ENTERING GOD'S FAMILY: THE ADOPTION OF CHRISTIAN NAMES IN THE EARLY BUNUN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, EASTERN TAIWAN

Chun-wei Fang
National Museum of Prehistory, Taiwan

Previous studies of the Bunun naming system always treated it as a rigid entity with a timeless essence (cf. Chiu 1966, 1976; Islituan 2009; Tu 2004). Although many researchers have discovered the exogenous names in the Bunun naming pool and considered them the consequence of the Bunun's interaction with outside world, they failed to explore the intricate relationship between naming practices and social change. For example, in Chiu's paper, after examining 409 names collected from the Tannan Bunun, he discovered 9 Japanese names and 4 Christian names among them. Instead of investigating the motives and processes of the incorporation of foreign names, he concluded the adoption of foreign names illustrates the influences of external cultures on Bunun society (Chiu 1976, 161). It seems to me that the adoption of foreign names is the adjunct of social change and treating it as in need of no explanation. Previous studies also obscured the agency of the Bunun people in adopting exogenous names. In this paper, I suggest replacing the static and passive models with a more inclusive and dynamic framework of name change that would allow us to consider the Bunun as active constructors in the changing world.

This paper describes the adoption of Christian names among the Bunun of eastern Taiwan as an example of cultural accommodation within the context of social change triggered by Christian evangelization. The argument I propose is that the adoption of Christian names occasioned in the early

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Bunun Presbyterian Church is a particularly effective mechanism through which the Bunun have managed to accommodate the cosmological framework of Christianity introduced into their society. A broader purpose of this paper is to shed some new light on how the Bunun people reorganized their ancestral religious ideas to accommodate a new Christian affiliation.

My starting point is the finding that the naming practice is a vital means for the storage and transmission of fundamental social, moral, and cosmological values of a society (Reid and Macdonald 2010; vom Bruck and Bodenhorn 2006). This does not suggest that the naming system is a static or bounded entity and that the naming system of a specific group is relative stable. As Khatihb (1995, 349) has illustrated, the name that a group of people relates to serves as a conceptual label for cultural consistency, and changes in names often reflect major changes in society. The significance of a naming system depends on its adaptability in the constantly changing world. In order for the naming system to remain responsive to cultural change, it must be in constant adjustment. The prominence of a naming practice in this respect is not merely that it alters itself to accommodate the changing situations. In their introductory paper on personal names in Asia, Reid and Macdonald proposed "changes in name systems are not only the consequence of great social shifts in history, but also influence those shifts" (2010, 2). Their remarks remind us to focus on the elaborated interactions between name changes and social shifts.

This paper is based largely on my doctoral fieldwork in the villages of Luntien and Hsiuluan. My fieldwork took place over 12 months from February 2010 to January 2011 and has since been supplemented by occasional visits of between three days and a week from 2011 to 2013. During my fieldwork, I stayed with a three-generation family whose members are members of the Luntien Presbyterian Church. Participant observation and interview are my principal methods of collecting data. I attended as many congregations and activities as I could, including church services, marriage, and naming. In the first stage of my fieldwork, I collected the genealogy of every household and their migration history by means of interview. To protect the privacy of the people I worked with, I have changed the names and details cited in the following section.

The adoption of Christian names has always been an epiphenomenon observed in the process of missionization throughout the world and history (Aragon 2000; Chitando 2001; Thornton 1993). Among Taiwan indigenous peoples, conversion to Christianity has been accompanied by an adoption of Christian names (cf. Chiu 1976; Huang 1999; Islituan 2009; Ku 2010; Tu 2004). In the encounter between Christianity and the Bunun people, the

cultural significance of indigenous names confronted the Christian tradition of what was appropriate.

In the early period of evangelization, the Bunun ancestral names, with their abundant sociocultural meanings, were abandoned in favor of biblical or Christian names. In this case study, I attempt to challenge the old idea that the newly converted Bunun were the passive recipients of exogenous names assigned by Christian ministers or they just imitated Christian ways superficially. Instead, I consider them active constructors of their own religion and society. This is similar to what Barker suggests in seeing Melanesians people as "the primary architects of their religions" (1992, 166). To understand why a Christian name was accepted and was given to a person, I therefore have to take the local community's social structure and cultural values into consideration. Through the adoption of Christian names in early evangelization, the local Bunun Presbyterians have intensively engaged with foreign religious beliefs and practices in many creative ways and made them their own by accommodating them in terms of their ancestral cosmology and cultural values. During the ongoing process of indigenization, the Bunun ancestral religious beliefs and practices were inevitably changed by Christianity, but they also deeply impacted the Christian ideas and practices.

Background

The Bunun are one of the Austronesian-speaking indigenous groups in Taiwan with a population estimated at 55,618 in June 2014, according to official census.[1] *Lumah* (house or family) is the basic unit and prototype of Bunun social structure and the origin of group or individual identity. The Bunun people are divided into five ethnolinguistic subgroups: Taki-tudu, Taki-bakha, Tak-banuaz, Taki-vatan, and Is-bukun (or Bubukun). All subgroups claim to be related by common derivation from ancestral male siblings. All of them find their origin in the Asang Daingad (the large settlement) or Lamungan in which they belonged to the same *lumah.* This suggests that the concept of *lumah* is closely associated with the idea of origin and thus has been given great prominence. The membership of a family was regularly maintained through the sharing of food, especially the sacred millet in annual calendrical rituals. In addition, new members, including brides and newborn or adopted children, could be transformed in status from strangers into family in relation to food sharing (cf. Chiu 1966). The relation of a family can be traced in terms of names, as explained in the following section.

Originally dwelled in the highlands around the Central Mountain Range, the Bunun people were forced to resettle in the lowlands to be closer to colonial control by the Japanese authority in the mid-1930s. My major field

sites, Luntien and Hsiuluan, are two Bunun settlements of around 143 households in total located on the intersection of a gentle east-slope area of Taiwan's Central Mountain Range and the western edge of the southern Huatung Rift Valley. Administratively, Luntien and Hsiuluan belong to Kufeng Village of Chohsi Township in Hualien County, eastern Taiwan (Map). It is estimated that more than 98% of the total population of Luntien and Hsiuluan are Bunun. Living in the lowlands posed great challenges for the Bunun people. They, especially children and infants, were exposed to the deadly threats by a range of diseases, including malaria, influenza, and diarrhea. Besides, the resettled Bunun communities are surrounded by various ethnic groups, including Austronesian-speaking peoples such as Amis, Truku, and Makatao, as well as Han Chinese.

Constructing Relationship through Naming

The significance of personal names does not lie in its lexical features. Rather, the Bunun place much emphasis the name recognizing those who share a same house. When the Bunun ask for the personal name of a person, they ask *kasimaan isuu ngaan?* (Whose name your name comes from?) or *sima suu ngaan?* (Who is your name?). Bunun ask "Who is your name?" instead of "What is your name?" A phrase commonly used to explain actual or expected kinship relations and behavior is *dais'aan* (sibling). To determine their relationship, two people consider their close common elder relatives or ancestors who were siblings of a house and then trace down the generational links from that starting point. The narrative proceeds: My grandfather and his grandmother were siblings of a family. This statement is often used to demonstrate two people's kin relation. Their name also provides a significant clue in tracing people's relationships as it is passed down within a family.

In most cases, the bride left her natal family after marriage and the newlyweds first lived in the house of the groom's parents. The extended family was the ideal model of Bunun society (Chen 1955; Mabuchi 1960; Okada 1988 [1938]). The names of these family members who once lived jointly within the same house become the potential candidates for the name of a newborn. The new mother and baby entered a period of segregation before the baby's umbilical cord stump fell off. During this period, they were not allowed to go out of the house, because they were most vulnerable from the attack of malicious spirits. After the baby's umbilical cord stump fell off, the restriction on the new mother was lifted and she returned to her daily life. The baby was then allowed out of the house, although the elders needed to smear over the baby a special plant called *ngaan*[2] to protect the infant from disturbance by

MAP. **Distribution of Bunun Settlements in Chohsi Township.**

malevolent spirits (Islituan 2009, 140). Until the naming ceremony, the newborn was just addressed with the impersonal label *ubuhan* (baby or infant).

Children are named in accordance with the Bunun naming rule, which is based on sex and generation. Formerly, about a week after a baby was born, the family head would gather family members to discuss whom to name the newborn after. This is called *pacinadaan. Pacinadaan* is derived from the root noun *daan* (path); thus, *pacinadaan* means "to follow a certain path."

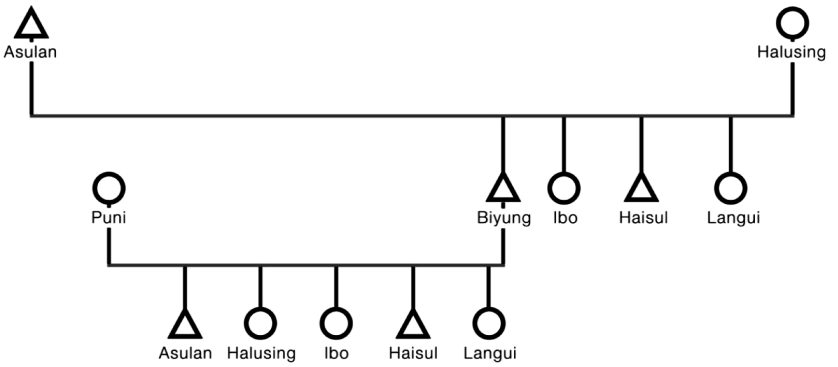

FIGURE. **The Bunun Naming Rule. Δ = man, ○ = woman.**

The firstborn son is named after his father's father, and the firstborn daughter is named after her father's mother. The successive children are named after the father's male or female siblings, respectively, in order.

In a figurative genealogy of the Figure, the couple of Biyung and Puni has five children. Their eldest son is named after Biyung's father: Asulan. Their eldest daughter is named after Biyung's mother: Halusing. As a result, the eldest grandson is the namesake of his grandfather, and the eldest granddaughter is the namesake of her grandmother. The couple's second daughter is named after Biyung's eldest sister: Ibu. The second son is named after Biyung's eldest brother: Haisul. The third daughter is named after Biyung's youngest sister: Langui. This example shows the dominance of the patriline in the naming rule: all the couple's children have names that are taken from the father's side. When the names have been used up from father's side, the Bunun can "borrow" a name from the mother's side after a request is granted by the mother's natal family.

A personal name presents not only who you are, your familial connections, but also your affiliation with past ancestors and future offspring. Following the naming rule, male personal names can be handed down within the family. The Bunun believe that although humans come and go, the names remain the same, passed down from generation to generation, and thus immortal. "We do not need to have a physical genealogy like the Han Chinese people, the name is indeed our living genealogy," one of my interviewees suggested.

In pre-Christian times, once a name had been chosen, the naming ceremony *(pacingaan)* was held either in the individual family by the family head or in a ceremony called *masulaulus,* which was held by the ritual leader in the settlement (Fang 2012). The term *pacingaan* derived from the root noun

ngaan (name); *pacingaan* means "to name someone or something." According to Islituan's study (2009, 141), the naming ritual was held a month after the baby was born. It was held within the family, with all family members present except the children, because they might violate taboos unintentionally. An elder member or the head of the family dipped his finger into the wine, smeared it onto the baby, and said: "I name you X." He blessed the baby by reciting words of protection to bring fortune to the infant. Kising Tanapima, a member of the Tak-banuaz subgroup, described the ceremony as follows:

> The naming ritual was held after the baby's umbilical cord stump fell off. Before the ritual, the elder takes the *ngaan,* chops them into little pieces, and strings them to make a necklace for the baby. Once the necklace has been worn, it is believed the malicious spirits *(hanitu)* and a variety of diseases are afraid of approaching. At the beginning of the naming ritual, children's clothes were taken off completely making them naked. This is because we human beings come to this world naked. Next, he takes the tip of miscanthus grass with a small piece of *ngaan* into his mouth, chews it and then smears the central part of the infant's head *(tungkul)* with the mixture. When anointing the child's head, he should say: "I name you Haisul.[3] Bless you growing up quickly, may bad things not happen to you forever and ever." After the ritual, the child gets clothed again. (Tian 1999: 33–34)

In other cases, the newborn babies were introduced publicly to the whole community in a ceremony called *masuhaulus* held once a year in a settlement. The term *masulaulus* literally means "to make the baby wear a necklace." During the *masuhaulus* ceremony, a necklace was given to the baby by his or her father. Then the ritual leader prayed for the babies to grow up healthily and to be luminous like the necklace. Some elders noted that the necklace is the metaphor for a star. The ritual leader not only prayed for the well-being of the individual baby but also the prosperity of the whole Bunun that their offspring would be as numerous as the stars in the sky.

Personhood was created through cosmological connection rather than biological reproduction. The essence of what it means to be human is to be a social person constructed through the name, not through the blood. One gains not only social connections but a distinct social identity through the name. The Bunun believe, by practicing naming ritual of some kinds, children transform their status from natural beings into social people. If children died with no name, they would not be considered people and would be buried roughly like animals. Once named, they would be buried under the

bedroom inside the house. The physical birth did not create children as "real people"; rather, naming gives them a complete Bunun identity.

Naming affirmed not only the original social or kin relationship between the child and the person for whom he or she was named but also their spiritual implications. The name-giver and name-receiver are connected socially and spiritually. In the process of collecting genealogies, I tried to write down every Bunun personal name accurately, but my informants often made comments like this: "All names are good names" and "Only good names can be passed down from generation to generation." They explained that some names appear more frequently because they are thought of as more protective. Despite the narratives, the Bunun do not seem to think that all names are equally good. In reality, they prefer the names of outstanding figures. In Sayama's research (2008 [1919]), he indicated the Bunun of the Taki-vatan subgroup desire to name their children after successful people.

It suggests what has been transferred through the naming practice is not only the physical name but also the name-giver's personal characteristics, capability, achievement, and reputation. Through life, the child was believed to exhibit certain characteristics of the name-giver. Since this was so, at the time of *pacinadaan,* it was not only the birth order, generation, and gender but also the name-giver's "path of life" that had to be taken into account. The prospective name-giver's health, personality, and even family life had to be reviewed and assessed. Hence, a name that failed to protect its namesake was destined to be discarded subsequently, as shown in the following instance, which is cited with modification from my field notes:

> In the evening, I talked with Tama Pima in regard to his family. Tama Pima is the eldest son of his family. He is in his sixties. He told me that his eldest sister was named after his grandmother in accordance with the Bunun naming rule. However, she died soon in infancy. After his second elder sister was born, she should be named after her father's eldest sister according to the rule. However, in fear of losing her personal name in this family, Tama Pima's grandmother strongly insisted the baby girl should still be named after her. This insistence was finally accepted by his father after a long negotiation. Unfortunately, his second elder sister died young as well. Since then, his grandmother gave up the hope completely to name her successive granddaughters after her name.

Tama Pima's case is not unique. According to the genealogies collected in the field, I observed that a lot of naming cases did not follow the rule

the Bunun asserted. More importantly, against my expectation, they did not consider those cases to be wrong because they contradicted the naming rule described earlier. On the contrary, people suggested that getting a proper name is essential because it relates to a person's fortune and well-being. It can be said, in the real social context, the naming rule is not always followed strictly and can be negotiated if a variety of considerations are taken into account. The process of negotiation becomes an inevitable part of naming practice. The Bunun are convinced this is the real meaning of *pacinadaan:* to bestow a good path.

The destinies of *ala* are entangled throughout life and death. People of the same name fondly call each other *ala* regardless of age and generation. The *ala* hold an intimate relationship. To this day, the elder *ala* give a gift or money to their young namesakes who perpetuate their names in society. Their close relationship not only reveals their familial ties built in terms of naming but also the spiritual relatedness. The Bunun believe that *ala* share sameness not only in name but also in character, achievement, fortune, fate, and so on. Once an elder *ala* has passed away, his or her spirit remains and gives necessary assistance for the young *ala.* For example, if a young *ala* is about to fall over, the spiritual namesake would give him or her a hand. When I conducted fieldwork in this settlement, a young man of a nearby settlement committed suicide by drinking poisonous herbicide. Villagers discussed the cause of his death and concluded the action of this young man mirrored the fate of his grandfather who was his namesake and committed suicide by drinking poison many years before. In this case, the living namesake reincarnated the route of the deceased. The negative connection between name-giver and namesake could be further confirmed in the following story told to me by a middle-aged female villager.

> There was a man called Aliav. He was my husband's uncle. There was a Taiwanese who lived in a nearby village. This man often went to the hunting grounds of my husband's family in the mountain to collect rattan without permission. Every time after his visit, the hunting grounds would always be disturbed greatly. This made my husband's uncle Aliav hold a strong antagonism towards him. One day, on his way home after hunting, Aliav met this man on the hunting trail about to go up to the mountain. Aliav pretended to be friendly to him by passing him a cigarette. However, after the man had his back turned toward him, Aliav raised his rifle, targeted at him, and shot this person from behind. After killing him, Aliav pushed the deceased down the mountain.

> Aliav told no one about what he had done in the mountain trail when he returned home. However, he became insane gradually and made weird actions such as climbing the wall like a gecko. His family resorted to a Bunun spirit medium. The spirit medium said Aliav had been cursed by another spirit medium because he had done something unforgivable. Aliav's family also went to see a Taiwanese spirit medium and got the same answer. Both Bunun and Han Chinese spirit mediums saw a *jitong*[4] curse Aliav by stinging a toad with needles. The toad was the substitute of Aliav.
>
> Because he was cursed very strongly, Aliav didn't live long and died soon after the accident. Subsequently, people with the same name as Aliav do not live over forty years of age within the family. My husband's name is Aliav and he died in his early forties. My grandson, my eldest son's first child, was Aliav named after my husband. He died in childhood. My second son's first son was named Aliav at the beginning. He became unhealthy and was always sick after his naming. Fearful of losing him, we changed his name.

The pre-Christian Bunun concept of person was complex and did not correspond to a binary distinction between body and soul. A human is made up of three parts: body, soul, and spirits. Humans were thought to have two spirits, an amicable one (*masial hanitu,* or good spirit) in the right shoulder and an irritable one (*makuang hanitu,* or bad spirit) in the left shoulder (Huang 1993: 57–58). Both the *masial hanitu* and the *makuang hanitu* would vanish after a person's death, but the soul transformed to spirit and left the human body (Huang 1992, 198). A peaceful death (called a good death) would make a person's soul a benevolent spirit and go to Mai-asang to be reunited with deceased family members. A violent death (called a bad death), such as being killed by an animal in hunting, falling from the hunting trail, being killed by other people, or committing suicide, would make a person's soul become a malevolent spirit, which would wander in this world. The spirit of bad death was considered the main cause of sickness or misfortune. In pre-Christian times, the corpse from a bad death was strictly forbidden from returning to the settlement. The Bunun feared the malicious spirit hovering near the body would be brought back to the settlement. Instead, the corpse was buried instantly or soil was just dumped on it at the site of accident. The fear of connection with the malicious spirit of a bad death can be observed in terms of naming. The Bunun assert that the names of those who had a bad death are not allowed as names for a child and should be abandoned forever within the family.

Changing Names: The Process of Relation Severing and Reconstructing

Name-changing *(pacislushuan)* was a part of healing practice performed by spirit mediums in time of sickness. Changing names would stop the malevolent spirits, which attempted to steal the child's life. This frequently occurred during childhood. The Bunun perceive sickness as a result of the attack of evil spirits and see the children as the most vulnerable. The Bunun resorted to spirit mediums whenever they got sick, seeking a diagnosis of the causes of the sickness and correct remedies. The spirit mediums took several stalks of miscanthus grass, waved them around the child's body, prayed, and summoned spirits who imparted them with power in curing. The causes of sickness were revealed on the leaf of miscanthus grass, which could only be observed by spirit mediums. Other spirit mediums requested a magic stone *(paciaul)* or leaves of citrus for answers. Most frequently, the spirit mediums attributed the illness of children to the unsuitability of names. The illness suffered by the child was evidence of the failure of the name-giver's spirit in protecting the child. Children's names would be changed, and then they would recover. A new name would be bestowed by spirit mediums through consulting either the magic stone or the spirits through dreams.[5]

Name-changing means to cut off the spiritual relationship between the name-giver and the namesake. Giving a new name was part of a healing process in which strength and protection from an active network in a new spiritual relationship were acquired as well. In recounting genealogies, such name-changing situations are rarely mentioned by villagers. I gradually discovered that to point them out would imply a breach of indigenous religious beliefs. The Bunun are convinced that a person can only have one name at any given time. Accepting one name precludes accepting another. After a name-changing, the obsolete name became a taboo name and the child had to be addressed with the new name. If a child was persistently unhealthy, his or her name might be changed repeatedly to eschew the tracing of malicious spirits and to alter the fortune of the child and thus enable complete recovery.

Exogenous or novel personal names were especially welcome by the Bunun. They perceive the malicious spirits to be most ignorant with the exogenous names. In pre-Christian times, these exogenous names might derive from neighboring ethnic groups (e.g., the name Amui was borrowed from the Hakka people) or just be invented by spirit mediums (e.g., the names Kia and Uvau, which could be used both for man and woman). As I mentioned in an earlier section, Luntien and Hsiuluan are situated in a multiethnic environment. Some famous Bunun spirit mediums not only serve their

people but also practice their techniques for other ethnic groups. By means of cross-ethnic contacts, the spirit mediums were enriched in their name pool.

The shift of name may have always prevailed in the past, given the high rates of mortality induced mainly by the contraction of the diseases, malaria and diarrhea, occasioned by the Mass Resettlement policy. The number of name shifts reached its height between the late 1930s and the mid-1950s in Luntien and Hsiuluan, according to my research. During this period, more than half of the children had their names changed at least once.

The Adoption of Exogenous Names

Just as the namesakes' relationship is central to the fabric of Bunun social life and what it means to be real people, so it is central in relations with outsiders. The process of turning strangers into relatives in terms of the adoption of foreign names has been going on a long time in Bunun society. As explained previously, a foreigner transformed his or her status from an outsider into a family member through living and sharing food in a house. The exogenous names brought by the new family members enrich the name pool of the family and are adopted as the names of the next generation. Take the Bunun women. Because they have to leave the natal family after marriage, their incorporation with their husband's family is manifested through the adoption of their names. In their grandchildren's generation, their names, initially exogenous, turn into the names of siblings.

Beyond women's names, the adoption of foreign names of other ethnic groups also illustrates the incorporation or domestication of foreign essences into the native framework. What makes this phenomenon all the more intriguing is that the adoption of foreign names is not just a distant event (cf. Sayama 2008 [1919]; Utsushikawa et al. 2011 [1935]) but also a process that continues in contemporary Bunun society (cf. Islituan 2009). I suggest the adoption of foreign names is a crucial mechanism in transforming exogenous into indigenous.

The Bunun naming system was in gradual transformation from the Japanese colonization period (1895–1945). Japanese colonial administrators aiming to cultivate the national identity introduced the Japanese given name and family name in Kanji to the Bunun people in the 1930s. The names given by Japanese colonialists had nothing to do with the indigenous naming system. Instead, the concept of family names inherited through the father was introduced. Since then, every person had two names and each name was used in specific domains. The Japanese name was used only in official contexts, such as household registration. The Japanese names written down in administrative documents represented the Bunun's new identity as Japanese citizens.

The Bunun name was not shown in official documents but was used in daily life. The Japanese names became a new address of a person with no relationship with his or her personal name. Due to the close association between the local official leaders and the Japanese officers, these Japanese names were most often assumed by local official leaders, and they carried the prestige associated with that status. Their Japanese names were widely used in official and local circumstances and persisted long after the retreat of Japan after the Second World War. However, at the moment of naming, the Bunun name instead of the Japanese name was passed down to the next generation. The coexistence of two distinct naming systems suggests that the Japanese names alone did not transform the Bunun. They were only a product of foreign military encroachment from the Bunun point of view.

A similar scenario happened after the Chinese Nationalist government took over Taiwan from 1945. In 1947, an official policy made by the Executive Yuan was implemented to change the Japanese names of indigenous peoples into Han Chinese names. According to Tu's research (2004: 80–81), Chinese names in characters were given randomly and rapidly by the Han Chinese local officers, regardless of Bunun social structure. The Chinese name, which is the product of domination, is used in dealing with the outside world, such as schools, and is registered in official documents, such as the identity card. In general, each Bunun person has at least two distinct names, the Bunun name and the Chinese name, and elders born in the Japanese period may have a third name, the Japanese name. These different names are used in different social contexts.

Christian names, the names of the figures in Old and New Testaments, were used as personal names by the Bunun Presbyterians in the early missionization. The Bunun people saw names that came from the Christian God as more powerful and protective. This also suggests that in the process of adopting Christian names, the Bunun people were not passive but active. The major difference between the names given by the state and the Christian names, as discussed in the following section, is that the latter displaced the Bunun names with all its cultural value. A few Christian names have found their way into the name pools of Bunun families. These names are passed down to the younger generation and are regulated by Bunun naming practices. How and why did these changes come about? Furthermore, the Christian names were adopted by the Bunun Presbyterians between the mid-1950s and the early 1960s, which corresponded to the peak of Christian conversion, according to my finding. What is the correlation between adoption of Christian names and Christian conversion? Before discussing these issues, I sketch a short history of Christianity among the Bunun of eastern Taiwan.

The Arrival of Presbyterians

The Bunun did not come into contact with Christianity until the early 1940s, after resettlement. In 1942, the Japanese government held a short-term training session in Luntien on malaria prevention and treatment and sent trainees to pay home visits in the evening to promote hygiene. Two Truku trainees, Yamata and Okuyama, were Presbyterians. They strategically took advantage of the opportunity to share Bible stories with the villagers during their home visits (Hu 1965). The spread of Christianity was prohibited by Japanese colonialists as it was the religion of their enemy, the Americans. Christianity was also rejected by the Bunun as it contradicted their ancestral rituals and injunctions.

Soon after the end of the Second World War, the Bunun began to experience evangelistic work by neighboring Han Chinese Presbyterian churches. But they failed to make conspicuous headway. Pastor Wen-tsi Hu, a Han Chinese missionary, was sent by the Mountain Work Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan to work among the Bunun people of eastern Taiwan. Having settled himself in Kuanshan, a Han Chinese town adjacent to the Bunun settlements, in September 1947, he began to learn local vernacular and conducted mission outreaches with a Bunun assistant. Hu recognized the need for the Bunun's participation in mission works by recruiting and training the natives to become his mission coworkers early on his work (Hu 1965; 1997 [1984]). The Yuli Bible Training Session held between January 29 and February 4, 1949, was a turning point in Bunun evangelistic history. Almost overnight, most trainees began to be involved in mission works spontaneously after their training session (Hu 1965).

While Truku Christians and Han Chinese missionaries were at the forefront of bringing Christianity to the Bunun people, it was the Bunun who established Christianity among their people. The early Bunun evangelists returned home and emerged as disseminators of the new religious knowledge and the accompanying literacy. Christianity continued to spread, in Pastor Taupas Tanapima's words, "from relative to relative, from friend to friend, and from house to house." Highly inspired by the success of Yuli Bible Training Session and the emerging need for more evangelists as their Christian communities expanded, Hu held another short-term training session for the Bunun in June 1949. He selected eight outstanding trainees and commissioned them to propagate Christian messages throughout all Bunun territories.

The participation of the Bunun in evangelism was a powerful demonstration that Christianity was not just a foreign religion but also a valid option for the Bunun. The widespread use of the Bunun evangelists was a distinctive

feature of Bunun missionization. This had the unintended consequence of allowing the early Bunun evangelists to reinterpret and accommodate their ancestral religious practices and beliefs to fit the Christian counterparts. They took the parallels between the ancestral stories and the biblical stories as evidence and demonstrated that they already had Christianity and a Bunun Romanized script of the Bible (i.e., the Bunun written words) in the ancient past that had been washed away by flood. This convinced the Bunun people that Christianity was not foreign borrowings but came from their own cultural heritage. This understanding further facilitated the pervasive acceptance of Christianity among the Bunun communities. According to the census provided by Hu (1965, 424), by 1964, there were 56 local churches with a collective membership of 11,630 people, which was more than half of the total Bunun population.

The Adoption of Christian Names

I did not recognize the existence of Christian names in local genealogies in the early stage of my fieldwork, because the villagers always insisted that "all names derive from the ancestors" and especially because few Christian names are inherited by younger generations. It does not mean that villagers attempt to hide the adoption of Christian names. Rather, it suggests that Christian names have been incorporated actively into their naming system and have turned from exogenous to indigenous. Christian names only came out when the namesakes' early life histories were reviewed.

Unlike their Catholic neighbors, who obtain a Christian name from a priest in baptism, the local Presbyterians chose Christian names intentionally for their children. The adoption of Christian names displaced the Bunun name. But the acquisition of a Christian name was not a pervasive phenomenon. Based on the genealogies collected in Luntien and Hsiuluan, I discovered at least nine Presbyterians were named after Bible figures. This happened approximately between the mid-1950s and the early 1960s (Table).

When asked about the reasons for their adoption of Christian names, most people told me something like this: "At the beginning, when Bunun began to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, their hearts were very hot. They intended to follow the teachings of Bible to devote their children to God and the church." This observation clearly indicates the adoption of Christian names only happened in the early stage of evangelization.

Moreover, naming their children after Bible figures became a new way people managed to show their trust in the Christian God and establish a relationship with Him. People remembered that, in the early stage of their acceptance of Jesus Christ, whenever a child was born, the local church

TABLE. **The Adoption of Christian Names in the Luntien Presbyterian Church.**

No.	Christian Name (Bunun/English Spelling)[7]	Sex	Year of Naming (Approximate)	Motives
1	Istilu/Esther	Female	1954	Protection and blessing
2	Yakuvu/Jacob	Male	1956	Protection and blessing
3	Matai/Matthew	Male	1957	Unknown
4	Iuhani/John	Male	1957	Protection, blessing, and expectation
5	Sala/Sarah	Female	1960	Sickness
6	Malia/Mary	Female	1960	Protection and blessing
7	Malia/Mary	Female	1960	Unknown
8	Naumi/Naomi	Female	1962	Protection and blessing
9	Isaku/Isaac	Male	1962	Sickness

pastor would visit the family to express his congratulation and concerns in person. Realizing the venerable tradition of naming that already existed in Bunun society, the local pastor persuaded the adherents to give their newborns Christian names. If his suggestion was accepted, a proper Christian name would be proposed by the pastor and a subsequent discussion with the family would be commenced in order to make a final decision. Once a Christian name had been chosen, at the moment of infant baptism held soon after the birth, the name was given openly in the church congregation.

Although the motives for adopting Christian names as personal names may be varied and complicated for each individual, in general Presbyterians hold positive attitudes toward Christian names. They perceive Christian names are all good names. Only those who made great achievements or contributions to the whole community could have their names written down in the Bible. Some Christian name-receivers recollected that the adoption of Christian names showed their parents' expectations for them. Parents wished children to imitate the behaviors, personality, and achievements of the Bible

figures after whom they were named. For example, Esther in the Bible was a woman who loved prayer, and Mary was a woman who loved the Lord.

As shown in the Table, the two major reasons for adopting Christian names were sickness and looking for the protection and blessing of God. These two reasons are related with the Bunun concepts of illness and its cure. In the following section, cases concerning naming after Bible figures in order to receive protection and blessing are discussed first (cases 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8 from Table), after which cases in which the adoption of Christian names was considered a healing ritual for sickness are investigated (cases 5 and 9 from Table).

The first case of the adoption of a Christian name occurred in 1954. In this case, the reason for the adoption was to receive protection and blessing of God. There are five cases, shown in the Table, of adopting Christian names for this motive. Among them, cases 1, 2, and 8 are siblings of a family. The adoption of Christian names for cases 2 and 8 was associated with the story of the eldest sister (case 1), which has been recorded in the local church history:

> There is a woman in our village whose name is Yu-chu Chin. She did not yet believe in the Lord Jesus Christ at the beginning. For the safety of her baby in the belly, she asked the spirit medium to perform techniques to drive out prospected misfortune ahead. However, the spirit medium told her that her upcoming baby was destined to die with no hope. This was fate. Her heart was very anxious. She could not sleep nor eat. One night, she had a vision in a dream. There was an extremely shining light illuminating her way while she was walking. An old man in white apparel appeared. His hair and beard were all in white. He took out a present, gave it to her and said: "Never lose this present." She woke up at the time she accepted the gift. Next morning, she ask Paki (from Jenlun village) to explain the dream. She was satisfied with the explanation. The Bunun people believe dreams are the revelation of the Sky.… Under the protection of the Lord Jesus, she delivered a baby on 25th of February of that year. The baby's name is Jui-mei Chen who is now the mother of three children. The Lord is the only refuge. (Luntien Presbyterian Church 1989, 27)

Dream, as a channel between humans and spirits, is meaningful to the Bunun people. The figure and apparel of the old man in the dream gave them some clues to recognize him as the Jesus Christ seen in the illustrations brought by evangelists. They came to conclude that it was Jesus Christ who saved their upcoming child. Besides, they recognized the power of the Chris-

tian God over other spirits who failed to save their daughter through the spirit medium. In order to construct a new relationship with God, the couple decided to enter God's family by naming this girl after a Bible figure—Istilu. By doing so, they perceived the child would receive the protection and blessing of God.

The active adoption of Christian names became a clear manifestation of the Bunun's commitment in the Christian God. What Istilu's (her Chinese name is Jui-mei Chen, as mentioned in previous quotation) parents did was the actual practice taught by local evangelists: "There is none other God but one. God is different and the distinctive difference is that God is the most powerful being in the world. God will be on your side if you develop the right relationship with Him." Presbyterian missionaries often proclaim the importance of "sincerity" as a bridge between the human and the Christian God, demonstrating the commitment of the adherents. However, it is difficult for the Bunun people to realize such an abstract requirement in their daily religious practices. In pre-Christian times, material substances or sacrifice were offered to express their commitment to the spiritual world instead of the abstract idea of sincerity. However, material sacrifice to God was prohibited by Presbyterian ministers. They proclaimed that there was no need to make sacrifices as Christ's crucifixion was the final sacrifice. How did they construct or maintain the relationship between the humans and the new spiritual beings if material exchange through sacrifice was forbidden? Entering God's family through the adoption of Christian names became an efficient answer to this quandary.

Istilu's example had some consequences among the local Presbyterian community. Case 4, case 6, and cases 3 and 7 belong to three distinct families.[6] The couple of each family was the first to convert in the Luntien Presbyterian Church as early as 1949. It is believed they named their children with Christian names, despite the importance they attached to the heritage of Bunun names, in order to enter God's family and construct or maintain direct relationships with the new Christian spiritual beings.

Another outstanding motive for adopting Christian names was associated with disease and curing, as shown in cases 5 and 9. In both cases, people adopted Christian names after suffering from illness. In case 9, Isaku's mother was an inhabitant of Luntien. She left her natal family and lived with her husband's family in a nearby settlement after marriage. Unfortunately, her first two children died soon after birth. Moreover, her husband's family members died successively. The successive deaths implied the place where the family lived was an inauspicious site. Her husband's family decided to move to another location and left the house. Isaku's parents returned to Luntien. Isaku's mother became pregnant soon after they came back. In fear

of misfortune happening among them again, the couple asked the spirit medium to perform techniques to drive evil spirits out after the birth of the baby. Unfortunately, they failed to keep the child. The child died around two years of age. They had another girl in 1952. She was attended by a community midwife, Mulas Binkinuan. After delivery, the midwife prayed for the baby in the name of Jesus Christ. Later, she introduced the Christian God to the couple and named the baby girl Akimi, from the Japanese that means "misfortunes have been eliminated."

From then on, the couple attended the Presbyterian Church to demonstrate their new religious affiliation. Three years later, they had the boy they had always longed for. However, the couple was shrouded in misfortune once more. The boy suffered from a serious ailment when he was about six years old. The midwife again stepped in. She was the church elder of the local Presbyterian Church. She recommended changing the boy's name to Isaku, for the Bible figure Isaac, to enable his cure.

Isaac was the only son of Abraham and Sarah in the Old Testament. Abraham was already a hundred years old when Isaac was born, and Sarah was ninety years old, beyond childbearing years. Isaac died when he was 180 years old, making him the longest-lived patriarch. For local Bunun Presbyterians, the story of Isaac's birth and death is a miracle. There are three main themes in Isaac's story, according to the local viewpoint. First, Isaac was the son of the promise given by God. Second, his father, Abraham, was father of the faithful. The last theme was the longevity of Isaac.

These points were exactly the expectations of Isaku's parents. Isaku told me his parents desired him to be the son of promise and prayed for his longevity by means of changing his name. More importantly, the entreaty could only be answered by God if his parents were faithful to Him.

Case 5 demonstrates a slightly different picture. It happened in the early 1960s. The girl's family had come to the local Presbyterian Church. However, when she got a serious disease, the family could do nothing but take her to see the famous spirit medium. After examining the causes of illness, the female spirit medium suggested she shift her name. The Christian name Sala, or Sarah in English, was proposed by the spirit medium. The female spirit medium had recently converted to Catholicism. With the consent of priests, the spirit mediums were allowed to practice their techniques as long as the techniques benefited people. In addition, this case illustrates the endeavors made by the spirit mediums to adapt their healing practices to the evangelization of the Bunun.

According to a Bunun pastor who majors in Bunun language and participated in Bunun Bible translation in the early period, the Bunun term *sinlatuza* (belief) was created in the process of Bible translation in the early

1950s. The term *sinlatuza* derives from the noun root *tuza* (truth). *Latuza* is a verb that means to believe something is true because it can be observed by human eyes; the prefix *sin-* in *sinlatuza* indicates that "we believe it is truth because it has already been revealed and observed by our eyes." For the Bunun, seeing is believing. Belief is not for intellectual discussion but should be demonstrated in actual practices. The Bunun people's belief in God and their sincerity toward Him can only be observed through practical actions. Therefore, the children's recovery after adopting Christian names is obvious evidence that Christian names have potency associated with God.

These cases suggest that the Bunun constructed their new Christian affiliation through the adoption of Christian names. The pre-Christian ideas, such as the concept of spirit, still played a role in the process. However, their beliefs had been changed fundamentally. In the Luntien Presbyterian Church, the naming practice was carried out at the time of infant baptism whether the name came from the Bible or an ancestor. Most local Presbyterians were eager to take their newborns to church to be named and baptized as soon as possible after birth. At the ceremony, the pastor dipped his finger in water and touched the baby's head just as the Bunun did in pre-Christian times. Then he announced the baby's name and prayed for God's blessing and protection. People were convinced that the baby's name would be written down in a book in Heaven after the ceremony.

The baby's name was given by the pastor, not the father or the ritual leader of the family group. This should be regarded as a kind of dispossession or deprivation of the family's agency to the benefit of the pastor's and the church's power. In addition, the local Presbyterian pastor insisted that baptism must be conducted as a prerequisite of becoming a Christian, thus pushing ancestral spiritual engagement and the associated concept of spirit into the background. This is especially conspicuous in the adoption of Christian names. In such cases, God's power was elevated and He became the most powerful being in the world. Hence, God disempowered both spirits and humans. People's ability in negotiating with spiritual beings through the naming practice was curbed. The Christian belief challenged the linkage between humans and spirits, which was the main theme of the pre-Christian naming practices.

Concluding Remarks

Bodenhorn and vom Bruck (2006, 3) have pointed out that "names carry with them the capacity, not only to delineate the boundaries of social status, but also to bridge them." For the Bunun of eastern Taiwan, the introduction

of Christian names was of great significance in their early encounter with Christianity. I have proposed elsewhere that previous studies on the Bunun naming system often viewed it as a static entity independent of social and historical processes and contexts (Fang 2012). This paper shows the active borrowing and appropriation of Christian names in the early stage of Bunun evangelization as pivotal dynamics in embracing Christianity.

First, by examining the process of the adoption of Christian names, I intend to point out that the new Christian traditions, including Christian names, were perceived and interpreted in term of the Bunun's ancestral religious traditions. The active adoption of Christian names shows Christian names are good names from the Bunun point of view. Thus, Christian names are names with potency to protect or bless the namesakes. This also suggests that the Bunun people confirmed the positive character of the spiritual beings behind Christian names. People believe the Christian God to be beneficial and benevolent. The adoption of Christian names instead of ancestral names intentionally by Bunun Presbyterians demonstrates their acknowledgement of God's superior power.

The local people use the phrase "entering God's family" to describe the new relationship constructed through the adoption of Christian names. People enter church, call one another *dais'an* (brothers and sisters), and consider Jesus Christ to be the family head. Church as an imagined extended family is further constructed through the adoption of Christian names. The new and fictive relationship created between believers' children and God through naming is seen by the Bunun as a way of entering God family and demonstrating their commitment to the Christian God. The inheritance of Christian names by younger generations also shows the accommodation of Christianity within the local Bunun community. Christianity transformed itself from exogenous into indigenous in terms of naming. This is how Christianity is indigenized.

I argue that religious change induced by Christianity among the Bunun involves severing ties with the old spirits and reconnecting with the Christian spirits. The abandonment of ancestral names and the displacement of Christian names mean the Bunun attempted to sever their relations with ancestral spirits in favor of Christian spiritual beings. The explanation also helps to answer the time coincidence between the adoption of Christian names and the height of Christian conversion. Among the Bunun, name changing was considered a healing ritual for sickness that occurred frequently during childhood in the past. This was seen as a way to cut off the spiritual relationship with the name-giver who was thought to have brought the illness on the child or was seen as unable to protect the namesake. On such an occasion, the spirit of the name-giver was represented as a source of affliction instead of well-being. Renaming with Christian names cut the

bond with previous name-givers, just as Bunun spirit mediums tried to do in pre-Christian times.

Frequent name changing among the Bunun decreased rapidly and disappeared completely after their mass acceptance of Christianity. Some villagers suggest the practical measures taken by missions, such as introducing medicine as relief goods, conducting mobile medical services among indigenous villages, and establishing hospitals or clinics in nearby cities, greatly improved the health of local people. As a result, the spirit mediums lost their market in the curing of sickness. However, as demonstrated by Strathern and Stewart (1999), medicine and the curing of disease do not equate with the healing of sickness. Healing is complex and involves the whole person. In Yang's paper (2006), she shows that Bunun cultural notions associated with illness and health are related to Bunun concepts of personhood. According to Bunun perceptions, healing can be performed by driving out the evil spirits *(hanitu)* and restoring balance to a person. The adoption of Christian names in renaming a child in time of sickness involves severing the relationship and warding off the evil spirit through the power of Christian God. Alternatively, it dismantled the link between humans and spirits, which was the main theme of pre-Christian naming practices. The baptismal naming ceremony carried out in church also undermined the legitimization of ancestral naming practices based on the traditional concept of spirit. And yet as I show the pre-Christian religious traditions remain extremely entangled with the adopted Christian practices and beliefs.

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NOTES

1. Council of Indigenous Peoples, http://www.apc.gov.tw, accessed July 28, 2014.

2. *Ngaan* is made from the dried rhizome of *Acorus calamus* (also called sweet flag). The strongly scented rhizomes have traditionally been used medicinally and spiritually by the Bunun. They believe the evil spirits are extremely scared of its flavor.

3. Haisul is a man's name.

4. *Jitong* is the Chinese spirit medium who is possessed by a deity when performing ritual.

5. The magic stone is a black, oval-shaped stone with two pointed ends. The spirit medium says a name and asks the magic stone. If this is an appropriate name, the magic stone will stand vertically on the ground with the pointed end for approval. Otherwise, it will fall down. For some spirit mediums, a new name was given by spirits in dreams. I heard from the villagers that there was a famous female spirit medium in Luntien. She practiced the techniques to decide whether a child's name should be changed. However, it was her father who provided new names for children. People said her father got the messages from the spirits in dreams.

6. In the early stage of Christianization, it was common for a whole family to go to church collectively once the decision had been made by the family head.

7. The pronunciation of Christian names is highly influenced by Japanese, as is the spelling. This is because in the early stage of evangelization, the Japanese Bible was widely used by both Taiwanese and Bunun clergymen.

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