement which states that the death of Christ undoes both divine and human violence and offers instead a transformative nonviolent approach to atonement. According to him, Jesus' death exposed the violent origin of all cultures which separate fallen humankind from God and through his death nullified violence as a method that can reconcile and restore human beings and the rest of creation back to God (2011:141-142). Although Bartlett did not explain how his idea could be applied within the context of systemic and symbolic violence such as Jos, he nevertheless offers a nonviolent approach that is relevant to this study. Through this perspective, an African model for peacebuilding will be constructed through an appropriation of the cultural symbols of peace and reconciliation among the Pyem people of Jos that embrace a nonviolent approach.

Kyle (2012:201) refutes the idea that Jesus paid the compensation owed to God so that humankind could go unpunished. For Finlan (2000:706-707), meanings attached to the

use of sacrifice and scapegoat as metaphors in the Bible can be used to describe the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ on the cross. For example, sacrifice is seen as gift that is humbly presented to God (2 Corinthians 9:15) and a scapegoat is the use of an animal to pay compensation and take the blame for a wrong as described in Leviticus 16:26 *“The one who sets the goat free for Azazel shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward may come into the camp”* (NRSV). Finlan further maintains that the better way of interpreting and applying the death of Christ is by using those metaphors that describe Jesus as a sacrifice to God. This is because scapegoating is part of the human fallen nature that always seeks to transfer blame and has the propensity of doing violence (Finlan 2000:706-707). While such metaphors used in the Bible may not be relevant to Kyle or Finlan in their context, they can be relevant in the African context because that is what constitutes part of the African cultural experience. It is for this reason that the African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical inculturative theoretical framework which this study utilises, incorporates familiar African cultural symbols that can serve as metaphors towards equipping the COCIN through its theological institutions to respond to the context of Jos that is plagued with systemic violence.

Castello (2012:336-337) has argued that the understanding of the penal substitution theory would have been devoid of violent nuances if it took into account the mission of God. While Oakland (2007:4) has argued that the avoidance of brutality and the violent nature embedded in the cross can be possible when Jesus’ death as substitution is seen as model of a life of service and sacrifice not like an animal sacrifice paid to Satan as ransom. Cahil (2007:432) states that at Christ’s substitutionary death, the model of service and sacrifice that Jesus offered to all humanity was one of love and hope. According to Cahil (2007:432:433), the violent social structures of the world can be overcome only when authentic Christian life that has not been sabotaged by violence nuances associated with the “power of the cross” but through an understanding of the finished work of Christ that projects service, sacrifice of love and hope. In light of this contemporary understanding of the penal substitution theory, this study interrogates the missio-cultural capacity of the COCIN as to whether its understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory is embedded in Christ’s model of service and sacrifice of love and hope. The study also engages the missional identity of the COCIN to dialogue

with the violent contextual realities of Jos and to explore culturally appropriate metaphors and symbols as an approach that can present a more life-giving concept of atonement that embodies peacebuilding through love and forgiveness.

Vanhoozer's argument on the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement (2004:397-399) calls for a shift from using either judicial or economic metaphors to interpret the work of Christ, because the substitutionary atonement is beyond human comprehension. Instead, he describes the substitutionary atoning work of Christ as rooted in God's overwhelming love and justice that cannot be explained by human words (2004:397-399). Vanhoozer goes on to explain this through his constant use of the term 'excess,' when he states:

The operative concept in the postmodern theological understanding of the atonement is excess, not exchange. The death exceeds our attempts to explain it.... Jesus was a master of excessive metaphors long before post modernity.... Jesus death thus exceeds the Levitical provisions for atonement.... The triune God is excessive, so much so that God shares his overflowing love with his creatures who not God (2004:396-400).

Referring to the social, judicial and economic metaphors used by scholars of the penal substitution theory, Vanhoozer has argued that doing theology in the postmodern era suggests that rethinking is necessary on the limitations of metaphors when interpreting the atoning work of Christ on the cross. He thus states:

The gift of Jesus death...is itself excessive. No economy or external constraint coerced God to give Him for us. No economy mandates that God return our evil with a greater good...In the final analysis, what exceeds the confines of theory is nothing less than the searing white heat of God's love... God pours Himself for us not in an economic exchange but in an excess of justice and love (2004:403-404).

According to this, it was the unconditional love of God in Christ and no other requirement that constitutes the foundations of the atonement. This study postulates that no theology can be successfully done without conversing with the context. In other words, the use of metaphors is necessary because through their symbolic meanings people are empowered to engage in theological reflection and to articulate the specific meaning of the Christian message for their contextual understanding (Arbuckle 2004:12). Accordingly, the use of metaphors to interpret the finished work of Christ on

the cross constitutes a contextually-appropriate way of understanding the doctrine under consideration.

Pugh's (2015:154) theological perspective has divorced any retributive tendencies from the penal substitution theory to a non-violence atonement which stresses that the death of Christ should be seen as non-violent resistance of evil. He argues that the nonviolent resistance by Gandhi, Luther king, Tutu and Mandela amounted to deal with evil not in an evil way since that was how God through Christ conquered evil (*cf.* Bartlett, 2011:141-142). According to Corey (2017:1):

Defenders of penal substitution theory will often say things like 'God cannot allow sin to go unpunished' or 'God cannot forgive without payment.' These statements however, indicate a belief that God is limited and powerless over his own anger. It would be a divine case of the tail wagging the dog and I have seen issue with God being a slave to that.

In his critique, Corey claims that it is unjust to allow an innocent to be punished for the guilty and although the Triune God who is equal in being and essence, the penal substitution theory embodies tendencies of subordination and violence that contradicts the being of God. It can thus be inferred that Corey calls for a re-examination of the penal substitution theory using metaphors and symbols that reject tendencies of violence and retribution.

Part of what informed the broader African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative framework of this present study is the missio-cultural lens that critiques the penal substitution theory. Antonio (2015:158) has argued that a missio-cultural perspective of the penal substitution theory be regarded as substitution that demonstrates in essence the love of God for all humanity and creation and that for the mission of the church in any context to incarnate the *missio Dei* then it's mandate must geared towards overcoming threats to life by imitating Jesus and his immeasurable sacrifice of love for sinful humanity. Bevans' message of the cross speaks of Christ's death as substitution that reveals the Triune God who embraces all irrespective of their context (2015:159). Bevans (2015:198) goes on to argue that Christ's death as substitution should be interpreted as act of Jesus Christ that represents the reconciliatory work of God for fallen humankind and that through the missional identity of the church the message of

peace should be incarnated by engaging with the context that is in dire need of peace. From a different ecclesial tradition, the Orthodox theologian Coorilos (2013:199-200) maintains that the Trinitarian perspective of mission challenges the church to be an agent of the *missio Dei* that seeks the fullness of life through the message of the cross and to respond to injustice and violence that denies life in today's contemporary context.

Since this study seeks to equip the COCIN's missional identity and vocation, the ecumenical document: "Together towards life: Mission and evangelism in changing landscapes" (Keum 2012:33) advocates the "fullness of life for all" (John 10:10) as the core of God's mission and therefore the church is called to refocus its missional mandate to demonstrating the value for life by resisting life-destroying agencies through love, mercy and tolerance.⁶ This Triune missional perspective also calls into question the capacity of the penal substitution theory to function as a peacebuilding and life affirming force within the pluralistic context of Jos where the mission of the COCIN must be committed in interfaith dialogue, cross cultural communication and overcoming violence.⁷

It is evident that the literature on the contemporary understanding of the penal substitution theory has identified some important areas that need to be addressed by this study. These include:

- i. The violent nuances which the concept contains especially in the context of violence such as in Jos;

⁶ See "Together towards life: Mission and evangelism in changing landscapes" This new mission affirmation was unanimously approved by the World Council of Churches (WCC) central committee on 05 September 2012 at its meeting on the Island of Crete, Greece. It is the aim of this new ecumenical discernment to seek vision, concepts and directions for a renewed understanding and practice of mission and evangelism in changing landscapes which is define by the emergency of migration. This is essentially what will inform the COCIN's understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement using this praxis to respond to the context of Jos.

⁷ In the Mission Affirmation of World Council of Churches (WCC), Sec. 9 of 2012, taking into cognisance the multi-religious and multi-cultural context of the church such as Jos, it calls for a life-giving conversation with cultures and engagement with the people and through the missional identity of the church to articulate the Christian message towards building societies of love, peace and justice.

- ii. The need for a symbolic hermeneutical approach that utilises relevant biblical metaphors or cultural symbols as media to communicate Christ's model of service and sacrifice through his death on the cross;
- iii. The need for the missional identity of the church to dialogue with its context by using familiar religio-cultural and socio-political human experience as African symbolic hermeneutical approaches to translate the works of Jesus Christ on the cross.

This is part of what constitutes the research problem that led to the use of the broader African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative perspective to re-examine the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN in Jos that is in dire need of peace.

1.9. The concept of violence

This present study is focused on the violence that erupted in Jos between 2001-2010. Due to the nature of the violence, the study utilises systemic and symbolic violence as concepts that can better define the violence in Jos. Although these concepts will be used interchangeably, each is discussed for the purposes of clarity and application. This section utilises the works of key scholars such as Arbuckle (2004); Katongole (2004); Danfulani (2005); Zizek (2009), and Kaunda (2016).

1.9.1. Systemic violence

Krug (2002:1) defines violence as the intentional use of force or power against a person or group of persons which results to damage of properties, injury and death. According to Arbuckle (2004:vii), violence is any action or non-action of persons or cultures that seeks to undermine human dignity. These definitions denote that violence can be physical or psychologically oriented. Zizek (2009:12) maintains that violence caused through force or power can be systemic it is attributed to when it covers a wide range of a community due to bad economic, social, religious and political systems. According to Zizek, such violence can be subjective when it seeks to satisfy an ambition. The perspectives used by these scholars to a great extent reflects the reality of the violence that has erupted in Jos. Danfulani and Fwatshak (2002:244) describe the violence in Jos

as a catastrophe that engulfed a whole area of the Plateau State as being religiously and politically masterminded. Zizek (2009:13) has further emphasised that violence can be systemic if it is attributed to remote causes that have links with historical unresolved ethnic, social and political conflicts within a whole community. Accordingly, Danfulani and Fwatshak (2002) have attributed part of the remote causes of the violence in Jos as having metamorphosed from unresolved historical conflicts. With this consciousness, the COCIN understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory requires an African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative perspective that takes into account the religio-cultural experience within this form of violence in order to offer a life-giving response.

1.9.2. Symbolic violence

Zizek (2009:14) describes symbolic violence as ideological, mostly expressed through methods of communication that are meant to cause harm. This medium of communication is embedded in the form of expression or language that inflicts fear and aggression which can easily morph into violence. The relevance of Zizek's proposal cannot be underestimated in respect to the violence that erupted in Jos from 2001-2010. It was evident that communications through unregulated mediums operatives using religious propaganda contributed greatly to the eruption and fuelling of the violence in Jos (Mwadwon 2001:57). For example, Mwadkwon (2001:58) has identified cases where threatening letters and pamphlets were circulated in Jos by groups to incite harm to others. Kaunda (2016:3) adds how the use of words in public speeches can be viewed as symbolic violence. Quoting from a speech made by Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini, he pointed out how deadly this can be in a pluralistic context such as South Africa. Although Kaunda addressed this form of violence within the Pentecostal perspective and from a different context, it nevertheless speaks volumes about the form of violence in the context of Jos. Human Rights Watch (2013:38) has reported cases of xenophobic tendencies where some are described as indigenes while others are called foreigners when it comes to economic benefits in Jos (2013, 38). In a similar vein, Trisk (2011:84) has stated that the exclusion faced by black people in South Africa during the Apartheid era was a form of symbolic violence. According to Trisk (2011:84), the feeling of being inferior and uncivilised by Black South Africans is currently seen as the worse form of violence inflicted by the colonialists. The undertone of superiority as identified by Trisk

seems to reflect the same posture before and during the missionary contacts with their host communities in North Central Nigeria. The triumphalist tendencies were noticed when Karl Kumm the pioneering leader of the COCIN described the people who were to be his host communities as “.....hell, the place where Satan has his seat, Pagan cannibals, primitive, hill savage, quite naked greatest darkest most suffering of all....” (1907:13-14). While the words used sounded motivational, they nevertheless seem to convey a derogatory undertone.

From the foregoing discussion, systemic and symbolic violence as described by these scholars undoubtedly reflects the nature of the violence in Jos. This understanding creates space for a viable examination of the violence in Jos and how through the broader African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative perspective used in inculturating the penal substitution theory can equip the COCIN to contribute towards peacebuilding in Jos.

1.10. The concept of peacebuilding

Peacebuilding is one of the concepts that undergirds this study. The interrogation of the penal substitution theory as practiced by the COCIN using the African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative perspective aims at exploring a distinctive African concept for peacebuilding in the violent context of Jos. Through the new initiative to promote the culture of peace and nonviolent response to violence, Konrad Raiser delineates efforts made by the World Council of Churches (WCC) to stimulate the missional identity of all churches and Ecumenical organisations to overcome violence through peace and justice (WCC 2012:5). Raiser maintains that the WCC concept of a just peace proposes a methodology that prioritises justice as a resource for sustainable peacebuilding. Just peace denotes peace that is based on dignity for humanity (2012:3-5). While acknowledging that peace is not the absence of war, the WCC further calls for respect to God-given humanity in a violent prone context. This can be achieved through exploring common ground and educating the members of conflicting parties. Education initiatives are aimed at transforming character and forming behaviours that have the capacity to offer non-violent responses to violence (2012:49-51). Within this framework, Karber (2003:151) adds that peace cannot be realised through justice unless perpetrators and victims of violence recognise their commonality of being human and

that each member of the community has an obligation to protect their heritage. The WCC initiative on peacebuilding as contained in its stated goals encompasses a commitment towards addressing violence holistically, interrogating tendencies of violence in theological concepts, and identifying alternative peacebuilding models that can be relevant within a given pluralistic context (WCC 2011:8). Part of what informs the Ecumenical consensus on overcoming violence is the formation of life-giving character and transforming reflexive dispositions through education. The aim is to build non-violent attitudes to provocations within a violence-prone environment (WCC 2011:112).

Although the WCC concept on peacebuilding is from the missiological perspective and does not dwell much on harnessing African indigenous concepts that have direct bearing on their religio-cultural experience, it nevertheless offers a new perspective that gives precedence to the dignity of humanity as the backdrop to effective peacebuilding. It is also relevant to this study because it seeks to give attention to the complications and dynamics present in the peacebuilding process in a pluralistic context such as Jos. Through the synopsis of the COCIN and Nigerian Government efforts to curb violence in Jos, this study interrogates the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN and seeks to offer an alternative African model that is based on the conversation between the Christian message and the symbolic religio-cultural experience for the Pyem people on peacebuilding.

In their key peacebuilding concepts and terminology, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) delineates peacebuilding as those actions which discover causes and consequences of conflict with the aim of strengthening the resilience and capacity of perpetrators and their victims towards overcoming violence. Strengthening resilience and capacity are perceived to be tools for reducing incentives to violence, strengthening positive perceptions and building trust among conflicting communities. This process can be realised through education that focuses on changing perceptions, character and behaviours (UNICEF 2016 :10). Due to its contextual insensitivity, this concept seems not to engage with indigenous cultural experience as a tool to initiate peace; nevertheless, it is relevant to this work in the sense that it focuses on building capacity and resilience through education. Within the conceptual framework of contextual theology, this present study proposes the need for a contextual theological education

that engages with indigenous African culture as a praxis that can strengthen resilience and capacity of the missional identity of the COCIN towards responding to violence in Jos.

Through an ethics of care contained within the African *Ubuntu* concept on peacebuilding, women are naturally seen as peacemakers because of their disposition represent sacredness, goodness, tenderness and humility (Isike and Uzodike 2011:36). One of the elements that constitute the *Ubuntu* philosophy as pointed out by Tutu is the religio-cultural understanding that every person within the larger community belongs to a greater whole irrespective of gender (Hendricks 2008:17-18). Based on this understanding, women should not only be seen as victims of war but active practitioners in peacebuilding. Their skills and capacity within the *Ubuntu* philosophy are considered as resource which can be harnessed (2008:17). The capacity and resilience to peacebuilding within the Pyem notion takes root in the understanding of God in relation to life in the community. Within the greater whole of humanity, every member participates in the wellbeing of the community irrespective of her or his affiliation.

Pokol's concept of *Suum-ngi* among the Kadung people of Plateau State, Nigeria, offers an African peacebuilding model through an analogy of two yam tubers as the origin of humanity. Although in the ground, it was one tuba of yam that sprouted and developed into a yam. At harvesttime, the yam that is exposed to the heat of the sun will taste very bitter, while the part that is covered over in the ground retains its sweetness. Although they looked and tasted differently, they had the same origination. The Kadung people according to Pokol interpreted this as the origin of humanity. The Kadung people referred to the sweet yam as female, while the bitter one was seen as male. By application, this concept states that ethnic groups such as Muslims and Christians and adherents of African Traditional Religion (ATR) who constitute the warring communities in Jos, despite their differences, all originate from the same God as creator. Subsequently, Pokol called for the integration of this concept into the curriculum content of the COCIN theological seminary as the medium to equip the COCIN to effectively respond to the violence in Jos. Although Pokol's concept focused on church and state relationships and his African model evolved from a different ethnic group, this concept is nevertheless relevant to this study, for the following reasons:

- i. This study focuses on the same context of Jos;
- ii. This study focuses on the same COCIN missional identity and vocation;
- iii. The concept offers an Afro-centric perspective that can contribute towards the African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative critique of the COCIN's understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory;
- iv. Finally, this study interrogates how the doctrine under consideration is interpreted in the same theological seminary.

Lesmore Ezekiel (2015:167) has presented a missio-cultural approach to peacebuilding in Jos in which he argues that a just peace constitutes God's mission and purpose for all that could be used as a process for peacebuilding within the violent context of Jos. This just peace approach rejects violence as the way of life for a community and challenges perpetrators of violence to prioritise and promote human dignity (2015:168). The just peace concept also draws attention to cultural experience as the medium through which the *missio Dei* will find expression. Accordingly, just peace serves as an African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative instrument in the examination of the penal substitution theory that takes into account the contextual relevance, cultural experience, missional identity and vocation of the church and the quest to militate against threats that deny the fullness of life in Jos.

According to Anyim (2014:7-14), the concept of peacebuilding emerges from the following:

- i. Basic human needs should not be denied;
- ii. Identify the values within the religio-cultural and socio-political context of Jos;
- iii. Religion should not be used for religious or political gain;
- iv. As a sociological and political concept, it can be used to critique the Nigerian Government's response to the violence in Jos.

Emmanuel Katongole (nd: 24) contends that the missional identity of the church necessitates that it serves as agents of the *missio Dei* and responds to violence by

resisting all forms of discrimination within the context of tribal and ethnic violence. He uses the incarnation of Jesus, the biblical “Word made flesh and dwelt among us” as his framework. He interprets “Word” as God’s gift that can be accessed by remembering God. “Made flesh” is interpreted as God who identifies with human context and “dwelt among us” as God’s practical engagement with the human context (nd:7-8). This concept offers a theological perspective that utilises a practical and contextual engagement for peacebuilding. Although this concept fails to take into account the cultural experience among ethnic groups as symbolic forms of expression, the concept is still highly relevant because the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos is partly ethnic and partly tribal. It thus allows the COCIN to engage with the context of Jos and to be more relevant in its method of communicating the penal substitution theory.

The strength and weaknesses identified in the above sections further widens the gap for an African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative critique of the COCIN’s understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement. The concepts show how cultural experience can be instrumental in facilitating peacebuilding within the pluralistic context as Jos. The concepts also suggest how the role of the church’s missional identity and vocation in Jos must not be overemphasised.

1.11. Statement of the problem and significance of study

This present research interrogates the extent to which the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN in Jos seems to exasperate the problem of communal violence, rather than empower its leaders and members to demonstrate radical love and acceptance of the other as Christ lived and taught. The wide prevalence of violence suggests that the practical outworking of the Christian faith has very little effect on their behaviour with peoples of other faiths. The research problem of this study will thus investigate the extent to which the COCIN understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement has contributed to the state of violence within the pluralistic context of Jos and what changes are needed to facilitate effective peacebuilding. The understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement by the

COCIN and the continued systemic violence in Jos poses a number of difficult questions about the COCIN's missional identity and praxis within the context of Jos. The European missionary heritage that transported and bequeathed the theory to the COCIN without an intentional and effective African symbolic hermeneutical inculturative process failed to take into account the hermeneutical implications of the theory as it interacted with the threats to life embodied within the local context permeated with violence.

1.11.1. The central research question

The central research question of this study is as follows:

To what extent does the African religio-cultural experience of Pyem notion of Ngwakin Darsai Daal serve as conceptual lenses and media through which the penal substitution theory can be contextually understood and expressed to equip the COCIN to respond to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria?

In order to understand this central research question, the following five additional sub-questions will be posed:

- i. What is the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement?
- ii. How was the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement transported, transplanted and translated by missionaries into the missional understanding and practice of the COCIN?
- iii. How does the COCIN understand and interpret the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement?
- iv. To what extent is the COCIN practice of the penal substitution theory embedded in the religio-cultural, socio-political and contextual challenges of Jos?

- v. How does the African symbolic religio-cultural experience/s of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* within Pyem ethnic group communicate which the penal substitution theory of atonement to give meaning to the people of Jos plagued by violence?
- vi. How can inculturation within the broader perspective of African symbolic hermeneutics help to construct a more contextually-relevant theology of penal substitution of the doctrine of the atonement for Pyem members of the COCIN in Jos?

1.11.2. Research objectives

- i. To explain the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement;
- ii. To examine how the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement was transported, transplanted and translated by the missionaries into the missional understanding and practice of the COCIN;
- iii. Examine to what extent the COCIN understands and interprets the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement;
- iv. To analyse the religio-cultural, socio-political and contextual challenges of Jos;
- v. To analyse the extent to which the COCIN practice of the penal substitution theory embedded in the religio-cultural phenomenon of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* gives meaning to the socio-political and contextual challenges of Jos;
- vi. To examine how African symbolic hermeneutics can help construct a contextually more relevant theology of penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement within the Pyem people that can equip the COCIN response to violence in Jos.

1.12. Research design and methodology

This present study utilises the qualitative method and other subordinating key research instruments, including the research design, sampling method, methods for generating data which include triangulation method, the semi-structured method, in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions. Discourse analysis is used as the method for the interpretation and analysis of the relevant generated data and findings. This study also utilises secondary relevant materials. In order to identify gaps, these materials were reviewed to show how it relates with the subject under consideration. This chapter concludes by pointing out the scope of limitation of the study.

In order to avoid repetition this chapter is fully elaborated in chapter six of the thesis.

1.13. Summary and outline of chapters

In order to interrogate the subject of this study in a systematic way, the chapters are structured in the following way:

Chapter one: The introductory chapter presents the motivation and background that informs the study, including the key concepts, the statement of the problem, the significance and purpose of the study, research questions and objectives, methodology, scope and limitation of the study.

Chapter two: This chapter focuses on the theoretical conceptual frameworks that undergird the study. Since the study is within the perspective of African symbolic hermeneutical perspective, one of the key theoretical frameworks is inculturation. Within the broader African symbolic hermeneutics, other subordinating frameworks include African symbolic hermeneutics as missio-cultural, as translation, and as symbols. Contextual theology constitutes one of the theories. Other sub-theories within this theory include contextual theological education.

Chapter three: This chapter presents the research design and methodology. It gives a detailed account of how the research data was gathered, presented and analysed.

Chapter four: This chapter presents an overview of the Euro-centric missionary heritage of the COCIN and its encounter with the indigenous people as well as the cultural, religious and language barriers between the Western and the African cultures, the context, the medium of transmission and transmission of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement and the subsequent evolvment of the COCIN.

Chapter five: This chapter focuses on the violent context of Jos due to the religio-cultural and socio-political differences present. The chapter gives further attention to antecedences that led to the contentious atmosphere among the different ethnic groups that reside in Jos. This chapter also presents a synopsis as to whether the practice of the penal substitution theory as taught and promoted with the COCIN has contributed to a much-needed peace.

Chapter six: This chapter presents the cosmological setting of the Pyem ethnic group, as well as the religio-cultural experiences that constitute their African philosophy on building bridges of peace between warring communities.

Chapter seven: This chapter identifies and analyses the COCIN understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory. This chapter also interrogates the COCIN understanding and practice as to whether it possesses the capacity to engender peace in the context of the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

Chapter eight: Through the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* as a symbolic religio-cultural experience, this chapter postulates an alternative African model of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement that can function as a medium of expression within the violent context of Jos.

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Chapter nine: This chapter provides a final conclusion to the study, recapitulates the major conclusions of the study and makes recommendations for future study.

CHAPTER TWO

AFRICAN SYMBOLIC HERMENEUTICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

The theoretical framework of this study employs African symbolic hermeneutics theory as the broader perspective to interrogate the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement. Within this broad framework are four sub-theories as shown in Figure 2.1. These are inculturation, missio-culturality, symbolism, translation, and contextuality, each being used as specific theoretical lens to interrogate the subject in detail. The missio-cultural theoretical lens is used to interrogate and navigate the ongoing discourse on how the Christian faith and message as expressed through the ministry and mission of the church finds expression in the symbolic cultural experiences of a particular context (Hewitt 2012:14). The contextual theological lens proposed by Bevan (2002) and Bujo (2015) is used to demonstrate how the theological reflections conversation between the biblical text, contextual cultural experiences, tradition and faith, that results in a new contextual theology can lead to a deeper understanding of the Christian faith. Finally, the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective of translatability by Sanneh (2009), Bediako (1995), Maluleke (1995) and other interlocutors can be captured as resources within the broader African symbolic hermeneutics for inculturating the penal substitution theory within the religio-cultural context of Jos.

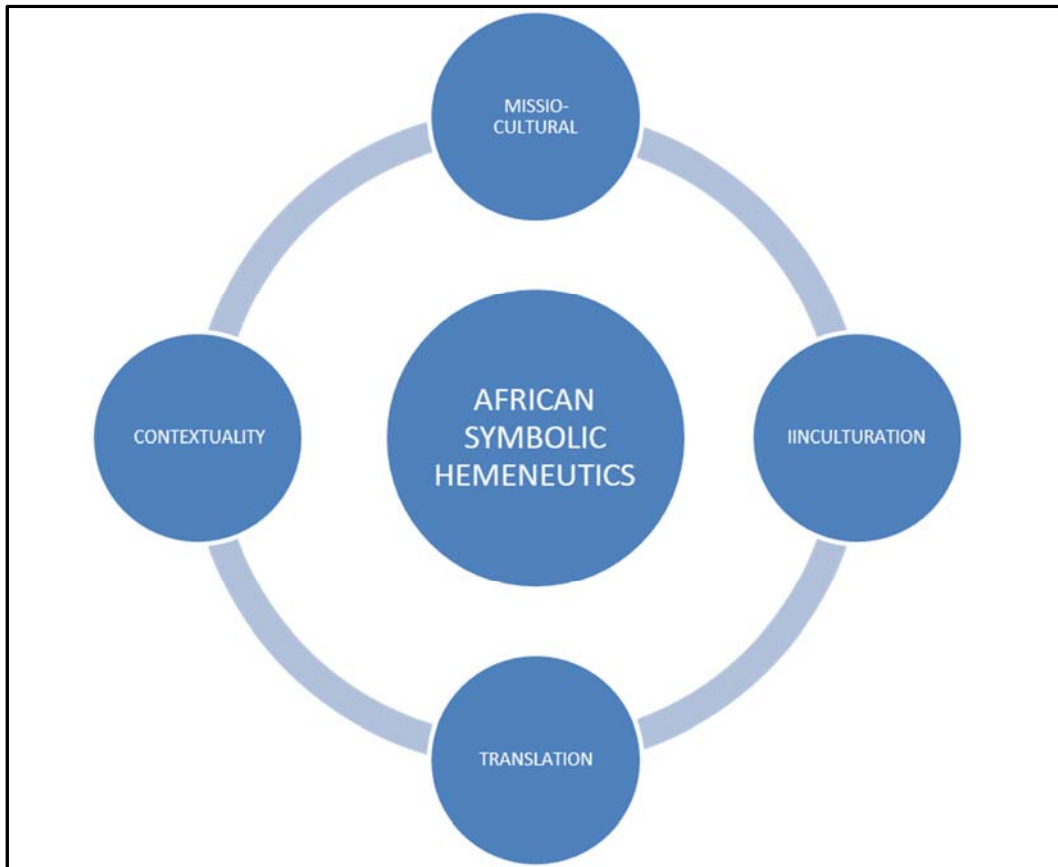


Figure 2.1. An African symbolic hermeneutical praxis that seeks a life-giving response to a violent context of violence (Source: Researcher’s diagram)

Figure 2.1 represents the interconnectedness of the broader African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework with subordinating theories. The African symbolic hermeneutics perspective as applied to this study seeks to appropriate the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN in Jos a context that is plagued with systemic and symbolic violence. The appropriation takes into consideration the Euro-centric nuances of the ecclesial doctrine that seem to have been uncritically incorporated into the missional identity of the COCIN without any missio-cultural assessment. The supporting perspectives include, the missio-cultural proposed by Hewitt (2012:17) which entails doing mission that engages with the culture of the people. Part of what informs the broader African symbolic hermeneutical perspective as presented in Figure 2.1 is how through the mission of the church this doctrine can be translated from a Western-oriented epistemology (Lamin Sanneh, 2009) using compatible African distinctive symbolic religio-cultural experience for easy assimilation. Bujo’s (2015:81) concept of

distinctive African ethics is used to show how relevant African concepts can be in terms of translating Euro-centric concepts into the mission thrust of the church. The sub-perspective within the broader African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework is the use of symbols as media through which this ecclesial doctrine can be expressed. Contextual theology as seen in Figure 2.1 is one of the theories that inform the use of the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective. The critique of the penal substitution theory through this perspective is necessitated by the contextual differences between the Euro-centric missionary heritage of the COCIN and the indigenous people. Consequently, this study argues that for the COCIN to contribute in the much-needed peace in Jos it has to contextualise this doctrine by engaging with the culture of the indigenous people. This can be carried out through the insertion of contextual theological education as part of the curriculum during leadership formation.

2.2. The theory of African symbolic hermeneutics

African symbolic hermeneutics is as an ongoing perspective within the African milieu that focuses on African religio-cultural experience as a symbolic medium of communication. This perspective stemmed within the African system of thought on how myths and rituals can be informative and imaginative (Umeogu 2013:113). According to Louis-Dominique Komo, African symbolic hermeneutics is a paradigm in African system of thought where African cultural experience is considered as medium to express human thought and creativity (2017:81). He adds that African symbolic hermeneutics is a perspective in Africa that explores meaning and symbols relying on African languages and cultural myths, proverbs and rituals (2017:81-82). Tsenay Serequeberhan delineates that African symbolic hermeneutics dwells on African culture and historical experience (1994:7-8).

From the forgoing, it is clear that African symbolic hermeneutics is contextual. Although its construction and application can be utilised universally but its particularity is within the context of Africa. African symbolic hermeneutics offers an alternative praxis where African religio-cultural symbols can be informative and imaginative while discovering and responding to the reality of life within the African context. African symbolic hermeneutical perspective is inculturative since it seeks culturally related symbols for the expression of human thought and creativity.

Based on this synthesis, African symbolic hermeneutics serves as the broader perspective to interrogate the PST as practiced by the COCIN in Jos. Through its subordinating concepts of inculturation this perspective offers the space for a conversation between the PST and the Pyem symbolic religio-cultural experience. Through this perspective the Pyem religio-cultural experience becomes a symbol that stimulates the imagination of the COCIN's mission thrust towards a missio-cultural response to violence in Jos. The Pyem religio-cultural experience when translated offers a new model that can be easily articulated within the violent context of Jos. This perspective suggests that the understanding and practice of the PST by COCIN must take into account the religio-cultural and socio-political context of Jos.

Furthermore, Mbiti's (1991) perspective on cultural symbolism is another concept that informs the utilisation of an African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework as a standard for the critical examination of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement. It serves as a compliment/contrast to the missionary medium in communicating the Christian message to the indigenous people. Mbiti (1991:25) argues for the centrality of symbols in the understanding of all African culture. According to him, symbols in the African culture are interpretive mediums of communicating the way of life of the African people. This study argues that the missionary heritage of the COCIN while presenting the Christian message to the people of Jos did not intentionally take into account the cultural symbols as a means through which the Christian message could be communicated. Sanneh (1990) and Bediako (1995) are also key scholars from the sub-Saharan Africa who have acknowledged the significance of the African cultural symbols as carriers of information which can be used to earthen the message of the Christian message to African indigenous peoples. In his examination of the power of symbols in culture, Arbuckle (2004:4-6) states that:

Symbols are at the centre stage of all cultures and are what gives definition and limits to how people behave in a given community and they are not merely signs but mediums through which norms and values are expressed or media that define the way of life of a particular cultural people.

According to Ott (2000:332), it is through these symbols one finds deeper meanings of the African way of life (2000:332). In this sense, the use of African symbolic

hermeneutics as symbols becomes relevant because it deals with way in which African people respond to situations based on the meanings they attached to such symbols. This perception is relevant to the study because the missio-cultural lens used is an element of African symbolic hermeneutics through which the church missional identity engages with the culture.

2.2.1. African symbolic hermeneutics as inculturation

Within the broader African symbolic hermeneutics employed in this study, inculturation serves as one of the subordinating lenses through which the PST is expressed. Okure (2007:138) defines inculturation as the dynamic conversation between the Christian message and culture through the missional identity of the church. Accordingly, as Walingo (1986:12) maintains, the conversation between the Christian message and culture makes the Christian message more appealing to the local culture. He further describes inculturation as the re-conceptualisation the Christian life and doctrinal concepts into the cultural life pattern of a particular people (1986:12). For Shorter (1988:6) however, inculturation is the means by which culture serves as a medium for incarnating the Christian message to a particular cultural context. Although these different authors try to capture the various components that constitute a culture and how cultural experience of a particular people becomes a medium of translating the Christian message, they seem not to express the contentious atmosphere that cultural diversity/plurality could pose to a particular locality. For example, the diverse cultures of the different ethnic groups that reside in Jos represent a multiplicity of languages, religions and political persuasions. The cultural complexity of the context therefore calls for the utilisation of some African symbolic hermeneutics as the theoretical framework. This is a way of doing theology in Africa that takes into account the multifaceted realities of a cultural context within a given locality. Magesa (2004:10) argues from a Roman Catholic perspective that inculturation is the interpretation of the African indigenous cultural symbolic experience into Christianity for constructive Christian life. While Hewitt (2012:17) adds that the interpretation of the indigenous cultural experience must dialogue with the Christian message in the perspective of socio-cultural context and those human experiences that pose threats to life within a particular context. Both scholars accentuate the dynamic in transmitting the Christian

message according to a particular context. Therefore, for the COCIN's missional identity and vocation to be authentic it must acquire real roots that are fully integrated into a particular cultural thought pattern of the people in Jos.

Within the broader African symbolic hermeneutics, Antonio Edward's Afro-centric perspectives on inculturation describes the incarnation of Christ as a medium for African theologians to ground the Christian message by conversing with the culture of a particular context. For him, the incarnation of Christ serves as a relevant model that embodies the idea of how the Christian message is communicated using human forms, cultural symbols and language to inform theological discourse on inculturation (2004:47). It is for this reason, that Magesa (2004:6-7) argues that the language and cultural nuances identified while transmitting the Christian message by the Western missionaries calls for an inculturation that gives attention to African language forms and cultural symbols as tools for easy expression. Through this medium therefore, the penal substitution theory constructed and transmitted through Western human forms, language and culture are simplified within the religio-cultural context of Jos. Shorter (1988:11) argues that inculturation is not only the expression of the Christian message through the cultural patterns of a particular people but should be a symbolic hermeneutical principle that brings transformation. Therefore, the expression of the penal substitution theory through the cultural patterns as spelled out in the aims and objective of this present study is to transform the culture of violence to a culture that seeks fullness of life for all. In the process of inserting the Christian message into the fabric of any culture, care must be taken not to tamper with the tradition, values and history of the people. It can be argued that care must be taken not only through the cultural values of the people but also not to compromise the core or essence of the Christian faith. Hewitt (2012:17) further argues that for transformation to be achieved through the interaction between the Christian message and culture it depends largely on whether the messengers perceive the other recipients of the Christian message as being a threat to life or they change to a perception that respects human dignity.

Grenham (2005:56) contends that for an authentic inculturation of Christianity in a multicultural and socio-political context, discovering the idea about God and humanity in every culture and religion is paramount. As discussed under inculturation as translatability, Bujo (2015:86) emphasises in his concept of African ethics that an

African understanding of God in relation to humanity and the universe makes every person ethically responsible for the peace and welfare of the community. Inculturation within the broader African symbolic hermeneutics demonstrates how a collective effort that seeks peace for all irrespective of ethnic, religious, social, and political affiliation is possible in the violent context of Jos. Arguing from an anthropological perspective, Arbuckle (2001:18-19) contends that inculturation is dialogue between two cultures and that through such dialogue the Christian message is inserted into the cultural experience of a people. The African symbolic hermeneutical examination of the penal substitution theory as bequeathed by the missionaries to the COCIN, with its familiarised Western cultural and contextual patterns, needs therefore to converse with the culture within Jos for easy understanding and life-giving practice.

From the discussion above, the key elements identified in the definition and description of the inculturation theory as unpacked by the aforementioned scholars include:

- i. The Christian message can be more appealing and understood only when it converses with the religio-cultural experience of the recipients. Through such a hermeneutic, the dialogue not only appeals but is transmitted into the life pertaining to a given people. Consequently, people can live as Christians but still retain their cultural heritage. The dialogue between the penal substitution theory and the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war” is a pattern of life that can be harnessed for peacebuilding in the context of Jos.
- ii. Christian message can be expressed only when mediums are made available. Inculturation within the broader African symbolic hermeneutics as identified by these scholars has the capacity to make available mediums through which Western-oriented theological concepts such as the penal substitution theory can be expressed.
- iii. The conversation of the Christian message and culture as pointed out by these scholars does not only deal with the interpretation of religious experience but also with contemporary human experiences that are threats to life. This is relevant because the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos is part of the religio-cultural and socio-political human experience that has denied fullness of life.

- iv. The theory of inculturation as a subordinating lens within the African symbolic offers a distinctive African worldview that advances mere judicial metaphoric language forms as identified in the penal substitution theory. This is attributed to the African ethic where every member of the community forms part of the whole and is given the responsibility to ensure fullness of life irrespective of her or his affiliation.

2.2.2. A critique of African symbolic hermeneutics as inculturation

Apart from the scholars mentioned above, there are others that have offered further critique of the concept of inculturation and question whether its centrality in the church missional identity and vocation remains a perspective that can be used in the contemporary era to reinterpret the Christian message in a context that is multi-cultural, religious, ethnic and violent context. One such critic is Byrne (1990:121) who expressed his scepticism in the relevance of integrating inculturation as part of the hermeneutical development within Africa that allows the practice of articulating the Christian message to various cultures and context (1990:119). It can be argued that the relevance of inculturation cannot be under-estimated since it is a conversation between the Christian faith and culture that conforms to Christian moral values (Arbuckle 2004:xv). Gifford (2008:31) however argues that inculturation is a way of localising Christianity, a return to the past and a form of reinterpreting the Christianity brought by the European missionaries. In his critique, Gifford (2008:5) argues that inculturation as a perspective that undergirds the task of articulating the Christian message within the African culture by African theologians seems to not take cognisance of the universal acceptance of this method. From a Pentecostal perspective, Ngong (2012:1,18), has argued that, while inculcating inculturation in the missional identity and vocation of the church in Africa and making it helpful in the evolvement of a viable African theology, its uncritical assessment may not promote piety that can be universally accepted.

It can be argued that while these authors endorse the utilisation of inculturation within the African symbolic hermeneutical context, they also share some apprehensions about its application in all areas of African culture. In his critique on the viability of inculturation within the broader African symbolic perspective on Christianity in Africa, Mageza argues that because of the intense impact of Western culture on the African

way of life by the missionaries, it makes it quite difficult for the Christian message to find authentic expression through the African culture. Hewitt (2012:17) however argues that although the process of African symbolic hermeneutics may express contradictions and can be misunderstood because it accommodates diverse cultures, it should nevertheless be noted that there is no such thing as pure inculturation because it is an ongoing process. While highlighting the characteristics of the church in Africa in the twenty-first century, McCain (2000:108-19) argues that despite the impact of the Western culture in African way of life, it is nevertheless evident that African indigenous churches are fast becoming African. The field research conducted by Magesa in Tanzania, Kenya and in Uganda has ably demonstrated that inculturation within the symbolic hermeneutics in Africa is and can be viable (2004:9). From an African feminist perspective, Oduyoye however, has stressed that inculturation should be utilised in the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective of the life-experience of the people because African theologians also live differently from what they postulate (2003:45-46). Inculturation therefore can become static and undermine the humanity and values of women especially if it is only constituted around African rituals, beliefs and symbols that usually marginalise the African woman (Oduyoye 2004:59). She further argues that an inculturation that is not self-generated cannot be viable in addressing threats that deny fullness of life of a given context (2004:46). Therefore, African symbolic hermeneutics as utilized in this study should not be used to marginalise African women, but should respond to both the traditional and contemporary needs of all people according to their experiences in a given context (Magesa, 2004:5).

2.2.3. African symbolic hermeneutics as missio-cultural theory

Missio-culturality as sub-theory within the broader African symbolic hermeneutics is engaged with Bosch (1991); Bevans (2009); Hewitt (2012); Kaunda and Hewitt (2015a); Kaunda and Hewitt (2015b); Kundiyiruppil (2015), and Keum (WCC 2012). Although these scholars have written from different perspectives, their contributions to the concept under consideration are relevant within the broader African symbolic hermeneutical focus of the study.

Bosch (1991:1) defines the missio Dei as:

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 privilege to participate.

The significance of Bosch is that he contends the church-centred definition and practice of mission is invalid because the church's mandate for mission should emerge from God. Accordingly, it is God's mission that sets the agenda for the church in the world. While the perspectives of Bosch were shaped in the South African context of Apartheid, in which the country was divided along racial and political lines within the church and society, he seemed not take into emphasis the indispensable role that African cultures contribute within South Africa and the wider African continent in the understanding and praxis of Christian mission. That said, his approach to inculturation and *missio Dei* provides a better understanding on how the church can engage in God's mission in offering fullness of life to every life (Kaunda and Hewitt 2015a). This can only take place in a socio-cultural, economic, religious and political context such as Jos where respect for human dignity needs to be protected from all form of violence in the name of religion. For Keum (2013) therefore, "fullness of life for all" (John 10:10) as the core of God's mission, calls upon the church to refocus its missional mandate to demonstrate the value for life and resist those life-destroying agencies through love, mercy and tolerance.⁸ As a consequence, the pluralistic religious context of Jos necessitates drawing on literature that informs ecumenical dialogue with mission and culture that fosters peacebuilding. This study focuses on the capacity of the COCIN to utilise an African symbolic hermeneutical perspective to re-examine its understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement within the context of Jos. This process necessitates a conversational dialogue of the church within the culture that is built on relationships of reciprocity with other communities that is fashioned in love, tolerance and reconciliation (Edmund 2015:274).

⁸ This new mission affirmation was unanimously approved by the WCC central committee on 05 September 2012 at its meeting on the island of Crete, Greece. It was the aim of this new ecumenical discernment to seek vision, concepts and directions for a renewed understanding and practice of mission and evangelism in changing landscapes which is define by the emergency of migration (Keum, 2012). This is essentially what will inform COCIN's understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement using this to advance praxis to respond to the context of Jos.

A key component of African symbolic hermeneutical framework is missio-cultural theory. This theory provides the lens through which a missio-cultural perspective can converse with the missional identity of the church within the context in which the Christian message is incarnated. This theory also takes into account human experience characterised by many threats. The core of this theory is that the missio Dei incarnates and takes root within the cultural context in which the church engages its ministry and mission. Hewitt (2012:12) defines missio-cultural as the purposeful conversation between the missional identity and vocation of the church and its hermeneutical capacity to interact with culture with the aim of transforming perceptions that mar the fullness of life in a particular context. Hewitt (2012:17-18) further proposes a new understanding of the missio Dei where God's mission is ongoing and must always function within a given human context. Unlike Bosch who only centred his mission perspective in God, Hewitt offers an advanced mission methodology that focuses on human religious or social constructs which can be threats to fullness of life (2012:xxviii). This methodology, according to Kaunda and Hewitt (2015b) focuses on the conversation between the mission of the church and the method of evangelisation that is employed to communicate the Christian message within a particular culture. Through this missio-cultural lens, the COCIN missional identity and vocation allows space for dialogue between the penal substitution theory and the cultural context of Jos. This perspective further identifies the church as an agent of God's mission and through its missional identity bears witness to all people by engaging with the religio-cultural and socio-political human experiences within a particular context that is plaque with threats that deny fullness of life (Hewitt 2012:xxx). Kumalo (2003:9) also argues that the missio Dei not only liberates people from their sins but also from oppression and other life-destroying agencies. Accordingly, Grenham (2005:279) calls the Christian church in its missional vocation to dialogue with culture by nurturing the values of love, justice, peace, and reconciliation within a particular context. Keum (2012:6-7) thus acknowledges that the multi-religious and multi-cultural context is due to the changing global landscape that challenges the church missional identity to be committed to building communities characterised by love, peace and justice. This theory therefore provides the lens by which to examine the religio-cultural and social-political challenges to which violence within Jos can be addressed by the COCIN through its understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine atonement.

2.2.4. African symbolic hermeneutics as translation

In this present study, the African symbolic hermeneutics is used as translation. Translation theology evolved from the quest by African theologians to indigenise the Christian faith and to make it more meaningful to the African context. It was initially proposed by Sanneh (1983:422) and developed further by Bediako (1995:4) who sought to postulate an alternative hermeneutic on how Christianity is culturally translated since its inception. Sanneh proposed an alternative that took into account the translation of Christianity from the missionaries which was born out of Western cultural contexts to a more African way of life. Translatability according to Sanneh (1989:3) advances beyond mere technical translation of biblical language into one that seeks to translate Christianity to look more African. Although Sanneh (1989:5) argues that the translation of the bible message from one language to the other is a way of incarnating the Christian message within the African culture, yet the transportation, transplantation and translation of Christianity into the indigenous meaning systems takes place through assimilation processes rather than intentional African symbolic hermeneutical instruments. This present study argues that communicating the Christian message through the cultural meaning systems of the indigenes makes Christianity more accessible and meaningful to the local people. Sanneh (1993:16) attributed the growth of Christianity in the African context after the European missionary era of the translation to assimilation of Christianity by indigenes that took into account the African cultural forms, symbols and values as medium of communication within the African context. While Sanneh (1995:205) and Bediako (1984:422) proposed doing theology in Africa as a means of liberation from the Western cultural stranglehold, Oduyoye (1995:88) considers such theologies as mere fantasies and a complete delusion since most African theologians and theologies do not regard the position of women as vital to the promotion of Christianity in the African context. It should be noted that there can no way of doing theology that is unbiased and perfect, therefore patriarchal nuances are not only present in theology that is based on the African culture but also in the Bible texts and church tradition in general. Therefore, all theologies must undergo critical feminist discourse in the search of interpreting and appropriating truth from the Bible and church tradition. It is in this way that this present study seek to bring to light the urgency for the utilisation of the African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical

framework as promoting the praxis of doing theology. In this way, the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement necessitates an intentional African symbolic hermeneutical review to determine the extent by which it has the capacity to dialogue effectively with the culture in order to offer a life-affirming and peacebuilding response to the state of violence that exists in Jos.

In his translation and Africanisation of Christianity within the African setting, Bediako (1995:117) re-examines the concerns raised by some Western scholars about the intellectual ability of African theologians to translate Christianity from the Western culture to the African way of life. Despite the impact of the Western culture on Christianity within Africa, Bediako (1995:39) argues that the Christianisation of the early African traditions by the Western missionaries forms the basis for African Christianity. Translation seeks to review theological and ideological assumption on which Christian faith was transplanted into the African context. Unlike Sanneh, who proposed indigenisation as the medium through which the Christian message can be effectively communicated and assimilated within the African context, Bediako in his passion for the Africanisation of Christianity, argues that most African theologians seem to put more emphasis on the indigenisation of Christianity without considering the relationship that exists between Christianity and the African Traditional Religion (1995:85). While arguing for a distinction between the Christian message and Christianity, Bediako argues that:

We can 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 it encounters in its never-ending journeys and wanderings (1995:117).

For Bediako, African Traditional Religion (ATR) offers a more effective way for the inculturation of Christianity in Africa by allowing the Christian message to speak through the African cultural norms, symbols and values of African reality. Hence, Bediako (1989:5) attributes the growth of the church in Africa to the relevance of the tenets of Christianity to the African culture which is built on family and community living. This present study argues however that Bediako has not adequately dealt with the perception of Christianity in Africa as being a Western-inserted religion and it is therefore debatable whether it is possible to separate the Christian message from the

containers that presented it, namely, the Bible, the missionaries and the church. However, the assertion that Christianity in Africa is Western stands to be challenged. This is attributed to practitioners of African theology such as Mbiti and Bujo who basing their analysis on the African religio-cultural experience, maintain that even before the coming of the European missionaries, there is God. For example, Mbiti states that the missionaries who introduced the Christian message to Africa in the past two hundred years did not bring God to our continent. Instead the same God who is the father of our Lord Jesus Christ who is already known brought them” (1980:817). On the other hand, Bujo attributes this supposition to the names of God and what they imply in the cultural experience of the Africans (2006:18). Therefore, the Christian message finds meaningful expression only when it undergoes a deep and authentic African symbolic hermeneutical conversation through cultural mediums that are carriers of norms and values of the African people.

Although, Sanneh and Bediako offer different insights in their African symbolic hermeneutical perspectives they are nevertheless relevant to this study. The indigenisation and Africanisation of Christianity in Africa as proposed by these theologians posit that African cultural symbols can serve as theoretical signposts to critically re-examine the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement and the extent to which this theological phenomenon has engaged with the cultural symbols to empower the missional identity of the COCIN to positively respond to the systemic violence in Jos.

According to Ott (2000:332), it is through these symbols one finds deeper meanings of the African way of life (2000:332). In this sense, the use of African symbolic hermeneutics as symbols becomes relevant because it deals with way in which African people respond to situations based on the meanings they attached to such symbols. This perception is relevant to the study because the missio-cultural lens used is an element of African symbolic hermeneutics through which the church missional identity engages with the culture.

2.2.5 Contextuality

Within the broader African symbolic hermeneutics, the theory of contextual theology as postulated by Bevan (1992:10) and Bujo suggest that the practice of theology should take into account four core processes:

- i. The Christian message;
- ii. The church's missional identity;
- iii. The culture in which one is theologising;
- iv. The social change within the culture.

Primarily, Bevans' theory of contextual theology considers human experience within a particular context as a basis of reflecting on the Christian message with the aim of conversing with particular human situation. A new understanding of the Christian message, according to this theory, can only be realised when enough space is given for a symbolic cultural expression of faith that reveals God within a given context. Accordingly, this theory proposes a contextual theology that is characterised by a culturally-familiarised religio-cultural human experience that postulates a contextually-related understanding of the Christian message in a very particular situation.

Bevan's contextual theology therefore emphasises the human experience as the basis of reflecting on the Christian message with the aim of conversing with a particular context. However, Bujo (2015:82) delineates another key African scholar whose work on the symbolic concept of Palaver⁹ has made an important contribution to the symbolic African contextual understanding of the penal substitution theory. Bujo's concept of Palaver also functions within an African ethic that focuses on the power of words in promoting peace between warring communities. For Palaver, traditional councils deal with conflicts within families and the wider community in order to maintain harmonious relationship (2015:81-83). Through the African ethics, attention is given towards

⁹ Palaver is an African concept postulated by Bujo as it relates to traditional councils that deal with community matters which relates to individual, family and the community. This concept takes into account the use of words as part of what constitutes African ethics. Bujo states, "The word is powerful. It can be medicine or poison, with the power to bring life or death. Words are said to be 'edible' or 'drinkable,' one chews and digests them. If badly chewed and digested can destroy the individual, even a whole community, whereas in the opposite case they can bring life" (2015:82).

understanding God as the giver of life, and the way humanity understand God and the universe through their cultural experience. Therefore, African cultural symbols that are expressed through the palaver concept are aimed at promoting life not only of the individual but the wider community. This African conceptual approach therefore ensures meaningful discourse with the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement.

According to Ukpong, (2000:17) contextualisation takes into account the realities that shape the social, religious, economic and political context while inculturation is a theological process of learning new cultural tradition of a given location. To ensure an efficient contextual theology, an in-depth study of the context is needed to converse with theological reflections on selective biblical messages that seek to meaningfully deal with people's needs and concerns (Upong, 2000:17).

This theory provides the basis through which the missio-cultural perspective converses with the missional identity of the church within a particular context in which the Christian message speaks using cultural elements to address threats to life within the context in which the church bears witness to Christ.

Through the African symbolic hermeneutical approach, this study examines the theological understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement and whether it has the capacity to equip the COCIN to offer a missional peacebuilding response in the context in which the church serves. The concept of contextualising theological education according to Hendricks (2011:14), requires a shift in the practice of hermeneutics where the interpretation of the text comes through dialogue with the context in order to educate and offer a practical Christian living within the cultural context. Using the Paul and Barnabas method of missional engagement as described in Acts 15 and Romans 12:1-2, Hendricks postulates the Apostles' mode of discipleship for proselytes as the model for theological education that allows a convert to follow Christ according to his cultural and social context and ecclesial tradition (2009:18). Sanneh (2003:15) and Cox (1995:243-264) attribute the growth of the church in Africa after the missionaries to the practice of Christianity expressed in the African cultural and social context by articulating the message of the cross to speak to its context. Hence as Cox (1995) states, "leaders sang its own music,

preached in the vernacular and worship and grew by multiplication at congregational level.” The Nigerian theologian Harding (2008:2) argues that contextual theological education can also help the church’s missional identity to respond to the religio-cultural, socio-political and systemic violence in the context of Nigeria. According to Werver, Esterline, Kang, and Raja (cited in Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, Di Censo, Blythe, and Neville 2010:104), for theological education to be authentic it must fully engage with the cultural and social context in which it is delivered. This is because the dynamics of textual interpretation, according to Mugambi (1995:20), is attributed to the cultural or social context upon which a particular text is understood and practiced.

These theories are relevant to this present study because they question the authenticity of the contextual theological education used by the COCIN’s theological institutions and whether they are able to facilitate an African symbolic hermeneutical understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement. These theories allow the theological institution to employ an African symbolic hermeneutical process of appropriating the missionary heritage of theological education to ensure that the ecclesial tradition and understanding of the Bible are life-giving and affirming. Such an African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework employs a four-fold process of interrogation:

- i. Missio-cultural;
- ii. Translatability;
- iii. Contextual theology;
- iv. Contextualising theological education.

Accordingly, this present study proposes that the clergy leadership of the COCIN can be better equipped to interpret and apply the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement to offer a more appropriate missional response to the changing landscape of Jos characterised by systemic and symbolic religio-cultural and socio-political violence. The realisation of this objective depends on the examination of how the penal substitution theory was transported and transmitted into the missional identity of the COCIN and the similar contributions and challenges faced during the missionary encounter with the indigenous people.

2.3. Chapter summary

This chapter has focused on the conceptual theoretical framework that underpins the study. The study utilised the broader theory of an African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework with subordinating theories which include missio-cultural, Inculturation translation, and symbolism. Through an African symbolic hermeneutical methodology that seeks a life-giving response to a violent context of violence as illustrated in Figure 2.1., the chapter presented the inter-connectedness of the African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework with sub-theories and showed how they function. An African symbolic hermeneutical methodology that seeks a life-giving response to a violent context of violence as illustrated in Figure 2.1 also showed how the chapter utilised contextual theology as one of the theories that undergirds this study. The chapter pointed out that the African hermeneutical theoretical framework as an ongoing discourse functions within a given context. The chapter concluded by drawing attention to the COCIN missional identity and how its engagement with these theories can dialogue with the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group towards building bridges of peace in the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research design creates the platform for practical plan and method that utilise sampling, collection of data, data presentation and data analysis (Harding 2013:15).

3.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research design and research method which the study utilises as an instrument through which the aims and objectives of the study can be achieved. Harding (2013:15) has argued that in the centrality of research design, the aim and objective of any meaningful study can be achieved through practical methods such as sampling, collection of data, presentation of data, and data analysis. This denotes that research design is a process that is systematic and favourably used in the presentation of the phenomena based on the meaning people express (Denzin and Lincoln 1998:3). This chapter also utilises the qualitative research method which presupposes that human beings are interpretive creatures that can make sense of their social world and through their experiences give meaning to what takes place around them (Switon and Mowat 2007:29). Within the broader qualitative method, the methods used for generating data include, the semi-structure method, in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussion and secondary sources. The interviews and discussion groups were conducted among the COCIN executive leaders, clergy leaders, lecturers, students, laity and subsequently the Pyem ethnic group.

3.2. Research design and methodology

Research design according to Durrheim (2006:34) provides the plan how a research project is going to be carried out taking into account the need to have a structure through which the research questions will be answered. According to Kaunda (2013:18), while the researcher seeks to gather relevant data that can answer the research questions within a particular field of research and expect credence to the work, she or he must be guided and directed by a particular research method. Kaunda (2013:15) further adds that research design is a practical plan that is based on methods that capture sampling,

data collection, presentation of data and data analysis. For a research design to be efficient, the research operation should be centred on collecting data that are guided by the aims and objective of the study (Phillips and Davidson 2010:257). Research design according to Kothari (2011:32), provides the needed framework that makes research to both smooth and efficient.

As noted by these scholars, the concept of research design becomes appropriate since this study seeks to have a practical plan that combines the utilisation of sampling, collection of data, presentation of data, and research findings through analysing the information gathered. Research design is also relevant to this work because research questions in this study are open-ended in order to give room for participants to contribute based on their experiences and understanding of the concept of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement. The research design also provides space through which inculturation perspectives can be used as its theoretical framework to critically re-examine the penal substitution theory. This is made possible by generating data on how the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN can be inculturated among the Pyem ethnic group to equip the COCIN to respond to violence in Jos.

3.3. The triangulation method

Carter et al., (2014:545) define triangulation as a methodology that utilises more than one method for generating relevant research data. The multiplicity of different sources of generating data according to Nancy (2014:545) is to provide a comprehensive understanding of a research phenomenon. The variety of methods within the triangulation methodology includes in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussion. The selection of participants within the triangulation method is heterogeneous. The different cultural, historical, geographical background and age differences allow space for participants to express themselves based on their experience of the research phenomenon. Whereas Carter focuses on the use of multiple methods in triangulation theory, Ritchie and Lewis (2003:173) emphasise that the different sources are meant to investigate the data collected for proper validity and reliability dealing with a particular research phenomenon. This method is relevant to this study because first, it utilises different varieties of methods that creates room for purposeful and

flexibility for participants to respond based on their experiences (Swinton and Mowat 2007:29), and second, within the broader qualitative method it utilises other methods of generating data as in-depth individual interviews, group discussion and secondary data. While there are other devices within the triangulation method, for the purpose of this present study, in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions were primarily used as sources. These were employed for generating data on the understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory, the symbolic and systemic violence in Jos, and the understanding of inculturation and how it be used to reinterpret the doctrine under consideration to equip the COCIN to respond to the violent context of Jos. Furthermore, participants who were randomly selected from different backgrounds among the different groups within the COCIN and the Pyem people were allowed to express themselves based on their understanding of the penal substitution theory and how it can find expression through the cultural experience among the Pyem ethnic group for peacebuilding in the violent context of Jos.

3.4. Qualitative research methods

This study utilises the qualitative research method which according to Denzin and Lincoln (1998:3) is a method that advances beyond projected insights and frameworks by conducting in-depth interviews with individuals and focus groups. Qualitative research methods utilise open-ended questions which enable participants to express themselves based on their experiences that have historical, cultural, religious, social and political nuances (Swinton and Mowat 2007:29). Through the use of open-ended questions, in-depth interviews and focus groups, interviews and discussions were conducted among the COCIN executive leaders, clergy leaders, laity, and members of the Pyem ethnic group. The data was generated through capturing their experiences of the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN. They were motivated to freely express themselves according to their different cultural, historical and social backgrounds within the systemic and symbolic violent context of Jos. These experiences, according to McLeod (2001:3) help explore ways in which people of a given locality offer new ways of understanding and interpreting their world. They seek not just to comment on their world but how by sharing their experiences, changes can be made that will be more life-giving in a particular context of study.

It is in this way, the experiences of the research participants within the COCIN context of Jos were captured and shared within the group discussion with the aim not only to comment but to challenge the missional identity of the COCIN on how to respond to the systemic violence in Jos. Nwizu (1998:20-21) argues that interviews within qualitative research method do not seek to educate participants or judge the researcher's expertise but rather to seek relevant research data for a particular field of research. Cannel and Khan (1960:11) argue that interviews within qualitative research are not only a personal conversation initiated by the interviewer which aims to acquire information but is aimed at gaining relevant data guided by the research questions. The relevant information generated from the recruited participants within the COCIN are determined by the research questions which seeks to stimulate participants to express their understandings of the penal substitution theory and how through engaging with the culture in Jos, the COCIN can be equipped to offer a missio-cultural response to the violent context of Jos. In view of this, the qualitative research method utilised in this study is constructive since it allows the researcher to use different methods to gather data and through the information generated, seek deeper knowledge of the doctrine of the atonement as taught and practiced by the COCIN. It also allows the researcher to find out how the COCIN through its theological institution engages with the culture to communicate the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement in such a way that it becomes life-giving within the context of Jos. Extracting relevant information during the interviews in qualitative research forms part of the aims and objectives of the researcher during either individual or group interviews. For predictions to be more effective, interviews should be done on the basis of accessibility, understanding of the subject of research and the willingness of the respondent (Ezejelue and Ogwo 1990:93).

The recruitment of suitable research participants was among the COCIN population whose experiences were accessible and were expressed based on the understanding of the phenomena within the violent context of Jos and the penal substitution theory. Nwizu (1990:22) asserts that qualitative interviews are diagnostic in nature since they seek to expose ideas that are serious and non-quantifiable responses. Through this research method therefore, the study seeks to generate in-depth ideas from the selected clergy and members of the COCIN and through their experiences on the penal

substitution theory and the pluralistic nature of Jos. Relevant data was generated through the research questions guided by the research aims and objectives. While structured interviews require that respondents should limit themselves to the questions asked, unstructured interviews, which this study utilised, are predetermined to be open-ended and inform the discussion where both the interviewer and the respondent are free to express their views and reactions based on their experiences as guided by the research aims and objectives (Nwizu 1990:57). This becomes relevant because the interviews were more of a discussion with the clergy leadership, lecturers and students, and among the recruited members that informed the focus groups within the COCIN in Jos.

Although the participants within the COCIN and the researcher are free to express themselves based on their experiences, they are nevertheless guided by the research aims and objectives. Since this study employs the empirical research method as the means of data collection, qualitative research makes room for hypothesis or theoretical assumptions which consequently the researcher seeks to verify. Nwizu (1990:57) thus asserts that the verification of any theoretical assumption within a given study can be more effective and to avoid irrelevant information or literature the researcher should be consistent with the projected hypothesis.

Mack, Woodson, Macqueen, Guest, and Namey (2005:1) maintain that the qualitative research method is scientific because it is not only the gathering of information from individuals and groups but also consists of an investigation of the relevant information gathered through particular research questions. In this strategy, the researcher engages observations as part of qualitative research method, and the utilisation of open-ended questions that provide flexibility to the researcher and participants in order to respond to the research questions for effective collection and analysis of data using the ability to interview and transcribe the interpretation of data (Switon and Mowat 2007:30). Through posing open-ended questions, the response of the researcher and the research participants within the COCIN were verified to ensure that the information generated are relevant to the projected hypothesis of the study. Besides the strategies mentioned, the study employed focus groups because it helps to generate data that the other methods cannot provide as the researcher interacts with the research subjects. Taking into account the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic nature of Jos, the research questions were translated in the languages spoken and understood by the research participants

especially in the in-depth, individual and focus groups interviews in order to facilitate free in-depth communication regarding their understanding of the penal substitution theory and how the missional identity of the COCIN through its theological seminary engages with the culture within Jos in order to offer a missio-cultural response to the systemic violence in Jos.

This research approach is relevant to this study because it creates room for in-depth interviews with individual participants and focus groups whose experiences of how the Substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement was transported, transmitted and transplanted by the missionary heritage of the COCIN and what informed the past and present understanding and practice of the theory and how the COCIN's leaders and laity are trained to use this understanding and practice of the theory to respond to the systemic violent context of Jos. Mack et al., (2005:2) suggests that this approach gives opportunity for the participants to respond in their own words and according to their personalities and it encourages them to elaborate on their answers. The flexibility postulated by this research method makes it easier for the research participants to interact within the individual and group interviews and remain free to express their experiences on their understanding and practice of the atonement and how in the violent context of Jos, the COCIN through its missional identity has facilitated peace by engaging with the culture to promote peace.

From the above discussion, the qualitative research method becomes relevant to this study because of its flexibility in the selection of research participants and how they are free to respond to the research questions within the individual and group discussions. This random selection of research participants becomes especially favourable in the selection of the COCIN clergy leaders, congregational groups, lecturers and students of the COCIN theological seminary.

According to Mack et al., (2005:2), qualitative research has three methods. These are as follows:

- i. Participant observation: This the process of collecting data where individuals and groups participate on naturally-occurring behaviours based on their context.

- ii. In-depth interviews: This the most favourable way of collecting data taking into account individual personal, historical, and cultural experiences, especially when the topics to be explored are of a sensitive nature.
- iii. Focus groups: This is efficient method that seek to elicit data that is geared towards generating broader overviews concerning particular cultural groups in a given context.

This present study utilises in-depth and focus group interviews as methods to generate broader overviews on issues of concern based on experiences of individuals and groups within the context of Jos and how the missional identity of the church through its theological institution can offer a more life-giving message in the context of Jos that has being plagued with threats that have denied life.

3.4.1. Utilisation of the qualitative research method for the study

Having projected that this study is in the field of systematic theology, the qualitative research method is relevant because it states that the selection of the research participants is based on their experiences of the world around them. It is for this reason that those who were randomly selected to participate in this research work represent the various groups within the COCIN whose experiences on the missional identity of the COCIN, the religio-cultural, socio-political and the systemic violent context of Jos correspond with the aims and objectives of the study. For qualitative information and originality of data, the research questions embedded in this research method employed open-ended questions which give room for participants to express themselves beyond the expectation of the researcher (Swinton and Mowat 2007:31).

Through this research method the selection of those to be interviewed in the in-depth and focus group within the COCIN population were selected through random sampling and recruitment based upon their experiences of the penal substitution theory, the context of Jos, and the curriculum in use at the COCIN theological seminary. The utilisation of the qualitative research method is also relevant to this study because it allows heterogeneous tendencies as a ground to select people from different cultural, historical, and ethnic groups in order to avoid any form of hegemony; likewise, the

selection was also gender sensitive. The qualitative research method therefore provides ways of understanding the world through the construction of formal statements and conceptual frameworks that contribute to the field of knowledge (McLeod 2001:3). One other factor that has attributed to the utilisation of the qualitative research method in this research project is due to the nature of the research questions that were aimed at finding out how the phenomenon being studied functions among a given population within a particular context (Ezejelue and Ogwo 1990:93). It is in light of this, that the African symbolic hermeneutical critique of the penal substitution theory as practiced in the COCIN and projected in this study, and through the data generated from the research participants, seeks to postulate an alternative conceptual framework within the African cultural setting that can equip the COCIN to offer a missio-cultural response to the systemic violence in Jos.

The research design and methodology as described above sets the stage by which this research work was undertaken. Following the presentation of the various research instruments embedded in the research design and methodology, the reliability and validity of the data generated were verified through the aims and objectives of the study. In order to ensure dynamism while applying the various methods within the qualitative research method and selection of research participants and the analysis of the data generated, consideration was given to the different backgrounds that constitute the experiences of the participants within terms of the study under consideration.

3.5. The research process

The research process includes the selection of research participants among the population of the COCIN and the Pyem ethnic group whose experiences of the doctrine under consideration, the violent context of Jos and the extent to which relevant cultural experiences among the Pyem ethnic group can be viable in the inculturation of the penal substitution theory.

Having received permission and guidelines for the research project from the Ethical Clearance Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), this study communicated with the COCIN in Jos, the COCIN theological seminary, and the Pyem chiefdom in Jos, Plateau State, requesting their written consent. Their acceptances were

sent to the UKZN through the Ethical Clearance Committee of the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics that served as gate keepers for all research in the College of Humanities. It was based on strict adherence to the ethical guidelines that the researcher conducted in-depth and focus group interviews, ensuring that not only their views but also their wellbeing and dignity were protected.

3.5.1. Utilisation of the sampling method for the study

Since this study is in the field of systematic theology, the simple random sampling method was used. According to Floyd and Fowler (2002:15), this method is considered appropriate since those chosen to be interviewed were randomly selected. Floyd and Fowler (2002:12-13) further argue that random sampling presupposes that every person within the targeted population has the likelihood to be recruited among those to be interviewed and that this can be done if the characteristics of the population are clearly reflected in the data analysis. The sampling is accomplished from a set of people whose experiences are assumed to correspond with the focus of the study. This work uses a scheme proposed by Floyd and Fowler (2002:13) which suggests that selection can be done based on housing units (Hus) and consequently individuals are selected from which a final sample selection is made. The heads of these units served as gatekeepers whose consent prepared the ground for the research participants following the final selection of individuals and groups. The General Secretary of the COCIN, the provost of the COCIN theological institution, and the Royal Highness of the Pyem people in the present researcher's locality served as gatekeepers, whose consent was applied for. The non-probability sampling approach was also utilised. Creswell (2007:112) holds that the non-probability sampling approach sets the focus for the selection of the research participants that have deep relevant information of the subject under consideration based on their experiences.

The strategy for the recruitment of research participants was heterogeneous and was as follows:

- i. The first group consisted of the COCIN executive clergy leaders. There are 30 principal leaders of the COCIN at the state level and 20 percent or minimum of 8 were selected to form part of the individual interview. However, among the 8

executive leaders that were sampled, 7 were interviewed. The participants were selected based on their leadership roles, gender, age range, ethnic and cultural background and geographical location within the state. This was to ensure diversity of opinion on the issues to be discussed.

- ii. The second group consisted of clergy leaders at the regional level of governance within the church. There were 120 clergy and 20 percent or 24 participants were selected. Among the 24 participants sampled, 20 were interviewed. The strategy for selection was based on their leadership roles, gender, age, educational background range, ethnic and cultural background and geographical location within the state. This was to ensure diversity of opinion on the issues to be discussed.
- iii. The next group was at the congregational level. Congregations were chosen based upon their location, diversity and accessibility. A total of 8 congregants that met the criterion were randomly chosen comprising of the clergy and members of the congregational board of lay leaders that offer diversity. The strategy for selection was based on consent to be interviewed, culture, ethnic, age, gender and geographical location.
- iv. The other category was lecturers and students at the theological institution. There were about thirty lecturers and eight were selected. Among the 8 lecturers that were sampled, 5 were interviewed. There were about 50 students of systematic theology and 10% or minimum of 8 were selected based on their consent, theological level education, area of theological discipline, age, cultural and ethnic background.
- v. Consequently, a group of 9 people were selected comprising male and female elders among the Pyem ethnic group who may or may not be members of the COCIN who are well-versed in indigenous forms of knowledge. Those who were COCIN members expressed themselves based on their understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory and from their cultural experiences within the Pyem ethnic group put forward how that can serve as resource for the

re-conceptualisation of the doctrine under consideration for peacebuilding in Jos.

All the data collected through tapes and recorders were burned onto a DVD and securely stored at the offices of the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, in collaboration with the supervisor(s) of the study. All information will be stored and destroyed after a 5-year period. No information collected will be used against participants but only for the purpose of the study. This formed part of the commitment of the research ethics of the university to protect participant's confidentiality.

One of the apparatus of qualitative research method are the ethical guidelines which form part of the coordinating factors among interviewers and participants of a focused research topic. This is highlighted by Mach et al., (2005:8), where ethics in research deals with how interviewers relate with participants and their well-being is made the utmost priority. While Silverman (2013:310-3011) argues that ethical guidelines not only deal with protecting the well-being of the research participants and the general public, but also their dignity and making in clear terms the purpose, methods, specific areas of their contribution and curtailing any breach of trust through disclosure of information except with the consent of the respondents. Although ethical guidelines may vary based on the field of research, some basic ethical standards which relate to voluntary participation, monetary benefits, protection of research participants, and consent of participants were also strictly adhered to (Silverman 2013:311). From past experiences on research findings, to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the research participants during individual or group discussions one ethical guideline considered to be the task of the interviewer is that of listening (Bloom and Crabtree 2006:314-321). Due to the danger of inadvertently exposing the identities of participants within an organisation that have been sampled as an entity for interview, the researcher was meticulously careful to protect the interests of research participants especially when experiences were shared in confidence (2006:320).

Following completion of the study, feedback was made available to the participants through letters of appreciation for their contributions. Before the research participant consent forms were signed, it was made very clear that participation was voluntary and

that the interviews followed strict guidelines and ethical standards. Participants were informed that there were no monetary benefits available nor should they be expected for participating in the interviews. Finally, participants were advised that should they so desire, they could withdraw at any time.

3.5.2. Semi-structured interviews

The study utilised semi-structured interviews through individual in-depth and focus group interview which according to Wengraf (2001:5) is an interview approach intended to facilitate the interviewer. Questions were prepared in advance that were open-ended to allow the research participants to freely respond through storytelling or narratives that could adequately express their own personal experiences. Since this study utilises an African symbolic hermeneutical perspective to interrogate the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN, semi-structured interviews were relevant because this study engages with the cultural symbols within the African context and through the research questions stimulated the research participants within the cultural setting to freely expressed themselves through the African narratives (Wengraf 2001:63). To achieve the desired objective in any research work, Creswel suggests the need for interviewers to carefully select participants who have experienced the phenomena (Creswel cited in Wengraf 2001:62). While emphasising the need for research work to be validated and reliable, Noble and Smith (2015:34) propose that the researcher who uses semi-structured interview in the qualitative method aims at verifying, criticising and making constructive judgment. According to them, this is necessary because scientific rigor and justification in the qualitative research method through semi-structured interviews is sometimes criticised.

The African symbolic inculturative critique of the penal substitution theory as practiced by the COCIN, employed a semi-structured methodology with the aim of providing a constructive examination of how the missional identity of the COCIN can engage with the cultural narratives to respond to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. In-depth interviews through a semi-structured approach are described as a way of discovering knowledge that is “given.” Ritchie and Lewis (2003:153) metaphorically describes information obtained this way as buried metal while the interviewer is described as a miner who digs the information and the meaning based on the experiences of

participants in the research work. Through this method, the study utilised research questions that were open-ended in order to stimulate participants responses freely and through the researcher they were guided by the aims and objectives thereby creating a platform where the researcher obtains deeper meaning from the experiences expressed by the research participants. While unstructured interviews were conducted in relation to information collected based on observation, semi-structured interviews according to Bloom and Crabtree (2006) are often regarded as the only reliable source for a qualitative research which can occur within individual and group interviews and are usually conducted prior to the time of conducting the interview.

This study used semi-structured interviews that allowed the researcher to ask additional questions for clarity from participants who were well experienced in the COCIN's understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement. These were based on their personal knowledge of how this concept of the atonement could be culturally re-examined in order for the COCIN through its theological institutions could offer a more life-affirming response to the systemic and symbolic violence taking place in Jos. To ensure reliability and validity in the semi-structured interviews, a question schedule was drawn up to generate relevant information from the interviews. This served as a guide towards achieving and verifying the hypothesis projected in the research under consideration.

3.5.3. In-depth individual interviews

Carter et al., (2014) describe in-depth individual interviews as a strategy to understand human beings by stimulating them to be reflexive and responsive to exploring topics. An in-depth individual interview is semi-structured in nature when compared with structured interviews. According to Bernard (2000:191), although both exercise the quality of free will and openness of both the respondent and the researcher, the in-depth individual interview allows the researcher to probe the attitudes, beliefs, desires, and experiences of the participant in order to get a deeper understanding of the subject at hand because it utilises an interview guide which evolves from the research questions, aims and objectives of the study. The key research question during an in-depth individual interview according to Bloom and Crabtree (2006:316) is what gives guidance and motivation to the interviewee to respond to other questions that follow.

Bloom and Crabtree (2006) further maintain that the in-depth individual interview method creates space for the interviewee to share her/his personal experiences with the interviewer. It is in this light, that the selection of the research participants within the clergy leadership, lecturers, students and ethnic group of the Pyem community was done by taking into account the heterogeneous undertones to ensure relevance and qualitative generated information.

The key research question is as follows:

To what extent the religio-cultural cultural experiences among the ethnic groups in Jos can be a medium through which the penal substitution theory can be expressed in the context of symbolic and systemic violence in Jos?

For the key research question to serve as a guide when conducting in-depth individual interviews, it is important that the research questions are clearly enunciated in terms of the stated aims and goals of the study so as to make the research more reliable and efficient. This can foster further openness to share personal experience by the interviewee (Bloom and Crabtree 2006:317). Some of the individual interviews were held in a private office, while other were held in participant's homes. As a result, personal experiences of the penal substitution theory based on the missionaries and current COCIN understanding were shared with the interviewer. Relating to the cultural background of the participants, they freely expressed how cultural experience can be a medium of expression. Guided by the aims and objectives of the study, further questions were asked and clarifications made that resulted in a deeper expression of meanings and understanding of key concepts of the research study.

3.5.4. Focus group

Apart from the individual interviews, this study utilised a qualitative research method with particular attention to in-depth interviews through the holding of focus groups. This methodology was employed in order to gather information. According to Rabiee (2004:2), the focus group interview is a technique incorporated within in-depth interviews in which respondents are selected from a given population and presupposes that from their own experiences they cannot lack something to say on the focused

research topic. The focus group research participants recruited for this research work from within the COCIN population, expressed themselves based on their experiences of the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN and also through their experiences of the pluralistic nature of Jos, they expressed relevant information that corresponded with the projected hypothesis of the study.

Unlike the individual in-depth interview method which permits the interviewer to focus deeply into both social and personal matters, the focus group interview is more elaborate and allows discussions that are participatory. Focus group interviews are conducted within particular groups of people who serve as representatives of an entity of a sampled group. Conducting focus group according to Barbour (2007:2) is an interview organised within a particular group of people who hold the same consensus view and voluntarily agree to participate and freely interact within themselves while the researcher listens with the aim of achieving a collective view in accordance with the research sub-questions.

The focus groups interviews, conducted among the clergy leadership, lecturers, students and the indigenous members who served as representatives were allowed to participate in the discussion. They were guided by the research questions and aims and objectives of the study, where their free participation was enhanced within each focus group. The names of the research participants were recorded. Their gender, age, positions and other information that gives the research heterogeneous sensitivity, was recorded and captured in one of the appendices. Taking into consideration the need to be heterogeneously sensitive in selecting research participants, Kelly (1999:389) states that if a researcher aims for thoroughness and effectiveness s/he will listen and carefully follow the heterogeneous nuances and dynamics in the interactions within members of a group. Therefore, the effectiveness of focus group interviews depends to a great extent on the skills of the interviewer in managing and moderating the different views and ideas as research participants interact and how they are encouraged to exchange views and ideas (Rabiee 2004:255-256). Sim (1998:2) asserts that the focus group interview method is a way in which the interviewer solidly depends on the interactions that occur within the interactive settings in the group. In light of this, the selection of research participants of the focus groups within the COCIN included members who had different cultural, historical, geographical, ages, genders and theological affiliations. While the

researcher coordinated and led the discussions, the participants interacted from their experiences of the penal substitution theory and what informed the context of Jos. Attention was also given to the research questions and objectives of the study which served as a guide in the group discussion.

The selection of research participants in the focus group was random based on age, gender, academic qualification and church affiliation. Each group had six to eight members.

There were four focus groups:

- i. The first focus group comprised of the clergy and lay members of the church in selective places in Jos.
- ii. The second focus group comprised of lecturers and students of systematic theology at the COCIN theological seminary.
- iii. The third focus group consisted of the laity, including youth, women and men of selective local churches.
- iv. The last group included members from Pyem ethnic group village of Jos Each group had six to eight members.

In the presentation and analysis of data appears in chapter five of the present study. The names of research participants, and churches where the interviews were conducted are mentioned as footnotes. Subsequently, a table containing the names of the research participants and the heterogeneous undertones are captured in the appendixes.

3.6. Data analysis, process and method

Data analysis according to Swinton and Mowat (2006:57) is a process of making sense of a particular data generated through interviews. The process is informed by structuring, breaking into themes and extracting meanings hidden from the data. The process in which qualitative data collected during the interviews, text, audio recordings and transcriptions were orderly structured and interpreted into meanings, in terms of

what Swinton and Mowat (2006) consider as data analysis in the qualitative research method. This procedure is adequate because the data collected through the individual and group interviews within the COCIN in Jos were classified into themes based on the experiences expressed according to the phenomena under consideration. In a general note, Swinton and Mowat (2006:58) further assert that data analysis takes into consideration the historical, cultural and contextual sensitivities that are embedded in a particular research data. The generated data on the interrogation of the understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory as bequeathed to the COCIN by the missionaries also reflects these processes. As guided by the objectives of the study, themes and sub-themes emerged due to the meanings extracted from the data as delineated above. It also gives attention to cultural, historical and contextual sensitivity in analysing the data. This is because the data generated within this study has historical, cultural and contextual undertones. Although there are diverse forms of data analysis, for the purposes of this study, discourse analysis was used to make sense of the data gathered.

3.6.1. Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis constitutes part of the research instruments of the study. It serves as an integral part in the preliminary process of analysing the research data generated within the triangulation method which allows for the use of multiple methods of gathering data. Smith and Charles (1992) describe thematic analysis as a research instrument that examines research data with the aim of extracting hidden meanings. According to Smith and Charles (1992:4), themes emerge within the experiences of research participants as they express themselves based on their cultural, social and historical backgrounds. Thematic analysis entails the process of synthesising research data and organising them into themes for effective analysis and findings (Boyatzis 1998:vi). Thematic analysis is relevant to this study because after assessing the data, emerging thoughts and views on the penal substitution theory, the systemic and symbolic violence in the context of Jos, the extent to which cultural experience can be a medium for fresh expression of the doctrine under consideration, and the seminary as a means of transmission are interpreted into themes and sub-themes for effective analysis and construction of the research findings.

This study employed Swinton and Mowat’s process of data analysis. This process includes, assessment of data into themes and sub-themes, extracting meanings from the themes and sub-themes, and interpreting the themes through reflective work (2006:68). Primarily, transcribing the data after the empirical research sets the stage for the examination of the data into themes (Parker 2011:57). Through this process, the generated data after the empirical research of the study were transcribed, and emerging themes and sub-themes were set for reflection and interpretation as tabulated in Table 3.1.

Themes	Sub-themes
penal substitution theory	Meaning of the penal substitution theory -components of the penal substitution theory -missionary understanding -COCIN understanding -significance of the penal substitution theory - Practice of the penal substitution theory
The context of Jos	constitutes the context of Jos -Religio-cultural context of Jos -Socio-political context of Jos -Systemic and symbolic violence in Jos -causes of violence -impact of violence -COCIN responds to violence
COCIN theological seminary	Transmission of the doctrine -curriculum content -Western system of education

Inculturation of PST	Pyem ethnic group -understanding about God -understanding of God in relation to the universe -concept of “ <i>Ngwakin Darsai Daal</i> ” -as cultural expression for peacebuilding
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Table 3.1. Inductively developed themes from qualitative data

3.6.2. Discourse analysis

Within the broader qualitative method, this study utilises discourse analysis as the chosen method for analysing the relevant data generated from the in-depth interviews and group discussions conducted within the COCIN and Pyem ethnic group in Jos. According to Talja (1999:459), discourse analysis is a technique that facilitates the production of knowledge by creating meaning out of the data generated within a particular context and institution. Discourse analysis not only seeks to produce knowledge, but also seeks to transform socially-oriented realities within a particular context. Through the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective, the generated data on the understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory within the COCIN as it relates to the religio-cultural experience among the Pyem people, hidden meanings were extracted to postulate an Afro-centric concept of the doctrine under consideration to form part of the contribution towards peacebuilding in Jos.

Discourse analysis also provides ways of utilising diverse approaches to respond to specific phenomenon. Discourse analysis takes into consideration the cultural and contextual background of research participants. This is because according to Talja (1999:460), human beings are cultural beings. In discourse analysis, meanings of the data generated are analysed in a broader perspective for subsequent production of knowledge. The employment of the triangulation method in this work is relevant since discourse analysis also provides a multi-dimensional strategy of analysing data. Due to the multi-ethnic groups in Jos, the analysis of the data gathered within the COCIN must be sensitive to the cultures and context of Jos. The critical re-examination of the penal substitution theory takes into consideration culture and context as that which constitutes

the African symbolic hermeneutical process. While there are many sensitivity frameworks in data analysis, for the purpose of this present study cultural, historical and contextual served as tools for the discourse analysis of the relevant data.

The study employed cultural sensitivity as one of the tools used in the discourse analysis of data collected through in-depth and focus group interviews. The African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework used as the methodology to critique the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement aimed at engaging with the cultural experience of the Pyem people. Hence, through the missional identity of the COCIN, the penal substitution theory as expressed through this medium is intended to equip the COCIN respond to the violence in Jos. From the data collected via research participants within the COCIN theological seminary, the study interrogated how the seminary was used as a means of transmitting the doctrine under consideration by the missionaries and whether it can dialogue with the religio-cultural context of Jos for a fresh transmission of the penal substitution theory that takes root in the cultural experience of the people in Jos. With this understanding, a focus group interview was conducted among the local community who were heterogeneously sampled. Based on the research questions information was gathered on the culture of the people in Jos in order to postulate a contextual understanding of the doctrine of the atonement that is more life-giving.

The historical nuances as posited, denote that the experiences embedded in the information generated by the researcher can be captured through his reflexive ability and sensitivity in relation to the hypothesis projected through the research questions (Swinton and Mowat 2006:57). This served as one of the research tools this present study utilised to analyse the primary sources through the interviews conducted and the available secondary sources that explained how the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement was transported and transmitted to the missional identity of the COCIN in Jos. While analysing the religio-cultural, socio-political and systemic violence in the context of Jos, the sources generated from both the interviews and the literature were synthesised taking cognisance of the tendencies that constitute the brief history of the COCIN, highlights of the history of the advent of the missionaries that founded the COCIN and their encounter with the indigenous peoples in North Central Nigeria.

The nature of this study necessitates the utilisation of contextual sensitivity as a research tool in the discourse analysis of the data collected. Swinton and Mowat (2006:59) argue that the researcher's ability to synthesis information largely depends on her or his personal reflexive ability in identifying the sensitivity that relates to the study. The ability of the researcher is more reflected in her/his engagement with the context of the study (Denzin and Lincoln 2000:4). Although the researcher is expected to distance personal bias and interest from the research, the researcher's personal experience, values and broader scope of the aims of life within the context of study helps give more meaning and focus to the research (Swinton and Mowat 2006:57-58). Contextual sensitivity is used as tool in the discourse analysis because this study argues that context plays an integral part in conceptualising Christian doctrines. The study further argues that the penal substitution theory which was constructed in a context that was legalistic may not be understood and applied in the context of systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. Therefore, for the COCIN to respond to the violence it has to dialogue with the religio-cultural context of Jos.

3.6.3. Reliability

Ritchie and Lewis (2003:173) describe reliability in qualitative research as when relevant data of a research becomes coherent, dependable, sound and convincing. It also depends on whether the projected hypothesis of a research is rigorously and consistently achieved. Whereas, Ritchie and Lewis (2015:35) maintain that reliability is the soundness of relevant generated data for a particular research, Noble and Smith argue that the soundness or dependability of the data depends largely on whether it is relevant and applicable to the research method and the projected hypothesis of a particular study.

Although the appropriateness of reliability is being questioned in research, Ritchie and Lewis (2015:36) further assert that the reliability of a research is key in ascertaining the integrity of a particular research. The reliability of the data on the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced in Jos, the way it was transmitted by the missionaries who founded the COCIN, and medium of transmission, the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos, and the cultural experience among the Pyem ethnic group is being investigated through the research problem and objective of the study to ascertain the reliability of the data generated. This was done in conversation to the projected

hypothesis of the study. Silverman (2010:535) has argued that the reliability of a research is determined by how focused and unswerving the researcher is and the meaning given by the researcher depends on the reflective ability of the researcher. It requires that the quality of the findings is based on the judgment by the researcher on the data generated through the field research (Noble and Smith 2015:1). What informs the reliability of the data generated in this study is how the research questions and objectives of the study the researcher was focused and guided while research participants responded as they were motivated by the open-ended research questions.

3.6.4. Validity

The validity of a research according to Ritchie and Lewis (2003:173) is the correctness and precision of a particular research. It functions in two forms: (i) internal and (ii) external. The validity of a research becomes internal when a researcher attempts to investigate what is being investigated within a given research. In the process of generating relevant data for this study, the investigation by the researcher took into account, the method of sampling research participants, the strategy for sampling, and how respondents were guided by the objectives of the study to ascertain validity of the data.

The second form of validity is the external validity which because of its correctness can be applied not only to the context of the research but to other contexts or settings of other research (Ritchie and Lewis 2003:174). Based on the research problem of the present study, the validity of the data collected for the inculturation of the penal substitution theory within the cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group is not only meant to equip the missional identity of the COCIN to respond to the context of violence in Jos but can also serve as a recipe for building bridges of peace in other context or settings that are in dire need of peace. According to Hamersley (1992:69), the validity of a research is ascertained by its capacity to accurately represent the phenomenological features of what the research seeks to postulate.

In order to ensure reliability and validity of the generated data of the study, coded sheets containing the key themes and sub-themes were used to analyse the interview transcripts to see whether the meaning the participants gave is relevant to the thesis of

this study. Noble and Smith (2015:3) describe the ways in which validity and reliability can be ascertained through the identification of prejudices from research participants, adequate keeping of records, coherence and in spite of different approaches, the perspective of the individual or group interviews should be established.

3.6.5. Ethical principles and guidelines

Prior to the empirical research, approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the UKZN had to be sought in order for field research work to commence. An essential apparatus of the qualitative research method is the ethical guidelines which form part of the coordinating factors among interviewers and participants within a research topic (Douglas 2006:61) According to Mack et al., (2005:8), ethical guideline in research deal with how interviewers relate with participants making their well-being the utmost priority (2015:8) While Silverman (2013:310-3011) argues that ethical guidelines not only deal with protecting the well-being of the research participants and the general public, but also their dignity and making in clear terms the purpose, methods, and specific areas of their contribution. It also aims at curtailing any breach of trust through disclosure of information except with the consent of the respondents. Following the presentation of the letters from the gatekeepers and the ethical clearance from the Research Ethic Committee of the UKZN, the participant's consent was applied and accepted by participants. A copy of the consent forms part of the attached appendices. Although ethical guidelines may vary based on the field of research, on a general note, Silverman (2013:311 highlights some basic ethical standards which relate to voluntary participation and the protection of research participants. From past experience with respect to research findings, Bloom and Crabtree (2006:312-321) assert that in order to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation on the part of the research participant during individual or group discussions, one ethical guideline considered important is the need of the interviewer to listen to the respondent.

Since the strategy for sampling of the research participants was heterogeneous, during the individual interviews and focus group discussions the dignity of the young, elderly, female and males were highly respected. And because the interviews and focus groups were well-scheduled with respect to time and place, all went smoothly. Due to the tendency of exposing the identities of participants within an organisation that has been

sampled as an entity for interview, interviewers should protect the interests and privacies of their research participants especially when experiences are shared in confidence (Bloom and Crabtree 2006:320).

Having received written permission from the Ethical Clearance Committee of the UKZN, this study takes into account the COCIN in Jos, the COCIN theological seminary, and the Pyem chiefdom whose consent was requested and their acceptance sent to the UKZN through the Ethical Clearance Committee of the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics who served as gatekeepers through which the researcher conducted in-depth and focus group interviews, thereby ensuring that not only their views but also their wellbeing and dignity were being protected.

3.7. Collection of secondary data

Apart from the primary sources for generating data for the research, the study employed secondary sources through the review of relevant literature. Ritchie and Lewis (2003:61) assert that secondary data are existing materials containing views and ideas of individual and group scholars which a researcher utilises when embarking on a particular field research and sees it as a constructive platform and entry point in the field of academics and that this is protected by not introducing new perspectives that are not fully analysed and developed. They further argue that secondary data is essential especially when certain subject areas do not correspond with initial objectives as reflected in the existing data becoming favourable to explore new data that can be relevant to the projected hypothesis (2003:61). In this way, alongside primary data collected from individuals and focus groups, this study utilised a review of secondary sources on inculturation, atonement, penal substitution theory and the contexts that inform how the understanding and practice of the theological concept was transported and transmitted by the founding missionaries into the ministry and mission of the COCIN within the context of Jos. Permission was sought to use archival materials from the COCIN's headquarters such as minutes and resolutions concerning discussions on the penal substitution theory. Material resources such as the curriculum and brochures on the subject from the COCIN's theological seminary were also collected. In addition, all relevant data from online search engines and the libraries from the UKZN, Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN) in Jos, ECWA Theological Seminary

(JETS) in Jos and the Gindiri Theological Seminary (GTS) libraries were also utilised. Through the data collected from these various sources, the researcher attempted an analysis that offers an African symbolic hermeneutics model of interpreting and presenting the penal satisfaction theory of the doctrine of the atonement within violent context of Jos.

3.8. Limitation of the study

Having ministered in the COCIN for more than twenty years, the researcher had easy access to some of the past and present principal leaders of the COCIN, ordained and non-ordained pastors and laity. Nonetheless, the ethnic, cultural, social differences within the COCIN and the violent context of Jos put the researcher in a situation where it was difficult to interact freely with some people. However, some of the researcher's colleagues who were class and school colleagues helped to gain access to the different individuals and groups that served as research participants in the interviews that were conducted. Through the assistance of local people, interpreters were available to communicate with the people in their local language. There were also financial challenges since the research involved traveling to the different points for data collection. The COCIN is a large church numerically and therefore the persons selected to be interviewed are intended to give a credible sample of the trend within the church.

3.9. The reflective method

While the qualitative research method was employed in this work, other methods for generating data included in-depth individual interviews, focus group discussions, and secondary sources through review of relevant literature. The multiplicity of sources for generating data in this study thus necessitated the utilisation of the reflective method. Lyons (2010:3) describes the reflective method in analysing research data as a methodology for engaging with human life experience. He further affirms that reflective work on a particular research data can be pedagogical since it seeks to transform the social world and develop new knowledge. The human experiences that constitute the data for this research aim at not only extracting new religio-cultural knowledge on the penal substitution theory, but through this knowledge the COCIN can be suitably equipped to build bridges of peace amongst the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

In other words, it is for human life transformation. Swinton and Mowat (2006:59) define reflectivity as the researcher's critical examination of the data and findings as s/he contributes to knowledge. While highlighting the ability of the researcher in the reflective process, Willig (2007:209) contends that the values, experiences, interest, and research objectives shape the thinking of the researcher. This seems to suggest the position of the researcher while generating, transcribing, and analysing the data gathered (Swinton and Mowat 2006:60). Although a researcher is expected to be objective in the way s/he carries out research, in reflective work on the generated data the researcher functions as an instrument in extracting hidden meanings and interpreting the data based on the aims and objectives of the study. Swinton and Mowat (2006:61) further argue that the reflective ability of the researcher cannot be overemphasised because s/he functions as an important instrument when it comes to extracting hidden meanings from the data. The application of the reflective ability of the researcher in this study was expressed in the motivation. Having served in the COCIN for more than twenty years as a minister, and having contact with the research participants personally, this enabled the researcher to be sensitive in reflecting and interpreting the data collected. Furthermore, having been guided by the research problem and aims and objective of the study, reflecting and digging hidden meanings from the data also became easier. The African symbolic hermeneutical process in the reinterpretation of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN requires the reflective thinking of the researcher. Such reflection is noticed in the appropriation of the doctrine under consideration taking into consideration the religio-cultural context of Jos.

3.10. Chapter summary

This chapter presented the key research instruments which included the research design, triangulation method and qualitative research methodology. The triangulation method entails that multiple methods for generating data can be used. Hence, within the qualitative method other methods for generating data were captured in this chapter. These included, the semi-structured method, in-depth individual interviews, focus group discussions, as well as secondary sources that involved the review of relevant literature to identify research gaps. The definition and choice of the sampling method,

the strategy for sampling, as well as ethical principles and guidelines were also presented in this chapter. In the preliminary process of data analysis, thematic analysis was shown to allow the thoughts and views of the interview percipients recorded in themes and sub-themes. Also contained in this chapter was the discourse analysis which the study employed to analyse the relevant data. The chapter also gave attention to the reflective ability of the researcher to extract hidden meanings and the dexterity to interpret the data as guided by the research problem as well as aims and objectives of the study. The chapter concluded by discussing the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EURO-CENTRIC MISSIONARY HERITAGE OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN NATIONS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the COCIN in Jos, Nigeria and examines the nature of the missionary engagement with the indigenous people and the cultural, linguistics, religious and geographical challenges that they encountered. The challenges that are identified are meant to contribute insights towards analysing the COCIN's understanding, utilisation and practice of the penal substitution theory. The chapter also critiques how the penal substitution theory of doctrine of the atonement was transported, transmitted and transplanted among the indigenous people by the pioneering missionaries that contributed to the contemporary witness of the COCIN within Jos.

4.2. The missionary heritage of the Church of Christ in Nations

According to Gutip (1983:25), the COCIN is an offshoot of the UK-based Sudan United Mission (SUM) whose pioneering leader was Hermann Karl Wilhelm Kumm, a retired military officer from Germany and by denominational affiliation of the Protestant Lutheran tradition. As Rengshwat (2013:73), has shown, Kumm's parents were conservative Protestant Lutherans (2013:73). Indeed, it has been argued that Lutheranism influenced the adoption of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as one of the ecclesiastical doctrines of the COCIN (Nden, 2013:36). This was made clear when new converts in Langtang, now a local government council in Plateau State, took an oath to show their full allegiance to the Christian faith (Nden 2013:36-38). As identified in the theological review of the penal substitution theory in chapter one above, what happened among the new converts was to affirm that this theory was conceptualised within the context of judicial system of ecclesiastical government (Lenman and Parker 1976:140-145). Furthermore, Kumm's meeting with Jonathan Edwards (Rengshwat 2012:74) who according Hamilton (2013:396) was one of the apologists of the penal substitution theory in Great Britain might have also

influenced Kumm's understanding of the COCIN ecclesiastical doctrinal tenets (2013:396). Having being brought up by his pious conservative Lutheran parents, the teaching of Hamilton during that meeting which dwelled much on Christ's death as substitute for the punishment that was upon humankind brings to bear his understanding of the concept on the substitutionary death of Christ (Rengshwat, 2012:73-74). His relationship with Jonathan Edwards was further deepened when Kumm attended a meeting where Edwards was the speaker in October, 1895 (2012:74-75). It was during this meeting that culminated in Kumm's missionary calling (2012:75). His colleagues were Ambrose Bateman, John G. Burt, and Mr. J. Lowry Maxwell who travelled to Nigeria, 23 July 1904. Goshit et al. have noted (cited in Carter et al. 2013:7) the SUM was an outcome of the combined efforts of several Protestant Christian denominations across Europe.

The other branch that contributed in the development of the COCIN was the Cambridge University Mission Party (CUMP), which in 1930 transferred its work to the SUM (Nden, 2013:50). The CUMP was formed by young university graduates in 1907 with the aim of taking the Christian message to "unreached lands in Africa." This accorded well with the SUM, who aimed at combating the advance of Islam by evangelising the people living in the Middle Belt of Nigeria whom they described as "pagans" "barbaric" "savagery" and "people living in darkness" (Boer 2014:14)

During the missionary era, the COCIN was named in Hausa as "*Ekklessiyar Kristi a Sudan*" which translated means, "Church of Christ in Sudan" (Gutip 1998:3). It should here be noted that the Hausa name of the church was necessitated due to language differences and for easy assimilation of the Christian message. Within the African symbolic hermeneutics, the use of the indigenous language for naming the church shows how relevant the use of language can be when transmitting the Christian message within a particular culture of indigenous people. The Hausa name was later changed in 1975 to "Church of Christ in Nigeria" (Gutip 1998:4). This change took place after the official handing over of the church from the missionaries to its indigenous leadership.

With the rapid expansion of the church across the different states of Nigeria,¹⁰ the name of the church was changed again from the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN), to the “Church of Christ in Nations” (COCIN) in 2013 (Gutip 2013:251-252). The historical sequence in changing the name of the church suggests that the church sought to be relevant within the political context in which it functioned. Ukpong (2000:17-18) has argued that theological reflection can be more viable if the reflector studies the context in which she or he is theologising. Through this approach, the present study will examine how the COCIN’s missional identity and vocation bears witness within the local cultures of Jos to facilitate fullness of life.

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the life of Kumm and his missional relationship with the indigenous people of North Central Nigeria (Boer, 1983:12). Harry Boer, the source for much of the information on Kumm was the pioneering principal of the present Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN). Nwokoro (2014:5) describes his call to be a missionary as, “conversion, to perfection in holiness, and to missionary service.” Kumm felt called by Jesus Christ to missionary service in Africa, a call he could not disobey (Boer 1973:13). Nden further describes Kumm as “a man tended to be ruled by his heart rather than his head, poetic, intense, explosive, forceful...” (2013:37-40). Kumm was determined to reach Sudan (Africa) like many other European missionaries of that era who became fascinated with the prospects of attracting Christian converts in the African continent whose lands were being colonised by European powers. For example, the early converts among the Taroh people of Langtang, in Plateau State, swore and signed an oath to fulfil the biblical commandments (Bitrus 2013:56). By association, they also uncritically gave their allegiance to be subservient to European judicial power. It is from this perspective that the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement is examined.

What contributed to the formation and plan to reach Northern Central Nigeria was Kumm’s working experience with mission organisations such as Sudan Pioneer Mission (SPM), Northern African Mission (NAM) and his meeting with a missionary

¹⁰ Today the COCIN is well-established across 26 states in Nigeria, as well as in Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Niger, Benin Republic, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda and the United Kingdom (Gutip 2013:251).

named Lucy Guinness and their subsequent marriage in Cairo (Rengshwat 2012:73). Guinness was a missionary who succeeded her father Henry Guinness who was also a missionary and the founder of the mission journal *Region Beyond* (2012:75). In Egypt, Kumm learned the Hausa language as part of his preparatory work for his expedition into the North Central Nigeria. The cultural sensitivity expressed by Kumm with respect to the importance that he attached to learning the local language suggests that his ability to communicate with the local people in their local tongue was indispensable. Kumm's perception of the Sudan and particularly the North Central Nigeria region led him to describe the area as "Land of Darkness" (1907:15). Indeed, Kumm states that:

There is a land in this wonderful world called, The Land of Darkness; a land which up till lately has been darkness.... Dark are the bodies of the people who live there, darker their minds and darker still their souls- The great of darkness. Tribes there in the Sudan, and there are many who are longing for the white man's teacher. The Government officials keep the Sabbath as Sunday of rest. No missionary had ever had the gospel brought to them (1907:15).

Although this superlative expression partly was used to motivate individuals and churches in Europe to support mission in the Sudan, his words nevertheless betray a Euro-centric cultural bias that devalues African culture by undermining their rich cultural experience and values. This prejudicial perspective also blinded the eyes of the missionaries from identifying the African symbolic resources through which the Christian message would be inculturated in the context of the indigenous people.

The idea of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement into the missional identity of the COCIN is spelled out in the present doctrinal beliefs of the COCIN (COCIN Constitution 2013). The adaption and practice of the penal substitution theory of atonement as bequeathed by the missionaries is embedded in its official Constitution of 2001 (Article #5) where Christ's death is described as one who took the divine punishment for sin on behalf of fallen humankind. The findings in chapter five of this present study will affirm that the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ as understood and practiced by the COCIN follows that of the Protestant Reformers, John Calvin and Martin Luther. As emerged in the interview discussion about the COCIN, one of the respondents reaffirmed this by saying:

The penal understanding that we have adapted as a church and that is being taught to students in this seminary follows that of John Calvin. Penal substitution is based on the fact that Jesus by dying on the cross Jesus took away our sins and instead of us dying Jesus took our place (Pokol 12 January 2017).

Kumm's conservative German Lutheran background and his meeting with Jonathan Edwards, who was a key proponent and apologetic in his teaching on the doctrine of the atonement, reaffirmed his knowledge on Christ death as punishment for the sin of humanity (Rengshwat 2012:74-76; Hamilton 2014:396). Martin Luther's interpretation of the atonement of Christ as substitutionary was grounded within the context of the German judicial system (Green and Baker 2004) and since, Kumm was a theological beneficiary of Luther's protestant teachings, he too would have been influenced by Luther's teachings since he came from the same context. Indeed, his evangelising work with the indigenous people of North Central Nigeria would also communicate his teachings on this doctrine to the new African converts who were asked to take a legal oath of allegiance to their new faith in Christ (Bitrus 2013:57). His negative description of the people of the Sudan also seems to further reveal his insensitivity to the rich religio-cultural experience that characterised the context of his recipients (2013:65).

According to Rengshwat (2012:73), it was the evangelical revival facilitated by ministry of William Carey, and the emergence of two kinds of mission—interdenominational and denominational—that led to the formation of the COCIN. There were faith missions that believed they could harness financial and other kinds of personnel and material support for foreign missions through answered prayers offered to God by faith (Boer 1983:7). It was thus during the evangelical fervour of the mid to late nineteenth-century and specifically during the pietistic and puritan revival period of 1859/1873 that mission organisations such as the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) and Sudan United Mission (SUM) were to emerge. Factors that gave rise to missionary journeys to Africa were motivated by evangelical pietistic concerns for millions of people in Africa whom they perceived were spiritually lost because they did not know Christ (Rengshwat 2012:71).

The aim of the SUM missionaries for the outreach to the Sudan¹¹ was further embedded in the words of the Kumm, who stated that:

In view of the present crises in the West Central Sudan, where, unless the message of Christ be brought within the next few years to Northern Nigeria, the million numbered pagan peoples of that new British Protectorate (a country as large as one-third of India) will go over to Islam, and in view of the fact that none of the Missionary Societies of the Baptist, Congregational, Methodist or Presbyterian churches of Great Britain or Ireland feels itself at present able to do anything for the evangelisation of the Sudan (cited in Nden 2012:80).

It should here be noted that the prejudicial disposition of the Arabic culture towards indigenous African culture and people was active long before the arrival of Europeans who came and added to the prejudice and exploitation. The rationale behind the missionary expedition to Sudan that culminated with the founding of the COCIN was driven by competitiveness and islamophobia that was intended to motivate the people to counter what was perceived to be the spread and scourge of Islam in North Central Nigeria (Boer 1979:390).

4.3. The context of North Central Nigeria

North Central Nigeria, as the name implies, is considered part of the Middle Belt which Rengshwat describes as an area dominated by different tribes or ethnic groups (2012:68). When Nigeria came under the British colonial rule, Fredrick Lord Lugard was made representative of the Northern and Southern Protectorate (Gutip 1998:19). The Northern Protectorate comprised of North and North Central Nigeria. Jos was one of the cities in North Central Nigeria well-known for tin mining activity (Danfulani 2006:2). It was an era of exploitation, suppression and damnation of the ethnic minorities (Boer 1983:17). According to Kraemer (1960:65), the nation of Nigeria was:

A country under colonial rule, real dynamic in foreign hands, nourished by foreign capitals directed by foreign personnel, inspired by a foreign

¹¹ According to Kumm (1907:63), Sudan is an Arabic word which means, 'Land of the blacks,' a land located around Abyssinia, (a nation that comprised the northern half of present-day Ethiopia) to the east, between the Senegal, and from the Sahara in the North. Those living in the land were the most civilised and the most degraded of the dark-coloured people of the dark continent.

spirit, primarily directed towards foreign interest.... the country at the last instance becomes instrument and means for foreign purposes and where foreign decision determine the people destiny.

This description reveals a contentious atmosphere where the indigenous people were subjected and oppressed. The strong opposition and negative feeling of being suppressed by colonial rule was staged by some local Hausa and Fulani in Bauchi who rioted against the system (Bitrus 2013:55). The political context was further divided when Muslims from the North were used by the British and considered to be socially superior to the local ethnic tribes of the Middle Belt, specifically in Jos, Plateau State. Nden (2013:26) made this clear when he quoted Lord Lugard as saying, "I have always personally preferred mission work among pagans to that of Mohammedans which may involve political difficulty." This was because according to the colonial masters, Muslims had a well-stratified political system (2013:26). The word "Mohammedans" means "followers of the Prophet Mohammad" (Boer 1983:17). The application of this policy put a stop to Kumm and his colleagues from reaching the Northern areas of the country where the Muslims dominate. The political strategy used by the colonial masters to divide the population led to the movement of the missionaries to the Central Northern region of the country to work among the multi-ethnic peoples of Jos (Goshit 2013:5). Boer (1983) in his evaluation of the commonality between the British Colonial Rule and the SUM missionaries has raised concerns about the ways in which the presentation of their Christianity may have compromised to find congruence with colonial ideology. Boer cites Kumm as saying, "Sudan has come under our rule, so that we might bring them under the rule of the kingdom of God" (1983:173). Bitrus (2013:55), in his contribution to the history of the COCIN also observed an instance where Kumm was mistaken as one of the German explorers by Hausa immigrants from Bauchi, a state in Nigeria

The context of North Central Nigeria was also informed by an Islamic Holy war (Jihad) under the leadership of Othman Dan Fodio who fought throughout Sudan (Boer 1983:17). War prisoners were captured as slaves and this created deep animosity between the different ethnic groups. Nden (2013:43) has argued that Wase was colonised by an Islamic Jihadist known as Shehu Dan Fodio in the nineteenth-century and was predominantly a Muslim community before the advent of the SUM

missionaries. Nden (2013:44) has further stated that the resistance faced by Kumm and his colleagues at Wase was due to Islamic domination caused by Islamic Jihadist Islam. It thus seemed to be regarded as a state religion over other religions and this preferential status heightened the tension, competition and animosity between the different religious groups that may have created the environment that became conducive to violence in Jos. Wase as Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria was the first missionary station consequent to Lord Laggard's political strategy that made Muslims the preferential religious group over other ethnic groups (Bitrus 2013:54). Among the ethnic groups of North Central Nigeria, the practice of African traditional religions was the norm in which the various ethnic groups had different ways of worship according to their deities who were viewed as intermediaries (Rengshwat 2012:67-70). The widespread belief in a Supreme Being, the idea of substitutionary animal sacrifice and payment for disobedience to community norms were seen as part of what constituted the religio-cultural experience of the various ethnic groups in North Central Nigeria. This becomes compatible with the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as bequeathed to the COCIN by the missionary heritage (Ukpong 2000).

Kumm's description of the tribes in North Central Nigeria and their greater awareness of God in terms of ensuring the peaceful co-existence and the welfare of the community through substitutionary sacrifice would have been a resource for inculturating the said doctrine (1907:15). This present study argues that through the symbolic religio-cultural experience of the various tribes in the North Central Nigeria, the penal substitution theory would have been appropriated by the missionaries as a medium of expression in the process of transmitting the doctrine under consideration.

Culturally, the North Central region of Nigeria was inhabited by different ethnic groups that were ethnically and culturally pluralistic. In his evaluation of the Nigerian context Maimi-Lawal (2001:10) maintains that apart from the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa as the main ethnic groups, there were about 300 sub-ethnic groups and about 500 dialects. Each of these ethnic groups had its own religio-cultural experience. Peter Nungshak Wika (2014) in his critique of the protracted violent crisis in the Plateau State has identified about 54 ethnic groups and that apart from the three main tribes of Berom, Anaguta and Afizere, the state was also inhabited by the Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo, Yoruba, and many other tribes within Plateau and other states of Nigeria before the

arrival of European missionaries. Wika further attributes the influx of the different ethnic groups and cultures into Jos to tin mining activities during the period of colonial rule (2014:59).

4.4. Missionary encounter with the indigenous people

This section draws attention to the missionary encounter with the indigenous people. Having presented the background context of the North Central Nigeria, this section will focus on how the encounter facilitated or hampered the understanding of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement in the process of transmission and the possible challenges the missionaries faced due to the language of communication, as well as cultural and religious differences.

4.4.1. Language barriers

Although language can be seen as part of a given culture, for the purpose of this present study, language will be discussed as a medium of communication. Sanneh maintains that mission can prove to be authentic not only by upholding the truth, but by relationship and medium of communication. He ascribes the beginning of the Early Church in Acts 2 to language which connected the missionary and recipient (2009:33). The vitality of the language used in communicating the Christian message must therefore be authentic if the missional identity of the church seeks to inculturate Western-oriented Christian concepts within a particular cultural context.

Kumm's desire to learn Hausa language, as described above, affirmed the importance he placed on language in communicating the Christian message. It should here be noted that with the multiplicity of ethnic groups in the North Central Nigeria, the Hausa language was just one among many languages. Furthermore, Kumm and his colleagues were restricted to reach the North which inhabitants were predominantly Hausa. That was where Kumm's elementary knowledge of Hausa would have been more utilised (Ayandele 1966:515). According to Bitrus, the first encounter with the indigenous people was recorded in Wase, an emirate situated in the lower part of Plateau State, this being considered the first missionary station of the SUM. Because Wase was predominantly Hausa it can be assumed that the challenge of the language of communication would have been minimised because of the elementary knowledge

acquired by Kumm, yet there were great challenges faced with relating to the neighbouring villages. As a result of other related challenges, the first station according to Bitrus (2013:55) was burned to the ground. This in turn led to the missionaries transferring to Langtang a neighbouring village now a Local Government Area of Plateau State. Due to language barriers, a few early converts had to learn the English language from the Western missionaries in order to translate the Christian message to other indigenous people among the Taroh ethnic group of present Langtang Local Government Area, Plateau State (Bitrus 2013:56). In the introductory chapter to his study, Sanneh (1993:16) proposed a contextual hermeneutical method where the indigenous assimilation of Christianity could find better expression through African cultural symbolic expression by indigenes. Following the challenges experienced at the first station, Bitrus (2013:60) has shown that missionaries were relocated to the Upper Plateau region, but the challenge of overcoming the language barrier made their situation worst. For example, in one of the missionary encounters with the indigenous people of Gel village in Bukuru, Jos, the differences in the language of communication became an obstacle for the transmission of the Christian message and its teachings on Christ's death as substitution. In Panyam, a village in the present Mangu Local Government Area, the indigenous people advised the missionaries to learn their local language in order for them to better communicate the Christian message. In the view of Mohzo (2013:40), this contributed to the development of Bible schools and specifically the COCIN theological seminary. He further highlights the language barrier faced by the missionaries and the indigenous people who were trained in the missionary established schools to serve as evangelists for effective communication of the Christian message (2013:104).

The communication challenges experienced by missionaries in appropriating the use of the local languages among the indigenous peoples called into question how the Western-constructed concept of the penal substitution theory was translated into the local languages to ensure a culturally-meaningful understanding of the concept.

4.4.2. Cultural barriers

Culture is a way of life of a particular given people. Bate (2002:18-19) argues that there are many ways to understand culture, including that of art. Hewitt (2012:11) describes

culture as that which gives a particular people their identity. Aram (1996:97) has further identified language, tradition, beliefs, institutions and customs as that which constitutes the way of life of a particular community. One thing that is common from these understandings of culture is that culture is understood as a way of life within a particular people. Accordingly, this study calls into question whether the differences in language, tradition, beliefs and customs between the missionaries and the indigenous people in the North Central Nigeria constituted a barrier in the transmission of the penal substitution theory of the atonement.

According to Bitrus (2013:67), polygamous new converts to Christianity at Jos were asked to divorce their second and third wives, as well as expressly forbidden from taking local alcoholic beverages and from attending traditional festivals as a part of their new-found Christian witness. The practices rejected by the missionaries formed an integral part of the cultural lived-experience of the indigenous people, which was deemed to be inferior, evil and therefore should be rejected. This approach was also expressed in some of the sermons given by the missionaries who described the ethnic groups of the Sudan as “pagans,” “savages,” “fetishes” and ‘heathens’ (Boer 2014:14). Consequent to this demand by the missionaries, some potential new converts alternatively embraced the Islamic faith which allowed men to marry up to four wives if they could afford to do so (Bitrus 2013:65).

In comparison to the Western culture which tended to be individualistic in nature, traditional festivals constitute the culture of communality within the African context (Bujo 2015:83). However, the negative perception of the European missionaries towards the cultures of the local people was not supported by evidence found among the Ngas people of Pankshin, now a Local Government Area in Plateau State, that treated adultery as a grievous crime (Bitrus 2013:69). Newbery Warren (2005:95) contends that the translation of the Christian message interculturally depends largely on the missionary’s knowledge of his/her host culture and ascribes the cultural barriers faced by the Western missionaries in Africa during the colonial era to their selective but intentional ignorance and arrogance about Africa. Another method used by the missionaries to deculturize the Africans from their indigenous identity was to require the new African converts to take an oath in the form of a religious legal covenant that

would keep them within a Euro-centric framework of religious experiences. Nden has detailed a formal covenant declared on 17 December 1922:

We the undersigned having been baptised in conformity with our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are gathered together in one accord to found Jesus Christ in Langtang. We solemnly covenant with each other to live together in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, to strengthen and to build each other up in the faith (2013:56).

According to Nden, about eighteen converts signed a document to demonstrate their allegiance to the rules of the new religion to which they were now converted. It can be argued that the missionaries did what their Western cultural experience told them was the correct (Bate 2014:27).

The conceptualisation of the penal substitution theory was constructed within a context characterised by judicial system of justice (Green and Baker 2011:169). Therefore, the doctrine which could only be understood within the framework of a Eurocentric judicial discourse also necessitated that the leaders and members of the COCIN understand and practice the doctrine using a Eurocentric hermeneutic. However, this approach was culturally insensitive to the religious diversity and social plurality of the local context. Instead of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement being utilised to facilitate peacebuilding within the community, it became a promoter of intolerance and violence within a context that was already destabilised by ethnic violence.

4.4.3. Religious intolerance

The competitive atmosphere between the missionaries and people of other faith groups within North Central Nigeria created a destabilising religio-cultural environment (Boer 2014:15). The triumphalist and competitiveness posture from Christianity and Islam as spelled out in the chapter that follows takes root from the aforementioned intolerance expressed by the missionary heritage of the COCIN. The competitiveness seems to be fully represented by the early Christians in the Central Northern part of Nigeria. Andrew Barnes made this clear when he suggests that Christian-oriented political parties were formed due to the fear of being marginalized. These parties included Non-Muslim League (NML), Middle Zone League (MZL) and United Middle Belt Congress

(UMBC). These parties recorded full participation of COCIN members such as David Vrengkat Lot, Azi Nyako, Joseph Tarka, Mosses Rwang (Barnes 2007:595).

The vast and diverse context of Sudan with a landmass area of over 3000 miles / 4830 kms across with hundreds of languages and religions (Boer 2014:14) within the African context was regarded by the missionaries as a land to be conquered and its peoples rescued from the forces of evil and their concomitant primitive way of life (2014:16-17) associated with spirit worship, traditional worship, and animism (2013:39). The missionaries however failed to embrace the understanding that God already existed within the religio-cultural experiences of the people (1980:2001). The context was therefore dismissed as unenlightened and uncivilised and that only their understanding and practice of the Christian faith could rescue them from their spiritual capture.

The clash between the Euro-centric Christian culture of the missionaries and the African religious culture of the indigenous people has therefore created a contradictory environment for the African symbolic hermeneutical inculturation of the doctrine of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement.

From the foregoing examination of the language, culture and religious barriers that seemed to militate against the transmission of the doctrine of the atonement, this present study argues that the clash between the Western worldview and that of Africa mitigated against a wholesome inculturated understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory because of their inability to appropriate compatible African religio-cultural practices as hermeneutical resources for the Christian message to converse with the African culture. Sanneh (1993:16) and Bediako (1992:5) in their African symbolic hermeneutical method have challenged African theologians to harness relevant African cultural symbols as tools for the assimilation of the Christian message. This perspective according to these renowned African scholars is what has facilitated growth of Christianity within Africa in the post-Euro-centric missionary era (Bediako 1995:206). It is therefore imperative for the COCIN's missional identity to embrace African religio-cultural values that will converse with the doctrine under consideration (Bediako 1992:5). Through this process of African symbolic hermeneutics, Sanneh and Bediako both maintain that African theologians should critically acknowledge the work of the European missionaries and appropriate their legacies as platforms for

refashioning the Christian message to address the African meaning systems (Sanneh 1973:17). However, as Maluleke (1996:13) has argued, the viability of Christianity in Africa does not only depend on the utilisation of African cultural values but on the need for African scholars to engage in in-depth research into the appropriation of African indigenous knowledge systems. This African symbolic hermeneutical approach necessitates that the COCIN dialogues with the cultural African religio-cultural experiences of Jos that can best serve as tools for the translation and assimilation of the doctrine by the people (Hewitt 2012:17). In an attempt to respond to this objective, this present study postulates an African alternative model of the penal substitution theory that emerges from the Pyem ethnic group of Plateau State that is called *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war.”¹²

4.5. The medium of transmitting the penal substitution theory

This section examines the medium through which the missionaries transmitted the doctrine of the atonement to the indigenous people of Plateau State. Kumm adopted the so-called ‘missionary standard model’ that was used by Reformed Missionaries from Europe and which consisted of ‘evangelisation through education.’ In a context where Islam was the dominant monotheistic faith, Kumm regarded Islam as a hostile competitor that if not stopped, would eventually dominate all of Africa and re-establish the horrible practices of the slave trade. The chosen method of reversing this fearful trend of Islamic domination was through “Christian education” (Mohzo 2013:102). Christian education was embraced as the most effective method through which the penal substitution theory as a core ingredient for the understanding and practice of the Christian faith and membership of the church. The establishment of catechetical and church schools served as important evangelising institutions for advancing church growth while ensuring a Western model education model that used a curriculum that purposefully alienated and separated Africans from their indigenous cultures and best equipped them to serve the interests of the Europeans. Therefore, the clergy leaders who had the primary responsibility of preaching and teaching of the doctrine to worshippers were first equipped through Western-modelled theological schools

¹² This cultural concept will be discussed later in chapter eight of this study.

(colleagues and seminaries) where they were taught for three to five years before being sent to work within the local churches and schools. Education in the local churches through Sunday schools, Bible study groups, local home groups and other organisations became the foremost methods through which ordinary people were taught about the doctrine.

4.5.1. The role of Gindiri Theological Seminary

Gindiri Theological Seminary is one of the first institutions established by the COCIN and is located in Gindiri.¹³ However, there are other secular mission schools which were established by European missionaries and they too were utilised as centres through which the COCIN membership was equipped to confess the doctrine as a central motif of their faith. The establishment of the theological seminary during the European missionary era was primarily to transmit this fundamental doctrine to indigenous evangelists and to ensure that they communicated it according to the expectations of the missionaries. They did this faithfully without seeking to respond contextually to the religio-cultural worldview of the local people. Mohzo (2013:103) has argued that at a 1910 conference held in Jos, the call for the training of indigenes to work alongside the missionaries was made. The missionary educational policy of that era had restricted the training of the indigenes, but desperation for the need to increase the training of indigenous clergy to communicate the Christian message through the meaning system of the culture led to the establishment of theological institutions. The urgent need to translate the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement using culturally-relevant expressions from the local language necessitated that the indigenous evangelists become the source of the communication in order for the local people to believe (Dames 2013:11). However, the use of the indigenous people as evangelists to communicate the doctrine did not necessarily result in the African symbolic inculturation of the doctrine within the cultural meaning system. Rather, while the concept was inserted it was not effectively inculturated. The theological institutions served as the educational enforcers of the Euro-centric understanding and practice of

¹³ Gindiri is situated in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria. Other COCIN mission institutions established in Gindiri include, a Boys Secondary School, a Girl's High School, a School for Blind Children, and the COCIN Comprehensive Collage.

the doctrine. The clergy were taught Hausa as a general language of instruction and communication of the Christian message (Mohzo 2013:104). According to Dames (2013:2), the appropriate way of doing contextual theological education necessitates taking into account the culture of the people through which the Christian message is being transmitted. Bible schools were established by the missionaries across most regional church councils (RCC) which according to Mohzo (2013:17), were meant to train indigenous leaders who best represented the ministry and mission of the COCIN. It can be argued that the understanding of culture in the theological training of the indigenous during the missionary era seemed to have been limited to the Hausa language of a particular host community without taking into consideration the wider national regional and global challenges of human life (Hewitt 2012:11).

The Gindiri theological seminary of the COCIN has evolved from its missionary founding era into a contemporary master's degree awarding theological institution with about forty academic staff and about five hundred students. One of its objectives is to train indigenous clergy leaders who can serve the missional identity of the church to respond to issues that threaten fullness of life within its context. Hendricks postulates the need for missional hermeneutics that takes root in the *missio Dei* and is relevant in promoting a theology that takes into account the context of its particular location (Hendricks cited in Bevans 1992:2). Hendricks further emphasises that the church in Africa should respond to its contemporary context in Africa by appropriating authentic contextual theological education by ensuring that seminaries equip their students by using curricula that are relevant to the context in which people live. Failure to do this may ill-equip the church in Africa to offer relevant missio-cultural responses to issues that deny the people fullness of life (Hendricks cited in Bevans 2012:2).

The African symbolic hermeneutical perspective employed in this present study also examines the extent to which the Western missionary curriculum used in transmitting the penal substitution theory among the clergy and the laity has demonstrated its capacity to be a life-giving resource. This poses a core question about the methodology of training the clergy leaders of the COCIN:

To what extent the penal substitution theory can find contextual religio-cultural expression through the curriculum content of the COCIN theological seminary as it engages with the violent context of Jos.

4.5.2. The missionary curriculum as a medium of transmission

The curriculum designed and used by the Europeans for the transmission of the atonement doctrine that embodies the penal substitution theory was meant to be taught in the theological institutions as a fundamental tenet that required the lecturers to communicate the doctrine to the local in a prescriptive way with no room for adaptation to contextual realities. When the theological seminary was handed over to local leaders by the missionaries, the content and structure of the curriculum underwent limited change such as improving literacy and the concept of self-reliance among the clergy through agricultural activities (Mohzo 2013:106). It could be argued that this limited curriculum change failed to address the systemic violence that denies fullness of life within the context of Jos.

The content and structure of the curriculum used by the missionaries to equip the clergy in understanding the penal substitution theory employed biblical resources through their hermeneutical cultural lenses. This theory and method approaches employed by the Gindiri theological seminary also failed to utilise contextual hermeneutical models in their quest to educate the local leaders on the fundamentals of the doctrine. Although the seminary operates a department that focuses on general studies that employs contextual hermeneutics to equip local students to appropriate their cultural experience, this was inadequate to respond to the wider community's threats to life within Jos. As a result, the curriculum used in their theological institutions failed to become a resource for peacebuilding to overcome violence in Jos (Pokol 2015:10).

The under-graduate and post-graduate programme of study used by the theological college¹⁴ reflected a standard Western theological education model without any

¹⁴ The courses offered both at under-graduate and post-graduate levels at the theological College include, historical theology, liberation theology, feminist theology, devotional theology, pastoral theology, practical theology, moral theology, Roman Catholic theology, dogmatic theology, philosophy and logic, black theology, Bible, science and reason, biblical development, infallibility and inerrancy and authorship.

intentional reflection on the Nigerian and African context. This suggests that a Euro-centric theological understanding of the Christian faith was considered to be orthodox within the ecclesial identity of the COCIN. The outline the penal substitution theory is taught under historical theology but the module failed to engage with religio-cultural indigenous symbols that also address promoting reconciliation between warring parties. In addition, the curriculum also failed to incorporate contextual theology in which courses such peacebuilding and African symbolic theological hermeneutics are taught (Pokol 2015:182).

The penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement is taught within the discipline of systematic theology at Gindiri theological seminary but does not converse with nor is interrogated by missio-cultural perspectives that engage with the religio-cultural environment in which systemic violence envelopes many COCIN communities (Pokol 2015:56). McCain (2000) has therefore called for proactive measure in which the clergy leaders who are formed by the theological institutions should take into account the contemporary social challenges that call into question the relevance of the theory to the context of Jos. This present study postulates that the curriculum used for the training of the church leaders has not adequately equipped the students to offer a life-affirming response to the violent context of Jos. The retaliatory attitude of some Christians during the violence in Jos denotes a hermeneutical pitfall in their understanding of what the finished work of Christ on the cross has accomplished and particularly the relevance of the penal substitutionary concept of the atonement in empowering clergy leaders in peacebuilding non-violent engagement (Uzodike and Obaje 2013:41). This present study therefore argues that the violence in Jos calls into question the central theological tenet of the penal substitution theory that is used by the COCIN through its theological college to equip its clergy leaders, who are ill-equipped to engage in missio-cultural hermeneutical work that would make the doctrine address the violent context of Jos with appropriate peacebuilding measures.

Although ATR and African Christian theology are included as specific courses that appear to engage with the symbolic cultural experiences in which the people live and work, the subjects do not appear to be of strategic importance but exist on the margins of what the church recognises as more relevant core subjects. Therefore, the academic training of the clergy leaders generally fails to appropriate elements of ATR for

engaging in contextual ministry and mission (Uzodike and Obaje 2013:57). In responding to the *missio Dei*, de Gruchy (2010:44) further contends that a theological curriculum should not be static but be responsive to the changing religio-cultural and socio-political nature of our world. It can thus be argued that the introduction of these courses could be seen as an attempt to introduce African nuances in the leadership formation of the COCIN's clergy. However, the Euro-centric missionary curriculum was not ideologically designed to explore and draw upon the resources of African cultural symbols and heritage that could better articulate and appropriate the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement in responding to the religio-cultural, socio-political violence that affects communities within Jos (Ukpong 1994:41). Indeed Amenze (2010:266, 347) states that the relevance of theological education in Africa depends largely on whether it takes cognisance of the pluralistic undertone of the African context. He further argues that the nature of the Western curricula that was used in many theological institutions and seminaries in Africa does not have the capacity to address the threats to life within the context of Africa (2010:267). A critical examination of the content and structure of the curriculum used in the COCIN's theological institution to transmit the penal substitution theory is therefore urgently needed to evaluate its capacity to be a life-affirming force that overcomes the systemic violence in Jos. While proposing a paradigm shift on curricula used in theological institutions for church leadership formation in India, Patro states that:

Things are changing fast, and the rise of exclusivism is dividing our society. Promoting an inclusive society is the need of the hour. The church must work with indigenous groups, particularly with the marginalised communities to promote justice, peace, fraternity and freedom...democracy and democratic institutions need to mature in pluralism (2017:2).

Drawing attention to the emerging changes in the society today, Patro (2017:3) invites the church to rethink curricula used in theological institutions to ensure that they are able to respond to the pressing issues of justice and peacebuilding within communities that are faced with threats that deny fullness of life. The COCIN faces an urgent task to identify what constitutes a contextually-relevant theological education for the equipping of its clergy leaders to respond appropriately to the violent context of Jos. According to Gaikward (2010:268) the traditional Western missionary method of

reading the Bible states that, “emphasis has been on the priority of text over context.” This method has proved deceptive because there is no value-free method of reading the scriptures that is devoid of context. Therefore, in their method, the missionaries made European contextual hermeneutics the *de-facto* template for reading and interpreting the Bible. The contemporary challenges the missionary-founded theological institutions face in their use of such curricula to train local church leaders with contents, theories and methods that did not respond to the local religious, cultural, political and social contexts are therefore immense. Such a framework according to Gaikward (2010:268) fails to create room for a missio-cultural practice that can equip the missional identity of the church in Africa to articulate missionary-oriented ecclesial doctrines to respond to challenges of the present changing society that posts threats to life. For example, while evaluating curricula used in African theological schools, Segundo (1976:65) has argued that traditional curriculum or method use in African theological colleges may not be viable in responding to the contemporary challenges. Instead, he proposes a continual change and re-evaluation take place in translating and interpreting Christian doctrine and for the equipping of theologians to respond to threats that deny fullness of life within the context they function. In his evaluation of curriculum development in Nigeria, Harding (2008:1) points to the necessity for theologians to review the Western-influenced curriculum with the aim of providing an African symbolic hermeneutical perspective in missional leadership formation that can equip the church’s missional identity to respond to the pluralistic nature of the contemporary context. It is such a perspective that informs the analysis of the curriculum used in transmitting the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement to the clergy leadership within the COCIN theological seminary.

This present study thus proposes an alternative African model that can offer a more contextually-relevant symbol of interpreting the penal substitution theory based on the religio-cultural experience of the people within Jos. The African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework used in this study converses therefore with the traditional theological curriculum content to offer a contextually-transforming theological education that is Afro-centric and missio-culturally relevant to equip the COCIN clergy leaders to respond to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos (Ho 2011:120).

4.5.3. The application of the penal substitution theory within the COCIN

The indigenous clergy leaders of the COCIN pushed for the transfer of leadership from the European Missionaries at about the same time when the local political leaders of Nigeria fought the British Colonial for its Independence in 1960. According to Rengshwat (2012), the handing over of the church administration to indigenous leadership by the missionaries took place in response to the need for more evangelists who could better transmit the penal substitution theory that took into consideration the language of communication and religio-cultural experience of the indigenous communities (2012:88). The handing over of administrative responsibilities was initiated to facilitate the emergence of an indigenous church.

Reference has been made already of the work of the Rev. H. J. Cooper among tribes of the Langtang district, a work that was founded and shaped according to “indigenous church” principles has been an example to others in the field. Cooper kept himself up-to-date regarding missionary developments, where his clear insight into the principles of the work made him a leader in the application of the “indigenous church method,” his writings on that subject being circulated far and wide (Rengshwat 2012:89).

The efforts of Cooper as a missionary who served among the multi-ethnic tribes in Langtang, initiated plans by the SUM to incorporate indigenous leadership as part of its development strategy and policy to enhance church growth by transmitting the Christian message through indigenous evangelists. In exploring modalities of indigenous assimilation, Maluleke (1996:18) argues for the Christian message in Africa to be transmitted by Africans to enhance the indigenous assimilation of the Christian message within the African culture. This method of inculturation within the broader African symbolic hermeneutics requires that indigenous African theologians adopt methods that facilitate dialogue between the Christian message and the culture (1996:18). Through the indigenous transmission model, the missionary heritage of the COCIN gave way to Africans evangelising Africans that advocated the policy of self-propagation by native evangelists within the neighbourhood (Rengshwat 2012:123). The initiation of the indigenous model that fell within the process of the administrative transition from the missionary heritage of the COCIN therefore seemed to project a missio-cultural initiative for textual and contextual engagement by the church in the

work of transmitting the Christian message (de Gruchy 2010:43). For example, Gaiya (2014:1) cites an indigenous couple who went to a neighbouring hostile community within Jos after the handing over of the COCIN to indigenous leadership, where their evangelising work resulted in the Christian message taking firm root within the context.

This African symbolic hermeneutical urgency for the COCIN became part of the condition for the handing over of the COCIN ecclesial administration from European missionaries to that of its indigenous leadership. The concern of the missionaries for indigenous leadership was focused on the need for their theological training in order that they would facilitate evangelisation among the native population who share the same way of life within a particular locality among their own tribal group (Rengshwat 2012:147). Although it focused on indigenous training, the strategy also revealed a sensitivity towards culture and how it could be used by the church through its trained indigenous leaders to converse with the culture in order to offer fullness of life. Bell (2011:1) has argued that for foreign missions to contribute to the establishment of indigenous churches among their host communities they should understand the message of salvation in its cultural settings. Nthamburi (1998) on the other hand attributed the planting of indigenous churches by either the missionaries or indigenous leadership to a process of synthesizing Christianity and culture. He thus states:

The objective of indigenisation is to give expression to Christianity in African religio-cultural terms. It is attempts to create a synthesis between African culture and Christianity. It aims at abolishing syncretism which renders African Christianity ineffective. In presenting Christianity in a way that is congenial to African experience and reality, African Christianity will be enabled to live out their faith authentically and creatively (1989:118).

In his argument, Nthamburi drew attention not only to planting of indigenous churches and ways in which the message of the Christian message could be symbolically inculturated, but he also focused on the likelihood of running into the syncretism sometimes faced by indigenous churches in Africa (McCain 2000:121). Hence for Christianity to find expression in the African cultural symbols, the missionary heritage of the COCIN employed the training of its evangelists to acquire methods of synthesising the Christian message with culture (Gaiya 2014:1).

Despite the cultural and contextual variances between the missionaries and the indigenous Christians, the process of handing over of the leadership of the COCIN to indigenous leadership seemed to represent a missio-cultural framework for the process of inculturation of the Christian message, church, theological education and the local culture.

The COCIN was formed through the amalgamation of all the planted churches within the Central Northern Nigeria. Four District church councils (DCC) adopted *Ekklessiyar Kristi a Sudan* (EKAS) as the Hausa name of the church and became one Regional Church Council (RCC). Mr. W. M. Bristow, one of the SUM missionaries was appointed as chairperson in each of the four regional church councils, a Bible school was also established as a medium for transmitting the penal substitution theory. (Daniel 2013:65) The priority given to the establishment of Bible schools affirmed Kumm's strategy in combating the spread of Islam. In 1975, the church adapted the name *Ekklessiyar Kristi A Nigeria* (EKAN) (Church of Christ in Nigeria) with Rev. Damina Bawado as the first indigenous chairperson. The name was again changed to Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN). Following the expansion of the COCIN beyond the borders of Nigeria to other African countries including, Ghana, Tanzania, Uganda, South Africa, Niger and Benin Republics, Malawi, Sierra-Leone and the United Kingdom. The name of the church was later changed to the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN). In 1998, it had a reported membership of more than three million people (Nanwul 1998:245).

The adaption and practice of the penal substitution theory of atonement as the central doctrine of the COCIN identity as bequeathed by the missionaries is embedded in its official Constitution of 2001 (Article #5) where Christ's death is described as one who took the divine punishment for sin on behalf of fallen humankind. The findings in chapter five of this present study will affirm that the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ as understood and practiced by the COCIN follows that of the Protestant Reformers, John Calvin and Martin Luther. This doctrine is also regularly taught in the COCIN theological seminary, its Bible schools for leadership formation and through preaching and teaching in both rural and urban congregations of the COCIN. It is in view of this that chapter six of this present study will focus on the city of Jos, a context

characterised by religio-cultural and socio-political violence and seek to examine the COCIN's response to its violence-prone context.

4.6. Chapter summary

This chapter has presented an overview of the missionary encounters with the indigenous people of North Central Nigeria. It began with an exploration of the motives that influenced Karl Kumm, the pioneering missionary leader of the Sudan United Mission (SUM) missionary journey. The context of North Central Nigeria before the advent of the missionaries was also examined in this chapter as essential background that shed light on the context of the missionary encounter through their engagement with the indigenous people. The chapter also highlighted the challenges that the missionaries and the indigenous people faced due to differences in language, culture and religious traditions. These challenges affected how the penal substitution theory was transported and transmitted by the missionaries to the indigenous people. The chapter concluded with an overview of the medium used in transmitting the penal substitution theory in the ministry and mission development of the COCIN.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE VIOLENT CONTEXT OF JOS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter gives attention to examining the socio-political and religio-cultural context of Jos, the capital city of the central Plateau State, Nigeria. The chapter begins with an examination of the factors that have contributed to the mass influx of settlers from other States within Nigeria that have given shape to the ethnic diversity that informs the pluralistic environment of Jos. The contentious atmosphere of this city has become a conduit for religio-political violence. This study however focuses its attention on the violence that erupted from 2001 to 2010. The chapter will also examine the quest for peacebuilding in Jos to determine the extent to which the approach served as a life-affirming strategy. Through the missio-cultural lens of interpretation, the chapter concludes by analysing the COCIN's contemporary missional understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement to determine its viability in facilitating peacebuilding in Jos.

5.2. An overview of the Nigerian context

Nigeria is located within the Western part of Africa bordered by the Republic of Benin, Cameroon, Chad and Niger with climatic condition that varies within the Equatorial, tropical and Arid respectively. The complexity of Nigeria as the most populated Nation State in Africa is attributed to its multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-religious character. In all, it has about 390 ethnic groups. Three quarters are from the Middle Belt and forty-four of these are from Plateau State. As Danfulani (2006:1) has shown, the pluralistic nature of Nigeria contributed greatly to the religious and ethnic violence experienced in some parts of Nigeria.

The political map in Figure 5.1 illustrates the pluralistic nature of Nigeria, showing the different ethnic groups.

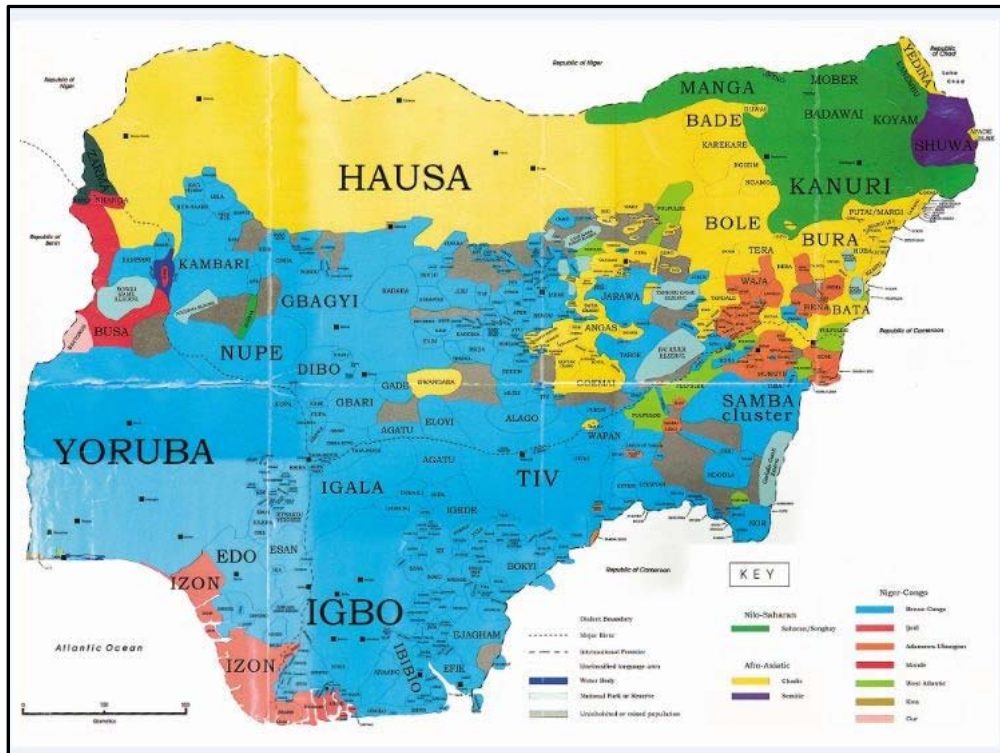


Figure 5.1. Ethnic Map of Nigeria showing its ethnic groups (Source: Nigerian Muse 2017).

According to Mwadkwon (2001), Nigeria’s complex socio-political identities have been exploited by those who wish to use its religious and cultural diversity as a reason to engage in violence against others that do not belong to their ethnic, religious or political group:

Nigeria is today one giant tinder box of religious and ethnic intolerance.... Sometimes beginning from a simple misunderstanding, they can metamorphose into religious, communal, and ethnic conflagration.... Nigerian urban and semi urban areas have been affected most by these religious and multi ethnic conflicts. Whenever conflicts of this nature reoccur, they erupt much more and claim many more casualties (2001:1).

In light of this reality, violence in contemporary Nigeria is attributed to the contentious environment shaped by multiplicity of religions, ethnic groups and different cultures that sometimes produce socio-economic conflicts. As Mwadkwon (2001) has shown, it is as a result of these privileges linked to the religious and ethnic identities of its recipients, that conflicts are sown. Mwadkwon states that:

In recent decades religious and ethnic affiliation have become major criteria for appointments to key offices, the military, the police force, the civil service, enrolment in schools, colleges and universities the military, the police force, the civil service, enrolment in schools, colleges and universities, and so on (2001:2).

This method of governance based upon appointing people to office according to their religious and ethnic identities serves as an indirect contributor to the emergence of physical and psychological violence in many communities that undermines human dignity and respect. Hurst (2017:1) has further argued that similar factors that create violence were also present in the socio-economic, religious and economic environment that resulted in the 'Biafra'/Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970. Indeed, throughout the period of colonisation in Nigeria that continued into the Independence era, the emergence of violent conflicts between the Hausa/Fulani in the North, Yoruba in the west and the Igbo the Southeast each attributed to the complexity caused by cultural, ethnic and political factors. This situation according to Hurst (2017:1) presents an atmosphere of rancour and domination within the Nigerian community. According to Arbuckle (2004:4), violence can be triggered through symbols because they can speak and provoke the people's emotions that can result in violence. Accordingly, the violence in Nigeria does not only seek to destroy or cause physical damage to lives and properties but also has psychological connotations that undermine human dignity due to cultural, religious, or political affiliations.

Hurst (2017:1) has further argued that such forms of violence were clearly reflected in the course of the Nigerian Civil War of 1967-1970, which was also known as the Nigerian Biafran War. Following the controversial atmosphere among religious and ethnic communities during the colonisation and post-Independence eras, the civil war has been attributed to a complexity of issues, relating to the three major cultural, ethnic and political struggles between the Hausa/Fulani in the North, Yoruba in the west and the Igbo the Southeast. Figure 4.2 is a photograph taken during the 1967-1970 civil war in Nigeria.



Figure 5.2. Victims of the Nigerian Biafra War (Hurst 2017:2)

Figure 5.2 acts as a potent symbol of the grievances and prejudices present among the different ethnic, religious and cultural groups within Nigeria. Arbuckle (2004:4) has argued that violence can be triggered through symbols because they can speak and provoke a person's imagination to nurse positive or negative feelings that can result in violence. Although Arbuckle wrote from the psychological perspective, the use of

symbols becomes relevant to this study because symbols are part of what constitutes the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective through which the penal substitution theory which finds expression within the cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group in Jos.

Part of what informed the contentious and violent atmosphere in Nigeria was the rise of religious fundamentalism as a political discourse towards solving issues related to identity politics. This present study draws attention to the Boko Haram insurgency which, according to Bagaji (2015), is an example of religious fundamentalism in Nigeria (2015:2-3). In other words, it is a sect that is against Western education, with the aim to enforce their brand of religious ideology/belief system in a country that is religio-cultural and socio-political in nature (2012:33). According to Obaji, the reason for their persistent attacks on Muslims and Christians during divine worship is contained in a video by the Boko Haram leader where he states that, “whoever follows democracy is an infidel. This is Shekau; this is why I am in enmity with you” (2015:2). Obaji (2015:1) further argues that the idea of democracy, according to this sect, means that anything Western must be rejected. The outbreak of violence at regular intervals in Nigeria sometimes makes it difficult for observers to ascertain whether it is the result of religious, economic or ethnic factors. Mwadkwon (2000:56) has observed that peoples’ social location influences their attitude in analysing religious and ethnic violence in Nigeria. However, whether violence is religious or ethnic, it remains a factor that poses a threat to the life and security of communities.

It is important for this present study that attention should be given to the response of the Nigerian government to violence within this context. The Nigerian military and police services are frequently used by the government at national and State levels to neutralise violence through the use of force. However, instead of using well-tested peacebuilding measures as central to their strategy of operation, they are accused by the public of exacerbating the violence through the collection of bribes (Danfulani 2006:21). According to Danfulani (2006:22), the Nigerian government claims to be building a society where individual rights are respected; whereas, it also engages in violent attacks through the military against the Boko Haram insurgency. The endemic prevalence of violence within society that denies fullness of life within the country has led the Nigerian government to appoint judicial commissions of enquiry on the causes

of such violence within the nation and recommend ways of curtailing it (Danfulani, 2006:6).

From the above discussion, it can be argued that the systemic and symbolic violence in Nigeria has both remote and immediate causes. The violence seems to be due to unresolved conflicts between the diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria. Despite the Nigerian government response, no significant results in social harmony between the different ethnic groups has been achieved.

According to the World Watch Monitor, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in their first meeting in Abuja discussed the prevalence of violence in the North Eastern part of Nigeria. The CAN recommended that the Nigerian government take seriously its responsibility of prosecuting perpetrators and to ensure the safety of all lives and called on Christians in Nigeria, especially the youth, to overcome the scourge of violence, cultivate attitudes of forgiveness and develop good relationships with people of other faiths.

Figure 5.3 is a photograph of the Christian Centre in Abuja.



Figure 5.3. Photo of the Christian Centre in Abuja (Source: World Watch Monitor 2016).

As the name implies, the Christian Centre is located in Abuja, the Federal Capital of Nigeria, where clergy leaders of the churches within the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) hold conventional meetings to address issues that concern the welfare of the church in Nigeria. As representatives of the various denominations, they seek ways of addressing remote and immediate causes of violence and its negative effect on achieving fullness of life within the country.

It can be argued that the missional response of the church in Nigeria towards violence takes two approaches. First, there is the idea of modelling Jesus' act of forgiveness; and second, the judicial approach for obtaining justice from perpetrators of violence.¹⁵ It is with respect to this notion of seeking justice that their understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement will be examined to ascertain whether the phenomenon of retribution is incorporated in its understanding and practice (Pugh 2015:67).

Finally, the pluralistic context of Nigeria has evolved out of the diverse cultural experiences of the people and this should be used as an important resource for peacebuilding.

5.3. An overview of Plateau State

Plateau is one of the states that constitute the Federal Government of Nigeria with a population of about 3.1 million and over fifty-four ethnic groups (Modibbo 2010:3). It is located in North Central Nigeria and forms part of the Middle Belt. The name Plateau emerged due to the dominance of a high geographic plateau. With regards to its religious population, it is predominantly Christian with a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural environment (Adams 2011:3). The following seventeen local governments make up Plateau State: Jos North, Jos South, Jos East, Basa, Barkin Ladi, Riyom, Bokokos, Mangu, Pankshin, Kanke, Kanam, Mikang,

¹⁵ This information was secured by World Watch Monitor during a meeting of the Nigerian Churches represented by their leaders for the first time to address violence in the northern part of Nigeria. The churches were united under the umbrella of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). In order to address the terrorist attacks of Christians by Boko Haram in the north, a five-point document presented after the meeting called upon the Government of Nigeria to intervene. The meeting was held at the Christian Centre Abuja (*World Watch Monitor*, 22 February 2016).

Quampan, Langtang North, Langtang South, and Wase (Modibbo 2012:4). Figure 5.4 presents a map of Plateau State showing the seventeen local governments.

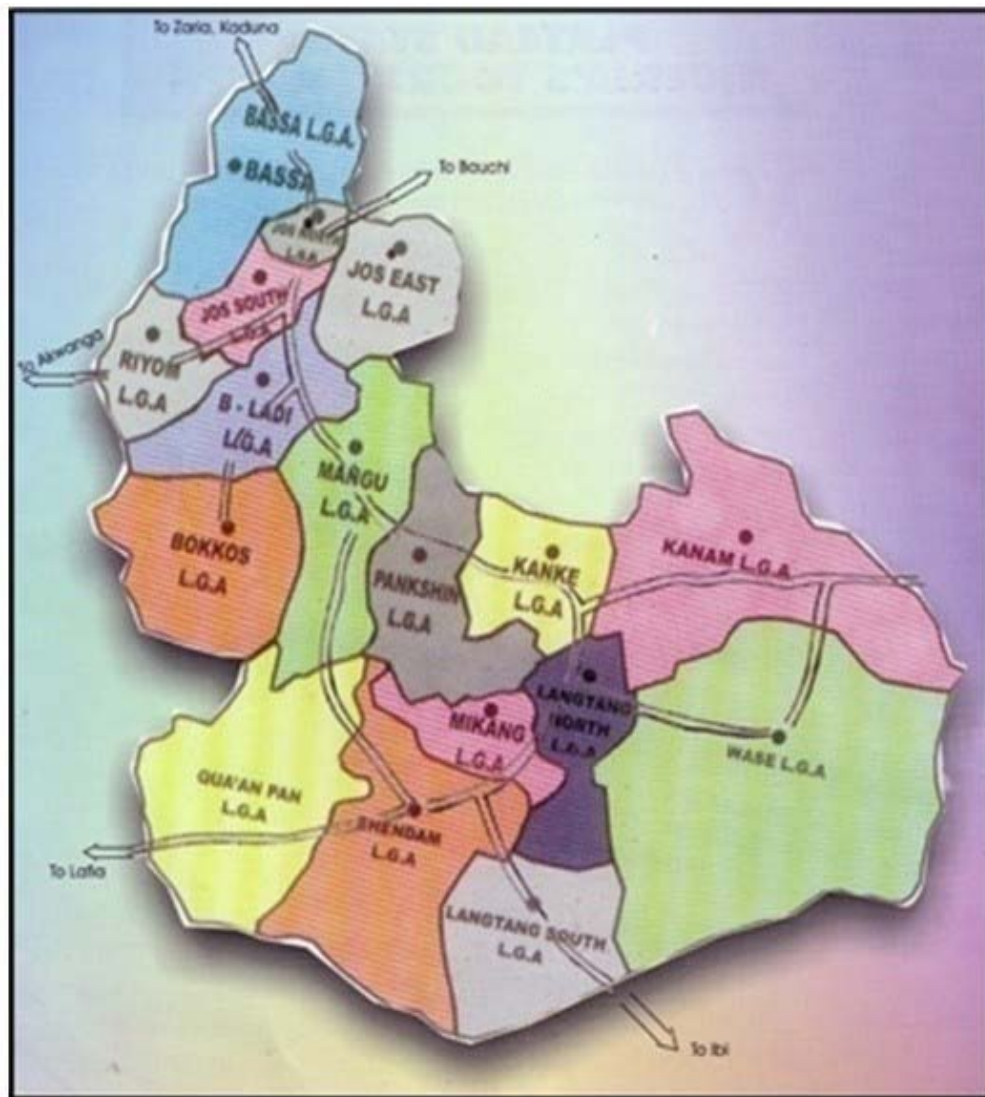


Figure 5.4. Map of Plateau State showing the seventeen Local Governments (Source: Nigerian Muse 2016)

According to Modibbo (2012:4), the Hausa language of the Muslim Hausa/Fulani in Plateau State is widely spoken and the names of the villages and towns were strategically changed from indigenous to Hausa names. This phenomenon cuts across the entire Local Government Areas making the context a complex socio-political entity. While highlighting the violence in Jos, Modibbo (2012:4) has identified the multi-religious and socio-political nature of Plateau State as a key contributing factor. The different ethnic group seek control over their local resources, political appointments,

and social amenities. However, their special interest pursuits run against the interests of the common good and these constitute factors that create violence within the society. In addition to the threats to peace caused by religious divisions, the question of who is qualified to be legally identified as an indigene of Jos is contested and this also contributes to outbreaks of violence in Plateau State, especially in places where Muslim Hausa-Fulani are predominant (Modibbo 2012:4). They perceive some of the people living in their context as migrants who do not qualify to belong and use the benefits of their state. Higazi (2011:14) has argued that although the violence has religious connotations in the central plateau, the causal factors must be expanded to include unresolved ethnic, economic, political and religious issues. According to Higazi (2011:15), this re-naming strategy constitutes part of the steps taken by the Muslim Hausa/Fulani group to dominate other ethnic groups within Plateau State because they were traditionally favoured by the previous colonial system against the other ethnic groups. Other factors cited for the religious and ethnic violence in Plateau State include the sporadic attacks by members of the Boko Haram sect whose ideology denounces Western education that has shaped the Nigerian educational strategy (Higazi 2011:15). The negative impact of violence from 2001-2010 has resulted in the physical and psychological destruction of both lives and properties. According to the Higazi study on violence in Plateau State:

19 000 men and more than 17 000 women and 17 000 children had been killed during 32 months of retaliatory violence between Christians and Muslims- 53 787 deaths in all... people have been forced to flee their homes as a result of the violence in Plateau State. About 25 000 houses had been razed to the ground and some 1 300 herds of cattle had been slaughtered during the battle (2011:17).

The triumphalist evangelising paradigm of the European missionary engagement within the pluralistic context of Jos has also played a negative part in the promotion of divisions between the different religious groups based upon their claim of proclaiming a superior faith. This 'better than the other' approach by the missionaries indirectly contributed to fuelling the phenomenon of intolerance that contributes to violence.

The context of Plateau State provides the background towards understanding the violence taking place in Jos. This is because the context of Jos is pluralistic in nature, being composed of multiple religions, ethnic groups, languages and cultures (Adams

2011:3). The quest for economic, political and religious control by the different ethnic groups, indigenous Christians and the Muslim Hausa/Fulani presents a complexity that threatens the maintenance of peace. Although there were attempts by both government and church institutions to respond to the violence, insignificant progress has been made. An understanding of the systemic and symbolic violent context of Jos thus necessitates an African symbolic hermeneutical critique of the COCIN's missional understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory to ascertain whether it has offered a life-giving response to the violence in Jos.

5.4. An overview of the context of Jos

Bevans (2002:4) has stated that, "there has never been a genuine theology that is articulated in an Ivory tower with no reference to or dependence on the events and the thought forms or the culture of its particular place and time." Based on this hypothesis, the missional understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced within the COCIN has engaged with the context of Jos in order to overcome the threat to life. The African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework used in this present study seeks to incarnate the doctrine of the atonement through the COCIN's missional identity to dialogue with the violent context of Jos.

Danfulani and Fwatshak (2006:243) have attributed the influx of people into Jos from other parts of the country to the cool weather conditions as well as the tradition of peaceful co-existence between the different ethnic groups that Jos has been known for. The devolvement of its economy in 1915 was due to tin mining, it becoming a transportation centre for mining industries within the country (Higazi, 2011:1). Geographically, Jos is situated on a pear-shaped plateau, characterised by diverse landforms and landscape and because of its humidity and average rainfall attracts a lot of people from other states of the country (Danfulani 2006:2).

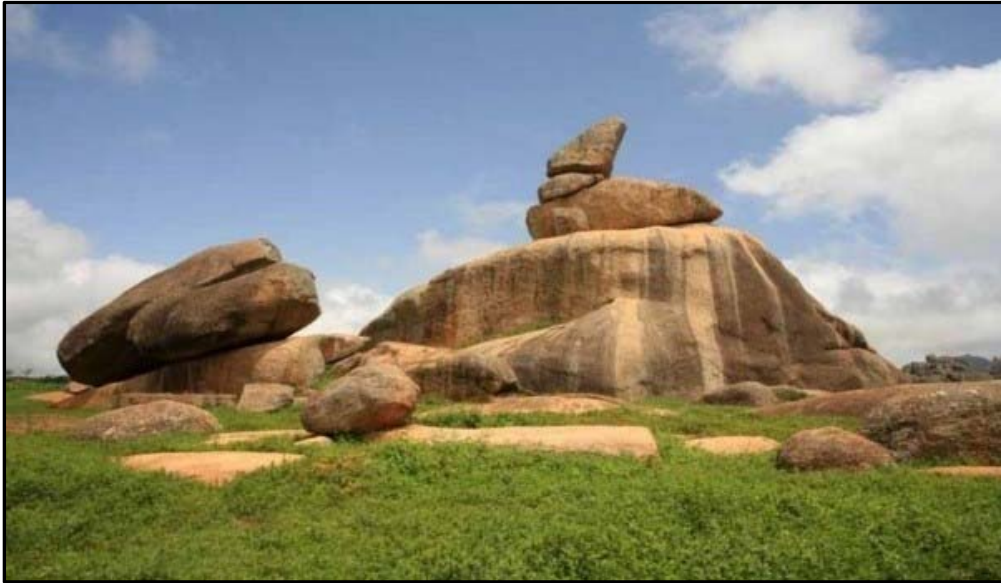


Figure 5.5. A photograph of a typical geological formation in Jos (Source: My Destination 2017)

The natural resources of good weather conditions, tin mining, excellent average rainfall, and good land for grazing, has transformed Jos into a metropolitan centre that attracts diverse migrants. This phenomenon resulted in rising tensions between the peoples as they competed for political and economic benefits (Modibbo 2001:57). In terms of numerical strength, the Christian population constitute the majority (50%), followed by the Muslim Hausa/Fulani (45%) who mostly migrated from the North and North Eastern part of the country for tin mining and grazing purposes (Danfulani 2006:2). The Anaguta, Berom and Afizere ethnic groups, along with minor groups such as the Amo and Buji resisted the invasion of the Islamic Jihad of Othman Dan Fodio during the pre-colonial era (Kwaja 2014:57). These ethnic groups are usually referred to as indigenes, while the Yoruba, Igbo, the Hausa Fulani are referred to as settlers. As a result of competing identities and migratory movements, religious, ethnic, cultural and social contacts and tensions have developed between the indigenous people and the immigrant populations (Modibbo 2001:57). The complexity associated with the socio-economic tensions arising from uncontrolled immigration has also resulted in religio-cultural consequences because immigrants who travel with their religious experience and institutions. Human Right Watch (2013:38) draws attention to the claims by the indigenes and the settlers concerning ownership of the land where Jos is currently situated as a key source for the ongoing threats to peace within the context.

To adequately set the stage for the African symbolic hermeneutical examination of the missional understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory by the COCIN, attention must be given to interrogating those religio-cultural factors which shape the context of Jos.

5.4.1. The religio-cultural setting of Jos

The religio-cultural context of Jos can be understood through the religions and cultures of the diverse ethnic groups within Jos. Rengshwat (2013) has argued that the religio-cultural context of Jos stemmed from the diversity of religious groupings in Jos and how their differing ideological features shaped the behaviours of its adherents. The multiplicity of ethnic groups in Jos and the different beliefs, values and symbolic cultural experience of each of these groups further complicates the religio-cultural context of Jos (2013:70). The subsequent development of Jos into a metropolitan city in North Central Nigeria, resulted in the city becoming favourably disposed and conducive to the establishment and practice of Christianity and Islam (Higazi, 2011:5). Seth Nden, former General Secretary of the COCIN has stated that the religio-cultural context of Jos was further complicated when Islam and the Hausa/Fulani cultures were introduced among people of different cultures (2013:39). Following the rapid growth of Christianity in Jos, Wika (2011:55) has singled out the COCIN among other denominations that have experienced numerical and spiritual growth in Jos with its branches present in Nigeria and other African countries.



Figure 5.6. The COCIN Headquarters located in Jos (Source: *Light Bearer* 2016).

The COCIN's understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory as argued by this present study necessitates a missio-cultural conversation through an African

symbolic hermeneutical framework to respond to the forces of alienation that threaten peace through the use of violence to exercise power that benefits the privileged groups in Jos.

While projecting the religio-cultural nature of Jos, Higazi (2011:6) has argued that due to the influx of Muslims from the Northern part of Nigeria, orthodox Islamic sects were attracted to Jos. One of these is the *Izala: Jama'atu Izalat al-Bidi'a Wa Iqamat al-sunna* which translated means, "the Association for Suppressing Innovations and Restoring the 'Sunna.'" While this religious sect seeks to preserve the practice of Islam that goes back to its ancient roots, their method of evangelisation accommodates the use of force to compel converts (Higazi 2011:6-7). Alongside the practice of Islam, Christianity found a strong base because the missionaries made the city of Jos their headquarters to evangelise the surrounding areas of the Central North.

While most of the peoples in the central plateau who were adherents of ATR resisted conversion to other religions, some became Christians and this transformed Jos into a Christian-majority populated city (Higazi 2011:6). The mass conversion of the people from ATR to Christianity could be attributed to compatibility and contextual attempts to engage the Christian message with the culture through the work of the indigenous missionaries. As a result of the speedy growth of Christianity and Islam in Jos, Higazi (2011:6) has shown how religious competition and fundamentalism emerged among both religions and how this was expressed through their triumphalist utterances during open air preaching. Likewise, Mwadkwon has stated:

Given the pluralistic nature of Jos, members of the two main religions in the city, Christianity and Islam, have intimidated each other's adherents as well other citizens of the town. Practical examples are the blocking of major roads during the Sunday services of the Christians and the Friday prayers of the Muslims. The mounting of loudspeakers to proclaim religious teachings and in the process make provocative statements in order to oppose or antagonise the religion of other community is a common phenomenon (2001:60).

The religio-cultural undercurrents of Jos according to Gopin (2002:5) can best be explained in the light of a person's behaviour and perceptions shaped by their religious norms and values. Indeed, since culture is a way of life lived within a particular society,

embedded in its beliefs and values, Gopin (2002:5) argues that religion can influence the culture of people living in a particular environment.

The presence of Christianity and Islam within Jos was ultimately misused by sections of their leadership to engage in competitive activities that communicate alienation and strife that promoted intolerance of differences in their religious beliefs and values (Gopin 2002:6). For example, as Best (2007:43) asserts, the tensions between the indigenous Christians and Muslims Hausa/Fulani in Jos can best be attributed to cultural and religious difference. Accordingly, the attitude of the Muslims and Christians towards each other is shaped by their respective religious beliefs and values. The attitude of Muslim groups in particular towards resisting and conversing/dialoguing with other groups towards peacebuilding measures is because of their monotheistic framework of maintaining strict religious beliefs and values irrespective of the changing circumstances (Anyim 2014:8). According to Islamic and Christian religio-cultural beliefs, it is a taboo for adherents to marry each other across the religious divide. As Danfulani (2006:4) states, the religio-cultural superiority of the Hausa/Fulani against the indigenous people is expressed through the total rejection of their culture, religion and traditions. Indeed, they use derogatory words such as *arna* which translated means “infidels” to classify non-Muslim people of faith. On the other hand, the indigenous people who are majority Christians also respond with provocative non-affirming words such as *raini* which translated means “culture of belittling” (2006:5). It can be argued that the triumphal and superiority complex embedded within the language of communication of the Muslim Hausa/Fulani and the Christian indigenous people as they seek to dominate each other constitutes a fundamental factor in creating a destabilising environment that has caused the eruption of symbolic violence that threaten life in Jos.

Additionally, Eze (2014:140) has argued that for culture to find expression it must operate within a religion which in turn shapes people’s behaviours, perceptions, thinking and evaluation within a given community. Therefore, the religio-cultural complexity of the ethnic groups—whether the indigenes or settlers—finds expression through their religions and this in turn determines the quality of their coexistence. This study affirms that the exclusivity and superiority tendencies expressed through the

monotheistic faiths of Islam and Christianity in Jos are factors that give rise to the intolerance between the different ethnic groups (Anyim 2014:8-9).

According again to Eze (2014:141-142), the Igbo from the Southeast and the Yoruba from the Western part of Nigeria are among the settlers in Jos that have contributed to the religio-cultural bias and prejudices related to the civil war in Nigeria. Because of this presupposition, the Hausa/Fulani and the indigenes in Jos regard the presence of the Igbo and Yoruba as a threat to their way of life (2014:141). The issue of land in the religio-cultural setting of Jos cannot be relegated to the background either. According to Danfulani (2006:3-4), the majority of the population in Jos are Christians who view land as a God-given inheritance that should be protected for future generations. The Muslim Hausa/Fulani group also recognise the ownership of land in Jos as important because their ancestors were among the first settlers there. Hence, part of the land should be allocated to them for dry season farming and grazing. Land is also viewed as a cultural inheritance for the Berom, Afizere and the Anaguta ethnic groups who regard themselves as the real owners of Jos, whereas the Hausa/Fulani claim to the land in Jos is linked to their religious beliefs (2006:3-4). According to Eze (2014:141), the description of culture focused on values within a particular society is viewed as core in shaping individual, communal thinking and behaviour in a particular society. It is therefore pertinent to note that the religio-cultural context of Jos makes possible the utilisation of the African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework because it invites the mission of the COCIN to be in conversation with the complex nature of the diverse cultures of the peoples within Jos. The penal substitution theory of atonement that is central in the COCIN missional identity and vocation seeks through the use of theological institutions to equip key clergy leaders to become effective agents that can inculcate the teachings into the way of life of the people that can offer a more life-giving response to the systemic violence in Jos.

5.4.2. The socio-political setting of Jos

The pluralistic nature of Jos calls for an overview of the social and political life among the people of diverse ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds in order to find out if these play a role in contributing to the emergence of violence in Jos. Religion, which is a factor for social cohesion in any given society, but especially in the context of Jos,

has perpetuated rancour and exclusion of those considered not to be part of the dominant groups. According to Danfulani (2006:4), the many years spent living in Jos has not resulted in the Muslim Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo and the majority Christian indigenes becoming socially integrated. Due to religious bigotry, the Muslims have belittled the Christians on cultural and religious grounds, while the Christian indigenes express bitterness and malice which consequently has metamorphosed into violence and disquiet. For Mwadkwon (2001:60,64), although there could be social integration influenced by issues that foster mutual benefits, the anti-socialisation environment between the Muslims and the Christians within Jos can still be found in their triumphalist utterances during worship and open-air evangelism. It should also be noted that such intolerant utterances by both Christians and Muslims groups facilitate the use of violence to settle grievances because it thrives on their wild imagination of fear, hatred, menace and uproar (Kaunda, 2016:16). According to Danfulani and Fwatshak (2002), the anti-social tendencies by the indigenes of Jos is rooted in earlier attempts by Muslim groups to politically and economically conquer them during the Islamic Jihad that began in the far Northern areas of Nigeria (2001:245). Human Rights Watch, while searching for the root causes for rancour and prejudice which helped to contribute to use of violence, could conclude:

The leaders of Christian indigene groups often openly accuse the Hausa-Fulani of attempting to take over their land, “dominate” the minority groups, and impose Islam on the region. They also point to the willingness of the Hausa-Fulani to resort to violence to achieve these ends (2013:35).

The resultant contentious atmosphere between the different religions and religious groups suggests that overcoming violence through peacebuilding measures constitutes an urgent agenda item for the wellbeing of the local community (Anyim 2014:6).

Another key factor that has contributed to the destabilising environment within Jos is the past discriminatory practices of the colonial administration that laid the foundations of exclusion of the indigenes whose culture was said to be primitive in comparison to Muslim Hausa/Fulani whose emirate system was well-stratified and conducive for quick assimilation and utilisation of the colonial administrative policy of indirect rule in Northern Nigeria (Nden 2013:40).

What also informed the socio-political situation in Jos is the quest for political power and resource control which emerged on the basis of social, cultural and religious intolerance between the Muslim Hausa/Fulani and the indigenous Christians in Jos. As Anyim (2014:9) has argued, this highlights the unhealthy relationship which has developed from previous incidences that consequently reflected on the socio-political context of Jos. Politically, Jos North local government stands out as the socio-political ground for Hausa/Fulani Muslim and indigenous Christians to exercise their political control at the exclusion of others (Anyim 2014:9). The political hegemony that emerged out of the former Nigerian Military Head of State Babangida led him to partner the Jos North constituency to be in solidarity with his Muslim counterpart. However, due to political upheaval in the country that led to the structural change in governance from military rule to civilian rule, this contributed to the Muslims losing significant political positions because of the national elections (Danfulani 2006:4). The attitude of the former Nigerian president paints a corrupting picture of Nigerian politics that exploits religious institutions, leadership and affiliations to acquire and retain power within the context of Jos.

Due to weak government structures at both the national and regional level that fail to focus on the common good of the people, there has been a prevailing economic mal-development resulting in the narrowing of ethnic and religious politics among both Christians and Muslims. Therefore, selective and partisan political representation was dispensed on the basis of ethnic and religious identities. Religious and political hegemonic practices especially among indigenous Christians was normative within the local context in response to what was perceived to be an Islamic practice of religious exclusion in an attempt to marginalise the ethnic groups that reside in Jos. The socio-political complexity of Jos was further made worse by elites who because of the desire to amass political benefits used religion and ethnic affiliation for the political mobilisation for acquisition of power during national and local elections (Higazi 2011:7-8).

From the above discussion, the religio-cultural and socio-political context of Jos embodies the following characteristics:

- i. It represents a relationship that is built on religious, ethnic and cultural grounds;

- ii. It presents a contentious atmosphere consequent to unresolved conflicts;
- iii. It postures symbolic violence through an expression of animosity, prejudice, fear, hatred, and retaliatory tendencies in public and private speeches;
- iv. The substitutionary sacrifice of Christ which is supposed to express God's love for all creation (John 3:16) seems to have been replaced with unforgiveness and intolerance by Christians in Jos.

As a consequence, the retributive nuances that this study has critiqued in the penal substitution theory of the atonement seems to be revealed in the contradictory ways that the COCIN and other church denominations responded to the contentious atmosphere. Therefore, the African symbolic hermeneutical critique of the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN in the religio-cultural and socio-political context of Jos becomes relevant because it argues that this doctrine does not seem to offer a life-giving response to the symbolic and systemic violence within the local context.

5.4.3. The systemic and symbolic violence in Jos (2001-2010)

The African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical perspective used in this present study is aimed at providing a critical re-examination of the penal substitution theory of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN. Within the socio-political context of Jos, Linden (2012:2) argues that violence becomes systemic when it is widely accepted as a physical or psychological force employed to respond to a particular violence committed by a group of people. Systemic violence according to Torrance (2013:1) is a form of violence that has become part of a system within a particular community. He further argues that systemic violence can be informed by violence that features religious, ethnic, cultural, social, political connotations and mostly takes root in remote causes that have links with historically unresolved social and political conflicts (2013:1). Although these scholars describe systemic violence from different perspectives, it is nevertheless relevant to this study because the violence in Jos is linked to unresolved religious, ethnic, and political conflicts within the religio-cultural and socio-political context of Jos.

Nicolaescu (2010:10) defines symbolic violence as a particular line of thought or perception that is imposed with the intention to marginalise or dominate a person or group of persons. De Haan (2008:32) on the other hand, argues that symbolic violence is an intentional effort to perpetrate psychological harm against a person or group of persons. According to Arbuckle (2004:xiii) and Kaunda (2015:4), symbolic violence seeks to cause psychological harm by dominating through an action or failure of an action and can be expressed in language, words, idioms, and concepts. Symbolic violence as defined and described by these scholars is thus relevant to the understanding and practice of violence in Jos because of the following factors:

- i. The quest for political and ethnic recognition among ethnic groups in Jos for dominating power over other groups;
- ii. The use of dominant language to stifle the use of other languages by minority groups;
- iii. The use of toxic speeches and threatening letters to create fear and animosity aimed at undermining human dignity.

This present study also exposes how religious language can also be used to facilitate violence. For example, it can be argued that the judicial word ‘penal’ as used in the doctrine of the atonement under consideration seems to embrace symbolically-violent tendencies since it argues that Christ through the means of a violent death had to pay for the punishment of a fallen humankind. It thus depicts salvation as process that emerges out of violence. For example, as Hebrew 9:22 states, “...the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness” (NIV). Both concepts of systemic and symbolic violence are thus used interchangeably in this present study to depict different forms of violence in Jos that erupted from 2001 to 2010.

5.4.4. Highlights of the 2001 to 2010 systemic and symbolic violence in Jos

This sub-section gives its attention to identifying the forms of violence that erupted from 2001 to 2010 in Jos. It takes into account those religio-cultural and socio-political

factors that metamorphosed into violence and how they affected the lives of the inhabitants of Jos. A synopsis is also presented on how the government and the COCIN responded to the violence and whether their response facilitated peacebuilding measures.

The multi-dimensional causes of the systemic violence in Jos are rooted in a power struggle between the indigenes and the settlers in Jos over religious, ethnic, economic and political disagreements (Mwadkwon 2001:57).

The creation of Jos North and Jos South Local Government Areas by the former Nigerian Head of State, Ibrahim Babangida as pointed out earlier and the assertion of Anyim (2014:2) that the indifferent attitudes of the Muslims against the indigenes was intentionally and politically designed to favour the Hausa/Fulani who are the majority within that area. Human Rights Watch (2013:38) reported that the boundary adjustments of Jos South and Jos North were interpreted by Christian indigenous leaders as having religious and economic implications because the Hausa/Fulani dominate the capital city. In 2001, the political and ethnically-contentious raft of unresolved conflicts metamorphosed into violence when Christian youth opposed the political appointment of a Muslim as Chairperson of Jos North local government council of Plateau State because they feared the advancing Muslim influence in a political office that they perceived to be the sole prerogative of Christians (Ostien 2009:40).

The expression of violence by sections of the Christian and Muslim communities reveal that it was a symbolic form of violence since it was performed to inflict fear and domination. It can be argued that the response offered by the COCIN may have been rooted in their historical legacy of superior tendencies expressed in the Euro-centric missionary approach to Islam in North Central Nigeria (Kumm 1907:15). The empirical research conducted in Jos by Mwadkwon (2001:58) seems to suggest that the violent actions of the indigenous Christian leaders and the Christian youth constituted were driven by fear because the Hausa/Fulani had control over the economy of Jos. For Danfulani (2006:4), the violence in 2001, while driven by a quest for greater political participation, was nevertheless clothed in religious and ethnic identities. For Krause (2010:35), the violence of 2001 was due to the inability of the government of Plateau

State to engage with Christian and Muslim youth who had earlier sent threatening letters that outlined their grievances.

The cause for the violence in May 2002 was also political. The bringing of Hausa/Fulani ethnic group from another part of Plateau State for congress party elections caused much political upheaval. The Christian indigenes responded with violence that spread to Jos and its environs, causing the death of hundreds of lives and the destruction of property (Anyim 2014:4). The violence also involved people outside of Jos. According to Nicolaescu (2010:2), the use of such violence was broader than just inflicting physical pain because it was a conflict in which the marginalised minority employed the use of violence to resist being overwhelmed by the majority.

Attempts by the Muslim Hausa/Fulani to subdue the Christian indigenous people in 2002 also erupted in violence that resulted in the destruction of property with the burning down of the ultra-modern market situated in the centre of Jos. Due to unresolved conflicts and other threats by the Muslims, the Christian indigenes blamed the Hausa/Fulani ethnic group whom they accused of seeking to destroy the economic foundations (Anyim 2014:3). Similar to the political upheaval leading to the violence that erupted in Jos, two tribes in the southern part of Plateau State also engaged in violence to settle ethnic grievances which led to the declaration of a state of emergency in Plateau State by the Nigerian Federal Government (Ostien 2009:16). This form of violence was aimed not only at the physical destruction of lives and property but also undermining the social dimensions of human life in Jos.

According to Anyim (2014), at its initial stage, the violence of 2008 was interpreted as political because it was related to the political election of the Jos North local government chairperson. However, it was soon transformed by selective perpetrators into a form of religious violence. As Anyim goes on to state:

The protests led to a bloody riot which had a religious overture. People were attacked and killed based on religion and not on party basis (no party or electoral office was burnt but places of worship were burnt and clerics killed). This sent signals that the crisis had already being planned and expected (2014:5).

The burning of places of worship as described above indicates the manner in which both the Christians and Muslims responded to violence in Jos. The COCIN is the fastest growing church in Jos and it therefore calls into question the extent to which its missional identity and witness as expressed through its understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the atonement serves as a peacebuilding strategy to overcome violence in Jos. Krause (2010:36) reported that Christian and Muslim Youth confronted each other as they tried to exercise power over the other. The ringing of church bells and the Muslim's call to prayer were interpreted and used by adherents to engage in active resistance against those groups that they considered their competitors. For Obaje and Uzodike (2013:1), the participation of youth in the violence was not unified because some exacerbated the problem while others sought to prevent it. Both Christian and Muslim youth were part of those groups that escalated the violence.

The violence that took place in January 2010 was an expression of those grievances carried over from past conflicts between the migrants and indigenes. Generally, the cause of the violence according to Higazi (2011:15) was due to the quest for control over grazing and farm land which was systematically seized from the settlers by the indigenes. The violence in 2010 also had political and ethnic tendencies. Due to the high level of corruption among law enforcement agents, opponents were illegally allowed to possess weapons that became a threat to the lives of the people. Characterised by an influx of local and foreign supporters linked to both the Christian and Muslim groups within Jos, the 2010 violence recorded mass killings of ordinary people that gained its support from the religious and ethnic differences among the indigenes and the settlers (2011:1-5).

An overview of the violence from 2001 to 2010 and its religious, ethnic and political notes can be understood on the basis of unresolved differences between the land rights of settlers and those that considered themselves as indigenes in Jos. Mwadkwon (2001:57) asserts that different cultural and religious beliefs between the ethnic groups nursed a certain bitterness and lack of respect that metamorphosed into systemic violence.

The contention between the Christian indigenous people and the Muslim Hausa/Fulani as explained in chapter two above was attributed to the complexity of the colonial

administrative rule that favoured the Hausa/Fulani over the indigenes whose way of life was considered primitive and uncivilised. Furthermore, the indifferent attitude of the indigenes towards the colonial administration as to their refusal to serve them at the Tin mining industry also contributed in no small measure to the colonial preferential treatment of the Hausa/Fulani immigrants from the North (Danfulani and Fwatshak 2002:245).

Within the violence from 2001 to 2010, the dominate factor remained the conflicts regarding land claims between the indigenes themselves that caused enmity among their elites and other members of the ethnic groups (Danfulani and Fwatshak 2002:245:246).

Following the handing over of the church administration of the COCIN to the indigenous clergy leadership, the church grew numerically among the Berom, Anaguta and Afizere ethnic groups. The members of the COCIN form the majority of the Christians within Jos (Goshit, 2013:293-294). Accordingly, any response to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos bears a large responsibility on the COCIN members. The African symbolic hermeneutical critique of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement within the COCIN is important because it must eschew the legacy in which the understanding and practice of the doctrine of the atonement as practiced by the COCIN seems to express retributive nuances in its missional response to the violence.

5.5. The impact of systemic and symbolic violence in Jos

This present study has argued that the utilisation of the African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework as the perspective to interrogate the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced within the COCIN has resulted in the facilitation of systemic and symbolic violence or/and served as a conduit for peacebuilding within Jos. Kwaja sets the stage by reflecting on the peaceful co-existence Jos had experienced in the past and how it had become a centre of tourist attraction within Nigeria and abroad. However, the devastating impact of violence due to ethnic and religious tensions affected its rate of economic development (Kwaja 2010:1). Through research conducted in Jos North and Jos South, Yaks (2010:1) postulated the negative impact of the violence on children who have grown up in an environment of war, rivalry, hatred,

discrimination and fear. The resultant psychological impact has adversely affected the children's perception, relationships and feelings of intolerance against other religious and members of other ethnic groups.

The above discourse has outlined how the violence in Jos mutated from violence that centred on the physical destruction of lives and property, to a violence that symbolically imposed an indelible attitude of animosity and negative perceptions among warring communities.

In a speech given in 2004, the former Nigerian President Obasanjo addressed the impact that violence was having in Jos:

Violence has reached unprecedented level and hundreds have been killed with much wounded and displaced from their homes on the account of their ethnic or religious identification schooling for children has been disrupted, business have lost billions of naira and property worth much more destroyed (Yilyap nd:4).

Apart from the loss of lives, people became destitute, this having an adverse effect on children's education which symbolically affects future generations. The continuation of violence over the following ten-year period poses difficult questions on the kinds of measures taken by the federal government to resolve the problem.

In a research conducted among schools of higher learning in Jos, in 2013 Jacob (2015:2) affirms that one of the impacts of violence was the falling standard of education and the movement of students and lecturers seeking safety. The people that felt threatened by the violence in Jos where they had experienced peaceful coexistence living with other peoples as they moved into new settlement areas where they lived among their own ethnic groups based on religious and political identities (2015:1). Human Rights Watch (2013:13) also reported that the movement and settlement of people who were directly affected by the violence was due to religious and ethnic differences within the society and fear of attack by unknown persons and groups. Settlement areas were developed for deeply conservative religious and ethnic groups that transformed the community 'no go areas' in Jos. For example, the community of Angwan Rogo in Jos is a Muslim-dominated settlement where Christians do not go for fear of being kidnapped or even killed. Although Christian settlement areas were also classified as 'no go' areas, they

were not as strict in allowing persons of other faiths to participate in their community life as that of Muslim-dominated settlements (Human Rights Watch, 2015:1). The restriction of movement of both Christians and Muslims due to the violence in Jos represents a contentious scenario that may still breed hatred and fear of being attacked by opponents.

The unrestrained slaughter of men, women and children in the villages and towns such as the attack on the Christians in Dogo Na Hawa Village was alleged to be reprisal attack against that previously launched on Muslims at Kuru Karama village on the outskirts of Jos. Over two hundred people men, women and children were slaughtered. Figure 5.7 is a photograph showing the mass burial of those killed in Dogo Na Hawa in Jos.



Figure 5.7. Victims of attack lying in mass grave in Dogo Na Hawa village in Jos
(Source: Human Rights Watch 2011).

It can be argued that the massive slaughter of people in Dogo Na Hawa possessed a strong element of religious prejudice since it was an alleged reprisal attack. For example, as Kwaja has stated:

The attack set the stage for the Jan 17, 2010, violence when the....
Christians invaded a Fulani settlement (Muslim herdsman allied with the

Hausa) in nearby Kuru-Jenta, in which... gunmen murdered and three Fulani corpse into wells. Fulani bands staged reprisal attacks on 7 and 17, despite a dusk-to-dawn curfew in the targeted villages of Dogo Na Hawa (2010:3).

The mass killings seem to represent a retaliatory response involving Christians and Muslims. Although the attacks and killing of Christians by the Hausa/Fulani ethnic group could be alarming as pointed out earlier, the understanding and practice of the substitutionary atonement among Christians warranted a nonviolent and non-retaliatory way of resisting evil.

The impact of the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos and how the ethnic and religious groups responded to the violence posits the need to explore other ways that can better respond to the threats in Jos. It is for this reason, that the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective of the present study focuses on a missio-cultural re-examination of the penal substitution theory of the atonement as held within the COCIN and to stimulate a more life-affirming approach towards the COCIN's missional identity and vocation to engage with the religio-cultural experience of the people in Jos in order to promote peace.

5.6. Plateau State Government's response to the violence in Jos

The utilisation of the military and police force in peacebuilding was assumed to be the first response by the government to the violence in Jos. However, it was proved abortive due to religious, ethnic and political sentiments. The military and police force were accused to have sided with their religious counterparts to fight the other. Furthermore, as a result of the influx of firearms and counterfeit uniforms within the warring points, the military and police lost credibility among warring communities (Krause 2010:49).

The report of Human Rights Watch on the Plateau State government response to the violence in Jos, state instances where the government seems to have failed in its responsibility:

The governor of Plateau State came under fierce criticism for inaction and negligence before and during the crisis. In particular, he was criticised for traveling abroad just one week before the crisis, at a time when tension had already risen to dangerous level and when the

governor returned half way through the crisis. They have played down the violence including the number of victims. They reacted after the fact and mismanaged situation (2010:20).

The state bears full responsibility in its response to the violence in Jos even when some of the law enforcement agents functioned professionally in their duty to serve and protect the people. However, due to the weakness of the regional state government, Danfulani and Fwatshak (2002:252) note that the federal government had to intervene and declare a state of emergency on the Plateau State government in order to gain military control over the spread of violence that was out of the control of the local police services. This bold step came about following the visit of the former Nigerian president to the area to assess first-hand from leaders how best to respond (Krause 2010:21). Commissions of enquiry into the violence in Jos and its environs were appointed as a method by the state administrator in partnership with the Plateau State political stakeholders, security and religious leaders working towards peacebuilding. Unfortunately, no tangible achievement was recorded (Higazi 2011:31). Danfulani (2006:6) attributes the failure of the ten judicial commissions of enquiry aimed at peacebuilding in Jos to the inability of the state government to arrest and charge the perpetrators of the violence and to try them in the judicial system where if found guilty they could be sentenced.¹⁶ The warring groups within the local context failed to cooperate with the government but rather protected the wrongdoers within their different communities and ensured that they were not handed over to the authorities to be prosecuted. Higazi (2011:31) has argued that the recommendations from the commission of enquiry seemed to exacerbate the violence rather than building bridges of peace. While analysing the responses to the violence, Danfulani and Fwatshak

¹⁶Attempts by the Plateau State government to resolve the crisis and build the broken walls of peace in Jos was prompted by the need to constitute the following ten Judicial Commissions of enquiries for peace building. The first four judicial commissions of inquiry into communal clashes in Wase, Langtang, Shendam and Quanpan Local Government Councils were all headed by Justice Jummai Sankey in May 2001. The fifth was the Justice Niki Tobi Judicial Commission of Inquiry the dark disturbance of Friday 7th to 14th September 2001. The sixth was the Justice C. Okpene, Federal Judicial Commission of Inquiry into communal clashes in Jos and other state in 2002. The seventh was the Rev. Pandang Yamsat high-powered Committee on Peace and Security in Plateau in 2002. The eighth was the private initiative on Southern Senatorial District of Plateau State headed by Alhaji Shehu Idris in 2002. The ninth was the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the violence in Southern part of Plateau State headed by Justice Felicia Dusu in 2003. The tenth was the Presidential Peace Initiative Committee on Plateau State headed by Alhaji Shehu Idris, Emir of Zazzau in May 2004 (Danfulani 2006:6).

(2002:254-255) have argued that the Plateau State government through the recommendations of the commissions only succeeded in creating fear, lack of trust and grave suspicion between Christians and Muslims especially when they were asked to block roads leading to their places of worship as a measure for responding to the violence. Such a response seems to manifest symbolic violence since it seems to impose thoughts and imaginations of hatred as explained above.

Other social activities involving youth from different religious and ethnic groups were explored by government, yet due to the deep religious and ethnic sentiments it did not yield any significant result. Dialogues and workshops sponsored by the local and international community were held as part of the effort to initiate peacebuilding, yet the atmosphere remained contentious (Krause 2010:45-47).

Among theories postulated as part of the initiative for peacebuilding in Jos, this present study employed the theories advanced by Anyim (2014:7-14):

- i. The first theory identified the denial of basic human rights within a given community as a key cause for the violence in Jos. This theory is relevant to the context of Jos because the absence of basic human rights resulted in the dehumanising of the most vulnerable and this triggers a violent response.
- ii. Anyim postulated a second theory which he termed a relational theory, which he applied to the peacebuilding process that takes root in the cultural, religious and social values common to the various groups within the context.
- iii. The third theory that Anyim advocates to facilitate peacebuilding is the instrumental theory which states that for effective peacebuilding to take place within any society, religion should not be politicised by the leaders that corrupts it into functioning as an instrument for ethnic and political control.

It can be argued that these three theories seem to derive from the various factors and experiences of the people within the violent context in addition to the religious and cultural experiences that shaped the people's behaviour and response to threats that deny fullness of life.

5.7. Synopsis of the COCIN response to the violence in Jos

This section briefly highlights the COCIN's response to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos and to ascertain whether its understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the atonement has helped in peacebuilding and overcoming violence. As pointed out earlier, Jos over the years has become a centre for mission work within the landscape of the Plateau State and through the influx of missionaries and the introduction of Christianity in the Central North area after its rejection in the far North Region of the country by the colonial administrators seeking to appease the dominant Muslim conservative leaders that had significant political influence over the population. However, in the Central North area, the COCIN is the "oldest and perhaps largest Christian denomination in Plateau State with branches in almost all the states of Nigeria" (Wika 2011:3).

The Roman Catholic, Bishop Kaigama, of Jos who was one of the inter-religious committee members for peacebuilding argued that religious leaders and lead institutions should give more emphasis to practical works that improve the lives of people than limiting their ministry to simply preaching and teaching. He also emphasised that the church should address the presence of corruption within its own community before it can challenge other religious communities and within the government (Krause, 2010:56).

The comments of the Roman Catholic Bishop as a leader of the ecumenical community suggest that the ecclesial community embraced a schizophrenic missional identity in which the preaching of the good news advocated by the ministry and mission of Jesus failed to reconcile with how its life and work should be practiced among the people. This was especially visible in their response to the threat of violence within Jos. Its teachings on the finished work of Christ which taught love and respect for all life irrespective of a person's identity and affiliations does not match with its mission action. According to Uzodike and Obaje (2013:14) the church also failed to engage with the government when it used violence against the Ogoni people. As for the church's attitude towards violence, it could be argued that a retaliatory attitude on the part of the Christian leaders contributed to the legacy of intolerance, particularly the COCIN

clergy leaders, could be attributed to the missionaries' triumphalist approaches to proclaiming the Christian message against Islam.

Another example that demonstrates the church's attitude towards the violence in Jos as described by Uzodike and Obaje (2013:41) involved Christians and Muslims that engaged in reprisal attack against each other. The Christian youth burned shops, houses, Mosques and headquarters of one of the Islamic sects in retaliation to an attack by the Muslims against Christians. According to Human Rights Watch (2013:42), the indifferent attitude of a Christian woman towards the Muslims during one of their worship sessions resulted to her death and in retaliation the Christians attacked Muslims within Jos. Human Rights Watch (2013:42) also reported that in the southern part of Plateau State, Christian men retaliated against the Muslims for the killing of Christians in one of the COCIN churches. Muslim women and children were abducted and some of the women raped and killed. In response to the violence that erupted in Dogo Na Hawa that resulted to the killing of many Christians, the Christians of Kuru Karama, a COCIN-dominated area, attacked the Muslims and killed many of them. In another violent outbreak that erupted in Dutse Uku in Jos, where the majority of the people are Afizere Christians, Higazi (2011:24) points out that before the violence Christians were seen in a group chanting, "come out and fight for Jesus." To them, fighting Muslims was also fighting for Jesus.

The response of the members of the COCIN to the use of violence against others in Jos suggests that their understanding and practice of the finished work of Christ is restricted to meeting their inner ecclesial needs and does not extend to offering hospitality to those considered to be enemies. This warped understanding of the penal substitution theory of the atonement seems to be an intolerant legacy of the COCIN's Euro-centric missionary evangelisation strategy that was rooted in combating the scourge of Islam and the slave trade in Northern Nigeria (Nden 2013:50). It is for this reason there is urgency for the emergence of an African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework to a missio-cultural critique of the penal substitution theory of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN that plays a central role in the faith formation of the members and leaders of the church. The ways in which this doctrine was transplanted and transmitted in the missional identity of the COCIN seems to incorporate baggage of retaliatory tendencies against those who oppose the church and

its Christian message of salvation in Christ. This inherent contradiction within the COCIN calls for contextual theological reflections on African cultural symbols that can better interpret and transmit the finished work of Christ through dialogue with the people's cultural experiences within Jos.

5.8. Chapter summary

This chapter described the multi-ethnic, religious, political and cultural nature of Nigeria and how it has been misused to facilitate violence that erupted in some parts of the country. An overview was also presented on how the Nigerian government and the church responded to violence. The Plateau State of which Jos is its capital city was discussed taking into account the multi-ethnic and cultural diversity which often resulted in conflicts breaking out. The chapter also captured the weakness of the State government as part of what had aggravated the violence. Since this present study is focused on Jos as its context, this chapter also highlighted the religio-cultural, socio-political and systemic and symbolic violence in the city. This chapter examined the role of the Nigerian law enforcement agencies, the Judicial Commission of Inquiry and the initiatives taken by private organisations as part of their contribution towards peacebuilding. The chapter concluded that the government at both the National and State levels along with the church failed to offer a life-giving response to the violence in Jos. It therefore posits that the African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework employed in this study becomes relevant since it critiques the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN and posits an alternative cultural symbol used by the Pyem people as a more meaningful phenomenon for local people to understand and practice the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement to equip the COCIN in order that it may offer a more life-giving response to the systemic violence taking place within Jos.

CHAPTER SIX

THE COSMOLOGICAL SETTING OF THE PYEM ETHNIC GROUP

6.1. Introduction

This chapter gives attention to the cosmological setting of the Pyem ethnic group of Plateau, Nigeria. It gives a brief overview of the Pyem people taking into consideration their geographical location and how conflicts were resolved at various levels of community life. It also highlights what constitutes the Pyem religio-cultural experience that gave rise to the notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* which this study utilises as a medium through which the penal substitution theory can be expressed in the context of violence. It draws attention to the symbolic expression of the male goat with regards to how conflicts are resolved between Pyem warring communities. It argues that because of the viability of the symbolic expression of the male goat, it has the capacity to serve as a medium through which the penal substitution theory can be expressed within the context of Jos. The chapter concludes by calling upon the missional identity of the COCIN to engage with the peoples of the diversified ethnic groups in Jos to seek compatible African and cultural symbols that can better express the COCIN's ecclesiastical doctrine.

6.2. A brief historical background of the Pyem ethnic group

The word “*pyem*” came from the root word “*pya*” which translated means “Earth.” In reference to the ethnic group, Pyem stands for “the people of the land.” It also stands for the language of the people. The word Pyem also represents “Ba-Pyem” for the people and Di-Pyem for language. Di-Pyem stands for the way the people communicate ideas, feelings, request and knowledge (Daspan 2002:1). From this nomenclature, it can be deduced that Pyem referred to an African ethnic group which expresses ideas, requests and knowledge through its own distinctive language and culture. The language of the Pyem and other ethnic groups within Jos and particularly in the African context serves as a medium for transmitting information on matters that concern social, religious and cultural aspects of the people (Blench 2010:1). The language within this

cosmology constitutes an integral part of their cultural experience as to how they express themselves in times of prosperity and adversity. Finally, as migrants from the far northern part of Nigeria and having experienced the Islamic Jihad by Othman Dan Fodio, they have experienced the tragedy of both systemic and symbolic violence (Blench, 2010:1).

Alfred Daspan's contribution to the cosmology highlighted that the Pyem ethnic group migrated from the ethnic of Gobir, one of the Hausa ethnic groups in Sokoto in Nigeria. The people of Gobir were known as those who expounded their territories through war. But Othman Dan Fodio, an Islamic fundamentalist group threatened Gobir with war, but the general of the Gobir army who was not ready to engage in war, armed himself with other people from Gobir and journeyed through Bauchi and subsequently settled in the rocks and caves in a village known as Pyemdere—presently in Gindiri, Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State (Daspan, 2002:3). It can be argued that the choice of settling in the rocks, caves and on the edge of the hills was born out of the consciousness of their past experience of the Othman Dan Fodio's Jihad which led to their migration and the need to be proactive to possible threats from neighbouring ethnic groups.

The Pyem ethnic group is popularly known for their hospitality and tolerance. This is evident in the way they accommodated many other ethnic groups within the Plateau State (Temple 1965:120). In his contribution to the history of the church among the ethnic group, Machunga 1964) has noted that due to their hospitality, tolerance and love, they welcomed and received the missionaries under the SUM who founded the COCIN. The evidence of their acts of benevolence was that they freely gave a very large portion of land to the missionaries to establish missionary institutions of learning (1964). The missionary schools founded included: Demonstration Primary School; Gindiri Theological Seminary; Boys Secondary School; Girl's High School; Gindiri Teachers College (now the COCIN Comprehensive Collage); School for the Blind Children, and Gindiri Material Centre for the physically challenged persons (Bitrus 2013:138-153).

Description of the cosmological setting of the Pyem ethnic group will not be complete without a synopsis on the advent of Christianity into Gindiri. Subsequent to the decision

by the SUM missionaries to establish schools to train indigenous evangelists, Gindiri was selected as the most appropriate context due to its geographical and temperate weather conditions. Citing Mr H. G. Farant, one of the pioneering missionaries Nanwul Gutip can write:

We wanted a cool climate for the Europeans, and too cold for the Africans, fertile and well wooded to provide scope for students to farm, accessible by motor, central to other ethnic groups. It was aimed at serving, surrounded by whom were pagans but speak Hausa for the evangelistic work of the students (1998).

The requirements as spelled by the missionaries are part of what characterised the geographical location of Gindiri, the land of the Pyem ethnic group. As was noted above, because of the hospitality and tolerance of the Pyem in Gindiri, the land that was needed for the establishment of the schools was given free of charge. The welcome and hospitality offered to the missionaries stemmed from the religious and cultural adage *Do ta chalai ram*, which translated means, “humanity is more important than land.” Through this humanitarian gesture, Christianity was introduced among the people of Gindiri. The majority of the Pyem people are COCIN members.

Writing on the challenge of church growth, Salome Luxman (2016:11-13) explains how despite the many challenges faced by the COCIN Regional Church Council (RCC) in Gindiri, the church has experienced significant growth among the Pyem ethnic group. The RCC Gindiri is now a regional and a provincial church council in the COCIN. Due to the influence of Islam from the northern part of Nigeria, many of the Pyem people have embraced Islam. Diche (1991) has noted that despite the religious differences among the Pyem ethnic group, for more than hundred years they have lived harmoniously. It can be argued that the respect they accord each other was not only on the basis of faith, but due to their African religio-cultural experience of what Harvey Sindima (1995) describes as a “social bondedness” enshrined in respect for human dignity more than land.

The hospitality and tolerance of the Pyem people stemmed from their religio-cultural understanding that everything comes from God, the Supreme Being. Having understood that humanity is from God, human beings must be respected more than land or any inanimate creation (Bida 16 November 2017). The symbolic religio-cultural experience

of the Pyem people according to Daspan (2002:3) is rooted in their tolerance and love for all that has out of their cultural adage *Do ta chalai ram*, which translated means, “humanity is more important than land” (2002:3). The symbolic understanding of the cultural experience of the Pyem people seems to have empowered the people to resist threats that deny fullness of life. As with other African people, the Pyem people perceive religion in functionalist terms as being at the service of humanity to help realise abundant life (Magesa 1998). Through the African symbolic hermeneutical Pyem understanding of humanity, this present study seeks to postulate an African-informed conception of the penal substitution theory of the atonement that can equip the COCIN to contribute towards peacebuilding that overcomes the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

Although there is more to the religio-cultural representation of the Pyem people contained within the notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* than is reflected in this present study, it can nevertheless be shown that the hospitality and love expressed within the cultural experience of the people was apparent even before the coming of Christianity in the locality. Indeed, they had cultural symbols that better expressed the life-affirming meaning of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement that speaks of the substitutionary death of Christ as love and tolerance (John 3:16) than from the understanding that emphasises punishment and retribution (Weaver 2013:47). The hospitality and love offered to people of other ethnic groups within Plateau State and abroad by the Pyem ethnic group describes how this resonates with God’s instruction to the Israelites on how they should respond to strangers (Deuteronomy 10:19). Orobator (2015:3-4) contends that faith is how people respond to God’s self-revelation and the impact it has on their cultural imaginations. He further holds that faith can best be expressed through people’s experiences that emanate from their religious, social, and cultural lives (2015:3-4). In the light of this, the dialogue between the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN within the religio-cultural experience of tolerance and love by the Pyem ethnic group becomes relevant. Due to its compatibility with the God’s mission of love for all, the doctrine under consideration can be expressed towards helping the COCIN offer a more life-giving response to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

6.3. Geographical location

The Pyem ethnic group according to Higazi (2010:2) is one of the 31 ethnic groups in Plateau State (2011:4). Gindiri is the main settlement and seat of the Sum Pyem “The Royal Highness” of the traditional council within the chiefdom. The name Gindiri is an offshoot of the root word in *Pyem Gyaringring* which translated means, “the town with multiple tribes.” Blench (2010:1) states that the Pyem people live in the south-eastern encampment of Jos, while Mwaghavul in the south and west, Kadung in the west plateau, Sayawa in the east and the Berom ethnic group of Barkin Ladi Local Government Area in the North of Jos. The name *Gyaringring* which translated means, “The town of multiple tribes” emerged as a result of the migration of other tribes from Plateau State, Bauchi, Kano and Sokoto States of Nigeria. The multiple tribes that settled among the Pyem in Gindiri have been attributed to their acts of hospitality and tolerance. This act is born out of the religio-cultural experience which is expressed through an adage *Do ta chalai ram* which translated means, “humanity is more important than land” (Bida 16 November 2017). Following the preference accorded to humanity as expressed in this adage, it reveals how compatible the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group is in expressing the penal substitution theory that speaks of tolerance and love irrespective of a person’s religious or cultural affiliation. Figure 6.1. is a geographical map of Gindiri showing the settlements that gave it the name Gyaringring.

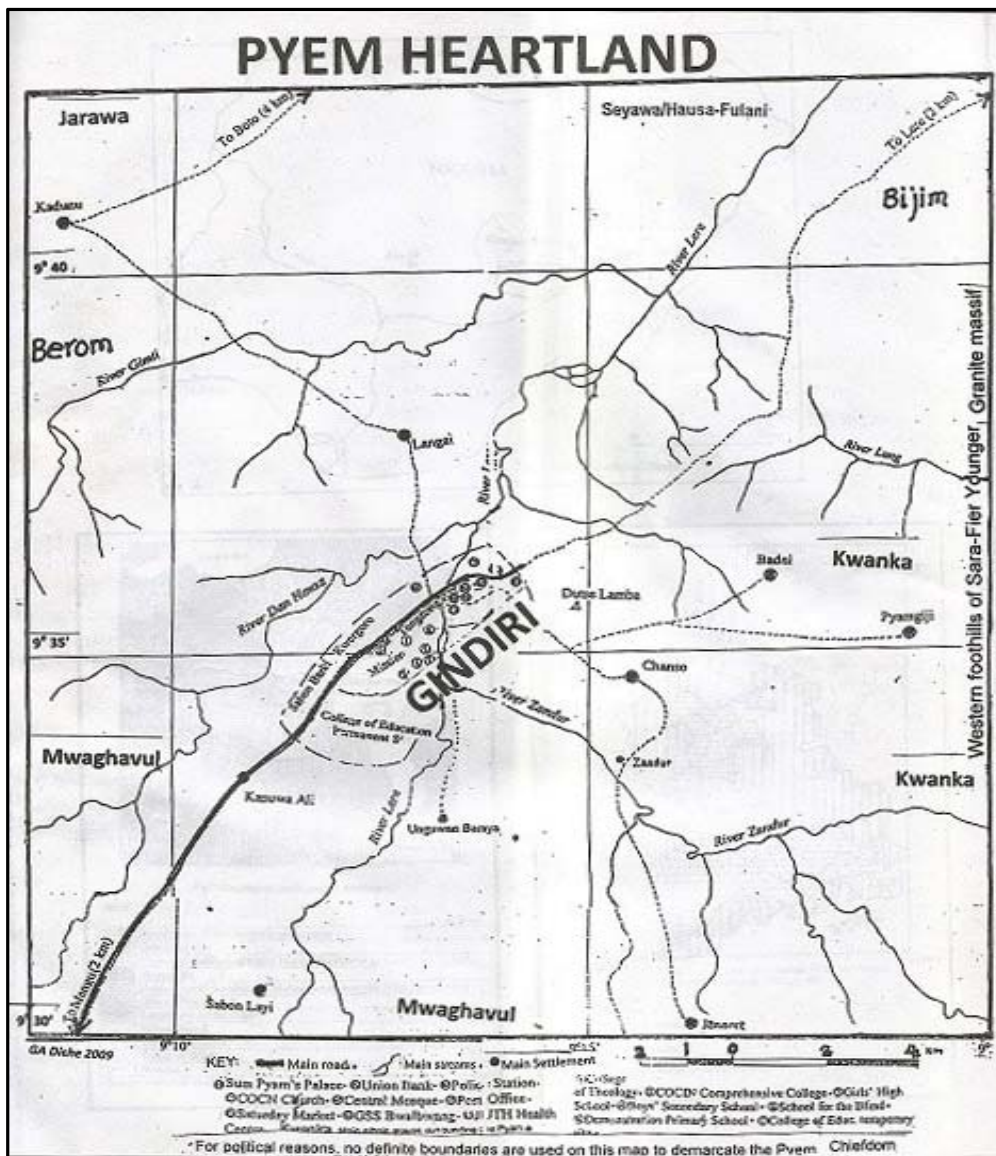


Figure 6.1. Map of Gindiri showing the Pyem settlements and bordering ethnic groups (Source: Diche 1991).

The Pyem people's experience of the Othman Dan Fodio Jihad led to their migration to settle in Gindiri, Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State. The Pyem people are found in Langai, Kadunu, Pumbush Kasuwan Ali, Chanso, kwergoro, Angwan baraya, Gimti makaranta, Pyemgiji, Mungi, Kopai, Sabon Barki, Kweradu, Sabon Barki, Keras, Nagwak Kongong, Mangar, Dukli, Kayarda, Buada, Sharka, Kongong, Badni and other villages within the chiefdom (Blench 2010:1). The Pyem are one among the major ethnic groups in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State and is known for its hills such as Dutsen Lamba in Gessin and the Gertem hills of Pyemgiji where they first

settled. It is also known for its temperate weather conditions due to of the trees and rivers of Gindiri, Langai, and Pyemgiji (Daspan 2002:3).

6.4. Religio-cultural experience

In his argument for dynamism in the methods used for the practice of theology in this contemporary era, Orobator (2015:5-6) can state that:

Theology does not operate outside the boundaries of our ordinary human experience. The raw material for our theological reflection is our faith.... In other words; our faith is grounded on the reality of human experience. Yet the understanding of our experience (of God, self, and the world) varies from one particular situation to another. This awareness allows us to affirm that we cannot neglect the role of human experience in the theological enterprise.

It can thus be inferred that human experience is key to understanding God and how God dialogues with humanity in relation to the universe. It can also be argued that as theology cannot operate outside ordinary human experience, human experience cannot be obtained without the experience of religious, cultural, social and psychological realities of human existence (Bate 2002:28). Therefore, the human experience of the Pyem ethnic group as highlighted in this section cannot be divorced from the understanding that religion is one of the realities that constitutes their experience as an African community.

The Pyem ethnic group as with other African communities practiced ATR. They believe in the existence of a Supreme Being who is the creator of all things, rewards good and bad, works through the intermediaries, and is concern about the welfare of the universe. The name of the Supreme Being in the Pyem language is *Wu-Tidy* meaning, “God who is in heaven” (Daspan 2002:12). Mbiti (1980:117) stresses that before the Bible and the coming of Christianity to Africa, God was active among Africans as God is active among the Jews. This is evident in the way the missionaries used the names of God already known among African People such as Mungu, Mulungu, Katonda, Ngai, Olodumere, Unkulunkulu These names are regarded with high esteem and express reverence to the Supreme Being as the creator of everything. Therefore, the belief in the Supreme Being expressed in the name *Wudde/Wu-Tidy* by the Pyem ethnic group can be symbolic and compatible in understanding God’s mission through Christ’s

finished work on the cross and how the church responds to threats that deny fullness of life of all people. Accordingly, this present study seeks to dialogue with the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem people in order to re-conceptualise the penal substitution theory of the atonement constructed within a Western and legalistic context to a more Afro-centric perspective.

For Rengshwat (2013:21), before the advent of Christianity through the missionaries, ATR as practiced by the ethnic groups in Plateau State was at the heart of all aspects of life. The social, political and cultural ways of life among the ethnic groups operated and found their bearing in religion. In the same way, the Pyem ethnic group connects their social, political, and cultural lives to the religion they practiced. Blench (2010:2) points this out while highlighting the religious experience of the Pyem people. What constitutes the culture of the Pyem according to Blench, includes procreation, initiation into the community, marriage rites, burial and chieftaincy titles. All of these rites of passage find their expression through religion (2010:2). For the purpose of this present study, a synopsis of the community life, procreation, initiation, marriage ceremony and traditional council will be briefly discussed in this section to see how connected and symbolic they are in the religious and cultural life of the Pyem people. Through the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective used in the re-conceptualisation of the penal substitution theory of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN, the religio-cultural analysis will focus on finding compatible cultural experiences of the Pyem ethnic group that can contribute towards affirming the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* as a medium through which the doctrine under consideration can find expression towards contributing to peacebuilding in Jos.

6.4.1. Community life

The Pyem as a community is classified into units call *Dyengye* which is an offshoot of the Hausa root word *Dyengye* meaning, “relative.” The determinative factor of a person’s identity is their membership in the *Dyengye*. This unit is considered as a clan through which nuclear families find their expression (Daspan 2002:7). Leadership roles in the *Dyengye* were distributed to members based on honesty and allegiance to the community norms. The clan priest and his council elders who pilot the affairs of members of the community were equipped by *Bwalbwang* and the chief high priest who

promotes cordial relationships among members of the communities. The name for a clan leader was Tikam, who presided over cases of fighting, theft and adultery (Daspan 2002:8, 12). Conflicts among individual members, families and the clan were handled by the clan chief. However, serious ritual offences were referred to Bwalbwang, the chief high priest at Pyemdere. Pyamdere is the first settlement place of the Pyem ethnic group.

Based on the leadership stratification among the Pyem ethnic group, Bwalbwang held the highest position of authority. He was the chief priest, chief judge, political leader, general and commander of the army. Serious cases were referred to him by his subordinates. He ate communal meals offered during rituals such as marriage, initiations and conflict resolutions. He appointed leaders at new settlement areas as his subordinates. He was assisted by one Gyartagere who was in charge of all festivals. He was responsible for investigating matters that were threats to the welfare of the community. However, with the expansion of the Pyem ethnic group to new settlement areas, further leaders were appointed as representatives of the chief high priest (Daspan, 2002:10) They were empowered by Bwalbwang to ensure peaceful co-existence among individuals, families and clans by settling minor conflicts. These leaders were empowered to communicate with ancestors and they in turn condescended by being present with the community in times of adversity or prosperity. The leaders were saddled with the responsibility of maintaining law and order in the community each of them served. Bwalbwang as the chief high priest and his subordinates, leaders and elders appointed in respective settlement areas, were charged to ensure that every member of the sub and larger community of the Pyem ethnic group promoted the common good of the community irrespective of their differences (Daspan 2002:73)

From the above discussion, it should be noted that both the religious, cultural, social and political life of the community was centred on how every member must uphold community values beyond individual, family or clan interests. Leaders in whichever capacity were empowered and equipped to investigate threats within and without, capable of disrupting the peace and welfare of the community. What is also interesting here was the consciousness and understanding shared by all community members about the ancestors, despite the transcendent position from which they identified with the community in times of prosperity and adversity. The Pyem symbolic religio-cultural

experience thus seems to be a compatible resource for the African symbolic hermeneutical inculturation of the penal substitution theory of the atonement that relates to Jesus Christ identifying with fallen humanity through his death on the cross.

6.4.2. Procreation

Since this study seeks relevant cultural experience within the African context that can foster peace within Jos which is in dire need of peace, this section will discuss how life begins and is lived among the Pyem community. As was discussed above, from childhood, members of the community are religio-culturally educated to take responsibility in contributing to the peaceful co-existence of the community. Giving birth according to the Pyem ethnic group is related to their religious understanding about the Supreme Being as the giver of children and all in life. Based on the Pyem religio-cultural experience, childbearing is part of the belief that the ancestors through childbirth identify with humanity and the universe by being born again in a particular family. This also affirms the belief that life is a circle. Although the child is born to a particular family, she or he participates in protecting and keeping family lines and future generations (Daspan 2002:26).

It can be argued that this understanding denotes that cultural and religious practice seeks fullness of life through participation, protection and sustaining the universe (Bujo 2015:86). While pointing to the ongoing discourse on utilising African religio-cultural symbols and experiences as mediums to express Christian affirmation, Bediako (1998:110) maintains that the use of the terminology “ancestor” within ATR should be seen as a religio-cultural symbol that expresses the understanding of Jesus Christ as the giver of life. In the light of this, the understanding of the Pyem people in relation to the role of the ancestors denotes respect for life by resisting threats that deny fullness of life within the community. For Bujo (2015:79) therefore, the centrality of the African religio-cultural thought is upon life and that for life to be meaningful it should be understood in relation to God who creates and sustains the universe.

Through this understanding of violence, be it systemic or symbolic is unable to give way to peace and fullness of life. Religio-culturally, whenever a child is born, after seven days the baby is taken from the mother by honourable elders to where religious

functions take place. The chief priest enquires to find out who among the ancestors has returned. Names are given based on events and circumstances (Blench 2010:2). At childbirth those who take the child from the mother after seven days are honourable elders. Being conscious of what makes a child responsible, marry and is initiated into the community, the mother offers the child wilfully and joyfully (2010:2). This means that they are trustworthy, respectful, and honoured in the community. This also shows that their words and instructions at times of prosperity or adversity are never taken for granted because they are ordained to serve in this capacity. Bujo (2015) in his concept of palaver and distinctive African ethics describes palaver as the traditional council who function as peace makers during conflicts and violence not only in the family but also in the wider community. As practiced among the Pyem ethnic group, the traditional council according to Bujo are respected in the community and empowered in words. When they speak, their words are obeyed and chewed by conflicting families or warring communities as remedy for animosity, grievances, hatred and unforgiveness. Bujo (2015:79, 82-83), further points out how cultural symbols are used by the council palaver to express deep insight about communal life while building bridges of peace between conflicting parties. Thus, the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem people during child birth symbolically represents participation and taking responsibility in cubing threats that deny fullness of life within a community faced with violence such as Jos. The religio-cultural experience on how the child is educated for the common good of the community can be a resource that challenge the missional identity of the COCIN as an agent of God's mission entrusted with the responsibility to participate in building bridges of peace in Jos through the doctrine under consideration. It is for this reason that the African symbolic hermeneutical re-examination of the penal substitution theory challenges the missional identity of the COCIN to engage with such cultural experiences among the ethnic groups in Jos as medium through which this theory can be expressed afresh in the context of systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

6.4.3. Initiation into the community

Circumcision and initiation rites constitute the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group. These events are held concurrently because of their relevance. During these religio-cultural practices, initiates are separated from their relatives, friends and families for seven months. Circumcision and initiation take place at the same time

because both introduce initiates into the wider community and the consciousness of becoming responsible for the common good of the community. Being separated from their family denotes that they are no longer under the guidance of their families or clans alone but rather the guidance of the community. This is a deliberate effort to teach the wider community that although they are members of a given family or clan, attention must be given to community life (Blench 2010:2). For Parratt (1995:92-93), participation in community life is key to the religio-cultural life of Africans and is occasioned through mentoring. Accordingly, the religious and cultural experiences centred in the circumcision and initiation ceremony among the Pyem ethnic group cannot be underestimated because it offers a way of life that focuses on the fullness of life in the community irrespective of affiliation. Through these cultural symbols, the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement can be expressed through the missional identity of the COCIN as it represents offering fullness of life in the violent context of Jos. This brings to the fore the African symbolic hermeneutical understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory that tries to divorce any retributive tendencies in the application of the classical concept of the atonement under consideration in the context of Jos (Weaver 2013:2).

During the circumcision and initiation rites, the initiates are taught family and community values, community norms, beliefs and morality. They are taught not to engage in acts such as stealing, fornication, adultery, lies, and any act of unfaithfulness capable of sabotaging the peace and welfare of community life (Blench 2010:2). Morality in the African context constitutes the religious and cultural life of people living in a given community. As discussed in chapter two above, the discoveries made with respect to compatible aspects of the religio-cultural experiences of the different ethnic groups in North Central Nigeria by the SUM missionaries would have been resources for the African symbolic hermeneutics of Christ's death as a substitutionary atonement. This is evident when significant response was recorded by the missionaries among the Ngas ethnic group of Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State. The reception was attributed to the compatibility of the Ngas cultural norm which prohibits adultery. The relevance is further expressed in the Ten Commandments preached and taught among the Ngas people by the missionaries (Bitrus 2013:70). As a consequence, the contemporary understanding of the penal substitution theory of the atonement as

reflected in the literature review can be more appealing if consideration is given to the context where it is being interpreted and applied. In his discussion of God's purpose in the finished work of Christ on the cross, Weaver (2013:2) can state:

One of the results of the comparison is to show that atonement imagery is less about the death of Jesus and more an understanding of the character of God and how God works in the world. Discussion of the atonement thus leads to a discussion of the character of God.

Weaver's understanding of the atonement of Christ is based on the expression of God's character. Ultimately, the character of God as expressed in God's mission love, mercy, tolerance and fullness of life for all. This is also expressed in the way God in Christ identified with humanity through the birth and death of Jesus on the cross (Grudem 2000:568). The Pyem traditional moral instructions to the initiates during the circumcision and initiation ceremony thus becomes a contextual and culturally-oriented medium in which the penal substitution theory can be reshaped and through COCIN's mission a life-giving response can be offered in answer to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

6.4.4. Marriage

Among the Pyem, marriage constitutes one of the integral parts of life in the community. For Blench (2010), the prerequisite for traditional marriage among the Pyem people is that of circumcision and initiation. As discussed above, the rites of circumcision and initiation are symbolic by mentoring and introducing the initiates into the wider community by being responsible for the common good of the community. The interlocking tendency between the initiation and marriage rites therefore suggests that responsibility is attached to marriage. Symbolically, as an agent of the *missio Dei*, the COCIN's missional identity and vocation takes into account its practice of teaching the God-given responsibility to bring to earth the loving act of Christ for the common good within the pluralistic context of Jos.

Marriage, engagements, and the marriage ceremony among the Pyem ethnic group are religiously and culturally interwoven and celebrated not only within the family but are ultimately part of the community life. Because life is connected to the community, families do not request a bride price and other traditional items, but rather the

honourable elders and chief priest on behalf of the community outline what is traditionally required from the bridegroom's family (Daspan 2002:49). The elder's involvement presupposes that part of their responsibility is to ensure that all is done in accordance to the laid down relevant traditional norms for the common good of the community. Since emphasis is laid on community life, every member is treated the same irrespective of the individual's social and economic status or affiliation. Among the Pyem, this stemmed from the understanding that whatever affects a member of the community—whether good or bad—affects the life of the entire community. While drawing attention to the way people act and respond to situations around them, Bate (2015:92) identifies the differences in worldview by stating that:

Generally, when we ask the question “How is the world?” it is answered differently from continent to continent. For Westerners the world is outside of us. It is to be used and exploited. In Africa the world is seen as part of us and it is to be embraced. The world is personal and relational.

This is an attempt to mark out the distinctive nature of the worldview and culture of the Pyem that shaped their perceptions and how they respond to what takes place around them. For Bujo (2015:84), the African worldview or role of culture in community life is central. In the African context, life is understood and interpreted on how life is viewed in the community. That which makes the African view of life distinct from the Westerners is that life is more communal than individualistic (2015:84). Therefore, the way marriage is religio-culturally initiated among the Pyem is symbolically relevant for the African symbolic hermeneutical inculturation of the penal substitution theory of the atonement in the religio-cultural, socio-political and violent context of Jos. Indeed, it provides an understanding that discourages superiority and the triumphalist transmission of the penal substitution theory in a context where community life is central in both religious and cultural experience.

As Blench (2010) has noted, the marriage celebration among the Pyem ethnic group involves not only the immediate families but the entire community. The marriage celebration is arranged by the community where the two families unite with members of the community in providing foodstuffs. This usually takes place during the rainy season. The two family members and members of the community joint hands in farming

and harvesting the farm produce for the newly married couple as support. Although Christianity and Islam among the Pyem are today the dominant religions, Blench (2010:2) has argued that their religio-cultural practice during marriage rites and celebrations are still evident. Despite the differences in worldviews, both the indigenous Christians and Muslims among the Pyem ethnic groups still maintain the religio-cultural practices associated with some of the traditional marriage rites and associated celebrations. Indeed, it can be argued that despite the indoctrination of foreign religions, the Pyem still embrace the communal life they were known for. Bate (2015:11) attributes this to the process of enculturation which constitutes the milieu of the African worldview Likewise, Mbiti (1980:6) observes:

When followers of African Religion convert to Christianity or Islam, they neither dispense with their traditional religiosity nor do they embrace their new faith with empty hands. In a fairly similar process, (Western) secularity has not squeezed out of African religiosity from the people.

It can thus be argued that the advent of the new religions among the Pyem ethnic group only compliments the African religio-cultural experience that shapes their response to situations around them. Furthermore, the centrality of community life among the Pyem ethnic group is embedded in the understanding of God in relation to the universe and that every member of the community works and contributes to the wellbeing of the community irrespective of the diversities within the community (Bujo 2015:88). This denotes that the centrality of community life in the way marriage as conducted among the Pyem ethnic group still affirms that despite individual and family differences, the wellbeing and peace of the community is prioritised by all its members. In the light of this, the African symbolic hermenetical re-interpretation of the penal substitution theory of the atonement in the religio-cultural, socio-political and ethnic milieu becomes relevant because the centrality of the community life symbolically serves as a medium of expression for the forecast of peacebuilding in the context of Jos.

6.4.5. Traditional council

Among the Pyem ethnic group, every community has a traditional leader. However, based on the religion and culture of the Pyem, there was a leader whom the Supreme Being through the ancestors conferred on him the authority and power to be the priest

and the overall leader of Pyem ethnic group. He pilots the affairs of the larger Pyem community irrespective of his family and clan of origin. This is grounded on the understanding that the common good of the community life is put before any other thing. He is called *Bwalbwang* which translated means, “the priest with authority.” Other leaders of the communities are given titles such as *Gyartagere*, *Wuciciri*, *Jer*, *Rit Fyem*, *Tikam* and *Zamzam*. The meaning of each name is in accordance to the responsibility each has within the community him or her functions. All these leaders were answerable to *Bwalbwang* the priest who pilots the affairs of the Pyem ethnic group. The priest was given with the responsibility of ensuring that each of these leaders prioritises community life above that of the individual, family or clan affiliation. These leaders were concerned with different aspects of the community life, such as birth, marriage, initiation and circumcision rites and other civil matters (Daspan 2002:7-9).

For the purposes of this present study, responsibilities concerning conflicts among individuals, family members, members of a clan in opposition with another clan and Pyem ethnic group with a neighbouring ethnic group were highlighted to show how this constituted the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group. In relation to the key research question of this study, the Pyem traditional leaders and their responsibilities within the communities they serve, the centrality of the community life and how they respond to the conflicts among individuals, families and clans seems to constitute a symbolic religio-cultural experience that can serve as a medium through which the penal substitution theory of the atonement can be expressed.

According to Ukpong (2000:12), present-day theology focuses on how the biblical text dialogues with the African context to make the Christian message more appealing. Draper (2001) adds that the viability of the dialogue between text and context also depends on the theologian who appropriates both for easy assimilation within a given context. Accordingly, as the penal substitution theory finds expression through the centrality of community life in the Pyem religio-cultural experience, the researcher through the modality of reflective sensitivity, appropriates the penal substitution theory of the atonement with the context of Jos for easy assimilation. This is a context that is plagued with systemic and symbolic violence caused by ethnic, religious, cultural, political and social differences. The religio-cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group also implies that peace can be restored in Jos if leaders of the different religions,

ethnic groups, social, cultural and political groups avoid the posture of triumphalist and superiority and work for the common good of the Jos community irrespective of their differences. It is in light of this, the African symbolic hermeneutical critique challenges the missional identity of the COCIN to utilise the symbolic cultural experience as a medium for the expression of the penal substitution theory of the atonement in the context of Jos.

In light of the above overview of the religious and cultural activities among the Pyem ethnic group, it can be argued that the practice of procreation, initiation, marriage and the responsibility of the traditional council and how they function within the immediate and larger communities denotes that community life based on their understanding of God in relation to the community which is core in everyday life. Accordingly, the culture of the Pyem is relevant in the dialogue between the penal substitution theory of the atonement and these cultural experiences since it seeks to uphold the welfare of the community despite the differences in religion and ethnicity. Through this notion, the COCIN can conceptualise the penal substitution theory of the atonement in its response to the diversified religious, ethnic, cultural and violent context of Jos.

6.5. Forms of conflict resolution

Apart from the larger Pyem community, there are other communities that each have a traditional leader that pilots the affairs of the community where she or he functions. Although the Pyem as a community, have the same religion, language, culture, and geographical location, the various communities spread across the various villages and towns, each made up of individuals, families and clans. Some are wealthy, some are not; some are from a royal family, some are not. In addition, there will be differences in knowledge, personality, perceptions and experiences, preferences and priorities (Bate 2002:2-3). This means that despite their commonality as an ethnic group there could be divergences that may result in conflict among individuals, families, clans and among the smaller communities. Furthermore, due to religious, cultural and ethnic differences, land disputes, political and social factors, the Pyem ethnic group as a larger community is bound to experience conflicts with other neighbouring ethnic communities. For example, during the indigenous group discussion, the research participants cited occasions where the Pyem ethnic group became involved in violent

conflicts with neighbouring ethnic groups as in Mwaghavul, Berom, and Takas in Mangu Local Government Area (Bida 16 November 2016).

Consequent to this sensitivity, the Pyem ethnic group records conflicts among individuals, family members, clans, and the widespread Pyem communities within the Pyem ethnic group. Daspan's contribution to the history of the Pyem ethnic group state instances where the Pyem larger community involved in violence with neighbouring ethnic groups (2002:12). Bate (2002:3) refers to misunderstanding and violence within a given family, clan and community which is born out of the various human experiences based on religious, cultural and social events involving members of the community.

Based on the experience of violence by the Pyem ethnic group, this present study gives attention to the religio-cultural experiences of the Pyem ethnic group in relation to how systemic and symbolic violence has been resolved within the sub and larger communities. This also draws attention to how violent conflicts have been resolved between the Pyem ethnic group and other neighbouring ethnic groups.

Before highlighting the notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* as a cultural symbolic philosophy among the Pyem for building bridges of peace between two warring communities, this study will examine other emerging religio-cultural ways in which peace can be restored during violent conflicts involving individual members and families within the Pyem ethnic group. This is aimed at setting the stage for the religio-cultural narrative and examination of the notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* with which this study is particularly interested as the medium through which the penal substitution theory can find expression in the African symbolic hermeneutical re-examination of the theory of the doctrine by the COCIN in the context of Jos. Examining other forms of conflict resolution in this section will also provide essential background to the notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* in the African symbolic hermeneutical re-examination of the penal substitution theory by the COCIN in the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

6.5.1. Conflict between individuals

Among the Pyem ethnic group, the Pyem religious and cultural medium for reconciliation between two conflicting individuals was through local brewing. According to Daspan (2002:73) this form of conflict resolution usually concerns two

community members involved in a fight due to rivalry of women, traditional leadership issues, sharing of proceeds from community farms and during religious and cultural festivals. As discussed earlier, the traditional council within the Pyem community is the body given specific responsibility of maintaining peace and order during community conflicts. The opposing individuals are asked to present themselves before the council. After proper adjudication, the local brew is brought in a calabash and the two individuals are asked to drink at the same time while one hand holds the calabash and the other holds the opposing individual. Both parties then drink the local brew from the same calabash (2002:73).

Symbolically, the calabash is interpreted as both individuals having been originated from the same Supreme Being who is the source of all life. Holding each other while drinking the local brew means that their differences are not powerful enough to change the religio-cultural view and understanding of the Supreme Being as the source of all life. The local brew represents the condenser of all their grievances, anger and hatred that is converted to love and forgiveness. Through this cultural practice, peace is restored between two individuals who are involved in a fight (Daspan 2002:73). From the Kadung's religio-cultural experience in Plateau State, Pokol (2015:271-272) in his concept of Sumgi relates how two sprouted yam tubers from one single yam in the ground symbolises that humankind although they may have their differences, yet they are from the same origin. While Pokol's concept emanated from a different ethnic group, it is relevant to this form of reconciliation among the Pyem who view drinking from the same calabash as depicting humankind having the same origins. Although this form of conflict resolution among the Pyem ethnic group involves two members of the community, it is still not divorced from the quest to always give attention to the common good of the community by traditional council leaders and lay members. The COCIN's understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory as discussed above, reveals that Christ's death on the cross signifies not only substituting fallen humankind in his death but also that he is concerned more about humankind than himself (Philippians 2:5). Although this form of conflict resolution does not involve the sacrifice of life as is obtained in the traditional interpretation of the penal substitution theory, it involves only two persons and not a larger community such as Jos, where many lives have been lost through conflict. Nevertheless, the concept is relevant since

it upholds the common good of the community as well as the two opposing individuals. It is also relevant since it nurses grievances, wrong perceptions, hatred and threats which this present study considers symbolic violent nuances of the penal substitution theory that place emphasis on punishment rather than love and tolerance. Through this experience, the penal substitution theory of the atonement can find expression in the context where life is grounded on ethnic, religious, cultural, political and social attachments and not agitating for the common good of the community of Jos.

6.5.2. Conflict between families

In the Pyem sub and larger communities, Daspan (2002:73) has argued that disputes and misunderstanding are recorded among families. Such conflict usually involves two families from the same or other clans within the Pyem community. The contentious atmosphere within this category of the Pyem community is attributed to disputes due to allocation of land, threats through expressions, recognition, stealing of property and superiority tendencies due to wealth and other social factors in the community. It is sometimes occasioned by loss of life. Although family members may have the right to resolve such conflicts, because of the honour and respect due to the elders and traditional council, such cases are brought before them for proper judgement. The process of reconciliation brings together the two families before the traditional council. After hearing from both sides, the council, vested with power and authority by the Supreme Being, pronounce their judgment. Where both families are found guilty of estrangement, each is asked to bring a goat. The two goats are summarily slaughtered and the two families eat the meat together with the traditional council to serve as remedy for peace. If only one party is found guilty of the offence, they are asked to bring a goat. The meat is also shared as a symbol of reconciliation between the two families. It should be noted that the meat is not offered to the Supreme Being or the ancestors but is shared among members of the family who despite their differences are still from the same source of life and are all responsible for the common good of the community. Because some members of each of the families eat the meat, this represents the removal of the estrangement for reconciliation and peaceful co-existence (Daspan 2002:14). These understandings stem from the fact that what affects the family after affects community life (Bujo 2015:82).

This form of conflict resolution is not divorced from the understanding that the Pyem community has the same source of life and each member is responsible for the fullness of life in the family and community. It is also focused on how life can find its fulfilment not only within the family, but within the community generally (Daspan 2002:17). This form of conflict has more tendencies of symbolic violence than systemic because it is between two opposing families and not the larger Pyem community, nor the Pyem ethnic group with another ethnic group. It does not involve the physical loss of many lives as in Jos where the loss of life is alarming. The traditional council who preside over these types of disputes disseminates their responsibilities within a Pyem sub-community. Bwalbwang, as the higher authority vested with the responsibility of piloting the affairs of the Pyem ethnic group is not consulted during such adjudication. This form of peacebuilding is of particular relevance to the African symbolic hermeneutical critique of the penal substitution theory because it calls for the utilisation of common ground for peacebuilding within the religio-cultural, ethnic and social differences that leads to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. Accordingly, Ashton (2013:11) proposes a methodology where religious leaders are called and equipped to promote mutual values and respect for building bridges of peace in Jos.

Although this method for peacebuilding focuses on violence initiated through religious difference, it is nevertheless relevant to this study because its objective centres on how common or mutual values within a context characterised by violence can be a resource for peacebuilding (Ashton 2013:6). The Pyem form of conflict resolution as discussed above becomes especially relevant because the African symbolic hermeneutical inculturation of the penal substitution theory also calls for the COCIN missional identity to utilise cultural experience as vehicle for equipping its clergy leadership and members to promote common ground towards peacebuilding in the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

6.5.3. Conflict among clans

Another form of conflict resolution in the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group emerged from conflicts that were within the various clans that made up the sub and larger communities. These conflicts were mostly concerned with land demarcations, superiority issues, and domination due to certain privileges within the

community. Mostly a community that was in possession of cows, horses, donkeys, sheep and large families was considered as the wealthiest people in the community. Based on such privileges, there were communities that would want to suppress other unprivileged clans. Conflicts occurred when one clan betrayed another clan for selfish reasons was noticed within the sub and larger community (Bate 2002). The way and manner in which this form of conflict was resolved was not far from other forms of conflict resolution within the Pyem milieu. The two communities appeared before the traditional council of the community to which they belonged. Although communities were made up of families, only heads of communities appeared at the hearing. Since every member of the community had passed through the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem community, it is presupposed that each clan came to the hearing ready to contribute to the common good of the larger community no matter what it might cost. After the hearing, sometimes the judgment and reconciliation occurred at the same time, depending on the type of offence. In the Pyem worldview, every offence at any level whether big or small is considered as an attempt to undermine the common good of the community. In other words, an offence is considered big or small in terms of its effect based on the meaning and function attached to the cultural form of the traditional ethics in operation (Bate 2002:50-51).

On behalf of Bwalbwang, the overall leader and chief priest of the Pyem ethnic group, the traditional council of the community pronounces judgment on those responsible for the breach of peace between the two clans. Sometimes both communities were liable because each contributed in the breach of peace (Daspan 2002:8). The perpetrators were asked to present a live goat before the traditional council and other members of the two clans. The live goat is slaughtered and the meat shared among the traditional council and representatives of the two clans. The eating of the meat was a religio-cultural symbol that expresses forgiveness and acceptance. In this form of conflict resolution, hatred, intolerance and anger—which according to this study are considered as symbolic violence—were dealt with after eating of the meat. Being conscious of the value of community life in the Pyem ethnic group, the traditional council and representatives of the respective clans embraced each as a sign of reconciliation and making peace (Daspan 2002:73). The killing of the animal was to appease the ancestors who according to Pyem religious and cultural beliefs represented the transcended

Supreme Being (2002:12). Once peace is restored between these clans, the calamity that was to befall the community is now averted.

It should be noted that in this form of conflict resolution, there is present a certain consciousness that all members must live for the common good of the community. This form of peacebuilding within the Pyem experience the value of community life is particularly powerful because it compels all members to forgive and tolerate each other irrespective of the offence, clan and other affiliations. This is not divorced from the understanding that despite the differences that contributed in the cause of the conflict, they still remain united because all of them came from the same source of life and the understanding that the Supreme Being alone has the power to intervene between the two disagreeing parties (Daspan 2002:12-13). In this form of conflict resolution, no human life is sacrificed as a form of punishment for the restoration of peace among the two conflicting parties or to appease the ancestors and/or the Supreme Being as a sacrifice to avert the calamity that might have befallen the community. Peace is restored on the basis of value for humanity and community life irrespective of a person's status. Communal fellowship through eating of the meat becomes a transforming religio-cultural practice to mitigate against hatred, anger, rancour, animosity and enmity. All these are replaced with restoration of love, forgiveness, tolerance and peaceful co-existence.

The cultural non-material form (Bate 2013:51) of conflict resolution as discussed earlier constitutes the essential background towards understanding the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* which this study utilises as key in the process of postulating an alternative African familiarised concept of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN in the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. Although this conflict involved only two clans and not a larger community such as Jos, the religio-cultural form for peacebuilding is the same with conflicting clans in the Pyem ethnic group, where clans have the same cultural background and the same religious belief systems. The religio-cultural and socio-political structures and their functionality in Jos are more complex than that of the Pyem communities. This is because of the religious, cultural, ethnic, political and social differences that has caused the contentious atmosphere has metamorphosed into violence in Jos. The relevance of this mode of conflict resolution among the Pyem

ethnic group cannot be overemphasised. This is because the way the traditional council gives attention to mutual grounds. Such mutual grounds include, the Supreme Being is the source of life and the understood in terms of whom all life is originated and finds its meaning. Communal fellowship that involves eating thus becomes a powerful tool for peacebuilding. The centrality of community life in the process of resolving conflict between disagreeing clans did not respect people's different affiliations.

6.6. Introducing the notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*

The notion *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* among the Pyem ethnic group was part of what informed their religious and cultural experiences for building bridges of peace between two conflicting communities following war. *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war” is a concept employed by this study that serves as the medium through which the penal substitution theory can be understood and practiced by the COCIN. It should be noted that due to inadequate secondary materials on the Pyem notion for peacebuilding, the relevant data generated for this present study was obtained during the focus groups conducted among the Pyem indigenous people. The notion is introduced in solidarity to the cosmological setting of the Pyem ethnic group. This notion will be more elaborated and applied in the final chapter of this study.

As it emerged from the data, *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war” is a religious and cultural practice for restoring peace between two conflicting communities. This practice is usually held after the fight between two communities. According to this notion, there were middlepersons who had the responsibility of initiating the meeting of the two warring communities in consultation with Bwalbwang the chief priest and his subordinates (Bida 2013). The meeting of the communities was held at the boundary where each community presents a male goat through its representative. The two representatives in the presence of the communities exchanged the male goat following the instruction of Bwalbwang whose words were empowered by the Supreme Being through the ancestors (Kallamu 2017). The use of the male goat is based on the understanding that it is a notorious animal, being known for its predator nature with regard to foodstuffs in the Pyem compound. The male goat represents the ugly nature of the fight that originally caused the

destruction of lives and property. It also represents the violence against females and children during the fight (Tafida 2017). The male goat is particularly known for its ugly forehead, which is expressed in the Pyem maxim *Nyen sai Ngwakin Darsai Daala*, which translated means, “see his or her forehead as the male goat that stops fighting/war.” Among the Pyem people, it is thus used to describe children, women, men and slaves who are disobedient and arrogant in respect to life in the Pyem community. Figure 5.2 is photograph of a male goat symbolising the ugliness of violence.



Figure 6.2. A male goat which represents the ugly nature of violence among the Pyem ethnic group (Source: Shutter Stock 2017).

The Pyem maxim is finally applied when each warring community sacrifices the male goat and participates in the communal meal. Bwalbwang the chief priest, coordinates the sacrifice through his subordinates Gyartagere and Tikam. Through their assistance, the male goat is sacrificed to restore peace and appease the Supreme Being through the

ancestors against any calamity that might have otherwise befallen the entire Pyem community (Daspan 2002:8). The male goat is now eaten based on the understanding that the animosity, hatred, anger, domination has broken its grip upon every member of the community. It thus symbolises the end of fight through the application of forgiveness, reconciliation, love and restoration of peace between the warring factions. The reconciliation is justified by their social interaction during religious and cultural festivals.

Although this notion emanates from the African religio-cultural practice among the Pyem people, it is utilised here to demonstrate that within the African religio-cultural heritage are embedded traditional symbols which can be used as media to express the penal substitution theory of the atonement in the context of violence such as in Jos. Under the broader African symbolic hermeneutical perspective used in this present study are the use of African symbols used to express deeper meaning to an event. Bediako (1995:109-110) in his concept of translatability thus asked African theologians to use African religious and cultural experience as tools for the translating of Christianity in Africa. For Arbuckle (2001:29), such symbols can be informative and meaningful in that a symbol can stimulate a person's imagination to think and to act in accordance to the information it conveys. It is from this perspective that the symbol of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* stood out as a practice that contributed to building peace between conflicting communities. The penal substitution theory which teaches reconciliation, peace and love can be expressed through this notion in order to equip the missional identity of the COCIN to offer a more life-giving response to the violence in Jos.

6.7. Chapter summary

This chapter has focused on the cosmology of the Pyem ethnic group of Plateau State, Nigeria. Through a brief historical background of the Pyem people, the chapter discussed its geographical location, settlements and the bordering ethnic groups. The chapter went on to draw attention to the religio-cultural experience that is symbolic to life in the community. Part of what constitutes the religious and cultural life in the community are the various forms of conflict and how they can be resolved in order to foster peace between warring factions and communities. The chapter presented an introduction to the symbolic male goat as the authentic medium that expresses peace

and reconciliation among a people. The chapter showed how the concept of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war,” possesses the religio-cultural symbolism to serve as an African symbolic hermeneutical tool that can be used by the COCIN to express the penal substitution theory of the atonement in the violent context of Jos. In the concluding part of the chapter, it was argued that for the COCIN to offer a more life-giving response to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos it has to engage with compatible African cultural symbols such as *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* as a medium of expression.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

7.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of the data from the in-depth individual and focus group interviews conducted within the COCIN in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. The chapter also presents the COCIN understanding of the penal substitution theory which was analysed to show whether it has the capacity to engender peace in the violent context of Jos. Based on the data collected, the tenets and significance of the penal substitution theory were presented and analysed in this chapter with the aim to verify the understanding and practice of this church doctrine that constitutes an integral part of its beliefs and doctrine. Through the responses to the question on what constitutes the COCIN's understanding and practice, the chapter presents how the theory under consideration was transmitted by the missionaries into the missional identity of the COCIN. Since this study utilises African symbolic hermeneutics as its perspective to interrogate the penal substitution theory, the chapter captures data and analysis as attempts by the COCIN through its theological seminary to engage with the culture in communicating this doctrine to the clergy during leadership formation.

7.2. Emerging themes from the data

The data presentation is guided by the evolving themes and sub-themes from the relevant information generated from the research participants through the in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions conducted within the COCIN in Jos. Consequent to the research design and the qualitative research method employed in this study and following the heterogeneous sampling of those to be interviewed, the sampled research participants was a composed of COCIN executive leaders, clergy, lecturers, students, laity and Pyem ethnic people within Jos. In order to ensure reliability and justification for the generated data as indicated in the research method, the real names of the respondents will be withheld. Furthermore, for the purpose of relevance, the thematic presentation and the analysis of the data will be solely guided by the aims and

objectives of the study. The aim of the presentation and analysis is to examine to what extent symbolic cultural experience within the Pyem ethnic group in Jos can be a medium through which the penal substitution theory can find expression in order to contribute to peacebuilding through the COCIN ministry in the violent context of Jos.

7.3. The COCIN concept of the penal substitution theory

The understanding of the penal substitution theory by the COCIN as it emerged from the generated data has not departed from the missionary understanding. While presenting this claim, one of the COCIN executive leaders stated that:

The missionaries did a good job, Jesus paying the penalty through his death; the death is ours because sin is punishable, since the wages of sin is death and it is an understanding that is based on the Scriptures (Datiri 02 February 2017).

This respondent confirms that the penal substitution theory as bequeathed to the missional identity of the COCIN by the missionaries is still understood in terms of a penal substitutionary atonement, where God, in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ, gave himself up on the cross to suffer the death, punishment and curse of sin due to fallen humanity as the penalty for sin. A systematic theology lecturer with the COCIN theological seminary adds that:

The penal understanding that we have adapted as a church and that is being taught to students in this seminary follows that of John Calvin. Penal substitution is based on the fact that Jesus by dying on the cross Jesus took away our sins and instead of us dying Jesus took our place (Pokol 12 January 2017).

The interviews confirmed that the COCIN's concept of penal substitution theory taught to students in the seminary is a transplantation of John Calvin's theology. According to Kadai (1999:177), this understanding of the penal substitution theory is just a part of the understanding on the atoning work of Christ which was conceptualised to address a particular context. The relevance of the cross should not be limited. It is meant to speak to every human situation (1999:178). Accordingly, the African symbolic hermeneutical

critique seeks to translate this doctrine from the perspective of a Euro-centric judicial interpretation of punishment and retribution to a notion that speaks about love and forgiveness (Kolb 2003:466). Based on the contemporary understanding as spelled out in section 1.6.2., the COCIN's understanding of the PST seems not to take into account the violent context of Jos and lacks the life-giving praxis to unearth its ecclesial doctrine (Ukpong 2001:17).

It was argued in the focus group discussions that the significance of the theory based on the COCIN understanding gives confidence and makes one guiltless because the theory entails that Jesus took upon himself what was fallen humankind's due. It was a payment for the penalty for the sin of humanity (Dalyop 31 January 2017). However, one of the executive church leaders and a lecturer argued that the COCIN leaders and lecturers are faced with the challenge on how this doctrine that is originally Western can be transmitted within the African context and particularly in the context of systemic and symbolic violence. According to them, the use of the word 'punishment' which is used to describe Jesus' substitutionary atonement needs to be reinterpreted from the missionary colonial understanding into the African cultural experience (Pokol 12 January 2017). As pointed in the literature on the PST, Ben Pug (2015), Baker and Green (2011) and Ekem (2005:5), who are considered the key scholars that underpins the contemporary understanding of the atonement has argued that the concept of the penal substitution theory can best be understood within the African context if emphasis is laid on reconciliation as the product that removed the estrangement posed by human sin so that humankind can once again live in peace not only with God, the Creator, but also with each other. One research respondent thus stated:

You know that the COCIN believes in this doctrine of the penal code. As an evangelical church, you know if you come from a legalistic background as some of the missionaries came from a background of community with oriented thinking affected the interface with culture. The penal code came in and you can see how the missionaries were legalistic in some areas. The lens and the mind in which we understand are different. The gospel came in the culture of the gospel bearers, carried some of their own cultural things and might not be aware using their culture to influence us (Dashan 31 January 2017).

This response suggests that the way in which the concept under consideration was transmitted into the missional identity of the COCIN does not seem to take into account the cultural experiences, pluralistic and violent context of Jos. In developing a hermeneutical method of doing theology in the contemporary Africa, Ukpong (2000:17) establishes a contextual perspective that focuses on incarnating the finished work of Christ as it encounters the reader in her or his context.

A further respondent claimed that the COCIN is still struggling to articulate this doctrine which was constructed within a highly legalistic context and had it transmitted into the African context that is pluralistic in nature (Dashan 31 January 2017). The struggle according to this respondent is how the penal substitution theory as an integral part of the doctrine of the atonement can be understood and practiced by the COCIN taking into consideration the African cultural life experience (Dashan 31 January 2017). This corresponds with Bate's understanding on life experience and its role in understanding religio-cultural and socio-political situation among a group of people (2002:12).

Although the penal substitution theory was constructed from within a Western context (Baker and Green 2011), two COCIN executives expressed the opinion that by considering the practice of animal substitutionary sacrifice in ATR, the understanding of Christ's substitutionary atonement would become easier to articulate within the framework of the African context. One research respondent thus articulated:

When the missionaries came although meeting their host communities in different cultures, the missionaries may not find it difficult because God had revealed Himself to people of different cultures. And the Gospel came to us and was related to our cultures most especially (Jimra 01 February 2017).

In the light of the biblical narrative of Abraham sacrificing his son, a COCIN clergyperson during an in-depth individual interview stated that COCIN understanding takes root in God's provision of a substitutionary lamb for Isaac's life (Mangkam 30 January 2017). For this respondent, this event serves as an OT typological narrative for the COCIN to understand the penal substitution theory as transmitted by the

missionaries. The research respondents seemed to put more emphasis on sacrifice as the aspect that constitutes the penal substitution theory. However, the interpretation of the atoning work of Christ as a sacrifice for sin according to Anthony Bartlett (2011) Baker and Green (2011) and McGrath (2004:411) should be seen from the perspective of the initiator, God, who's love exposed the violent act of the fallen humankind, transcends the idea of sacrifice and exposes the violent act of the fallen humankind. Hence, it was more of an offering for sin because Jesus wilfully offered his life to save fallen humanity. In order to inculturate the penal substitution theory, this study engaged with the Pyem notion *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, a religio-cultural experience which expresses peace, love and forgiveness between two warring communities. Although sacrifice was an integral part of the notion, what it represents has the capacity to engender peace and reconciliation (Bida 16 November 2017).

Two research respondents argued that the concept of the atonement under consideration should be seen in the light of the OT concept of the atonement which entails that every sin or commission is liable to be punished (Kangdim 16 January 2017; Sagai 19 February 2017). Following the OT understanding, one of the respondents went on to argue that Jesus was technically punished because God could not allow sin to go unpunished. Therefore, as taught by the missionaries, the COCIN understanding also claims that sin of whatever nature must be punished. Within the feminist perspective, the idea of Jesus been punished to redeem the fallen humanity is tantamount to child abuse (Ray 1998:52). However, this present study has argued that this assertion could be due to the retributive nuances expressed in the penal substitution theory (Pugh 2015:154-155).

In his attempt to present a non-violent understanding of the penal substitution theory, Weaver draws attention to peace which according to him is what constitutes the atoning work of Christ on the cross. In affirming this understanding, Weaver states that:

The gospel of peace is not a gospel if it does not make peace. It is time for Christians to give greater credence to the non-violence peace-oriented message of Jesus and to proclaim the peace of Christ without compromise or qualification "Peace on earth, good to all people" sang the angels in announcing the birth of Jesus. That is the message I suggest Christians are called to proclaim in words and in deeds (2013:186).

The OT concept of the atonement understood by the research participants seems to project sacrifice as the dominant element of the penal substitution theory as understood by the COCIN. This becomes relevant because the concept of animal sacrifice forms part of the symbolic cultural experiences within the African context and can thus serve as a meaningful resource towards offering a missio-cultural understanding of the penal substitution theory that can equip the COCIN in its quest to offer a more life-giving response to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

In the focus group discussions, two students of the COCIN theological seminary responded that although John Calvin emphasised Jesus' death as punishment for sin, what was in the mind of God they argued, was not intended to punish Jesus. Jesus' death should not be seen as punishment because Jesus died willingly and not forcefully (James 01 February 2017; Williams 01 February 2017). The understanding of the penal substitution theory as pointed by these two respondents seems to suggest the need to avoid terms that may misrepresent Christ willingness in his atoning work. As pointed out by McGrath (2004:411-412), to use terms such as offering needs to be further explored because it gives an impression of Christ's willingness to die. It is for this reason that this study used culturally-familiarised terms within the African culture as mediums through which the willingness embedded in the penal substitution theory can be expressed in the context of violence in Jos (Bujo 2015:72). As developed by the Protestant reformers, Luther and Calvin, this theory was heavily influenced by the sixteenth-century legalistic context of Western Europe. Generally, if people are asked to voice their opinion about a particular event they may differ. Accordingly, Luther and Calvin and others have constructed this theory based on their cultural, contextual and theological backgrounds. As another research participant was to confirm:

If Calvin was in Jos he would have used a different perspective to articulate this theory. If John Calvin would have been in our context today he would have reshaped his own theology. The limitation in John Calvin's penal substitution theory is that it failed to look at God's love for humanity. The penal substitution theory should be viewed in the picture of God's sacrificial love and not in the picture of punishment. If it were a punishment, can we then say that Jesus was a criminal? Therefore, this theory needs to be reshaped (Istifanus 16 January, 2017).

This response seems to reveal the challenge face by the COCIN clergy in trying to re-conceptualise this doctrine in the violent context of Jos. The emphasis on love and forgiveness by this respondent seems to reflect the WCC's concept of peace. Christ's violent death on the cross according to WCC consensus on overcoming violence is interpreted as God's new perspective of overcoming violence by love and forgiveness (WCC 2011:32). It can thus be argued that the conceptual framework on peacebuilding as proposed by the WCC corresponds with contextual theology being one of the theories that undergirds this study.

It is for this reason that this research study utilises contextual theology as one of the theories which according to Bevan's theory of contextual theology postulates a practice of theology that takes into account the Christian message, the church's missional identity, the culture in which one is theologising, and the social change within the culture (1992:10). The perspective of Hewitt (2012:17) on church and culture also offers a missio-cultural approach that equips the missional identity of the church to consider human experience within a particular context as a basis for reflecting on the Christian message with the aim of conversing with a particular human situation. Such new understandings of the Christian message can then be realised only when enough space is given for a cultural expression of faith that reveals God within a given context (2012:17). Calvin, as one of the developers of the penal substitution theory, was fully influenced by the time and context in which he lived, characterised as it was by a developed Western judicial system (Lenman and Packer 1993:140). This is evident in the so-called five points of Calvinism (TULIP), where he tried to present an atoning work of Christ that excludes the non-elect of God (Parks 2015:30-31). The African symbolic hermeneutical perspective used in this present study challenges the COCIN missional identity to engage with relevant African religio-cultural symbols that can serve as a medium that can express the theory under consideration within Jos which can embrace all people irrespective of their faith affiliation.

These responses from the research participants indicate the need for doing theology that takes into account the context in which one is theologising (Pears 2010:1). Hence, the penal substitution theory should only be articulated within the context of Jos if the missional identity of the COCIN engages with the people's cultural experience and is used as a resource to reconceptualise the doctrine of the atonement. In failing to offer

such a contextual recasting of the doctrine, the COCIN will fail to provide a life-giving response to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

During a focus group discussion among the clergy, the majority of participants gave a personal evaluation of the understanding of the penal substitutionary doctrine of the atonement as taught in the COCIN. They responded that it is difficult to understand the doctrine under consideration because people may likely think that because Christ took our punishment freely, they can live loosely. For example, one research participant stated that:

The word punishment according to me is a wrong way of describing the finished work of Jesus on the cross. Punishment sounds too negative for that kind of loving kind of Jesus act. The use of the word punishment may likely be misinterpreted to mean God punished himself. Therefore, this theory is problematic. This is the reason why theologians are trying to engage with the context in order to articulate these missionary colonial concepts that are foreign to us and are not making any sense to our people (Pokol 12 January 2017).

According to the majority of respondents, if this theory is to be explained in the African context, it will be difficult to understand because the idea of someone being punished on behalf of someone else will not make much sense in the African context. The idea of love and pardon can serve as a better medium to communicate the concept within the context of Jos. Nevertheless, one respondent argued that the idea of someone dying on behalf of another is embedded in the African context (Mancha 31 January 2017). The sacrifice of animals and human beings as substitution for the gods might be prevalent in some cultures in Africa. Therefore, this study seeks to use religious and cultural experiences within the African milieu that cannot negate the central doctrines of Christianity, but nevertheless make them more accessible (Bediako 1995:110).

In drawing attention to the contemporary understanding of the penal substitution theory, Buthelli (2015:782-783) proposes the idea of selfless love as a transforming medium of incarnating the finished work of Jesus on the cross for peacebuilding in most African countries where threats to life are experienced on an alarming rate. In his examination

of other contemporary understandings of the penal substitution theory, Pugh (2015:154) further argues that contemporary theologians should try to remove any retributive tendencies from the penal substitution theory in order to provide a nonviolence atonement which stresses that the death of Christ was a nonviolent, non-resistive act against evil. Bartlett further argued that *Satyagraha*, the nonviolent philosophy of M. K. Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jnr., and Desmond Mpilo Tutu is a means of overcoming evil, without committing murder. That was how God through Christ conquered evil by exposing it in all human cultures. In this way, the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective used in this present study aims at postulating an understanding of the penal substitution theory that takes root in the people's cultural experience in the context of violence in Jos.

7.3.1. The tenets of the penal substitution theory

One of the emerging sub-themes from the research data is the tenets of the doctrine under consideration. It emerged as a response to the research question that aimed to ascertain the COCIN understanding and practice of the doctrine in the context of violence. One research participant reported that the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as propounded by Calvin consists of the following components:

Jesus Christ been a humble person, Jesus Christ being willing and obedient to the Father and obedience should be considered as the major component of this theory. If Jesus didn't obey the Father and was not willing to live his glory to come to our situation, even if he die several times that message of representation will not be there. Once these are removed from the theory you have nothing left (Pokol 12 January 20017).

Another research participant reported that although this concept of the atonement is constituted by forgiveness, the elements of sin and punishment were more pronounced by the missionaries who founded the COCIN (Kangdim 16 January 2017). Based on the COCIN understanding, a ministerial student in the focus group discussion argued that redemption serves an integral component of the penal substitutionary theory

because Christ's death is a price paid to satisfy God's justice. The components as relayed by the research respondents give attention to the context in which this theory was constructed. According therefore to Pugh (2015:74), the context that shaped Calvin's development of the theory was fully conversant with his Geneva context that was characterised by criminal justice. Influenced by this context, Calvin's interpretation of the finished work of Christ on the cross portrays God as an avenging judge who would not suffer his law to be violated without it being accounted for (2015:67).

During a focus group discussion, one research respondent made the following statement:

Ultimately the love and grace of God are the components of the concept under consideration (Goshit 19 February 2017).

During one of the in-depth individual interviews, another research participant responded that reconciliation is one of the components of the penal substitution theory. During a focus group discussion among the COCIN clergy, the statement was made that, "*sin, punishment, God's love and justice, sacrifice and forgiveness*" (Datongs 01 February 2017) were the tenets that constitute the COCIN understanding of the penal substitution theory. The mention of different components by this respondent suggests that this theory may not be adequately understood and appropriated in the COCIN due to contextual differences and therefore needs to be re-examined by using the cultural experiences of the people within the context of Jos.

7.3.2. The significance of the penal substitution theory

From the in-depth and focus group interviews, another emerging sub-theme from the data generated was the significance of the penal substitution theory among COCIN members (Talwa 01 February 207). According to a lay member during one of the focus group discussions, the doctrine demonstrated God's love through Christ's death on the cross, which served as substitute for human sin. Therefore, as Christ loves humanity, so human beings should love one-another (Rhoda 08 January 2017). Another member of the COCIN laity was to state that "*the significance of the theory to my faith is that it helps me consider the interest of others first*" (Ezekiel 08 January 2017), while another respondent stated that "*the significance of the penal substitution theory to me is*

measured not only by my understanding of it but how I practice it” (Ishaya 01 February 2017). This respondent went further to assert that the love of God is ultimately the cause of the atoning work of Christ and should be reflected in the Christian life as a form of reciprocity. Another of the COCIN laity stated that, *“the penal substitution theory teaches me not to pay evil for evil”* (Adamu 08 January 2017). The substitutionary death of Christ on the cross represents the price paid for the penalty for violating God’s law. Consequent to the removal of the estrangement which was the result of the imputed sin of humankind, humankind is reconciled to God (Selbol 19 January 2017). Christ’s substitutionary death teaches that those who have faith in the finished work of Christ should consider the interests of others and carry each other’s burdens. (Ezekiel 08 January 2017).

Christ’s death is significant because it teaches that Christians should not pay evil with evil, rather they should love, forgive and be humble. The significance of the penal substitution theory as described by the research participants seemed to follow Calvin’s view which states that Christ’s death was a punishment for sin (Pugh 2015:80). Considering the interest of others first and not returning evil for evil can be a better way of responding to the systemic violence in Jos. However, it can be more life-giving if consideration is given to the cultural experiences of the people within Jos and how it can be used as a resource for articulating the penal substitution theory in the context of Jos. Taking into account the religio-cultural nature of the violence in Jos, this study seeks to postulate an African model that finds its expression through the cultural experiences of the people in Jos.

The responses on the significance of the penal substitution theory, affirm the COCIN’s adoption of this concept as one of the ecclesial doctrines as assimilated and evolved within the church. However, the continual violence and the critique on the COCIN’s response to the violence in Jos (Higazi 2011:17) reveals that the understanding and significance of this theory has the capacity to equip the missional identity of the COCIN especially if it is seen in practice. It is for this reason, this present study seeks not only to critique the COCIN understanding, but also examine how it can promote peace in the context of the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

7.4. The medium of transmitting the penal substitution theory

This section concerns the medium of transmitting the penal substitution theory into the missional identity of the COCIN which emerged as a theme from the relevant research data. The thoughts expressed by the respondents corresponds with one of the objectives that seeks to explore the medium through which the founding missionaries transmitted the doctrine under consideration to the COCIN.

The transmission of the penal substitution theory according to one of the respondents, engaged with the challenge of language and cultural barriers. He stated that:

The interface of culture was affected because the missionaries came from a legalistic background with oriented thinking and because. The transmission which was supposed to be done using the language and culture of the indigenous people was transmitted through the culture and language of the Western missionaries (Dashan 31 January 2017).

Although at some point the missionaries tried to learn the indigenous language, it was not effective. They had to employ the assistance of the indigenous people to serve as translators of their gospel message (Dashan 31 January 2017). The assistance rendered by the indigenous people denotes that for Christianity to be understood and practiced within a particular context, its appropriation has to take root in the symbolic religio-cultural experience of a particular people. Shorter (1988:22) contends that the Christian message can only find expression when it is transmitted within the cultural context of a particular people. The view raised by this respondent corresponds with Nden's contribution on how the missionaries encountered the indigenous people in Langtang (2013:56). Due to cultural and language barriers, indigenous people were employed to serve as intermediaries between the missionaries and the indigenous people (2013:56). Another respondent added that, whereas, the missionaries represented Christ's incarnation by identifying with the tribes in North Central Nigeria, the medium of transmission was a great challenge not only to them but the indigenous people as well. Responding to a question on how the doctrine of penal substitution was transmitted to the missional identity of the COCIN, the respondent added that one of the mediums of transmitting the Christian message was through individual and house-to-house

witnessing (Godeh 24 January 2017). Yet another research participant expressed the view that for the transmission of this doctrine to be effective, attention would have to be given to the language and culture of the people:

The communicator goes down to the level of the person he or she is communicating to...You must reach out the penal substitution theory in their term not on your term. You are to communicate the penal substitution theory in their language not in your language, in their culture not in your culture (Dashan 31 January 2017).

Sanneh (1989:5), in his theory of translatability asserts that the place of language and culture as a symbolic medium of transmitting the Christian message should not be compromised. While his concept of translatability advances the ordinary translation of the Bible into the language of the recipient, a competent translation should also focus on engaging with the culture of a particular individual through language. Sanneh thus states that, “when the missionaries adapted the language it was tantamount to adapting indigenous cultural criteria for the message, a piece of radical indigenisation” (1989:5). It can thus be argued that, although language and culture were used as mediums of communicating the penal substitution theory by the missionaries, it cannot be fully understood by the indigenous people unless it is communicated in their language and culture. This can only be fully achieved if it is transmitted by the indigenous people themselves.

This experience affirms the importance of culture in the process of translating Christianity as posited by Bediako (1995:109). Apart from cultural and language barriers that hamper the smooth transmission of this concept of the atonement, a research participant reported how legalistic the missionaries were in the process of transmitting this concept on the finished work of Christ on the cross. This is evident in the way the missionaries enacted laws that were repugnant to the religion and culture of the indigenous people of North Central Nigeria. The research participant further stated how new converts were asked to divorce their second and third wives for the sake of holiness. In addition, they were not allowed to use traditional drums and attend traditional festivals. Many new converts who were asked to divorce their second and third wives alternatively embraced Islam which allows the practice of polygamy

(Mohzo 02 February 2017). The resultant contextual clash may be attributed to the context in which the penal substitution theory was constructed and developed. This is highlighted in Pugh's claim on the legalistic context from which the doctrine under consideration evolved (2015:67).

Emerging from the data, other modes of transmitting the penal substitution theory include the Bible, which is considered by the COCIN to be the God-inspired, inerrant, Word of God. The Bible emerged as one of the mediums through which this concept of the doctrine of the atonement was transmitted into the missional identity of the COCIN. Although religious, language and cultural differences existed between the Western missionaries and indigenous people seemed to hamper the understanding of the Word of God, yet the Bible remains the final authority in faith and practice (Datiri 02 February 2017). This is enshrined in the present COCIN Constitution and is viewed as one of its central doctrinal beliefs (COCIN 2001 Article V). The Bible that was used as the medium of transmission of the doctrine under consideration presupposes that it has to be read, explained and understood by the recipients (i.e., evangelisation through education). Therefore, it cannot be understood and practiced unless it is read and explained in the language and culture of its audience. Nthamburi (1998:13) argues that Christianity can appeal to the African soul only if it is expressed through the religio-cultural experience of its audience. This means that whereas the penal substitution theory is authenticated by the Bible, it remains blurred and cannot appeal to the indigenous people in Jos unless it is expressed through their language and cultural experiences. African symbolic hermeneutics as an ongoing hermeneutical phenomenon is thus employed by this study to reshape the penal substitution theory constructed within a Euro-centric cultural and legalistic context into a more African religio-cultural context. This present study thus argues that an African symbolic hermeneutics assessment can equip the COCIN to respond to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos.

The research findings also projected other media for the transmission of this concept of the atonement. One of the research participants reported that when the SUM missionaries came under the leadership of Kumm, apart from the Bible they had large and small hoes that religio-culturally symbolised agricultural activity. According to the same respondent, these hoes became a medium of instruction because farming was part

of the vocation of the indigenous population. As a result, many embraced the new Christian religion. Furthermore, the missionaries offered social services such as hospitals, dispensaries and schools which served centre-stage in transmitting the doctrine under consideration. Because of the need for medical services and education among the indigenous people many through this medium embraced Christianity (Betle 21 February 2017). In her contribution to the history of the COCIN and the establishment of hospitals dispensaries and other social services by the missionaries, Lere (2013:172) has noted that their central aim and objective was to offer a holistic Christian message to the indigenous people.

The media through which the penal substitution theory was transmitted advances many additional questions regarding the understanding and practice of the concept in the COCIN. Although many embraced the Christian message through different methods of communication, it calls into question the following:

- i. From its inception, the doctrine was constructed from a Euro-centric context and transmitted into a context that was multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and multi-religious.
- ii. Within this contextual clash, how can the audience understand this doctrine?
- iii. The transmission of the doctrine within the religio-cultural context of Jos had to cope with language, cultural and contextual barriers as the missionaries encountered the indigenous people.
- iv. Based on these findings the translation of the doctrine into the cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group was based on the missionaries' experiences, rather than the local people.

The institutional medium of transmitting the penal substitution theory that is formally used is the COCIN theological seminary (Gindiri Theological Seminary). Based on the research findings, the theological seminary serves an integral part of the present study because it bears a major responsibility for the curriculum content as well as the teaching methods employed and the extent to which they enhance the African symbolic

hermeneutical process of re-interpretation of the penal substitution theory that takes into account the religio-cultural context of Jos.

7.4.1. The COCIN Theological Seminary as medium of transmission

The COCIN theological seminary is one of the central theological institutions used to equip the clergy leadership to face the contemporary challenges within the communities they serve. In this work, the COCIN theological seminary is considered as the medium through the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement is officially interpreted and transmitted to the clergy leaders. In order to examine whether the curriculum development of the seminary takes into account the religio-cultural, socio-political, systemic and symbolic violence, the research questions sought to generate responses on the hermeneutical interpretation and methods used in transmitting this theory during training of the COCIN clergy leaders.

From the research findings, the curriculum content of the COCIN theological seminary emerged as an important theme. Through the research participant responses, this study examined the current curriculum of the seminary to show whether the developing process takes into account the contemporary challenges with particular attention to the violence in Jos.

According to one of the research respondents, the curriculum content of the COCIN theological seminary (Gindiri theological seminary) is a replica of the Western missionary curriculum developed within a European context where the population had never experienced the kind of systemic violence as Jos. It was evident that the seminary still clamours for Western perspectives and ninety percent of the theological books in the library are written by authors from the West. The research participant went on to state:

We need to conceptualise these Western concepts and turn them into our own local terms. We need a contextual bible study so that people are able to contextualise those American concepts into real African concepts (Pokol 12 January 2017).

The research respondent further stated that the curriculum did not really deal with issues that concern the religio-cultural context of Jos. Instead, the respondent attributed the maintenance of the Western system of knowledge by the indigenous theological seminary to the impression of religio-cultural supremacy expressed against the African religion and culture (Pokol 12 January 2017).

The transmission of the penal substitution theory using this curriculum as reported by the research participants needs to be re-examined. This can only be achieved by developing an afro-centric perspective that takes into account the African religio-cultural experience. Only then will a better translation of the penal substitution theory emerge that can communicate a deeper and relevant meaning system to the people within Jos. In his work, Bediako (1995:3) highlights the importance of translatability as an element of African symbolic hermeneutics. For him, the growth of Christianity within the African religio-cultural context depends largely on whether the method used in transmitting the Western-influenced system of knowledge gives attention to the African culture. Bearing in mind that this theory was constructed in a context entirely different from Jos, emphasis must be put on love and not punishment because that is what the theory intended for humankind from its inception.

At whatever point this theory can be reinterpreted and transmitted in the COCIN, it must be based on the context that one is theologising within (Dami 16 January 2017; Gurumse 16 January 2017). Another research participant reported that the curriculum of the theological seminary needs to engage with African culture that teaches forgiveness and love within the warring communities in Jos. According to the respondent, this can be more appealing to the people because it will be translated through their symbolic religio-cultural experiences (Rifkatu 16 January 2017). Taking into consideration the need to express this theory from the religio-cultural experience of a particular people, this study seeks to postulate a more appealing concept within the Pyem ethnic group by utilising their cultural experience on their understanding of God in relation to developing peace within warring communities. A ministerial student in one of the group discussions contended that the seminary only taught about the Western origins and understandings of the penal substitution theory, but little was offered as to how it could be reinterpreted in the conflictual context of Nigeria (Abalis 16 January 2017). Another research participant expressed the opinion that the reason why little was

offered as to how the theory could be translated into the local context was because contextual theology was not taught as a specific course in the seminary (Williams 16 January 2017). A clergyperson in one of the group discussions further contended that the terms used for constructing the theory became difficult to explain to lay members in the Nigerian context. After providing an example of someone who responded to this theory after preaching, the respondent quoted the man saying, “*You are saying I should accept him because He died for me, after all I didn’t ask him to die for me. It is his choice*” (Musa 16 January 2017)

From the above discussion, this study argues that the theological seminary, which is still being used as medium for transmitting this concept of the atonement, may need to be assessed if the understanding and practice of the penal substitutionary theory of the atonement is to be proved viable in contributing to peacebuilding in the violent context of Jos. The Western system of education bequeathed by the missionaries for transmitting this concept of the atonement needs to be transformed with a hermeneutical interpretation that is Afro-centric. This study thus argues that this can only be realised if the curriculum content gives attention to the religio-cultural, socio-political, systemic and symbolic violence in communities where the COCIN functions, such as in Jos, Plateau State.

7.5. The praxis of the penal substitution theory

Emerging from the generated data is the theme which focuses on the contextual translation of the penal substitution theory by the COCIN in Jos. According to the responses, its praxis is viewed within the pluralistic context of Jos. Therefore, while responding to the question as to whether COCIN members have put into practice this church doctrine in the context of Jos, one research participant reported that:

The understanding of this theory is narrow in the COCIN and is not explained and because the understanding is narrow the practice is also narrow. There is lack of forgiveness among Christians in the COCIN. Sometimes we want to retaliate when someone does something wrong to us. We preach on condemnation and our messages are judgemental.

They don't preach on God's mercy and grace (Maiseni 25 January 2017).

According to the research participant, the practice of the penal substitution theory by the COCIN does not offer fullness of life. The lack of forgiveness among Christians in the COCIN, as well as the retaliatory attitude among Christians and judgemental approach in communicating this doctrine may be attributed to the triumphalist presentation of the Christian message by its founding Western missionaries (Rengshwat 2012:80). Is this because the doctrine is not well-preached and taught in the seminary, or the lecturers and the clergy are not experts in transmitting the doctrine? It can be argued that the doctrine may be well-preached and taught by the clergy and lecturers but still may not be understood by the general clergy leadership and by extension the lay members of the COCIN because the hermeneutical interpretation did not take into consideration the context and cultural experiences of the people to whom it was preached.

In drawing attention to the African symbolic hermeneutics of incarnation, Megasa (2004:137) has argued that the finished work of Christ can be better understood and practiced within a particular context if there is a relationship between the Christian faith as preached and practiced, and the people's way of life that is embedded in the cultural structures within the country. One research participant was to argue that while Christians pontificate on theory and practice, practice should go ahead of theory (Pokol 12 January 2017). The respondent further contended that members of the COCIN were supposed to embrace everyone, including loving their enemies and having respect for the other. However, some members of the COCIN seem to practice an ego-centric religion rather than being spirituality informed by an obedience to Christ that calls for loving God and one's neighbour.

One respondent reported that the bitterness, rancour, and hatred experienced among some clergy and members of the COCIN confirmed that the church itself needs peace and if there is no peace in the hearts of its leaders then there will be no peace in the home, church, and the larger community (Lani 21 February 2017). According to the respondent, sectionalism, nepotism and tribalism is rife among some clergy and

members suggest that the interests of the other is often not considered important. In this regard, a participant in a focused group discussion stated that:

For me violence should be seen in two categories. There is violence outside and within the church. Within the COCIN there is violence of discrimination through tribal and ethnic differences. The expression of love in the COCIN is more theory than practice (Dimlong 19 January 2017).

What is described by these respondents indicates that violence either in the church or in the context of Jos is both systemic and symbolic, since discrimination on ethnic, tribal and religious grounds seeks to deny fullness of life. Another participant responded that the life of sacrifice and love are not well-practiced by COCIN members in the context of Jos. The penal substitution theory which presupposes love seems to have been replaced by hatred and selfishness among COCIN indigenous Christians and towards the people of other faiths (Yusuf 31 January 2017).

The irregularity in the practice of this doctrine by the COCIN can be attributed not only to the lack of adequate understanding of the doctrine of penal substitutionary atonement, but also the religio-cultural, socio-political systemic and symbolic violence-filled context of Jos may be other important factors responsible for the malpractice. This may likely occur when the penal substitution theory is practiced by the COCIN consequent to ethnic, political, social and political affiliations. While highlighting the remote causes of the violence in Jos, Mwadkwon (2001:57) has asserted that the lack of peace and the continual violence in Jos is due to unresolved religious, ethnic, economic and political conflicts. It can also be argued that the medium through which this concept was transmitted from the beginning seems not to take root in the context and cultural experience of the people that are embedded in the cultural symbols that serve as carriers of how life is understood within the African context (Mbiti 1991:25).

7.6. Views on the reconceptualisation of the penal substitution theory

One of the objectives of this study is to examine how African symbolic hermeneutics can help reconstruct the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement in a way that can be more appealing to the religio-cultural, socio-political, systemic and

symbolic violence-filled context of Jos. Emerging from the data is the need for the COCIN's missional identity to engage with its lived-context in re-interpreting the penal substitution theory. Attention should also be given to always be contextually conscious in the method used in transmitting the doctrine during leadership formation at the COCIN theological seminary.

While pointing out the challenge of understanding the penal substitution theory during the Western missionary encounter with the indigenous people, one of the participants reported that the Christian message came in the culture of its message bearers, the missionaries, who's Western cultural experiences were different from the African religio-cultural experience. If therefore the COCIN clergy and members find it difficult to understand this church doctrine, then the cultural differences should be seen as one of the challenging factors. However, since the penal substitution theory speaks of Christ's death as a bridge to reconcile God and humanity, then the Christian message cannot be totally separated from culture. It is thus imperative that the penal substitution theory be legitimately expressed through the symbolic cultural experiences of the ethnic groups within Jos as a facilitating medium for reconciliation (Dashan 31 January 2017).

The concept of sacrifice is part of what constitutes the religio-cultural understanding of how the relationship between humankind and the Supreme Being and between humankind itself and can be restored (Jimra 01 February 2017). These imperatives form part of the African symbolic hermeneutical process where the African understanding about God in relation to the universe calls for participation in the welfare of the community through animal sacrifice offered to the Supreme Being by violators. In his concept of African ethics, Bujo (2015:81) asserts that humanity is connected to the cosmos. While humanity seeks good relations with the Supreme Being, the welfare of the community is one of the top priorities of each individual member (2015:81). The use of symbols in OT sacrifice can be compatible with the African cultural symbols of sacrifice. For Ukpong, these OT concepts and symbols can provide important entry points in bringing the message of the finished work of Christ into the African context. Ukpong attributes this hermeneutic dimension to the compatibility of the Hebrew religio-cultural experience with African culture (2000:7). Contextualisation according to one of the research respondents began in heaven and not on earth. Through Christ's incarnation, God identified with the human context. He further argues that if the

missionaries had not acknowledged the need to engage the local indigenes in the transmission of the Christian message, then their response would have been insignificant (Danfulani 12 January 2017). Another research participant therefore called for the re-conceptualisation of this theory through engaging with the culture of the African people (Pokol 12 January 2017).

The questions raised by these respondents focused on how the doctrine under discussion can be contextualised, understood and practiced within the systemic and symbolic violence in the context of Jos. The argument on the use of judicial terms such as punishment as pointed out by one respondent, suggests that this theory may make sense to a context characterised by systems of justice, but not for a context such as Jos. Consideration must thus be given to the religio-cultural, socio-political, systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. This study therefore argues that the retaliatory tendencies as captured in the synopsis on how the COCIN responds to the violence in Jos might be ascribed to the inadequate understanding of the church doctrine due to contextual irrelevance.

From the broader African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework, this study utilises the contextual theology of Bevans (1992:10) as a theory that undergirds how the practice of theology can be viable if it takes root in the context of the one theologising. Therefore, the African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework employed by this study becomes relevant since it focuses on how this theory can be reshaped by engaging with the context and cultural experience of the multi-ethnic groups in Jos.

Following the interviews and group discussions, the need for the COCIN theological seminary to engage with the people's cultural experience through its curriculum content emerged as a theme. The data suggests that understanding the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement by COCIN clergy and its members seems to depend on whether the theological seminary as a vehicle of transmitting this doctrine takes into account the context of Jos. This study thus argues that attention must be given to the theological seminary because clergy leaders are educated and entrusted with the responsibility of transmitting Christian doctrine to COCIN members.

In view of the religious, ethnical and cultural complexities in the context of Jos, one respondent called for the need to contextualise the Euro-Christian doctrines and turn them into African familiarised and compatible indigenous terms (Gurumse 16 January 2017). The respondent further called for the teaching of a contextual bible study method so that the clergy and its members can be equipped to contextualise foreign doctrinal notions into real African concepts. As a lecturer of the COCIN Theological seminary, one respondent reported how aspiring theologians in the seminary need to look for compatible terms in the local culture that can better communicate the deeper meaning of the penal substitution theory based on the cultural experiences of the people. This thought was echoed by another respondent:

When the missionaries came all the things about us is not good. Many concepts in the Christians faith can be articulated into our African context. Although not everything within the African context can be relevant, yet there are African concepts that are compatible with the gospel message (Dami 16 January, 2017).

The supposition made by this respondent corresponds with the SUM missionary perception about the people of the Sudan. In his effort to call for support to reach the Sudan with the Christian message, Kumm described the Sudan and its people as living in the land of darkness (1907:15). This notwithstanding, an objective examination of the African worldview can confirm that there are many concepts in the Christians faith that can be articulated into the African context. For example, the concepts of reconciliation and peace-making are symbolically relevant to the African concept of sacrifice and communal living (Ramose 2012:37).

The research findings reveal attempts by the COCIN theological seminary to engage with the culture within Jos as a method to incarnate Christian doctrines to better appeal to African indigenous people within their context. While pointing out the ineffectiveness of Western systems of transmission within indigenous theological seminaries, one research participant reported that most of the theological books and literature are written by Westerners embedded in their culture and transmitted through the Western perspective. However, due to contemporary challenges in applying the Western-oriented Christian doctrines, partial attempts have been made. The respondent

went on to cite the example of an indigenous man whom after watching the Jesus Film which had been translated into the Berom language exclaimed that Jesus spoke in the Berom language! (Chagumi 31 January 2017). This analogy entails how effective and relevant it is to transmit the Christian message in the language of the recipient. Magesa (2004) thus asserts that there are cultural terms within African languages which symbolically express God identifying with humankind in their context, as for example, the term *umwilisho*, which in Swahili refers to “God becoming one like us” (2004:37). The African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework used in this study takes root in cultural symbols that express peace among warring communities in Jos.

The research problem of this study interrogated the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN and the likelihood of exacerbating the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. It is for this reason that the key research question seeks to examine to what extent cultural experience within the ethnic groups in Jos could be re-expressed to equip the COCIN to respond to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. The interviews conducted among the Pyem ethnic group pointed to an African philosophy as an African model for the penal substitution theory that could contribute towards building peace in Jos. The model emanated from the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem people which symbolically represents peace, sacrifice, and love for the community and future generations. This will be discussed in detail in the chapter which follows.

7.7. Chapter summary

This chapter focused on the presentation and analysis of the relevant data generated from the interviews conducted within the COCIN members in the Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria. The chapter argued that in order to ensure diversity in experiences shared by the respondents, the sampling of participants was heterogeneous. From the research findings, this chapter identified how a cross-section of the COCIN members understands and practices the penal substitution theory in the light of its missionary heritage and the extent to which this concept of the atonement is understood and practiced in the systemic and symbolic violent context of Jos. The research data revealed the media through which this concept was transmitted to the indigenous people and the call for the African symbolic hermeneutical re-interpretation of the penal

substitution theory that can appeal to the religio-cultural experiences of the people in Jos. The contentious atmosphere in Jos and the religio-cultural and socio-political factors that have contributed to the state of systemic and symbolic context of Jos were identified and critiqued.

The next chapter contains a presentation and analysis of the responses of the COCIN members from Pyem ethnic group and how their cultural experience can serve as a medium through which the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN can contribute to peacebuilding in the systemic and symbolic violence-filled context of Jos.

CHAPTER EIGHT

POSTULATING AN ALTERNATIVE AFRICAN MODEL OF THE PENAL SUBSTITUTION THEORY

8.1. Introduction

Through the African Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war,” this chapter aims at postulating an alternative African model of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement that can better equip the missional identity of the COCIN to offer a more life-giving response to the religio-cultural, socio-political and violent context of Jos. This alternative model presupposes that the Western-derived understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory as a church doctrine of the COCIN does not seem to have the deep capacity to engender peace in the context of Jos that is plagued with systemic and symbolic violence. The assertion is based on the Euro-centric epistemology identified within the context in which the church doctrine was constructed and bequeathed by the COCIN missionary heritage. Following this presupposition, this study has observed how, due to contextual, religious and cultural barriers, this doctrine was uncritically embraced by the indigenous people without fully understanding its implications in a multi-cultural, multi-religious, socio-political and violence context such as Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. Based upon the contemporary understanding of the classical understanding of the penal substitution theory, this study further observes that the retributive nuances contained within its Western construction, seems to have exacerbated violence especially in the context of Jos where the threat to life is alarming. This observation is further confirmed by the research findings as presented in the analysis of the relevant data generated through the empirical research conducted within the COCIN in Jos.

The re-conceptualisation of the doctrine of the penal substitutionary atonement through the broader African symbolic hermeneutics cannot be achieved without divorcing the missional identity of the COCIN. The study therefore engages the missional identity of the COCIN in order to offer a hermeneutical interpretation of the penal substitution theory that is informed by African experience embedded in their understanding about

God and the human community. As indicated in the literature review and the findings of the study, the aim of appropriating the penal substitution theory of the atoning work of Christ so as to postulate an alternative culturally-meaningful way of understanding and practicing it within the context in which it was transplanted and developed.

It is in the light of the broader African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework that dialogues between the penal substitution theory and religio-cultural context of Jos has been examined. Since this study is done in the African context, the African symbolic hermeneutics of the penal substitution theory gives attention to African symbolic hermeneutics as a missio-cultural mandate of the COCIN in the context of Jos. The African cultural symbol in the translation of Christianity from the Western worldview to the African milieu serves as components in making the doctrine under consideration more appealing to the warring ethnic groups in Jos.

Since there is no universal and static hermeneutical interpretation of Christian doctrine (Segundo 1986:65) the alternative African model of the penal substitution theory which evolved within the African cultural experience constitutes part of the contextual shift in making this ecclesial doctrine more understood and practiced within the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. It is based on an African symbolic hermeneutics that this study has employed as the perspective to appropriate the penal substitution theory into the COCIN's missional identity and vocation. This phenomenon then engages with the Pyem symbolic religio-cultural experience to offer a fresh understanding and practice of the doctrine in Jos. The chapter focuses on the notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, "the male goat that stops fighting/war," as a symbolic cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group as an African model of the penal substitution theory that represents love, tolerance and forgiveness. This chapter concludes with an analysis of its relevance in fostering the common good of the community of Jos irrespective of the religious, cultural and social diversities that have led to systemic and symbolic violence in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria.

8.2. Setting the stage for an alternative African model of the penal substitution theory

The key research question was based upon the premise of understanding Africa's God-given values as embedded in their diverse cultural heritage (Parratt 1995:206). These cultural experiences can be harnessed for understanding Christianity in Africa (1995:209). Consequently, the alternative African model of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement is not intended to be divorced from the understanding of African religio-cultural values within Jos. It also asserts that this alternate model can become a medium to express the doctrine under consideration in the violent context of Jos with its multiplicity of ethnic groups. The exploration of the African cultural experience is based on the objective of the study which seeks to ascertain how through the African symbolic hermeneutical re-conceptualisation of the penal substitution theory the missional identity of the COCIN can be equipped to respond to the violence in Jos. What necessitated the utilisation of the missional identity of the COCIN is occasioned by the understanding that it is the main practical interpretation in which the life of the church finds expression (Bosch 1991:12-13). Accordingly, the inculturation of the penal substitution theory is aimed at equipping the COCIN's missional identity to offer a more life-giving response to the religio-cultural, systemic and symbolic violent context of Jos.

8.2.1. The COCIN missional identity and vocation

The missional identity and vocation of a church is its God-giving capacity to participate in the *missio Dei* that has no boundaries and no discrimination (Bosch 1991:28). In the contemporary era, the church's missional identity is its potential to explore through the Trinitarian understanding of God's mission that seeks to identify with human situation by taking into account God's Trinitarian self-revelation as Father, Son and the Holy Spirit as a life-giving response to every threat that denies fullness of life (Keum 2012:43). It is based on the understanding that this study gives attention to the missional identity of the COCIN and how through its understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory it can respond to the contentious atmosphere in the violence-filled context of Jos.

Before the introduction of the penal substitution theory by the missionaries of the COCIN the people lived side by side, regardless of their cultural, political, ethnic and religious diversities. Later, during the colonial period, the socio-political and religious developments were partly influenced by the political and social marginalisation of the Christians by the Muslims, as facilitated by the colonial system of governance. Attempts by the Christians to resist marginalisation and domination, contributed to the fuelling of violence in the areas (Wika 2014:55). This study calls into question the COCIN's missional understanding and practice of the doctrine under consideration and how through its missional identity the church can more effectively respond to the violence in Jos (2014:55).

Part of what constitutes the vocation of the COCIN is the theological seminary that also constitutes the medium through the penal substitution theory was transmitted to the missional identity of the church by the missionaries. The continuing contemporary thrust of the COCIN to promote theological seminaries and bible schools accentuates the missional significance to train its leaders and equip them to respond to agencies that threaten life. Important to this study therefore is the task of interrogating what kind of understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory that the missionary heritage¹⁷ of the COCIN communicated and inculcated into the theological and leadership formation of the clergy and to what extent it has equipped them to respond missionally to the violent context of Jos.

8.2.2. Attempts to inculturate the penal substitution theory

One of the motivations of the study was informed by the researcher's earlier MTh. study, "A critical analysis of Christ's blood as means of protection from evil, a case study of some selected churches in Jos" (Luxman 2013:51). The findings confirmed that as one of the designated churches in Jos, the COCIN has advocated that Christ's blood (that gives fullness of life) can be sprinkled on beds, roads, houses and automobiles as a means of securing divine protection during times of violence and the

¹⁷ Missionary heritage refers to founders of the COCIN whose Western culture opposes the traditional culture that negates the Christian message of its saving power (Danfulani 2006:3). The Christian message was consequently received due to persistence by the missionaries and their vision to establish theological schools to train indigenes.

concomitant upsurge of evil forces. This understanding of the efficacy of Christ's blood and its application was based upon an understanding that overcoming evil necessitated that the atonement of Christ was appropriate to achieve victory over every form of evil. This was also regarded as an attempt to harness traditional rites of blood sacrifice in the African religio-cultural experience as a medium of expression (Pugh 2015:4).

As discussed in chapter one above, the religio-cultural response demonstrated attempts by the COCIN and other selected churches in Jos to indigenise their understanding and appropriation of the theological significance of Christ's blood. Furthermore, the COCIN as an Evangelical church is embarking on cross-cultural evangelism. This methodology was affirmed during a workshop organised for clergy-leaders and laity alike. The aim was to explore the religio-cultural experience of recipients as a medium to express the atoning work of Christ. This understanding is born out of the African theological consciousness of utilising compatible religio-cultural values as resources for doing theology (COCIN Workshop 2016).

The teaching curriculum contained within the *Information handbook of the COCIN Theological Seminary* (COCIN 2015) attempts to engage with African culture in the transmission of the doctrine under consideration (2015:57). In regard to the systematic theology department, the Information handbook states how its clergy leaders and members are conscientised on the need to explore the African worldview as an instrument for doing theology in Africa. That said, it is evident from the *Information handbook of the COCIN Theological Seminary* that little has been incorporated into the curriculum that encourages African symbolic hermeneutics as inculturation or contextual hermeneutics as a method for re-reading Western-oriented Christian theological doctrines using African symbolic cultural experience to ground the Christian message (2015:56). In light of this, the present study postulates an African symbolic hermeneutical critique of the penal substitution theory that seeks to embrace an African model within the Pyem religio-cultural experience that offers an afro-centric perspective that the COCIN can employ through its theological seminary to respond to the violence in Jos. This study argues that the viability of an alternative African model of the penal substitution theory will depend on a religio-cultural reorientation of the hermeneutic that engages with the African symbolic cultural experiences of the ethnic groups within Jos.

8.2.3. The Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* as religio-cultural experience

The key research question of this study seeks to establish the extent to which African symbolic cultural experience can be utilised as a medium through which the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN can find expression in the context of systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. In this regard, Bate (2002:17) can state:

Our human life is a life of experience. We experience the world through seeing, hearing, feeling, touching and using all of our human senses. In this way we relate to what is around us. This we call our experience. It is the first step in knowledge, understanding and wisdom.

Experience as put forward by Bate is perceived to be that part of human life that affects perception and imagination. According to him, the human senses trigger a person's sense of reasoning and perception (2002:27). The notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, "the male goat that stops fighting/war," among the Pyem ethnic group is understood to have become part of their experience. Experience, as pointed out by Bate (2002:28) is embedded in the religious and cultural consciousness that is passed from generation to generation and which thus becomes a reality of life. On the basis of this reality of life, the present study through African symbolic hermeneutics seeks to interrogate the missional identity and vocation of the COCIN to discover culturally-meaningful notions for the penal substitution theory of the atonement that can address the threats to peace within the pluralistic context of Jos. As pointed out in the literature review, the need for a culturally-familiarised notion of the penal substitution theory is necessitated by contextual and cultural differences and the retributive nuances of the theory of the atonement. The expression of these tendencies was noted in the way the missionaries transmitted the doctrine under consideration. The present study, through the concept *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* of the Pyem ethnic group uses symbolic religio-cultural experience to address how conflicts are resolved between two conflicting parties.

In his discussion of the viability of African religion to understanding Christianity in Africa, Mbiti (1969) can state that:

The man of Africa in meeting with the Christian gospel will not have very far to go before he begins to work on familiar ground.

This presupposition is based on the understanding that the idea of the Christian message is already in the fabric of African religio-cultural life experience and thus can be harnessed to make the Christian message more appealing (Bediako 1995:109).

The religious and cultural practices and particular forms of conflict resolution within the Pyem ethnic group were explored above in chapter five of this study. This section gives attention to the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war,” as a symbolic religio-cultural experience. For example, Pokol (2015:271) postulates an African model of peacebuilding by advocating the *Suum-ngi*, which translated means “origin of humanity” as medium of expression in a context characterised by cultural, ethnic, religious, and political diversity and violence. *Suum-ngi* constitutes part of the religio-cultural experience of the Kadung ethnic group in Plateau, Nigeria (2015:271). Although Pokol’s theological reflection was addressed from the perspective of church and State relationships, it nevertheless provides space for the utilisation of African religio-cultural experience as a medium for expressing Christian doctrinal concepts. Accordingly, this present study maintains that the ideological perspective of the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* is postulated as an authentic medium through which the penal substitution theory can be understood and practiced by the COCIN within the violent context of Jos.

The notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* was mentioned by members of the focus group discussion of the Pyem ethnic group.¹⁸ It emerged in response to the research question on what constitutes the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group and how it contributes to peaceful co-existence within the Pyem community. The research question further seeks to ascertain how conflicts within the Pyem ethnic group were resolved between disagreeing parties cutting across the Pyem communities.

¹⁸ Focus group discussion among Pyem ethnic group in Gindiri, Plateau State, Nigeria. Interviewed by Y. J. Luxman, 12 January 2017.

8.2.4. The Pyem system of thought

The Pyem system of thought takes root in the word *Ba-Pyem*, which is the name of the language of the Pyem people through which ideas, feelings, requests and knowledge are communicated. Symbolically, this reveals how language constitutes the way of life within any given community (Blench 2010:2). The Pyem ethnic group expresses ideas, request and knowledge through its own distinctive language and culture (Daspan 2002:1). Blench (2010:1) adds that language among the Pyem ethnic group serves as a medium for expressing matters that concern social, religious and cultural aspects of the community. Accordingly, the *Ba-Pyem* language of the Pyem ethnic group constitutes an integral part of their cultural experience, especially in times of prosperity and adversity (Daspan 2002:1-2). It can thus be argued that since the Pyem notion for peacebuilding is dialogical in nature, language serves an important role in communicating with warring communities (Bida 16 November 2017). In other words, *Ba-Pyem*, like any other language, cannot be divorced from the culture of its people. Through this cultural symbol, this present study seeks to utilise the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* in order to translate the penal substitution theory in such a way that it can offer a religio-cultural understanding for peacebuilding in the violent context of Jos.

As migrants from the far Northern part of Nigeria were forced to flee following the Islamic jihad by Othman Dan Fodio, the Pyem people have already experienced the tragedy of systemic and symbolic violence (Blench 2010:1). As pointed out in chapter four above, their subsequent settlement in the rocks and caves in a village known as Pyemdere in the present Gindiri District of Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria was born out of the consciousness of their past experience of war (Daspan 2002:3). This present study thus argues that the authenticity of the Pyem notion is not only attributed to their religio-cultural experience but also in their experience of war which has contributed in transforming their perceptions and developing their reflexive attitudes towards an African religio-cultural concept of peace. It can also be argued that the adaption of the *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* within the Pyem milieu as a distinctive peace vision and programme is embedded in their same experience of war (Daspan 2002:3).

Hospitality and tolerance is part of what informs the Pyem system of thought. The widespread knowledge about Pyem hospitality and tolerance is rooted in the religious and cultural understanding that all of humanity comes from the same source (Machunga 1964). This present study argues that although there could be other ways of justifying this presupposition, the peaceful co-existence between the Christians and Muslims among the Pyem ethnic group speaks volumes about this system of thought (Temple 1965:120). The religio-cultural experience that informs this system of thought denotes that love within the Pyem worldview is supreme (Kallamu 16 November 2017). Through this system of thought, the penal substitution theory which ultimately is an offshoot of God's love for humanity (Grudem 2000:568-569), can be expressed in the violence-filled context of Jos

8.2.5. The expression of the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*

The notion *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* is a religio-cultural experience is expressed as *do to chalai ram*, which translated means, "humanity is more important than land." *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* in the Pyem language when translated means, "the male goat that stops fighting/war" (Tafida 12 January 2017). This concept emerged out of the need to build bridges of peace between two conflicting parties. As pointed out in the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group, *Bate Ya* (i.e., intermediary persons) as expressed in the Pyem maxim during the focus group discussions, were given the responsibility to initiate dialogue and restore peace between the two conflicting parties. They were empowered by the ancestors through Bwalbwang the chief priest. Peacebuilding between two warring communities occurred on a day selected by the chief high priest in consultation with the *Bate Ya*. Kallamu (26 November 2016) maintains that while representatives from the two communities assembled, one person from each community comes forward carrying a male goat on their shoulders. Although this concept is derived from a religio-cultural experience that is different from that of Pyem, it is nevertheless relevant because it deals with an African ethic that functions in building peace between conflicting parties (Bujo 2015:83).

This symbolic cultural experience of peacebuilding suggests the extent to which it can be a medium through which the penal substitution theory can be re-expressed. In his

presentation of the role culture plays in understanding the Christian message in Africa, Mbiti can state that:

We can add nothing to the Gospel, for this is an eternal gift of God; but Christianity is always a beggar seeking food and drink, cover and shelter from the culture it encounters in the its never-ending journeys and wanderings (1970:438).

The engagement of the COCIN missional identity with the Pyem religio-cultural experience therefore offers a covenantal model of reconciliation between God and the people. The eating of the goat meat becomes a cultural symbol for peace-making that expresses God's love and forgiveness. The communal model of eating the goat meat according to the Pyem notion symbolises the end of anger, hatred, malice and bitterness within the community. Grudem (1994:200, 568). argues that the atoning work of Christ is ultimately because of God's love for fallen humanity. Through this form of African symbolic hermeneutics, Waling (2015:35) challenges the missional identity of the church in Africa to engage with compatible African traditional concepts in order to respond to injustice and threats to peace in African society.

During the focus group discussion within the Pyem group, a question was raised about the use of a male goat and not that of the female goat (Bida 12 January 2017). The response was that the use of the male goat is symbolic. The male goat according to Audu Bida (12 January 2017) is notorious and naughty and is not a respecter of female goats. It can meet with the female goat that gave birth to it and reproduce other goats. The attitude of the male goat symbolically expresses gender-based violence. Within the Pyem community, patriarchal hegemony and other forms of dehumanisation are frowned upon. Bida further explained that during inter-tribal conflicts, gender-based violence was prevalent. Violence against women was usually perpetrated by men from other warring communities. In these circumstances, the violence against women can also be symbolic since the contentious atmosphere between the warring communities is capable of inflicting patriarchal domination and fear (Kaunda 2016:4). Russo and Pilot (2006:179) assert that gender-based violence is a form of violence that is perpetrated by men against women or by women against men. These scholars add that such forms of violence can be systemic or symbolic (2006:180). Writing from the feminist perspective, Oduyoye (2003:43) has argued that the atoning work of Christ can

liberate only if women are not considered vulnerable simply because of gender difference. For example, the agitation of women for space in theological education as put forward by Phiri (2009:43) is due to patriarchal hegemony and discrimination against women in the field of theological education. Following the challenge to the church by these scholars, this study calls into question the Western-judicial understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory and its capacity to respond to gender-based violence that is mostly symbolically perpetrated.

The Pyem notion and the use of the male goat that symbolically stops fighting and war is also aimed at stopping violence against women. Recognising that violence is essentially against God, it is God as a woman who suffers from human violence and is therefore against all forces that take the lives of God's people who are created in God's image. Violence has everything to do with destroying the image of God in humanity. This is expressed in the eating of the goat meat communally by the warring communities which symbolises forgiveness and reconciliation. The nature of the male goat according to the Pyem religio-cultural experience symbolically denotes the contentious atmosphere after war between two communities and that the hatred, animosity, bitterness, anger and lack of respect to human dignity are all symbolically laid upon the male goat (Bida 12 January 2017). This symbolic expression appears to correspond with the use of the scapegoat in OT atonement. Although the goat used in the OT atonement was male or female, it was used as a sacrifice for the reconciliation between humankind and God and humankind with their neighbour (Leviticus 16:9-10). Through this compatibility, the atoning work of Christ which represents both sacrifice and offering can be expressed through this notion to respond to the violence in Jos (Finland 2000:706).

Part of what constitutes the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective is the use of symbols. African symbols are seen as media through which the African way of life is expressed (Mbiti 1997:23; Ott 2000:332). According to Arbuckle (2004), symbols can be informative, emotive and directive. In other words, symbols provoke imagination and reasoning. The eating of the male goat by the warring communities is informative and directive. It both informs and directs the conflicting communities to forgive, love and embrace one-another irrespective of their differences or failures. This also corresponds with the adage, *Do to chalai ram*, which translated means, "humanity is

more important than land,” since reconciliation is on the basis of respect towards humanity and the call to be hospitable irrespective of one’s religion, ethnic group, culture and gender. Waliggo (2015:42-42) thus calls on the missional identity of the church to seek relevant symbolic practices that negate patriarchal domination in the quest to make the church one family.

The exchange of the male goat as explained Bida (12 January 2017) means the representatives of the warring communities according to the Pyem ethnic group, symbolically inform and affirm reconciliation and the restoration of peace. The hard-earned peace is usually justified by the restoration of social interaction through marriage, attending traditional and cultural festivals, communal hunting, communal meals and drinking the local brew together. The exchange is done in the presence of community representatives so that each person bears witness to the restoration of peace between the two communities (Bida 12 January 2017).

8.3. The application of the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*

Based on the key research question, this study argues that the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN in the context of violence can be expressed through the Pyem notion *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, a religio-cultural experience for peacebuilding between two warring parties.

The Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* that is integral to life in the community by the Pyem ethnic group is not divorced from the African understanding about community (Bujo 2015:83). God in relationship to the community is also rooted in the understanding of God as the creator of life in the community. This is what informed the Pyem adage, *Do to chalai ram*, which translated means, “humanity is more important than land.” Mugambi (2013:517), discusses the convergence and divergence between the African understandings of community life with the Christian community. He thus argues that both communities are bound by a collective allegiance to the Supreme Being. In the case of the African community, a member finds the meaning of her or his life from the community. Living for the common good in the African community is not by choice (2013:517). The understanding of community life also abounds in the *Ubuntu* notion where the life of a person finds its meaning in the life of the other (Strozenberg

2015:53). The understanding of community life according to the Pyem notion is more advanced compared to the notion of *Ubuntu* because the Pyem religio-cultural experience accommodates all people, not on the basis of persons within a given locality as stressed in the notion of *Ubuntu*, but on the basis of humanity.

Following the Pyem notion about life in the community, the COCIN as a Christian community within the African context should be able as a missional imperative to express the penal substitution theory through the religio-cultural medium of the *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* in order to respond meaningfully to the violence in Jos through effective peacebuilding activities. The relevance of this cannot be underestimated since the Pyem notion places emphasis on the role that humans play in building peace and reconciliation within communities. The focus on the dignity of humanity by the Pyem ethnic group, symbolically denotes that this notion reflects the *missio Dei* and through the atoning work of Christ represents tolerance, peace, sacrifice and love for all people irrespective of their affiliation (Buthelli 2015:782-783). The life-giving notion offered by the Pyem ethnic group with its symbolic cultural experience on life in the community *Do ta chalai ram* has the potential to re-shape the COCIN's missional identity and vocation to respond with love and respect towards humanity in the diversified context of Jos (Grenham 2005:279). In this sense, the Pyem understanding of life in the community equips the missional identity of the COCIN to challenge the triumphalist and judgemental presentation of the atoning work of Christ and the retributive nuances of the penal substitution theory. The atoning work of Christ can be more appealing because it is presented through an afro-centric perspective. Whereas the transmission of the penal substitution theory bequeathed by the missionaries did not take into account the African context, this perspective offers a contextual theology that engages with human experience within the religio-cultural, socio-political and violent context of Jos (Bevans 1992:10; Pears 2009). This notion also offers a distinctive African ethic that calls for COCIN clergy and members alike to be responsible for a common peace within the Jos community (Bujo 2015:85).

Another important part of the research question concerns how the COCIN can contribute to promoting peace through re-evaluating the church's practice of the penal substitution theory as its ecclesial doctrine (Mwadkwon 2001:60). This present study therefore calls into question the context in which the doctrine was originally

constructed, how the doctrine was transported and transmitted into the missional identity of the COCIN, and finally, how it was used by the missionaries in transmitting the doctrine and subsequent evolution of the COCIN. The present study also calls in to question how this doctrine is being transmitted to the clergy and laity in the COCIN's theological seminary in terms of leadership formation. From the research findings, it can be argued that the COCIN understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory seems to exacerbate the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. Accordingly, the critique of the COCIN understanding and practice of the theory is occasioned by a lack of understanding the doctrine under consideration due to contextual, religious, and cultural barriers during the transmission of the doctrine. Likewise, the hermeneutical method used in transmitting the doctrine to COCIN clergy and laity fails to engage with the symbolic cultural experience of the ethnic groups within Jos. This results in retaliatory tendencies by the COCIN in responding to the systemic and symbolic violence, which in turn can be ascribed to the retributive nature of the penal substitution theory.

Through African symbolic hermeneutics, this present study has argued that if the missional identity of the COCIN can contribute to building peace in Jos then it has to engage with African religio-cultural life (Antonio 2006:30). This way of responding to the violence can be more viable if the curriculum content used by the COCIN theological seminary is contextually or religio-culturally reoriented (Hendricks 2011:1). As has been stated above, this study affirms the incorporation of inculturation in educating COCIN clergy because part of their responsibility is to preach and teach Christian doctrine to its members.

As highlighted in chapter four above, the violence in the context of Jos is categorised into systemic and symbolic violence. The study has argued that violence is systemic if it covers a wider range and can be symbolic if it seeks to inflict fear, anger, animosity, marginalisation and domination. Scholars such as Zizek (2001:58), Kaunda (2016:3) and Trisk (2011:84) describe how violence can be systemic and symbolic. As has already been noted in the chapter, Kumm the pioneering leader of the missionaries and his seemingly crusading motivational speech against Islam appears to presuppose symbolic violence (1907:13-14).

As a background to the alternative contextual African model of the penal substitution theory, this present study acknowledges the work of Pokol (2015:271-272) and his *Suum-ngi* model of peacebuilding, Lesmore (2015:167) and his concept of a just peace, Anyim (2014:7-14) and his theory of meeting human needs, identifying values, and the role of religion in peacebuilding. Katongole (nd:24) and his concept of the incarnation also contributes to the literature on peacebuilding. This present study has thus observed that although these scholars write from different perspectives, they nevertheless provide an important background into the African symbolic hermeneutical application of the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war” as an alternative model to the penal substitution theory for peacebuilding in the violent context of Jos.

In chapter five of this present study, it was acknowledged that other religio-cultural experiences within the Pyem ethnic group could serve as yardsticks for resolving conflicts on an individual capacity, within a family and the Dyengye clan (Daspan 2002:7).

The African symbolic hermeneutical perspective employed by this study is an ongoing notion that provides a dynamic conversation between the Christian message and culture through the missional identity of the church (Okure 2007:138). It is an endeavour to make the Christian message more appealing to every culture (Shorter 1988:6). Bediako (1995:110) in his theory of translatability asserts that the accessibility of Christianity within Africa depends largely on the translation of Christianity from the Western worldview to the African milieu. In the literatures reviewed, this present study acknowledges the criticisms on the viability of African symbolic hermeneutics as a perspective for appropriating Western-oriented Christian concepts to new cultures. Such scholars include Ngong (2012:1); Gifford (2008:31); Byrne (1990:121), and McCain (2000:108). These scholars discuss how this hermeneutical perspective can be universally accepted. In the feminist perspective, scholars such as Oduyoye (2004:59) and Phiri (2007:106) argue instances where most cultures do not give space for women to exercise their God-given dexterity in the ongoing endeavour to transform life. They further observe the danger of losing the tenets of the Christian faith. Although these scholars write from different perspectives, the present study has observed that there can be no theology without context and the culture in which one is theologising (Bediako

1995:109; Bevans 1992:2). Accordingly, the present study interrogates the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN in the context of violence in Jos. This study further argues that if this theory can be understood and practiced by the COCIN in the context of violence in Jos, it has to be appropriated from the Western worldview to the African religio-cultural experience. In view of the contextual differences, this present study takes into account how theological reflection can engage with the context one is theologising (Bevans 1992:7).

The notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* within the Pyem ethnic group emanates from the quest to foster peacebuilding within the violence that erupted in Jos within the years 2001-2010. As reflected in the literature and research data, the contentious atmosphere that attributed to the violence was due to the multi-ethnic, religious, social and cultural diversities present in Jos. Thus, the alternative African model of the penal substitution theory seeks to help the COCIN missional identity to contribute to peacebuilding in the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. Therefore, having highlighted how this notion was expressed by the Pyem ethnic group and its relevance to the reconceptualisation of the COCIN ecclesial doctrine, this study now gives attention to the key notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war,” to serve as a medium through which the penal substitution theory can be re-expressed.

8.4. Toward an African symbolic understanding of the penal substitutionary theory

This section will give attention to the key notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* through which the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement can be re-conceptualised. The doctrine is not far removed from the key elements that constitute the notion that symbolically expresses the place of dialogue between the warring communities. This section will also highlight the symbolic expression of the male goat as a symbol of violence. Other key elements include the use of two male goats, the exchange of guilt and the ethical implications of eating the guilt offering will also be captured in this section to see how the penal substitution theory can be re-expressed.

8.4.1. The necessity of authentic dialogue

One of the key elements identified within the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* is the theory of dialogue. In other words, the Pyem notion of peacebuilding is dialogical. As pointed in chapter five above, the notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* was characterised by a process of dialogue which was initiated by the *Bate Ya* (i.e., intermediary persons) in consultation with Bwalbwang, the chief priest. This in turn culminated in the meeting of the warring communities, the exchange of the male goat and the eating of the male goat. The dialogical posture within the Pyem notion is what necessitates the utilisation of the African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework of this study. This perspective stems from the ongoing method within African theology that allows dialogue between Christianity and the culture of a particular people with the aim of making the Christian message better understood (Okure 2003:138-139). The aim of the dialogue between the penal substitution theory and the Pyem religio-cultural notion is to contribute towards equipping the COCIN missional identity and vocation with a missio-cultural understanding of its ecclesial doctrine that offers a more life-giving response to the violence in Jos.

As discussed in chapter four above, dialogue is one of the ways used by the Plateau State Government in collaboration with religious leaders to foster peace in Jos. According to Danfulani (2006:6) however, the dialogue has failed to foster peace because the warring communities seemed to justify the perpetration of violence on the basis of protecting their affiliations. However, the dialogue within the Pyem notion motivates warring communities to admit that they are all guilty.

The penal substitution theory as argued by Torrance (2009:122) constitutes dialogue. According to Torrance, dialogue takes root from the OT where God dialogues with God's people through sacrifice for the restoration of peace. Katongole (nd:7) in his theoretical framework for peacebuilding explains how through dialogue Jesus Christ came in the flesh and dwelt among fallen humanity. The incarnation of Jesus expresses the necessity of dialogue in resolving conflict. Jesus was incarnated to demonstrate the humility of God in choosing to be human in order for dialogue to be mutual and authentic. Authentic dialogue demands incarnation into the other in order for equality and just dialogue to take place. Katongole's view must also be linked with Philipians

2:5 Likewise, the divine initiative for dialogue is expressed in Jesus' birth, miracles, teachings, and attending worship places (Luke 4:18). The event that culminated Jesus Christ's dialogue with humanity was in his atoning death on the cross which finally brought peace and reconciliation (McGrath 2004:18). There can be no conflict resolution without authentic dialogue for justice and peace.

From the above discussion, the dialogue expressed in the Pyem notion can be a viable medium through which the COCIN ecclesial doctrine can be expressed within the violent context of Jos. This is because the Pyem dialogue is a dialogue of the guilty. It is believed that the warring communities have acknowledged that all are guilty. This is based on their understanding of what it means to be human. Conflict dehumanizes and robs the community of its humanity (Bida 16 November 2017). Scholars such as Mbiti (1969), Sindima (1995) and Strozenberg (2015) have recognised that the African worldview embodies humanity as a resource for dialogue and peaceful co-existence. In the African system of thought, what affects an individual affects the entire community. Scholars focusing on Africa have underlined the role of dialogue as the social and humanistic source for an African moral and ethical vision of peace, equity, and just communities (Mbiti 1969; Sindima 1995). Dialogue within the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* is therefore not optional because every member of the warring community is guilty (Bida 16 November 2016).

The element of dialogue within the doctrine under consideration as expressed through the Pyem notion *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* becomes authentic in fostering peace between the warring communities in Jos. This assertion is attributed to the Pyem dialogue which acknowledges that all members of the conflicting communities are guilty. In this form of peacebuilding there is no winner and no loser (Tutu 1999:27-28). Unlike the penal substitution theory which seems to posture superiority, competitiveness and violence due to its judicial nuance, the Pyem notion offers an authentic method where Christians, Muslims, and ethnic other groups that constitute the warring communities in Jos participate in a dialogue where all are guilty. Dialogue thus offers an African symbolic hermeneutical understanding of the atoning work of Christ where members of the warring communities in Jos are all guilty of not respecting human dignity irrespective of their religious, cultural, social, and political differences.

The relevance of the dialogue expressed in the notion *Ngwakin darsai Daal* and the penal substitution theory provides a radical African symbolic hermeneutic that can equip the COCIN missional identity and through its theological seminary offer a more life-giving contribution to the much-needed peace in the violent context of in Jos.

8.4.2. Engaging violence

Bartlett (2011:141) argues that the atonement pictures Christ as one who has borne the human ugliness of sin. According to Bartlett, this is expressed in the words of Jesus on the cross (Matthew 27:46) which are understood as Jesus being eternally forsaken by his heavenly Father because of the penalty of sin (2011:141). Furthermore, Weaver (2013:190) argues that Christ's death on the cross is a confrontation with violence rather than confronting human beings. In other words, human wickedness is expressed during Christ's substitutionary death on the cross. Having exposed human wickedness through the violent acts of those who crucified Him, fallen humanity is reconciled back to God (2013:191). The contemporary understanding of the penal substitution theory as pointed by these scholars reveal that the atoning work of Christ is ultimately to confront violence itself. This assertion is confirmed in Jesus' response to human violence through love and forgiveness (Luke 23:34).

The utilisation of the male goat within the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* includes the tendency of violence. This was confirmed during the focus group discussion conducted among the Pyem group. The selection of the male goat according to Bida (12 January 2017) was due to its ugliness which is characterised by its naughtiness and lack of respect for other goats. Bida (12 January 2017) further maintains that the male goat's ugly character was expressed in the Pyem adage as *Wun ngen mo sai Ngwakin Darsai Daala*, which translated means, "look at his or her forehead as a male goat that stops fighting/war." It is a symbolic assault against a man, woman, or even slave who were known to be naughty and disobedient in the community. Tafida (16 November 2017) holds that the male goat was made uglier when the anger, animosity and hatred of the warring communities were symbolically placed upon it at the time of sacrifice. By taking the male goat, the communities resolved to confront violence itself rather than one another. Kaunda (2015:9) describes how at the Communion Table, Christian worshippers show animosity and hatred that caused

human violence and injustice to be laid upon Jesus and through his death exchanged their vexation and anger for peace and reconciliation. Although Kaunda (2015) is writing from a missiological perspective, his view nevertheless offers a valuable Christological insight into the symbolic representation of the male goat who absorbs the anger and animosity between the warring communities for that of reconciliation and peace. This means that the symbolic expression of the male goat that confronts anger, animosity and grievances among the warring communities within the Pyem notion can serve as a medium for the appropriation of the penal substitution theory within the context of Jos. Whereas Christ confronts and exposes the violence of sin and all forms of human wickedness in order to reconcile the sinful humanity to God and creation, the symbolic use of the male goat represents the confrontation with violence of anger, animosity and grievances held within the Pyem notion, which also has the capacity to engender peace and reconciliation between warring communities. Through this element of the Pyem notion, the warring communities in Jos can strengthen their resilience and develop their reflexive attitude against anger, unforgiveness and animosity. As the penal substitution theory has a built-in reciprocity of love and forgiveness, *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translates means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war,” demands that through the religio-cultural symbolic violence of the male goat, members of warring communities can confront the ugliness of violence they have perpetrated and embrace peace irrespective of their religious or cultural affiliations. The expression of the penal substitution theory through the Pyem notion for peacebuilding corresponds with the WCC’s affirmation of the concept of a just peace as indicated in chapter one above.

The African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework as utilised in this study offers therefore a radical understanding and missional practice of the penal substitution theory by directly confronting threats that deny fullness of life. Such a missio-cultural understanding according to Kurgat (2009:89) becomes powerful especially if the missional identity of the church takes into account the experience of a particular location while transmitting the Christian message. As put forward by Gumo, the subordinating concept of contextual theology as one of the theories that underpins this study is contextual theological education. Hence, the challenge faced by the clergy leaders on how to inculturate the doctrine under consideration from the classical

Western understanding that presents Christ atoning work as a judicial punishment for sin to a contemporary understanding that presents Christ as one who loves and forgives.

8.4.3. The two male goats

Within the notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, the use of two male goats is understood as a symbolic cultural experience that calls for participation of warring communities in restoring peace within the conflicting communities. As African communities, this practice stems from the religio-cultural understanding that every member of the community finds her or his essence and meaning of life by contributing to the wellbeing of the community (Nel 2008:33). The participation is evident in what was presented by the two communities. Each of the communities gave the same kind of animal with the same characteristics. Although there were two goats, they were the same type of animal based on the African hermeneutic which symbolically functions as the medium to reconcile the community with the divine and between warring communities. In other words, the symbolic cultural experience in the slaughter of the two male goats serves a dual purpose. Spiritually, the communities are reconciled with the supreme God and physically members of the two communities can co-exist irrespective of the differences. Despite individual, family or clan affiliation, the two male goats symbolically bear all the differences, the anger, animosity and enmity of the two warring communities. This is demonstrated through the exchange of the male goats between the two communities.

The symbolic representation of the two male goats as a form of religio-cultural participation can be articulated to mean the human and divine nature of Christ without which the atoning work of Christ would be invalid (Grudem 2000:521). As fully expressed in the incarnation, Jesus Christ was fully human and fully divine in his work of substitutionary atonement (Katongole nd:7). At death, he substituted the fallen humanity through his human nature, while in his divinity the fallen humanity was reconciled back to God (Grudem 2000:553). According to (Shenonda 1991:2), the human and divine nature of Christ is a hypostatic union in which God became human in one person. It was a symbolic expression of God identifying with the human context. Chemnitius (1971:1) adds that the divine and human nature of Christ represents the defeat of sin which is the evil, violence and the conflict that warped the relationship and fellowship between fallen humankind and God.

According to Chemnitius (1971:4), the defeat of evil is accomplished in the divine nature that satisfied God's justice and the human nature functions as human inability to reconcile to God. The symbolic expression of the elements (Bread and wine) at the Eucharist reminds his disciples not only his death but also his divine and human natures (Luke 24: 30-31). It also denotes the symbolic expression of the two natures and what each represents in restoring peace between God and humankind (Welker 2000.8-9).

The symbolic cultural representation of the two goats offers therefore an African contextual understanding of the penal substitution theory that draws attention to the two warring communities to participate in the development of a sustainable peace. As the participation of the human and divine natures of Christ is inevitable in the atoning work of Christ, likewise the African symbolic hermeneutic of the two male goats necessitates that the two warring communities must participate by exchanging the goats. The two goats being male goats and exchanges according to the Pyem religio-cultural experience symbolised a union that expresses each community's participation in destroying the evil and violence that has caused loss of life in the fight that erupted between them (Bida, November 2017). This is a cultural symbolic practice for peace to be restored. The participation of all members of the conflicting communities falls within the cultural practice of dialogue aftermath violence. It is a dialogue of the guilty (Tafida 16 November 2017). Through this symbolic representation of the two male goats, the penal substitution theory that projects love and reconciliation through the participation of both the human and divine nature of Christ can be expressed. This cultural symbol gives space for the warring communities in Jos to first comprehend that all are guilty and their participation in the dialogue is what necessitates their reconciliation, irrespective of their differences (Mbiti 1991:25).

The idea of participation within the African worldview as delineated by Bujo (2017:80-81) stems from the understanding that every member of the community is a guardian of humanity and of their cultural heritage. It can be argued that the African Pyem concept of peacebuilding as the atoning work of Christ not only seeks for peace between conflicting communities, but also acknowledges their religious, cultural, social and political differences. It offers a concept of unity in diversity in peacebuilding following the aftermath violence. This is embedded in the Pyem adage, *Do ta chalai ram*, which

translated means, “humanity is more important than land” (Chanwat 16 November 2017).

8.4.4. Exchanging guilt

One of the key components that constitute the Pyem African concept of peacebuilding is the exchange of the two male goats between the warring communities. The exchange by representatives of the two communities before other members culturally symbolises the understanding and practice of sharing in the violence against the loss of life and property (Kallamu 16 November 2017). Since it is a dialogue of the guilty, all members share in the grief and tragedy experienced by those who are victims during the conflict. As Tutu (1999:27) can state:

A person belongs to a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished when others are tortured and oppressed.

The Pyem concept as supported by Tutu’s understanding and the place of humanity within the *Ubuntu* philosophy denotes that humanity comes first before religion and other social constructs (1999:26-27). The exchange of the male goat within the Pyem notion is done openly and not in secret. It includes all members of the warring communities, even those who did not participate, but bore witness to the event. During the Pyem indigenous group discussion, Tafida (16 November 2017) added that the exchange of the male goats openly was to help in the formation of the Pyem oral tradition. This event forms part of the dialogical processes in the quest to restore peace between the communities, ever mindful of their differences.

As the research findings revealed, the contemporary understanding of the penal substitution theory as incarnation can be interpreted as the God-man Jesus Christ identifying with fallen humanity by taking on human nature (Philippians 2:1-5). According to 1 Peter 2:21-22, while Jesus Christ was not guilty of sin, he became guilty in order that he could fully identify with fallen humanity. Based on this biblical notion, the WCC (2011:28) calls upon all its member churches to be agents of mission that represents Christ identifying with people who are faced with threats that deny fullness of life. This stems from the WCC’s concept of a just peace which advances beyond the mere absence of war to a concept of overcoming violence that gives respect to human

dignity. This contemporary understanding of the doctrine under consideration corresponds with Katongole's concept of peacebuilding as discussed above in chapter one above.

From the above discussion, it can be argued that the relevance of the penal substitution theory with the symbolic practice of exchanging of the male goat cannot be underestimated. Both denote an understanding of identifying with the vulnerable by sharing in the grief and tragedy of their life-changing situations. The symbolic expression of the exchange of the male goat that illustrates how perpetrators of violence and its victims may be different based on their contribution to the violence, yet all share in the burden of the calamity that has befallen humanity and the community (Bida 16 November 2017).

Through this element of the Pyem notion, the penal substitution theory can be expressed in the systemic and violent context of Jos. The COCIN missional identity and vocation that represents Christ's identifying with humanity as its ecclesial doctrine entails that the different warring communities in Jos from the perspective of dialogue of the guilty, can identify with each other and carry the burden of violence on humanity irrespective of their religious, cultural, social or political differences. When asked during the Indigenous group discussion on the essence of carrying the male goats on the shoulders, one of the respondents replied that the practice symbolises that each member of the conflicting communities takes the responsibility upon her or himself the violence that denies fullness of life (Kallamu 16 November 2017). Carrying the burden of the fallen humanity in his person, as embedded in Christ's substitutionary death on the cross can be expressed through the symbolic carrying of the male goat by representatives of the warring parties. The public practice of exchanging the male goats denotes a public confession of guilt for the violence carried out against humanity and the community. Through this element, it can be argued that the Pyem notion does not give attention to their differences, but rather has humanity and community as its common ground.

8.4.5. Male goats as a substitutionary sacrifice

Christ's death as a substitution is viewed as his life offered as a sacrifice for the reconciliation of fallen humanity to God (Finlan 2000:706). For the warring

communities, the sacrifice of the two male goats is seen as a substitute that ends the fighting and at the same time fosters peaceful co-existence. In this way, no community member claim to be innocent. While addressing the contentious atmosphere that resulted to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos, the symbolic expression of the male goat if applied within the warring ethnic groups in Jos denotes that all are guilty of undermining human dignity either systematically or symbolically. For the fullness of life in the community to be restored, their grievances, animosities, wrath and enmities were laid upon the goats.

The two goats which symbolically signifies the two natures of Christ were offered and sacrificed as substitutes for peace between the conflicting communities and the Supreme Being who even though held some of the members of the community responsible for violating traditional laws, all were deemed guilty because of the nature of life in African community (Bujo 2015:82). The two male goats are innocent but symbolically take on the guilt of the warring communities. They died so that peace could be restored between the communities.

In Ukpong's hermeneutical interpretation, the compatibility of the Jewish sacrifice with African sacrifice when doing theology in the African context is clear (2000:6). While highlighting the NT understanding of the penal substitution theory, the Apostle Paul made use of sacrifice as a metaphor to describe the atoning work of Christ in his socio-historical context (Torrance 2009:99). This analogy can be a medium through which the penal substitution theory can be expressed if the missional identity of the COCIN can engage with the Pyem religio-cultural experience. This missio-cultural understanding can help the missional identity of the COCIN to represent Christ as an example of sacrifice, love, self-denial, and seeking the good and interest of others, irrespective of their differences (Philippians 5:2). It means that the retaliatory tendencies identified in the COCIN response to the violence in Jos, can be replaced with tolerance as the Pyem ethnic group suggests. The discriminatory attitude of the indigenes or settlers will thus be undermined. Through this medium, the retributive nuances of the penal substitution theory will be translated to love and forgiveness (Bartlett 2011:142).

8.4.6. The ethic of eating the guilt offering

The notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war,” according to the Pyem ethnic group demands that after slaughtering the goats by each of the warring community, the meat should be eating communally. Although members who eat the meat were representatives of the two communities, it nevertheless serves as a symbol that represents eating of the grievances, hatred, wrath and animosity within the aggrieved communities. In this notion, those whose relatives and family members died during the violence no longer hold grievances against the perpetrators. Responding to grievances, animosity, fear, hatred, wrath and enmity by the symbolic practice of eating of the goat meat becomes a medium that responds to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos (Kaunda 2016:3). The communal eating of the goat meat and what it symbolises in the notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* corresponds with the symbol in the Christian rite of Holy Communion (or Eucharistic Feast). This application is described by Welker (2000.8), who states 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.

The right celebration of the Holy Communion as described by Welker suggests that there are conditions. In other words, the benefit of the Christian rite of Holy Communion is enjoyed if the conditions are correctly observed by participants. It means that peace and liberation are enjoyed by those who correctly celebrate the Eucharist. While Welker’s symbolic meaning of the Christian rite of Holy Communion relates to the peace, liberation, reconciliation enjoyed by all those who participate, participation in the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* allows all members of the community to participate in the communal meal (symbolised in the eating of the male goat meat).

Part of what constitutes the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective of this present study is the concept of palaver (Bujo 2015:79). Bujo (2015:83) puts forward the idea of the power of eating words within an African community. According to Bujo (2015:83), words can either bring life or death. Within the concept of palaver, eating

words spoken by a traditional healer can bring life when conflicts are resolved within a given family or clan of the sick. The traditional healer represents the ancestors, who also represents the Supreme Being. The chewing and digestion of words as expressed by the traditional healer, aims at destroying conflicts within relations of the patient. This presupposes that the cause of the sickness was due to a wrong against someone (2015:79-81). This shows how distinctive the African community is when compared to the Western context that is more individualistic (2015:80). Although this concept might have evolved from a different ethnic group, it nevertheless offers a contextual element that creates space for the inculturation of the penal substitution theory that is Western-oriented. This relates well with the idea of African symbolic hermeneutics as translation which this study utilises as part of what informs the re-conceptualisation of the doctrine under consideration (Bediako 1995:111).

The penal substitution theory, if translated from the Western context using the Pyem African symbol of eating the meat of sacrificed goats represents forgiveness and reconciliation (Bida 2017). It corresponds with the church's concept of *missio Dei* which seeks to destroy barriers that keep humanity apart (Bosch 2011:27) The appropriation of the atoning work of Christ that speaks more about love and forgiveness will be better projected than a penal substitution theory that speaks of punishment and retribution (Ekem 2005:5). The words of Bwalbwang, the high priest in consultation with the *Bate Ya* (i.e., intermediary persons) (Daspan 2002:8) can also serve as a medium to express the role of the clergy and laity who are educated in the COCIN's theological seminary to transmit to its members. This study through the research findings, has argued that the clergy can be equipped if the COCIN missional identity engages with the culture through a suitably oriented curriculum that considers the context where it functions (Hendricks 2011:3).

From the above discussion, the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective used to reconceptualise the doctrine under consideration becomes relevant since it challenges the COCIN missional identity to dialogue with the pluralistic context of Jos in order to offer a missio-cultural response to violence. The Pyem *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* and what it implies, equips the COCIN to seek common ground such as human dignity and a God-given African human community life as resources for peacebuilding in Jos. Accordingly, the *missio Dei* of the church will seek to break all human barriers in order

to constitute a community that can serve as agents of transformation. It shows how most African religio-cultural experiences can be harnessed to translate Christianity and make it more appealing. The construction of the penal substitution theory and the contextual background from which it was conceptualised, indicate how context can influence the practice of theology. While this work acknowledges the remarkable missionary activities by the SUM missionaries and the final evolvement of the COCIN, this study argues that the triumphalist undertone against Islam as spelled in the motivational speeches of its founder seems to negate the *missio Dei* which embraces everyone irrespective of her or his religious affiliation. The alternative model *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* as a medium of expression deals with the violent and retributive nuances that was characterised by the context in which it was theologised. The Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* which offers a symbolic act of dealing with anger, animosity, hatred, wrath, domination and fear, becomes relevant in responding not only to religio-cultural or socio-political systems, but also the systemic and symbolic violence in the context of Jos.

8.5. Chapter summary

This chapter has focused on postulating an alternative African model of penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN in the context of Jos which is plagued by systemic and symbolic violence. The historical development of the penal substitution theory as it emerged from the research findings posits a number of serious questions as to its viability to respond to the violent context of Jos. This is based on the presupposition that the doctrine under consideration contains within it a propensity towards retribution and violence. The chapter has thus argued how due to contextual, cultural, and religious barriers between the missionaries and the indigenous people, this theory was embraced by the COCIN without critical assessment. Consequent to this deduction, the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective used to postulate this model was highlighted. The Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “the male goat that stops fighting/war” was used as a medium to express the doctrine under consideration. It offers a symbolic African hermeneutic that responds to the religio-cultural, systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. The chapter also showed how this symbolic cultural notion evolved within the religio-cultural experience of Pyem ethnic group as method for conflict resolution. This chapter

concluded by drawing attention to the context and the role it plays in the praxis of theology.

CHAPTER NINE

GENERAL CONCLUSION

9.1. Introduction

This concluding chapter focuses on the summary, conclusion and recommendations based on the projected hypothesis of the study. The hypothesis emerged from the conducted research findings and was guided by the key research question and the objectives of the study. Through an African symbolic hermeneutical perspective this study seeks to postulate an African model of the finished work of Christ on the cross expressed through the penal substitution theory, an ecclesial concept of the doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN in the violent context of Jos.

The African symbolic hermeneutical perspective was employed to interrogate the doctrine bequeathed by the COCIN missionary heritage. The critique is based on the research problem which states that the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN appears to promote violence in the context of Jos. The research problem was further constituted based on the motivation and contemporary understanding of the penal substitution theory that seeks to present a nonviolent concept that can be better applied within a context characterised by violence such as Jos. The research findings suggest that the retaliatory tendency identified from the COCIN's response appears to stem from the triumphalist presentation of the penal substitution theory by the founder missionaries and its uncritical assimilation by the COCIN. Following the summary of the research work based on the chapters, this chapter draws some final conclusions as well as recommendations for further study.

9.2. Recapitulation

The key research question was as follows:

To what extent African religio-cultural experience can be a viable medium through which the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN can be expressed in the violent context of Jos?

The dialogue between this ecclesial doctrine within the African symbolic religio-cultural experience is aimed at equipping the COCIN's missional identity to offer a more life-giving response to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. Guided by the research objective, the study seeks to answer the central research question through the research design and the method employed as the instrument through which relevant information is generated. What informed the research method included the utilisation of relevant literatures from which the gaps in the research were identified. Through the qualitative research method which allows field research, interviews were conducted among the selected research participants who consented to offer relevant information based on their knowledge and understanding of the phenomena. From the research findings, this study argues that for the COCIN to offer a missio-cultural response to the violence in Jos its missional identity and vocation has to dialogue with the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem ethnic group in Jos.

The first chapter focused on the introduction to the study. The background of the study was constituted by the motivations which emanated from the personal, academic and professional experiences of the researcher. Through these experiences, the study calls into question the understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory by the COCIN in its response to the violence in Jos. Academically, the researcher pointed to attempts by the COCIN to indigenize the application of Christ's blood by engaging with cultural experience that related to blood sacrifice within the African worldview. The African symbolic hermeneutical tendency was noted from the researcher's earlier master's dissertation. This chapter is informed by relevant reviewed literatures on the broader doctrine of the atonement and the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN in Jos. The introductory chapter also focused on a review of relevant literatures which examined the historical development of the doctrine of the atonement which has its biblical roots in the OT and the Jewish religio-cultural experience that states how sin was atoned for through the shedding of an animal's blood (Cross 2001:1). Scholars such as Grudem (2000:281-282) and Torrance (2009:122) describe the OT idea of atonement as the reconciliation of two estranged parties. Based on the Jewish understanding of the OT atonement, other Hebrew terms used to describe God's act of reconciling the sinner are *kipper*, which translated means, "to cover" (Cross 2001:2). Others synonyms include, "to appease" and "to wipe off" (Smith

1906:9). The OT Hebrew word *kipper*, according to Brummer (2005:65) is an act that describes how the penalty for sin is reversed in order that the relationship between the sinner and God can be restored. Although the OT understanding of atonement for sin was through the blood of animals, as argued in the literature review the use of the OT Hebrew language to describe reconciliation in terms of atonement is relevant to this study because it denotes that the church's mission can be more viable if the cultural experience of a particular people is used as an instrument for transmitting biblical truth (Bujo 2015:82). Furthermore, the OT understanding emphasises love and reconciliation more than punishment as in the case of the penal substitution theory.

Whereas the OT understanding of the atonement represents love and reconciliation, in the NT, the Greek word for atonement is *katallage* which can be translated as, "reconciliation" (Cross 2001:1). In the NT, Christ's sacrifice was considered as the fulfilment of the OT atonement since it also represents reconciliation. It also takes root in the Apostle Paul's analogy where the sinner through Christ's blood is made righteous and at peace with God (Torrance 2009:100). This present study argues that the use of reconciliation, restoration and peace by the Apostle Paul in the NT was necessitated by the contextual sensitivity to the Roman Imperial system during the Apostle Paul's time. Hence, for the atonement to be understood and practiced, it had to take into account the context in which it was appropriated.

The atoning work of Christ during the period of the Early Church Fathers was occasioned by a context that was characterised by a consciousness towards evil. Christ's death on the cross was seen as one which appeared to conquer evil (Pugh 2015:4). For example, the ransom to Satan theory propounded and developed by Irenaeus and Gregory of Nyssa entails that Christ's death was a ransom paid to Satan and to God (Green and Baker 2011:144). While contending the idea of ransom to Satan interpretation of Christ's atonement, Peter Abelard (185-254 CE) in his concept of moral influence holds that Christ's death is simply the demonstration of God's love for fallen humanity. The satisfaction theory conceptualised by Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109 CE) holds that Christ death was primarily for God's satisfaction. From the feminist perspective, this concept of the atonement was critiqued on the idea that Christ's death was a ransom to God (Green and Baker 2011:152). The feminist perspective called into question the idea that an innocent child was crucified just to

honour God. According to feminist theology it is seen as child abuse (Ray 1998:51). However, Anselm of Canterbury's concept of the atonement might be due to the imperial system of justice. This is evident in the utilisation of judicial terms such as satisfaction, substitution and honour towards God.

Although these understandings of the broader concept of the atonement might be exposed to criticism, if viewed from other perspectives and contexts, this present study argues that from the OT understanding of the atonement to the period of the Early Church Fathers, the burning question was how the atoning work of Christ could be understood and applied in every context. It is based on this understanding that the present study critiqued the penal substitution theory which was conceptualised from a context different from the context characterised by violence such as in Jos, Plateau State. Hence, for it to be correctly understood and practiced, it must take into account the African religio-cultural experience within the context.

The penal substitution theory emerged from the broader concept of the atonement. The word "penal" denotes punishment or legal punishment. It is from the Latin word *poena* which translated means, "penal" or "compassion" (Ekem 2005:5). The use of these symbolic judicial terms as argued in the literature review suggests that the context that shaped this theory of the atonement was characterised by a justice system containing elements of judicial retribution (Lenman and Packer 1993:140). If therefore this concept is to be understood and applied by the COCIN in a context of systemic and symbolic violence such as in Jos, it needs to be reshaped in order to offer a non-retributive undertone (Bartlett, 2011:141). The key scholars that undergird this concept of the atonement have argued that it was based upon Anselm's satisfaction theory which was consequently developed during the Reformation era (Green and Baker 2001:166; Pugh 2015:70). The key reformers who contributed in developing the penal substitution theory were Martin Luther and John Calvin. Following Luther's experience as a Roman Catholic priest, it is important to understand that his struggle with personal sin and guilt had an indelible impact upon him while developing the concept under consideration (Pugh 2015:70).

In terms of a re-examination of the penal substitution theory according to inculturation theory, this present study gives attention to African symbolic religio-cultural experience

as a medium of expression (Mbiti 1991:25). Influenced by his context characterised by judicial system, John Calvin's contribution in the development of this theory placed great emphasis on God as an avenging judge that cannot let sin go unpunished (Pugh 2015:67). This is evident in his use of the judicial terms, "penal" and "substitution" (Pugh 2015:74). Although the use of these terms was criticised as a misuse of words to describe Christ's death for sinful humankind, this present study argues that the theologising of Luther and Calvin, among other Reformation theologians of that period was shaped by their context. Their objective focused on how the sacrificial act of Christ could be understood and applied within their context (Packer 1974:10). As pointed out in the literature review, the idea that describes God as an avenging judge might be fully understood in the context where it was appropriated. However, for the context of the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos, this idea may likely exacerbate the violence. The retaliatory tendencies noticed in the COCIN's response to the violence in Jos as pointed out in the literature and research findings may have been present in Calvin's concept as bequeathed by the missionaries who founded the church (Uzodike and Obaji 2013:41).

As has been pointed out earlier, this study has observed that the appropriation of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement was immensely influenced by the context in which it was conceptualised. The contextual consideration by the framers was to make the atoning work of Christ understood and appealing to their particular audience. The historical development that led to the subsequent evolvement of the penal substitution theory was shaped to the contextual consciousness of its framers. Bevans' concept of contextual theology as spelled out in the broader African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework of his work, shows how context played an integral part in the practice of theology (2015). He further states that the understanding of any theologically-oriented text depends largely on whether the articulation takes into account the context in which the theologising takes place (2015). While stressing the insensitivity of the African religio-cultural experience by the nineteenth-century missionaries, Mugambi (1989:20) asserts that in the practice of translating or interpreting the Christian message within a particular context, consideration must be given to the context that constitutes the worldview of the people to whom the message is addressed. Within the African context, this present study gives

attention to Bujo's contextual and distinctive African ethic embedded in the African religio-cultural experience that is occasioned by the understanding of God in relation to the community (2015). This understanding compels every member of the community to take responsibility in ensuring the common good of the community, irrespective one's affiliation (Bujo 2015:81).

The contemporary understanding of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as it implies is occasioned by the distinctive contextual nuance it represents each time it is introduced to a particular audience (Ukpong 2000:17). The penal substitution theory, especially in the context of pluralism characterised by violent conflict, the contemporary understanding is no longer seen as revengeful but rather as a nonviolent and loving act of God for fallen humankind (Bartlett 2011:142; Kyle 2012:201; Finlan 200:706-707). Buthelli (2015:783) emphasises that the ultimate cause of Christ's death as substitution should be seen as love and accordingly be appropriated as a symbol of peace and transformation (2015:783).

The contemporary understanding of the penal substitution theory as noted in the literature review is seen as sacrifice and service and not punishment and retribution (Castelo 2012:336-337). In his critique, Corey (2017:1) states that the judicial terms used to conceptualise Christ's death seems to portray tendencies of subordination and violence. In view of the legalistic foundation of the penal substitution theory in the context in which it was originally developed, the present study seeks to analyse the extent to which its understanding and practice can foster peacebuilding in the context of the violence in Jos. Based upon this objective, the present study employed the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective in order to engage with the African cultural experience as a medium to express this doctrine through the missional identity of the COCIN in the violent context of Jos.

Chapter two focused on the theories that underpinned the study that were captured in chapter one. Following the key research question, African symbolic hermeneutics was employed as a broader perspective to re-conceptualise the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN in Jos. Within the broader African symbolic hermeneutic lens, the use of inculturation as translation, symbol and their engagement between the mission of the church and cultural experience were utilised to ground the

finished work of Christ. Having argued that no theology can be meaningful without contextual consideration within the broader African symbolic hermeneutics, contextual theology was employed as one of the theories to undergird the present study. The contextual consideration in the reconceptualisation of the penal substitution theory was due to the religio-cultural, socio-political and violent context of Jos.

In view of the nature of the violence in Jos, the study utilised systemic and symbolic forms of violence. The models of systemic and symbolic violence developed by Zizek (2009) and Kaunda (2016) respectively, were employed. These models denote how the physical destruction of life and property can be violent and how language itself can be violent. Since this present study attempts to equip the COCIN to contribute to building peace in Jos, relevant concepts of peacebuilding were used. Among other peacebuilding concepts, the WCC's concept of a just peace was utilised. It was considered to be one of the key concepts by the study due to its dynamism on how violence can be overcome within a violence-prone context. The WCC concept of peacebuilding is relevant to this study because it underlines the importance of respect to human dignity as an essential feature in ensuring that peacebuilding is effective between conflicting parties. Other concepts included those of UNICEF (2016) which gives attention to building bridges of peace, resilience and transforming responses to provocation in the context of violence. The present study also employed contextually-related concepts which included Pokol's *Suum-ngi* concept of peacebuilding, Lesmore's concept of a just peace and Katongole's concept of Jesus becoming flesh. Others, included Anyim's concept model of providing human needs, gave particular attention to the religio-cultural values of people and not using religion as a means for political gain. Although these concepts were developed from different perspectives, this present study argues that they remain relevant because it suggests how Christian doctrines can dialogue with other cultures in order to make it more appealing to a particular people.

Chapter three gave attention to the methodological process of generating relevant data and information for the research work. Both the research design and method were guided by the key research question and problem statement of the study. Having justified the utilisation of the qualitative research method as a broader method, the chapter focused on the other methods of generating data such as the triangulation method which allows for the use of more than one method for gathering research data.

Together, these supported the generation and collection of the research data considering the historical, cultural and religious sensitivity. Discourse analysis was considered appropriate because it facilitated the researcher's efforts in addressing the central phenomena of the study. Apart from the primary data generated through interviews, relevant literatures were reviewed as secondary data to identify gaps for possible entry points in the field of academic research. The use of thematic and reflective methods helped classified the data into themes and sub-themes as well as to extract hidden meanings as guided by the research problem and key objectives of the study. The chapter concluded by highlighting the limitations of the study.

Chapter four focused on the transportation and transmission of the penal substitution theory into the missional identity of the COCIN. This study argued that the practice of the doctrine under consideration in the context of systemic and symbolic violence in Jos depends on whether it is adequately understood. To ascertain the COCIN understanding and practice of the ecclesial doctrine dwells much on how it was transported and transmitted into the church's missional identity and vocation. The transportation took place when the missionaries came to North Central Nigeria and particularly to Jos, Plateau State, under the leadership of Hermann Karl W. Kumm. Being from a deep conservative protestant Lutheran background in Germany, his work among the indigenous people in North Central Nigeria possibly necessitated the introduction of the penal substitution theory in the evolvement of the COCIN. The scourge of Islam and the ongoing slave trade were considered the main battles they would have to contend with (Nden 2012:80). The tendency towards triumphalism and superior tendencies as argued in chapter four of this study might be what attributed to the competitiveness and the judgemental attitudes of the Christians and Muslims during the violence in Jos (Mwadkwon 2001:60).

The transmission of the substitutionary atoning work of Christ by the COCIN missionary heritage was born out of their understanding that God cannot allow sin to go unpunished, the penalty for sin being beyond human ability. Through Christ's death the penalty for sin was paid and reconciliation accessed through faith in Christ. The judicial concept of penal atonement as transmitted into the missional identity of the COCIN is informed by the understanding that humankind was eternally separated from

God due to sin, Christ's death as substitution and reconciliation with God being obtained by faith alone (Daniel 2013:56).

This study has observed how due to language, cultural and contextual barriers the understanding of the penal substitution theory by the indigenous people was hampered. The religio-cultural and contextual disparity between the Western missionaries and the African indigenous people is what this study has identified as the challenge in the transmission of the Christian message. The space created due to these differences constitutes the utilisation of the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective used in the re-conceptualisation of the penal substitution theory that takes into account the religio-cultural, socio-political, systemic and symbolic violence-filled context of Jos.

The theological seminary is one of the institutes of the COCIN and serves as one of the mediums through which this doctrine is transmitted. The seminary was necessitated by the plight of both the missionaries and indigenous people to transmit this doctrine to indigenous people through training and ministerial formation. The seminary as discussed in chapter five of this study began as a catechetical school for local evangelists in the Hausa language using the Western system of education in a context characterised by different cultural and contextual worldviews. This catechetical instruction has today developed into a seminary with lecturers and students from different ethnic groups within and outside of Nigeria. One of the research participants reported that clergy leaders and laity alike from the African cultural context found it difficult to assimilate the penal substitution theory in their course on COCIN doctrine. The research participant attributed this difficulty to the Western system of education with 90% of the library books written by people from the West. This study argued that the inculturation of the penal substitution theory and subsequent postulation of an alternative concept of the doctrine depends on the reorientation of the curriculum of the COCIN seminary. Attention should be given to developing a curriculum that takes into account the religious, cultural, ethnic and social diversities present in Plateau States, as well as the violent context of Jos (Ukpong 2000:17).

Chapter five draws attention to the multiplicity of religious, ethnic and social cultures within the Nigerian state. The violence that erupted in some parts of the country was attributed to the complexity due to the pluralistic face of the Nigerian context.

Government and church responses to violence were interrogated in order to understand how the COCIN's practice and comprehension can contribute to peacebuilding in Jos. The study argued that the ethnic, cultural and religious diversities constituted part of what aggravated the violence within the State. Since this study focused on Jos as its context, this chapter highlighted the religio-cultural, socio-political and systemic and symbolic violence present in Jos. Consequent to the failure of the federal government to offer a life-giving response, the church's response, especially that of the COCIN was highlighted in this chapter. Accordingly, this study calls into question the COCIN's comprehension and practice of the doctrine under consideration due to the retaliatory tendencies noted in its response to the violence in Jos. In highlighting the response of the church, this chapter examined the COCIN's rejoinder to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos. This chapter thus advanced the idea that the African symbolic hermeneutical theoretical framework study would be relevant to the study since it critiques the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as understood and practiced by the COCIN. Accordingly, the study's aim is to postulate an afro-centric model of the penal substitution theory that offers a more life-giving response in the systemic and symbolic violence present in Jos.

Chapter six focused on the cosmology of the Pyem ethnic group of Plateau State, Nigeria. In order to foreground the religio-cultural experience of the Pyem people as a resource for the African symbolic hermeneutical purpose, the study provided a description of the geographical location, settlement and presence of other ethnic groups. The cosmology of the Pyem ethnic group centres on the religio-cultural understanding of a Supreme Being in relation to the significance of life in the community. Due to various diversities within the Pyem community, several violent conflicts were recorded utilising religio-cultural methods on how these could be resolved to enhance the wellbeing of the community as a whole. Accordingly, the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, "a male goat that stops fighting/war," was introduced into the chapter to show its viability in serving as a medium through which the penal substitution theory could be re-expressed to foster peace in the violent context of Jos. In the concluding part of the chapter, this study argued that for the COCIN to offer a more life-giving response to the systemic and symbolic violence in Jos it has to engage with compatible African cultural symbols such as *Ngwakin Darsai Daal* that

can function as symbolic expressions of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement in Jos.

Chapter seven focused on the presentation and analysis of the relevant data generated from the interviews conducted with the COCIN members in the Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria. In order to ensure diversity in the experiences and understanding of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement within the COCIN, the sampling of research participants was heterogeneous in nature. The diversity in the background of the research participants resulted in gathering relevant data that were based on the different experiences of the doctrine under consideration. From the research findings, this chapter identified how due to cultural, religious and language differences, the understanding of the penal substitution theory as bequeathed by the missionaries was inadequate. The analysis of the data confirmed that the projected barriers were occasioned by contextual differences. It was thus argued that in order for the ecclesial doctrine to be assimilated into the COCIN's missional identity it would need to be in vocational dialogue with the religio-cultural experience of the ethnic groups in Jos. From the research data generated among the Pyem ethnic group, compatible religio-cultural experiences that symbolised peace and reconciliation were considered as alternative media in the African symbolic hermeneutical reconceptualisation of the doctrine under consideration. The symbolic expression was thus embedded in the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, "a male goat that stops fighting/war. This culturally-related method denotes how violent conflicts can be resolved. The relevance of this notion cannot be overestimated since it suggests that the systemic and symbolic violence that has erupted in Jos may be resolved if applied by the COCIN's missional identity and vocation.

Chapter eight focused on the need to postulate an afro-centric model of the penal substitution theory. This was necessitated by the cultural, and religious and language barriers that hampered a smooth transmission of the said doctrine into the missional identity of the COCIN. The study thus argued that in order for the COCIN to offer a more life-giving response to the violence in Jos, the missionary bequeathed theory that was constructed within a sixteenth-century Western judicial context has to be re-interpreted into the African religio-cultural milieu. Accordingly, the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, as symbolic practice among the Pyem to stop fighting between

warring communities was suggested as a means towards fostering a lasting and just peace in Jos. As introduced in chapter five of this present study, the symbolic representation of the initiation and presentation and offering of the male goat and the subsequent communal eating of the meat denotes dialogue between warring communities. During the dialogue, consideration was given to the understanding of the Supreme Being as the source and essence of life in the community. Although other relevant African concepts were mentioned, the Pyem notion became more relevant in the context of Jos. This was because of another Pyem adage, *Do ta chalai ram*, which translated means, “humanity is more important than land.” The study thus argued that this African notion can be a medium of expressing the doctrine of substitutionary atonement since it symbolically portrays Jesus offering himself on the cross of Calvary and at the Communion Table / Eucharistic Feast in exchange for unforgiveness, animosity and other forms of violence that mitigate against the peaceful co-existence of diverse communities.

9.3. The contribution to the field of new knowledge

Through the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective employed, a paradigm was put forward that calls for a missio-cultural re-interpretation of the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced in the COCIN. In terms of this approach, this research work makes the following contributions to new knowledge:

- i. Following the review of literature and generated data, this study has contributed by bringing to light the triumphalist presentation of the atoning work of Christ that seems to have contributed to the contentious atmosphere that has erupted into violence in Jos. This is evident from the noted tendency towards religious and cultural superiority on the part of the Western missionaries and their bequeathed doctrinal understandings and the dichotomy noticed in the missionary speeches where Christianity was described as a weapon to fight Islam, slavery and ATR which was described as savage, barbaric and fetish.
- ii. The collaborative tendencies by the colonial government particularly in Jos, where the Muslim Hausa/Fulani were upheld and considered superior to the majority of other tribes who later turned to the Christian faith was also identified

- as contributing to the unhealthy relationship between the Muslims and other faith groups.
- iii. As emphasised in the research findings, clear signs of a similar religious and cultural superiority were identified in the Christian majority who are mainly COCIN members and the Muslims who are Hausa/Fulani, this being revealed in their judgemental presentation of their religio-evangelistic propagations.
 - iv. The study also confirmed the Western missionary insensitivity to the African religio-cultural, socio-political milieu and the conflicting ideologies of the colonial rule which characterised the context of the indigenous people.
 - v. The study noted that the lack of an adequate African symbolic hermeneutical understanding of the penal substitution theory within the COCIN has directly attributed to the religious, cultural and language barriers that have hampered the smooth transmission of the penal substitution theory into the missional identity of the COCIN.
 - vi. The research study contributed to new knowledge by proposing that a true hermeneutical interpretation of Christian doctrine within the COCIN should be dynamic and contextual. In other words, there is no universal way of interpreting Christian doctrines.
 - vii. Through the African symbolic hermeneutical perspective, the study postulated an alternative model of the penal substitution theory derived from the Pyem notion of *Ngwakin Darsai Daal*, which translated means, “a male goat that stops war/fighting.” As an authentic African religio-cultural philosophy, its usage in re-interpreting the penal substitution theory of the atonement would help equip the missional identity of the COCIN in contributing to peacebuilding in the violent context of Jos.
 - viii. Through the symbolic religio-cultural experience of the Pyem religio-cultural group, the penal substitution theory as understood and practiced by the COCIN would thus find its expression in the violence-filled context of Jos.

- ix. The study further confirmed that within the African religious tradition there are compatible African values that are ethically relevant and have the capacity to contribute in responding to pluralistic contexts such as Jos, Plateau State.
- x. Within the Pyem notion of *Do ta chalai ram*, which translated means, “humanity is more important than land,” the religio-cultural value of hospitality accounted for its ethical relevance in translating the loving act of the penal substitution theory in the violent context of Jos.
- xi. Previous research into the systemic and symbolic forms of violence in Jos has always led to the physical destruction of life and property. This is evident in the attempts by both the church and the Federal Government to develop bridges of peace through its military and police forces. Through this study, a new understanding and interpretation of the violence in Jos was discovered. This new understanding emerged from the research findings where lives were jeopardised, oppressed, and marginalised due to religious, ethnic and political interference. Threatening and violent language was used in letters circulated among the warring ethnic groups in Jos. Evidence of such violence was advanced from the understanding of physical violence that is both symbolic and systemic in nature. This study thus argued that although such violence is usually relegated to the background, it nevertheless threatens and undermines human dignity.
- xii. The study confirmed that the inadequate conversation between the penal substitution theory and the cultures present within the ethnic groups in Jos contributed immensely to the lack of an African symbolic hermeneutical understanding of the theory among COCIN clergy and the laity. The study confirmed that this was due to the Western curriculum and system of education bequeathed by the missionaries and which is still used as a resource in the COCIN theological seminary during leadership formation.

9.4. Gaps for future research

The following remaining gaps for future research were identified by the study:

- i. The continued violence in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria and the challenge it presents to the COCIN's missional identity and vocation remains a gap for future research. As the church represents the *missio Dei*, further critical study has to be undertaken on whether its missional response to violence converges with what God intended from the beginning (Keum 2012:33; Bosch 1991:1-2). In this respect, the ecclesial doctrines that guide what the church believes and teaches has to be re-interpreted in vocational dialogue with the religio-cultural experience of the people in Jos.
- ii. While the church applauds and acknowledges the efforts made by its Western missionary heritage, further research has to be conducted on the missionary insensitivity towards the utilisation of African religio-cultural values as resources for the transmission, re-expression and assimilation of Western religio-culturally oriented Christian concepts. This presupposes that the hermeneutic interpretation of the biblical text has to be dynamic. The presupposition relies on the understanding that there can be no meaningful theological practice without taking into cognisance the context in which the theologising takes place (Orobator 2015:5).
- iii. A critical analysis of the forms of violence in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria is an identifiable gap for future research. The interpretation of violence in the context of Jos goes beyond the physical destruction of life and property. The violence of discrimination, oppression, domination and fear by the use of words and language need to be critically examined if the missional identity of the church is to offer a more life-giving response to the violent context of Jos (Zizek 2008:9; Kaunda 2015:8).
- iv. The re-orientation of the curriculum of the COCIN theological seminary is an area that needs to be explored through further research. This calls to question the viability of the Western culturally-oriented system of education used in

African indigenous theological seminaries. In particular, it gives attention to the incorporation of the praxis of doing theology that takes into account the social and religio-cultural context of a particular people's worldview.

- v. The need is recognised for a comprehensive research that can synthesize the diverse African philosophies of peace found among the various ethnic groups in Jos.
- vi. Finally, research needs to be undertaken on how to teach Christian, Muslim and ATR communities on the importance of those religious and cultural qualities and characteristics they have in common, rather than their present destructive preoccupation with their perceived differences.

9.5. Some final conclusions

While indigenous African churches acknowledge the valuable contributions made by their Western missionary heritage, attention should be given to the challenges that seem to hamper the smooth transmission and assimilation of Western-oriented Christian concepts and doctrines. As presaged in the recapitulation, these challenges are occasioned by contextual variances during the missionary encounter with African indigenous people in the context of Jos Plateau State, Nigeria.

Based on the reviewed literature, the penal substitution theory presents retribution. This is attributed to the sixteenth-century Western European judicial context in which the theory was formally constructed. Having been uncritically embraced by the missional identity of the COCIN, the study calls into question the understanding and practice of the doctrine of the penal substitutionary theory of the atonement in the context of Jos that is plagued with systemic and symbolic violence. The triumphalist expressions by the missionaries and the contextual differences due to the cultural, language and religious barriers are what necessitated the inculturation of the said doctrine. Therefore, the African symbolic hermeneutical critique of the penal substitution theory is aimed at equipping the missional identity of the COCIN with a missio-cultural perspective that can help in responding positively to the violence in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria by creating a lasting and just peace. It is in this light that an alternative model of the penal

substitution theory emerged consequent to a hermeneutic interpretation that focuses on the vocational dialogue between the penal substitution theory with compatible African religio-cultural experiences within Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria.

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APPENDIX ONE

CONSENT FORM

Introduction

I am Reverend Yusuf Jactu Luxman, a Doctoral student at the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics at the University of Kwazulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. The area of my study is Systematic Theology and how it can be applied to effect transformation and life affirmation in the African context.

Purpose of the study

The academic process of completing a Doctoral study in this institution requires a research and writing a thesis on my findings. The proposed Topic of the thesis is “An inculturative critique of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement as Understood and Practiced by COCIN In Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria.”

The aim of this study is to examine the understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory by The Church of Christ In Nations (COCIN) in the context of Jos and how this study can equip the missional identity of COCIN through its educational institution to respond to the religio-cultural and socio-political and systemic violent context of Jos. The work also seeks the participation of Church leaders, groups and members to find out how their understanding and practice will enhance life affirmation and life-giving peace in the context of Jos.

YOUR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH IS THEREFORE REQUESTED.

Informed consent signed.

In order to participate in the interviews, one needs to sign the consent form and to also show that you are aware that I am undergoing a research which its aims is known to you and you agree to participate.

Voluntary participation

Your participation in this study from the beginning to the end will be highly appreciated. However, it is at your discretion to either agree or stop participating in the cause of the interviews. The interview may last for at most one hour. Your cooperation will be needed in case the need for follow up arises.

Identification for participation

You have been selected to participate in the research work and as a member in the Church of Church of Christ in Nations your contribution on the understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory by COCIN in the context of Jos will be of great help.

Confidentiality

All data collected from you in the process of this interview will be highly confidential and all will be used for the purpose of this study. All data collected will be secured and stored on campus storage and destroyed after five years.

Monetary benefits

This study aims at contributing to the field of knowledge and to equip COCIN's leaders and laity through its theological education to offer a missional identity that is missio-cultural centred to respond to its challenges in the pluralistic and violent context of Jos.

Please you can indicate your willingness to participate in this interview by ticking whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded using the equipment mentioned below.

	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photographic Camera		
Video Camera		

For more information you may contact the following.

Research Student: Reverend Yusuf Jactu Luxman
PhD candidate, School of Religion Philosophy and Classics
University of Kwazulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg
E-mail: luxmanyusuf@yahoo.com
Cell phone: +27638628609

Research Supervisor: Prof. Roderick R. Hewitt
Academic leader, Research and Postgraduate Studies
School of Religion Philosophy and Classics
University of Kwa Zulu- Natal, Pietermaritzburg
E-mail: Hewitt@ukzn.ac.za
Cell Phone +2733260650

You may also wish to contact the Research Office through:

P. Mohun
HSSREC Research Office
Tel: +27312604557 E- Mail: mohun@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your anticipated contribution to this work.

Yusuf Jactu Luxman

Acknowledgement to participate


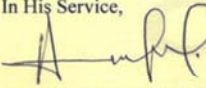
I ----- (Full names of participant) haven't understood the task involved and what this study seeks to project I consent to participate in this research project.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

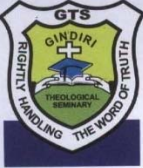
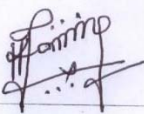
APPENDIX TWO

LETTER FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN NATIONS GENERAL SECRETARY

 COCIN	CHURCH OF CHRIST IN NATIONS Office of the General Secretary
COCIN HEADQUARTERS: No 5 Noad Avenue, P.M.B. 2127 Jos, Plateau State. email: cocinheadquarters@gmail.com website: www.cocin.org	+234 816 682 0626 +234 812 572 8861
20 th July, 2016.	
The Ethical Clearance Committee University of KwaZulu-Natal South Africa	
Dear Sir,	
RE: APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION	
Greetings to you in the precious name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.	
The above subject matter refers please.	
This is to inform you that COCIN is aware of Rev. Luxman Yusuf Jactu's intention to come and with your permission conduct some interviews in COCIN with respect to his Doctoral Program at your Institution.	
The church will appreciate if you will give him all the necessary cooperation needed to carry out his studies.	
Thank you for your usual cooperation.	
In His Service,  Rev. Dr. Amos M. Mohzo General Secretary.	
CHURCH OF CHRIST IN NATIONS P.M.B. 2127, JOS, PLATEAU-NIGERIA Sign _____ Date _____	
Founded by Sudan United Mission (SUM) British Branch now Action Partners Who First arrived Nigeria in 1904.	



APPENDIX THREE

LETTER FROM GINDIRI THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

	<h1>GINDIRI THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY</h1> <p>(In Affiliation with University of Jos) P. M. B. 01001, Gindiri, Plateau State-NIGERIA.</p>
Our Ref: _____	Date: <u>15th July, 2016</u>
Your Ref: _____	
<p>The Chairman, Ethical Clearance Committee, School of Religion, Philosophy and Classis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.</p> <p>Dear Sir,</p> <p>PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH</p> <p>I write to indicate my willingness to open the gate for Luxman Yusuf Jaclu to carry out his research on the topic: "An Aculturative critique of the Penal Substitution Theory of the Doctrine of Atonement as understood and practiced by COCIN in the Systematic Violent Context of Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria", in our Seminary being the highest Seminary of COCIN.</p> <p>Please, do not hesitate to contact me should you require more explanation.</p> <p>Kind regards:</p> <p>Email:</p> <p>Phone:</p> <p>Thank You,  19/7/16</p> <p>_____ Rev. Prof. Jotham Kangdim, PROVOST.</p>	
<p>Founded in 1934 by Sudan United Mission (SUM) now Pioneers (British Branch). Proprietor: Church Of Christ In Nations (COCIN), No. 5 Noad Avenue, P.M.B. 2127, Jos, Plateau State, NIGERIA. Tel: 073-453679</p>	


APPENDIX FOUR

LETTER FROM SUM PYEM GINDIRI

	SUM - PYEM PALACE	
<i>All Correspondences should be addressed to the SUM-PYEM</i>		
		Sum-Pyem Palace, P.M.B. 01, Gindiri, Mangu LGA, Plateau State.
<i>Our Ref:</i> SPP/Vol. 01/042	<i>Your Ref:</i>	<i>Date:</i> 15 th July, 2016.
Attention of P. Mohun HSSREC Research Office, University of Kwazulu-Natal South Africa.		
Dear Sir,		
RE: LUXMAN YUSUF JACTU		
We humbly write to affirm our acceptance to allow the above mentioned name to come and embark on an empirical research among our local people in Pyem chiefdom, at Mangu Local Government Area, Plateau State, Nigeria.		
We are also ready to give him all the necessary support he will need during the process of the research.		
Thanks and God bless.		
Sincerely yours,		
His Royal Highness SUM PYEM OF PYEM CHIEFDOM <i>Charles Mato Dakat</i> SIGN: DATE: 15/07/2016		
CC: PYEM CHIEFDOM TRADITIONAL COUNCIL.		

APPENDIX FIVE

APPROVAL FROM ETHICAL CLEARANCE COMMITTEE

 **UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL**
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

28 September 2016

Rev. Yusuf Jactu Luxman 215064310
School of Religion, Philosophy & Classics
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Rev. Luxman

Protocol reference number: HSS/1574/016D
Project Title: An Inculturative Critique of the Penal Substitution Theory of the Doctrine of the Atonement as understood and practiced by (Church of Christ in Nations) COCIN within the context of Jos, Nigeria

Full Approval – Expedited Application


In response to your application received 22 September 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol 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.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

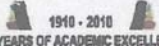
Yours faithfully







.....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Professor Roderick Hewitt
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor P Denis
Cc School Administrator: Ms Catherine Murugan

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Telephone: +27 (0) 31 280 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 280 4809 Email: xlmban@ukzn.ac.za / snvmanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohuno@ukzn.ac.za
Website: www.ukzn.ac.za


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APPENDIX SIX

IN-DEPTH INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- i. What is your understanding of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement as understood and practiced by (a) missionaries and (b) the Church of Christ in Nations in the contemporary era.
- ii. What are the issues that contribute to the rise of violent conflicts within Jos?
- iii. What impact does the violent conflict within Jos have on the ministry and mission of the Church of Christ in Nations?
- iv. In what ways have the Church of Christ in Nations responded to the violent conflicts in Jos?
- v. In what ways do the Church of Christ in Nations' theological institutions address the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement in their leadership formation curriculum?
- vi. What are the ways in which the Church of Christ in Nations has engage with the local culture through its understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement to promote peace in Jos?
- vii. What are the methods used by the ministers of the Church of Christ in Nations to communicate the church's understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement to the members?

APPENDIX SEVEN

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG CLERGY LEADERS

- i. What is the significance of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement to your Christian faith?
- ii. What are the key elements of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as taught by the Church of Christ in Nations?
- iii. Are there any areas of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement that you find difficult to understand and/or practice within your cultural context
- iv. What if any are the differences in the key elements of the penal substitution of the doctrine of atonement taught in the Church of Christ in Nations' Bible schools and theological colleges.
- v. In what ways does the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement relate to the local culture which deals with paying of wrong doing?
- vi. What are the reasons for the ongoing violent conflicts in Jos?
- vii. What are the methods used by the clergy to communicate the penal substitution theory to the members within the Church of Christ in Nations?
- viii. What are the ways in which the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement facilitates peace-building among the local people of other faiths?
- ix. What are ways in which the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement promotes conflicts in the local community among people of other faiths?

APPENDIX EIGHT

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG CONGREGATION MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN NATIONS

- i. What is your understanding of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement as preached and taught in your local congregation?
- ii. How important is the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement to your faith?
- iii. What are the factors that constitute the violent conflicts within Jos?
- iv. What impact has the violent conflict have on the ministry and evangelism of your local congregation in Jos?
- v. What are the ways your local churches have responded to the violent conflict in Jos?
- vi. What are the ways in which your local congregations use the teachings on penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement to shape their Christian lifestyle and witness in Jos?
- vii. In what ways do the church's understanding and practice of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement supports or disagree with the local culture on seeking compensation for a debt that is owed or a wrong that has been done to the innocent?
- viii. How does the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement understood and practiced by your local congregation promote peace in Jos?
- ix. What are the other ways that members of your local congregation can promote peace-building to address the phenomenon of perennial conflicts in Jos?

APPENDIX NINE

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG STUDENTS OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

- i. What is your understanding of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement as taught by your theological institution?
- ii. What are the different elements of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement as taught by the theological institution?
- iii. What are the differences and similarity between the Bible Schools and the Theological Colleges with their teaching of the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement?
- iv. What are the causes of the violent conflict in Jos?
- v. How does the violent conflict in Jos affect the ministry and of the Church of Christ in Nations?
- vi. In what ways do the theological institutions interpret the penal substitution theory to promote peace in the violent conflict in Jos?
- vii. How does the theological institution relate the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of the atonement to the local culture understanding and practice of atonement?
- viii. What are the ways in which the theological institution ensures that the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement is understood and practiced by the Church of Christ in Nations' local congregations in Jos?
- ix. What other ways can the penal substitution theory of the doctrine of atonement be taught to promote peace in the violent conflict in Jos?

APPENDIX TEN

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

What are the causes of conflict among communities?

- i. What impact does violent conflict have on the community?
- ii. What are the ways in which the local community promotes peace between two warring communities?
- iii. Is there any cultural symbol that relates to payment for a wrong doing?
- iv. How do members of the community learn and practice ways of living in peace with each other?
- v. How does the community respond to people of different cultural beliefs?
- vi. How do members of the community regard each other?

APPENDIX ELEVEN

TRANSLATION OF THE CONSENT FORM

Gabatarwa

Nine mai suna Reverend Luxman Yusuf Jactu, dalibi a Jamiar University na KaZulu-Natal a Afrika ta Kudu, a Jihar Pietermaritzburg karkashin karatun adini, Fasaha da zamanin rubuce rubucen helenanawa da Roma. Sashin karatuna ta kumshi, kwarewa wajen iya kimsa rukunai cikin tauhidi da yadda za a moreta wajen kautata rayuwa a Afrika.

Manufan wannan Nazarin. Daya daga cikin sharuda domin kamala karatun Dokta a wannan Jamia ya bukaci rubutu ta wajen tattara ra'awowi mutane game da wata bukatar. Nawa bincike da rubutu ta kumshi yadda za a yi amfani da cudanya cikin aladun Afrika domin a kalubalanci ganewa da aikatawar daya daga cin rukunai na COCIN dake cewa Yesu ya mutu ne amadadin Bil Adamu domin ya biya ukuncin dake bisa kansa cikin yanayin bambance bambancen aladu, yare, siyasa, adini da kuma yanayin fadace fadace a Jos.

Manufan wannan rubutu itace domin a tatance fahimta da ganewar COCIN game da mutuwar Yesu amadadin Bil Adamu da yadda wannan rubutu zata taimaki COCIN ta wurin makarantun tauhidinta ta iya kauta rayuwar jamar Jos cikin yanayin bambancin aladu, yare, siyasa da kuma fadace fadace cikin Jos.

Roko domin yarda ka/ki kasance daya daga cikin wadda za a bukaci raayoyinsu.

Sa hanun Yarda.

Domin ka/ki kasance daya daga cikin wadanda za a bukaci ra'ayinsu zaka/ki nuna yarda ta wurin sa hanu cewa ka/kin san ina wannan rubutu da manufanta, kuma ka yarda.

Yadar ba tilas ba

Yardarka/ki domin zaman daya daga cikin wadanda za a bukacin ra'ayinsu daga farko har karashen wannan rubutu zata zama abin yabawa. Amma yardarka/ki domin zama

don jin ra'awoyika tana da muhimmanci. Wannan zata taimaka kwarai domin zagaya in ta taso. Zama zai iya kai awa daya.

Tabatar da mai kasancewa

Na zabe ka/ki ne domin kasancewa cikin wadanda zasu taimaka bada ra'ayoyi cikin wannan rubutu. Kuma a matsayinka/ki na member COCIN gudumawarka na ganin cewa fahimtar da aikawar COCIN game da wannan rukuni ta taimaka ma COCIN a yanayin fadace fadace ckin birnin an Nijeria.

Adanar siri.

Duk ra'ayoyin da an samo daga gareka/ki za a adanasu domin cika manufan wannan nazari. Makaranta zata adana wannan ra'ayoyi kuma bayan shekaru biyar zata kona su.

Ba moriyar kudi cikin wannan taimako

Manufan wannan nazari domin taimakawa ne shashin kimiya da kuma COCIN ta iya horas da shwagabanenta da membobi su iya mori bishara tawurin cudanya da aladun Afrika domin kautata rayuwa da kayo salama cikin yanayin bambancin kabila, aladu, siyasa, adini da yanyin fadace fadace a Jos.

Ka/ki taimaka ta wurin sa maki domin nuna yarda ko rashin yarda domin yin amfani da wadannan nawurorin daukan Magana ko hoto.

	Yarda	Rashin yarda
Nawuran daukan Magana		
Na wuran daukan hoto		
Nawuran daukan hoto da Magana		

Idan akwai bukatan Karin bayani sai a tuntubi wadanan.

Reverend Luxman Yusuf Jactu

Research Student: Reverend Yusuf Jactu Luxman
PhD candidate, School of Religion Philosophy and Classics
University of Kwazulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg
E-mail: luxmanyusuf@yahoo.com
Cell phone: +27638628609

Research Supervisor: Prof. Roderick R. Hewitt
Academic leader, Research and Postgraduate Studies
School of Religion Philosophy and Classics
University of Kwa Zulu- Natal, Pietermaritzburg
E-mail: Hewitt@ukzn.ac.za
Cell Phone +2733260650

P. Mohun
HSSREC Research Office
Tel: +27312604557 E- Mail: mohun@ukzn.ac.za

Godiya domin yarda ka/ki taimaka cikin wannan rubutu.

Yusuf Jactu Luxman

Tabbatar da yarda

Ni -----(suna cikakke) bayan
na gane da wannan aiki da kuma abinda wannan rubutu ta kumsa na yarda in zama daya
daga cikin wanda zasu bada rayi domin nasaran wannan rubutu.

SA HANU

KWANAN

APPENDIX TWELVE

TRANSLATION OF THE IN-DEPTH INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Menene fahimtarka/KI game da rukunin Krista a COCIN da ke bayana hukunci da yesu ya biya tawurin mutuwansa da ya yi amadadin bil Adamu bisa ga fahimtar (a)missionaries da (b) COCIN a yenzu

Wadanne ababa ne sun taimaka wajen kawo tashin hankali a Jos?

Wadanne illoli ne tashin hankali a Jos ya kawo a sha'anin yada bishara da ginin Ikkliya a COCIN?

Ta wace hanyoyi ne COCIN ta fuskanci tashin hankali a Jos?

Ta yaya makarantan Tauhidin COCIN tana koyadda wannan rukunin wajen horas da shugane a COCIN?

Ta wace hanya ne COCIN ta yi cudanya da al'adu domin kawo fahimta da aikata wannan rukuni domin kawo salama a yanayin fadaca fadace a Jos?

A ganinka/ki wadanne dalilai ne sun sa fadace fadacen Jos yaki ci yaki cinyewa?

Ta wace hanya ne wanan rukuni da ke nuna hukunci da yesu ya sha amadadinmu ta taimaka walen maganci bambance bambancemu a COCIN?

Ta yaya COCIN take kokarin tabatar cewa ana koyadda wannan runi a COCIN?

APPENDIX THIRTEEN

TRANSLATION OF THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Saduwa Domin Tamboyoyi Mara Matakai

Menene fahimtarka/KI game da rukunin Krista a COCIN da ke bayana hukunci da yesu ya biya tawurin mutuwansa da ya yi amadadin bil Adamu bisa ga fahimtar (a)missionaries da (b) COCIN a yenzu

Wadanne ababa ne sun taimaka wajen kawo tashin hankali a Jos?

Wadanne illoli ne tashin hankali a Jos ya kawo a sha'anin yada bishara da ginin Ikklisiya a COCIN?

Ta wace hanyoyi ne COCIN ta fuskanci tashin hankali a Jos?

Ta yaya makarantan Tauhidin COCIN tana koyadda wannan rukunin wajen horas da shugane a COCIN?

Ta wace hanya ne COCIN ta yi cudanya da al'adu domin kawo fahimta da aikata wannan rukuni domin kawo salama a yanayin fadaca fadace a Jos?

A ganinka/ki wadanne dalilai ne sun sa fadace fadacen Jos yaki ci yaki cinyewa?

Ta wace hanya ne wanan rukuni da ke nuna hukunci da yesu ya sha amadadinmu ta taimaka walen maganci bambance bambancemu a COCIN?

Ta yaya COCIN take kokarin tabatar cewa ana koyadda wannan runi a COCIN?

APPENDIX FOURTEEN

TRANSLATION OF THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AMONG THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Wadanne abubuwa ne sukan kawo tashin hankali sakanin jama'ar daga kauyuka dabam dabam?

Wane illa ne tashin hankali takan jawo ma gari?

Wadanne hanyoyi ne jamar wannan gari takan kawo salama sakanin mutane da suna fada da juna?

Akwai wata hanya cikin alada da ke nuna alamar biyan wani abu saboda laifi da mutum ya yi?

Ta yaya jamar gari suna koyan zaman lafiya da juna?

Ta yaya ne mutanen wata gari sukan marabci mutane daga wata gari?

Ta yaya ne mutanen gari daya sukan yi cudanya da juna?

APPENDIX FIFTEEN

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS: IN-DEPTH INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW AMONG THE COCIN EXECUTIVE

S/N	Name	Position	Qualification	Gender	Venue	Age Bracket	Interview	Clergy / Laity
1	Rev. Dr. Dachollom C. Datiri	COCIN president	Ph.D.	Male	COCIN Headquarters	50-60	2/2/2017	Clergy
2	Rev. Dr. Obed Dashan	Vice President	Ph.D.	Male	COCIN Headquarters	50-60	31/1/2017	Clergy
3.	Rev. Amos Mohzo	General Secretary	Ph.D.	Male	COCIN Headquarters	50-55	2/2/2017	Clergy
4	Rev. Dauda Jimra	Dept. General Secretary	M.Th.	Male	COCIN Headquarters	60-65	1/2/2017	Clergy
5	Mrs. Godeh Jerry Nuhu	COCIN women leader	Dip. Theol.	Female	COCIN Headquarters	50-55	24/1/2017	Laity
6	Rev. Paul Mangkam	Director Evangelism and Church Growth	B.Th.	Male	COCIN Headquarters	50-60	30/1/2017	Clergy
7	Rev. Alexander Maiseni	COCIN Youth Coordinator	B.Th.	Male	COCIN Headquarters	40-50	25/1/2017	Clergy
8	Prof. Umar Danfulani	Lecturer University of Jos	Ph.D.	Male	University of Jos	50-60	12/1/2017	Laity
9	Rev. Justin Lani Betle	Retired Reverend	Ph.D.	Male	RCC Jos Jarawa	60-70	21/2/2017	Clergy

IN-DEPTH INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW WITH LECTURERS OF GINDIRI THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

10	Prof. Jotham M. Kangdim	Provost	Professor	Male	Gindiri Theological seminary	60-65	16/1/2017	Clergy
11	Rev. Dr. Benjamin Pokol	Lecturer	PhD	Male	Gindiri Theological Seminary	50-55	12/1/2017	Clergy
12	Rev. Dr. Caleb Dami	Lecturer	PhD	Male	Gindiri Theological seminary	50-55	16/1/2017	Clergy
13	Rev. Philemon Grumse	Lecturer	MTh	Male	Gindiri Theological Seminary	50-60	16/1/2017	Clergy
14	Mrs. Rifkatu Pam	Lecturer	MTh	Female	Gindiri Theological Seminary	45-50	16/1/2017	Laity

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG STUDENTS OF GINDIRI THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

15	Rev. Reuben Musa Amende	Student	Degree	Male	Gindiri Theological Seminary	30-40	16/1/2017	Clergy
16	Rev. Ayinze James Ayuba	Student	Degree	Male	Gindiri Theological Seminary	40-50	16/1/2017	Clergy
17	Rev. Wayas Ishidi	Student	Degree	Male	Gindiri Theological Seminary	30-40	16/1/2017	Clergy
18	William John Istifanus	Student	Degree	Male	Gindiri Theological Seminary	30-35	16/1/2017	Laity
19	Rev. Margit Irmiya Bulus	Student	Degree	Male	Gindiri Theological Seminary	40-45	16/1/2017	Clergy
20	Ishaya Abalis Daya	Student	Degree	Male	Gindiri Theological Seminary	30-40	16/1/2017	Laity
21	Mudunka Filibus	Student	Degree	Male	Gindiri Theological Seminary	30-40	16/1/2017	Laity
22	Rev. Kwashe Musa	Student	Degree	Male	Gindiri Theological Seminary	30-40	16/1/2017	Clergy

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG COCIN CLERGY CONGREGATIONAL
LEADERS RCC DU JOS

23	Rev. Chollom Adamu Gyang	Pastor	Degree	Male	Du Jos	40-50	19/1/2017	Clergy
24	Rev. Destu Wale	Pastor	Degree	Male	Du Jos	30-40	19/1/2017	Clergy
25	Rev. John Yusuf	Pastor	Degree	Male	Du Jos	40-45	19/1/2017	Clergy
26	Pastor Obadiah Selbol	Pastor	Degree	Male	Du Jos	30-40	19/1/2017	Clergy
27	Mrs. Esther Stephen Choji	Staff	Degree	Female	Du Jos	30-40	19/1/2017	Laity
28	Mrs. Jessica Dagok	Pastor's wife	Degree	Female	Du Jos	30-40	19/1/2017	Laity

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG CLERGY CONGREGATIONAL
LEADERS RCC DADIN KOWA JOS

30	Rev. Dalyop G. Mancha	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Dadin Kowa	40-50	31/1/2017	Clergy
31	Rev. Yakubu Agwom Izang	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Dadin Kowa	50-60	31/1/2017	Clergy
32	Rev. Wakaso Issoufou	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Dadin Kowa	40-50	31/1/2017	Clergy
33	Rev. Moses Chagumi	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Dadin Kowa	40-50	31/1/2017	Clergy
34	Rev. Isaac Daspan	Leading Pastor	Master	Male	Dadin Kowa	40-50	31/1/2017	Clergy
35	Rev. Mark Millam	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Dadin Kowa	30-40	31/1/2017	Clergy

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG CLERGY CONGREGATIONAL
LEADERS RCC JOS

36	Rev. Bitrus C. Bogos	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Jos	40-50	26/1/2017	Clergy
37	Rev. Mutdang Philemon Deshi	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Jos	30-45	26/1/2017	Clergy
37	Pastor Ebiloma Okpanachi	Pastor	Degree	Male	Jos	30-40	26/1/2017	Clergy
38	Rev. Sani Wasika Iliya	Leading Pastor	Diploma	Male	Jos	50-60	26/1/207	Clergy
39	Rev. Mafuyai Nathaniel	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Jos	40-50	26/1/2017	Clergy

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG CLERGY CONGREGATIONAL
LEADERS RCC GYEL JOS

40	Rev. Samson Bisat	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Gyel Jos	40-50	29/1/2017	Clergy
41	Rev. Maxwell B. Dayok	Leading Pastor	Masters	Male	Gel Jos	60-65	29/1/2071	Clergy
42	Zi Samuel Pam	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Gel Jos	40-50	29/1/2017	Clergy
43	Pastor Emmanuel Sunday Bot	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Gel Jos	40-50	29/1/2017	Clergy
44	Rev. Gabriel S. Ajilson	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Gel Jos	50-55	29//2017	Clergy
45	Rev. John Mahos	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Gel Jos	40-50	29/1/2017	Clergy
46	Mrs. Comfort Dimlong	Elder	Master of Theology	Male	Gel Jos	40-50	29/1/2017	Clergy

FOUCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERS OF
LCC ANGWAN ABUJA JOS

47	David Azi Kaze	Member	Degree	Male	Angwan Abuja Jos	40-50	8/1/2017	Laity
48	Kupdot Ezekiel	Member	Degree	Female	Angwan Abuja	40-50	8/1/2017	Laity
49	Samuel Vivanyabak	Member	Diploma	Male	Angwan Abuja	40-50	8/1/2017	Laity
50	Baks Xerses	Member	Diploma	Female	Angwan Abuja	30-40	8/1/2017	Laity
51	David c. Chollom	Member	Primary	Male	Angwan Abuja	50-60	8/1/2017	Laity
52	Yusufu Adamu	Member	Secondary	Male	Angwan Abuja	50-55	8/1/2017	Laity
53	Mrs. Rhoda	Member	Secondary	Female	Angwan Abuja	50-60	8/1/2017	Laity
54	Danladi Wuyep	Member	Diploma	Male	Angwan Abuja	50-60	8/1/2017	Laity
55	Machif Gideon	Member	Degree	Male	Angwan Abuja	40-50	8/1/2017	Laity

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG THE CONGREGATION LCC TUDUN
WADA JOS

56	Rev. Daniel Datongs	Leading Pastor	Degree	Male	Tudun Wada	40-50	1/2/2017	Clergy
57	Mrs. Christiana D. Datongs	Member	Diploma	Female	Tudun Wada	30-40	1/2/2017	Laity
58	James Phillip Nyam	Elder	Masters	Male	Tudun Wada	40-50	1/2/2017	Laity
59	Williams Daguleng	Member	Diploma	Male	Tudun Wada	25-30	1/2/2017	Laity
60	Moses Talwa	Elder	Higher Diploma	Male	Tudun Wada	50-60	1/2/2017	Laity
61	Mrs. Naomi Ishaya	Elder	Degree	Female	Tudun Wada	40-50	1/2/2017	Laity
62	Philip Baya	Elder	Degree	Male	Tudun Wada	50-55	1/2/2017	Laity
63	John Watvil	Member	Diploma	Male	Tudun Wada	50-55	1/2/2017	Laity

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AMONG CONGREGATION AT THE COCOIN
HEADQUARTERS COMPOUND CHURCH JOS

64	Yakubu Sagai	Leading Pastor	Masters	Male	Headquarters Church	40-50	19/2/2017	Clergy
65	Gabriel Gwafwan	Member	Degree	Male	Headquarters Church	50-55	19/2/2017	Laity
66	Christabel Samuel Atikum	Member	Secondary	Female	Headquarters Church	20-25	19/2/2017	Laity
67	Mary Fwabong	Member	Secondary	Female	Headquarters Church	40-50	19/2/2017	Laity
68	Joshua Mba	Member	Degree	Male	Headquarters Church	30-40	19/2/2017	Laity

FOCUS GROUP AMONG THE PYEM INDIGENOUS GINDIRI

69	Mary Sokale Kaka	Indigene	Primary	Female	Gindiri	50-60	12/1/2017	Laity
70	Ruth Abuku Bulus	Indigene	Degree	Female	Gindiri	50-55	12/1/2017	Laity
71	Samuel T. Kallamu	Indigene	Masters	Male	Gindiri	60-65	12/1/2017	Laity
72	Zaka Kaka	Indigene	Degree	Male	Gindiri	55-60	12/1/2017	Laity
73	Toni Moko	Indigene	Secondary	Male	Gindiri	65-70	12/1/2017	Laity
74	Chanwat Suna	Indigene	Primary	Male	Gindiri	60-65	12/1/2017	Laity
75	Lori Tafida	Indigene	Diploma	Male	Gindiri	60-70	12/1/2017	Laity
76	Audu Wani Bida	Indigene	Primary	Male	Gindiri	60-70	12/1/2017	Laity
77	Jostina Lori Tafida	Indigene	Primary	Male	Gindiri	60-70	12/1/2017	Laity