



NORWEGIAN
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Naming God in the Chin Language

Towards a Contextual Approach

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my dear wife Ni Hlei Tial and our beloved four-months old son Vanro Cung.

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Abstract

“Naming God in Chin Language: Towards a Contextual Approach” is a research paper done on the theological understanding of the Chin traditional names of God, “*Pathian* and *khuazing*”. The main research question seeks to find the proper name for God in Chin language amidst concepts developed by the Christian Missionaries to the Chin people who were behind either the creation or adaptation of the name of God for native Christian Chin people. The supporting research question is why the present Chin Churches are still using only the missionaries’ concept of God, *Pathian*, not the traditional concept of the Supreme Being, *khuazing*. The other research sub-questions are asking about the concept of *Pathian* and of *khuazing*. The research also intends to find the reason why the missionaries to the Chin people used *Pathian* as the name of God instead of *khuazing* which was the traditional name for God.

The research is done among the Hakha Chins and the names are confined to the Hakha-speaking Chin dialect. The aim of this study is not to compare and to contrast each other but to explore the local national theological understanding of God’s name in the Chin language whereas some of the present Chin people are still using *khuazing* for the name of God in spite of the exclusion from the Hakha Chin Bible as the name of God. This thesis also traces the differences and similarities between *Pathian* and *khuazing* in order to find the rudiments of fundamental theological foundations for naming God in Chin.

In a nutshell, the research explores some issues on reasons of the use of *Pathian* relative to the disappearance of *khuazing* as the name of God in Chin. Some of the issues can be addressed as the missionary negligence or insensitivity towards Chin traditional religions and their local identity. Lastly, the research finds that the Chin people are ready to use *khuazing* as the proper name of God interchangeably and along with *Pathian*: *khuazing Pathian* or *Pathian khuazing*, but not to replace *Pathian*. This finding is a basic and theological fundamental foundation for naming God in the Chin language towards a contextual approach towards the future Chin name of God.

Naming God in the Chin Language

Towards a Contextual Approach

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

The topic of the thesis is “Naming God in the Chin Language: *Towards a Contextual Approach*” The main research question is what is the proper name for God in the Chin language. The research sub-question will be why are the present Chin Churches using the missionary concept of God, *Pathian*, not the traditional concept of the Supreme Being, *khuazing*. Other sub-questions are what is the concept of *Pathian*, what is the concept of *khuazing*, and why did the American Baptist Missionaries use *Pathian* instead of *khuazing* for the name of God in Chin.

This thesis tries to find the theological understanding on the concept of the two Chin names for God; *Pathian* and *khuazing*. The researcher has explored these two concepts in reference to the reason why the missionaries chose *Pathian* over the name *khuazing*. Despite the exclusion of the word *khuazing* for the name of God by the missionaries, some of the Chin people, especially in the Lai-speaking Chin, are still using *khuazing* for the name of God till today. The aim of this study is not to compare and to contrast each other but to find the wider theological understanding of these two names in Chin that are named for God after Christianity in Chin Land, *Pathian* and for Supreme Beings in the traditional religion of the Chin people, *khuazing*.

In Chin traditional religion, the fore fathers and mothers believed that *khuazing* is the creator and omniscience. But when the missionaries came to Chin Land, they totally rejected the name *khuazing* for the name of God and introduced God as *Pathian*. Despite the introduction of this new name for God, our fathers and mothers are still using the name *khuazing* and *Pathian* together for the name of God when they pray. So, I investigated the origin of the name *Pathian* and how it became the Chin name for God. The researcher also dealt with if the word *khuazing* was the name for Supreme Beings in traditional religion of the Chin people, why the missionaries did not use it for the name of God.

Whenever, the words *Pathian* and *khuazing* are used in this paper, those refer to the name for God among Lai-speaking Chin. The Lai-speaking Chins in this paper are those who are living in Hakha township, Thantlang township, and Falam township. And whenever the word Chin Land is used, it means Chin state in Myanmar.

In this paper, the name *Pathian* is used in capital 'P' but not capital 'k' in *khuazing*. This also is somehow interesting because whenever God is mentioned in any language and traditional name, it must start with the capital letter and small letter for other gods. Like this, capital 'P' is used in *Pathian* which is officially used as the name of the Christian God in Chin. But the name *khuazing* is not yet official for the name of Christian God in Chin. So, this is not used with capital 'k'.

1.2. Research overview

There is no any direct research which is done about why the missionaries chose the word *Pathian* for the proper name of God in Hakha Chin instead of *khuazing*. There is one book about the history, identity of the Chin people and traditional Chin religion. But it is not a direct research book concerning this study. The book is called "In Search of Chin Identity,"¹ whose author is Dr. Lianhmung Sakhong. He concluded his book that the Chin society was changed from *khua-hrum* religion to *khua-zing* religion after the colonial period in Chin land through missionaries. After that time, Christianity and Chin-ness were inseparably intertwined in the new Chin society. Among the reasons for mass conversion to Christianity of the Chin people was the similar theological concepts between traditional Chin religion and Christianity, especially the concept of a Supreme God (the concept of *khuazing*) and the theology of eschatology (the Chin had the theology of *mithi khua*, meant village of the dead in English).²

1.2.1. Literatures

There are some books about the American Baptist Chin Mission in Chin written by foreigners. But there is no critical or academic book about the missionary works in Chin Land written by the local people. There are some master theses and dissertations of the missionary works of the American Baptist and among them, is a dissertation of Rev. Dr. Thla-awr Bawi-hrin with the title "The impact of missionary Christianity on the Chin", which he wrote for his doctoral ministry. The dissertation stated that upon examination of the missionary words in their books for the Chin people it is evident that the missionaries were not sensitive enough to the indigenous culture and traditions of the Chin.³

¹ Sakhong, Lian H. (2003). *In Search of Chin Identity: A Study in Religion, Politics and Ethnic Identity in Burma*. Copenhagen S: NIAS Press.

² Sakhong 2003: 242-245.

³ Bawi-hrin, Thla-Awr. (2002). *The impact of Missionary Christianity on the Chins* (Doctoral Dissertation). Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, Ohio.

In contextualizing Chin traditions and culture, the book of Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of contextual theology*⁴ will be used in this study. The second book for contextual and identity of the Chin people is the Robert J. Schreiter's book, "Constructing Local Theologies."⁵ In this book, Schreiter gives a well definition of local theologies and discusses important and challenging theological issues. He also discusses about three models. Most importantly, Schreiter insists that the outsiders and insiders do local theologies together. That means the community, the professional theologian, the prophets and the poets are key players in a local theology setup.⁶ This Schreiter's model is a good assessment to this study in relation to the missionaries' approach to the Chin people.

1.2.2. Research emphasis

In this research paper, the focus is on the Chin names for God, *Pathian* and *khuazing*. The study is trying to find what is the proper name for God in Chin? And the reasons to why *Pathian* is officially used instead of *khuazing*. How did the Chin name of God come to be? Why did the missionary dismiss the word *khuazing* for the name of God which was the name for a Supreme Being in the traditional religion of Chin? The answers for these questions are central in uncovering the reasons behind the use of the name *Pathian* for God while some Christians still using *khuazing* along with *Pathian*. Last and most important thing that the study is presenting is about the differences and similarities between these two names; *Pathian* and *khuazing*.

The study may not give answers to all questions but it can give a glimpse of the understanding of people. First, this study tries to find the reasons of using the word *Pathian* for the name of God in Chin. In other words, the Chin people have their traditional name for Supreme Being, called *khuazing*. The missionaries neglected this traditional name and used another name, *Pathian* as it is explained above. Secondly, the study also tries to find the origin of *Pathian* and *khuazing* and its theological reflections among the Chin people.

1.3. Analytical unit and the research question

It took me the whole month of September 2016 in Myanmar, to collect data and interview people for my thesis. There are nine people whom I interviewed: three professors, three pastors and three lay men. Among them, there are five men and four women in which two are women

⁴ Bevans, Stephen B. *Models of contextual theology, revised and expanded edition*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.

⁵ Schreiter, Robert J. (1985). *Constructing Local Theologies*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.

⁶ Schreiter 1985: 16-20.

pastors, and two are lay women. I did not interview one professor by person. I sent the interviews questionnaires through email and he gladly and eagerly answered all.

1.3.1. The analytical unit

I have selected three places for my interview. The two are very crucial in this study. Actually, I chose them purposely. The three places are; Yangon, the most populous and former capital city of Myanmar. The second one is Kalay, the city in which many of the diaspora Chins are living. And the last one is Hakha, the capital city of Chin State. In Yangon, I interviewed four people, three laymen and one professor. I interviewed a woman pastor in Kalay. The rest of my interviewees were from Hakha.

Yangon

Yangon is the largest city in Myanmar. According to 2014 census report, the population of Yangon region was 7.36 million.⁷ Yangon is also the very important and populous city for the Chin people because many of the Chin people are living there. It is believed that the Chin in Yangon is not less than 48,000. Among them, the Hakha Chin are about 25,000.⁸ They live among other people, like Burmese, Karen, and Mon, but they value Chin culture and try to revitalize nationally and internationally. Chin state is poor politically and economically, most of the Chin who have much money and most educated people are moving in Yangon. That means they are living in the more advanced and educated society than that of Chin state. In this city, there is also the most important and largest theological institute in Myanmar.

Kalaymyo

Kalaymyo is one of the cities where many of the Chin people in the plain region among the Burmese people and other ethnic groups are living. This is very interesting that how far they know about their own culture in the midst of mixed society. In this region, I interviewed only one, woman pastor because the context is not too much different from Yangon. Hakha is also important for my research. This is the homeland of the culture and context of my topic. Most of the data are collected in Hakha. *Pathian* and *khuazing* are Hakha language. So, Hakha is the place most important in doing research in this field.

⁷ Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia 2016. *Yangon region*. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yangon_Region.

⁸ The author interviewed one of the pastors of Lai Baptist Church, Pastor Peng Thang in Yangon.

1.3.2. Statement of the problem and research questions

The main research question for this thesis is why are the Chin Churches using the missionaries concept of God *Pathian*, not the traditional concept of the Supreme Being called *khuazing*. In other words, why did the American Baptist Missionaries used *Pathian* for the proper name of God in Chin, instead of *khuazing*? The sub-questions are; what is the meaning of *Pathian* and *khuazing* in Chin and what is their reaction in the use of both? What are the differences between the concepts of *Pathian* and of *khuazing*? Do the present church leaders and the active church goers know about the differences between the words *Pathian* and *khuazing*, contextually? All findings from the interviews will be analyzed thematically.

1.4. The structure and organization of the thesis

This study is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter is the introduction in which the scope of the research and the general overview of the study is presented. The second chapter is background of the research. It is about a political and religious background of Myanmar and of the Chin Land a bit of understanding of the two concepts, *Pathian* and *khuazing*.

The third chapter is about the methodology of this research paper. In this chapter, it is fore mentioned what kind of social research method will be use in this research. Research paradigm and strategy are included in this chapter. All the informants are mentioned with a short biography. The fourth chapter deals with theory of the thesis. Contextual theology is the key to this research thesis theory.

The fifth chapter of the thesis is the presentation of the interview. The presentation is done in person by person. At the same times, the presentation tries to organize the findings thematically too. The six chapter is discussion chapter. Discussion chapter includes the summary of the findings and other scholars' view on the subject. The last chapter summarizes the whole thesis to conclude the findings.

Chapter 2

Theory

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is theory of the research. The research is about contextual theology particularly on naming God in Chin. This chapter is presented into three sections. The first section one defines the meaning of contextual theology. This tries to look back to the process of naming God in Chin, how came the Chin name of God. The second section deals with models of doing contextual theology according to two authors, Stephen B. Bevans and Robert J. Schreiter. Bevans has six models and Schreiter has three models. As naming God is doing contextual theology, we have to look back how far is the missionaries to the Chin people were aware of these models. The third and last section is about Schreiter's approaches to culture. These approaches are very important and indispensable in doing contextual theology.

Rev. Dr. Ling, the president of Myanmar Institute of Theology, Yangon, explained in his book "*Communicating Christ in Myanmar*" about immaturity of many Christians in Myanmar. He said,

"Theologically speaking, many Myanmar Christians are not yet matured in theological thinking so that they follow centuries-old missionary teachings verbatim without critical questioning and without re-evaluating their contents."⁹

Doing theology from our own context is more important especially for the Chin people who have been Christians for more than one century and yet haven't shown any progress in growing theologically. The American Baptist Missionaries had brought the Gospel to Chin people in 1899 and from this time, there has been the need for examining, re-evaluating and reconstructing the received Western image of God to a new form of Chin ethnic local fashion. In fact, the Western missionaries used science, philosophy and their western logic in constructing and introducing theology/Gospel to Chin people. The current need is more theologies/perspectives from within our own culture. Doing theology from Chin perspective

⁹ Ling 2014: 18

does not mean denial of other theologies brought by missionaries, but to find a new way to construct it from within a deep-rooted Chin culture.

As mentioned above, this study is focusing on contextualizing the name of God from a Chin perspective. So, I will present some models for doing contextual theology from the two prominent authors, Stephen B. Bevans and Robert J. Schreiter. The first part is a very short introduction to contextual theology according to both the two reference authors. In the second part, all the models from the two authors will be presented in this chapter. It does not mean all the models is relevant to this research thesis. But, there are some most appropriate and useful models from both the authors for this research. I think it is necessary to relate some of these models in doing contextual theology among the Chin people, particularly on naming God in Chin.

2.2. Contextual theology as both new and old

According to Bevans, doing contextual theology is both new and old. He clearly said,

“A contextual approach to theology is in many ways a radical departure from the notion of traditional theology, but at the same time it is very much in continuity with it. To understand theology as contextual is to assert something both new and traditional.”¹⁰

If Bevans stated that contextual theology was both and new or a radical departure from the notion of traditional theology, we will look the concepts of God’s names in Chin if there was any continuation from the traditional religion of the Chin to the present names of God in Chin: *khuazing* and *Pathian*.

Schreiter (1985) has also discussed about local theology in his book *Constructing Local Theologies*. He explained the process of local theology in three main themes, namely; Shift in perspective and the new questions, the issues of old answers in a new situation, and the emergence of a new Christian identity. He also gave the meaning of contextual theology as, “Contextual theology is a widely used term for this shift in perspective, focusing especially on the role of context in this kind of theology.”¹¹

¹⁰ Bevans 2002: 3

¹¹ Schreiter 1985: 2-6

The only Chin historian, Lian Hmung Sakhong said that Christianity and the Chin-ness were inseparably intertwined in the new Chin society after the mass conversion to Christianity.¹² The Chin people were changed to Christianity in a very short period of time when the gospel was introduced by the American Baptist missionaries in 1899. It is very interesting that what make this change very fast. At the same time, we still have to ask about the old Chin identity in the new Christian identity.

2.3. Models of contextual theology

According to Bevans (2002), there are six models of doing contextual theology. These models are conceived as the basic and fundamental models in contextual theology. Schreiter (1985) has also introduced three models in doing local theology. In this chapter, all the models from both authors will be discussed in order to understand doing contextual theology in general and to relate some of the models in naming God in Chin.

2.3.1. Bevans' six models

Bevans has divided *Models of Contextual Theology* into two parts. In the first part, he stresses on the methodological issues and concerns in doing contextual theology. He clearly defined the meaning of contextual theology and pointed out what kind of issues that are important in doing theology in a particular context as a new approach. In the second part, he gave six models and explained in detail. In the following, the six models will be presented briefly in relation to this study.

2.3.2. Translation model according to Bevans

Translation is presented by Bevans as a model which does not mean translation of words. Rather, the translation of the meaning from the content of the Gospel into the context of the particular culture.¹³ Bevans also clearly stated that, translating the meaning of doctrines into other cultural context, the translation might make those doctrines look and sound quite different from their original formulation. The important thing that we should be careful about in this model is the content of the gospel that should be preserved. When we studied this model specifically to this research, Bevans' statement on,

¹² Sakhong 2003: 244

¹³ Bevans 2002: 38-39

“The starting point for the process in this model was always supracultural, supracontextual essential doctrines. Thence, if there is conflict between the gospel values and cultural values in the evangelization or contextualization process, there is no doubt that the gospel message must be preserved, rather than the values and practices of the culture. Ultimately the gospel is the judge of all contexts, even though it seeks to work with and within all context. On the other hand, the practitioner of the translation model is one who can accept the good in all cultures or contexts while still being committed to the transforming and challenging power of the gospel.”¹⁴

Here in this statement, the weak point of this model is the gospel is the judge of all contexts. But on the other hand, the strong point is that it can accept the good in all cultures or contexts.

2.3.3. Anthropological model according to Bevans

The second is anthropological model. Etymologically, this word came from the word anthropology which means the study of the origin of human. This model focuses on the validity of the human as the place of divine revelation and as a source of theology and was perceived equal to the other two sources of scripture and tradition.¹⁵ Bevans made it clear that the starting point for this model is the present human experience with a particular focus on human culture, secular or religion. The practitioner of this anthropological model attempted to listen to a particular context in order to hear within its social structure, the very word of God.¹⁶

The strength point of this model was that it took human reality as the utmost seriously. At the same time, the model provided the people a fresh perspective. This model tried to see things from where the people were. But on the other hand, the danger point of this model was that the core message of the gospel could not be preserve.¹⁷ As the main question for this research was whether the missionaries to the Chin people listened or sensitive to the local cultures or identity, this model was very relevance for evaluating in naming God in Chin.

2.3.4. Praxis model

In a nutshell, this model is a call for social change. The model does not mean in terms of practice and action, rather is the term that denoted a method or model of thinking in general, and a

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 40-43

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 56

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 57-58

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 60-61

method or model of theology in particular.¹⁸ Bevans wants to say that the model is raising the spirit of commitment to Christian action rather than just mere expressions in words.¹⁹ The defining biblical reference for this model is the word becomes flesh and God with us – the revelation of God. This model is the best for liberation theology.

2.3.5. Synthetic model

This model emphasized the uniqueness of the culture and its complementarity of cultures. Which means that, every culture can borrow and learn from other cultures and still remain unique. This model paved way to interfaith as well as dialogues that facilitates learning from each other and listen to each other instead of underrating other cultures. The uniqueness of this model is its methodological attitudes of openness and dialogue. The danger point of this model is on the other hand, selling out to the other.²⁰

This is also observable among Chin people whose cultural names for God have been changed by missionaries and brought misunderstanding. This model will help shape perceptions and cultural concepts that Chin people have, instead of judging them, we will dig deep to see and learn from its cultural grounds.

2.3.6. Transcendental model

This model sometimes is understood as subjective model. It does not focus on the content of the culture or of the gospel. Rather, it emphasizes the experience of oneself as a subjectivity. In this model, revelation was understood as event, not as a content, but it was something that happened when a person opens himself/herself to the reality.²¹ The emphasis was the revelation of God in person, not in scripture or culture. So, the subjectivity of a personal experience of truth was more important than the objectivity of revelation. Experience is good tool in tackling some issues but it can be of a little help in solving historical and cultural truths. In this case, there might be some difference in one's experience of God and revelation to the other.

There are some advantages of this model like faith seeking understanding. That is called in other words, theology as process or activity rather than theology as a particular content. The second one is that this model recognizes the contextual determination of the person who

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 71

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 72

²⁰ Ibid., p. 90

²¹ Ibid., 104-105

theologizes. Moreover, this model provides the common ground for mutual conversation and interaction. There is a difficulty in this model. The transcendental model could be a ‘metamodel’, too abstract and might be too ideal.²²

If this model is applied to naming of God in Chin, we have to ask some question about is there any mutual conversation between the traditional Chin people and the missionaries, the runner of Chin Christian newly identity. The revelation of God in the Chin culture and identity should be looking and asking nowadays. Is there any interaction between the traditional religion of the Chin people and the newly identity of the Chin people in Christianity?

2.3.7. Countercultural model

In this model, the content of the gospel always challenges the culture. Culture is treated with suspicion. The term is not anti-culture rather encountered and engaged context through respectful yet critical analysis and authentic gospel proclamation in word and deed.²³ This model tries to adjust the context within the content of the gospel. This might be a perfect model in a contextualization sense. What Chin people are looking for is, the content which came with missionaries should have been adjusted to fit in Chin culture settings. The danger point of this model is the need to be counter-cultural rather than anti-cultural. On the other hand, the strong point of the model is its clear and courageous stand in the midst of religious pluralism.²⁴ This model will be relevance for this study research work. We should inquiry whether there is a mutual engagement or conversation in naming God in Chin.

2.4. Schreiter’s three models of local theology

After presenting different models by Bevans, the following section will present the three models by Schreiter. In his book *Constructing Local Theologies*, Schreiter (1985) has not only developed a definition of local theologies but also discussed important and challenging theological issues about the process, context, and challenges of local theologies. His main argument is based on how to express the experience of Christ in its own situation and relate it to a different context, and maintain fidelity both to the Christian tradition and to the insights of the present experience. The following are the models;

²² Ibid., p. 108

²³ Ibid., p. 119

²⁴ Ibid., p. 125

2.4.1. Translation models

Translation model is the most common model that combines the task of local theology as one that comprises a two-step procedure. In the first step, the basic Christian message is the kernel. In the second step, the gospel message is brought to a new situation, named husk. It is called kernel-husk system. According to Schreiter, there are two weaknesses in this model; first, cultural analysis is not done in terms of what culture investigated, but only to find parallels with patterns in previously contextualized Christianity. The second weakness of translation model falls on kernel-and-husk theory. The kernel and husk seem to be intimately bound together thus isn't used much in reflecting contextual understanding. The strength of this model is its concern to remain faithful to the received tradition of Christian faith.²⁵ Thus it cannot be much considered under this study as long as context is not a subject matter.

2.4.2. Adaptation Model

In adaptation model, there are three sub-models. In the first model, Western theology or philosophy is used as a basic principle for theological/philosophical development. Secondly, the focus is more on local culture, doing theology as a refinement for the previous model. Thirdly, there is a different kind of adaptation approach. The first method is showing someone planting the seed of faith and allowing it to interact with the native soil, leading to a new flowering of Christianity, faithful both to the local culture and to the apostolic faith.²⁶ This suggests that, the native culture will not be distorted but will be interrupted in a positive way which may result to interconnection of the two.

2.4.3. Contextual model

The third and the last model by Schreiter is contextual model. As the term implies, it concentrates on the cultural context in which Christianity took root and receive expression. Schreiter explains two kinds of contextual approaches; ethnographic approach and liberation approach. Ethnographic approach particularly is concerned with identity and liberation approach is concerned with social changes in human society.

For Schreiter, among the three models, contextual model is the most important and enduring in the long run.²⁷ And this is what is craved for in our contexts that whatever is brought to our

²⁵ Schreiter 1985: p. 8-9

²⁶ Ibid., p. 9-11

²⁷ Ibid., p. 12-16

cultures should be contextualized and be part in the indigenous culture as it is the quest of this study too.

2.5. The study of culture according to Schreiter

Schreiter has referred the study of culture as to listen to the culture. In the process of studying culture, Schreiter has proposed some tools for listening to cultures under local theology. There are four approaches of listening to cultures in accord to some characteristics in every cultural analysis.²⁸ The first approach to any culture must be holistic. The second approach explains that it must be able to address the forces that shape the identity of culture. The third approach is that it should be able to address the problem of social change. These three things are important in listening to the cultures. In naming God in Chin, we have two national names for God. The missionaries' chose the one for the name of God and they rejected the other one. The important thing for the Chin people now is, in this naming God in Chin, did the missionaries really listen the Chin culture.

The following are three approaches in studying culture, we also need to ask that did the missionaries to the Chin people really think about these approaches in naming God in Chin.

2.5.1. Functionalist approaches to culture

Functionalist approaches are concerned with how the various aspects of society are constituted and interrelated to form a culture as whole. This approach is most useful in studying culture in a holistic concern and is well suited to translate approaches in local theology.²⁹

2.5.2. Ecological and materialist approaches to culture

These approaches focus on the relationship between society and its physical environment. Ecological approach is concerned with how the community serves to keep the society in balance with its physical environment. This approach went further to seek how the realities of physical environment shapes and direct the cognitive dimensions of culture. This kind of approach was very useful when the big social changes were taking place.³⁰

²⁸ Ibid., p. 42

²⁹ Ibid., p. 45-47

³⁰ Ibid., p. 47

2.5.3. Structural approach to culture

Structural approach to culture is concerned with uncovering the unconscious structures that generates patterns of culture and control their transformations and permutations. This method is mostly helpful to get to the sources that shapes, direct, and transform the bases of identity in a community. They also help to point out directions of change.³¹

2.6. The use of models for this research

When presenting all these models from the two authors, it is important to know which one is the most relevant and appropriate model for this research method. Both authors give the use of the models in their respective books. Naming God in the Chin language to be contextual, the most useful model from Bevans would be a mix use of translation and anthropological model. That is accepting the Chin concepts of God and listening to social and religious structure in traditional religion of the Chin people. Schreiter's contextual model is the most important goal of this research thesis.

³¹ Ibid., p. 49

Chapter 3

Method

3.1. Introduction

Generally, there are two kinds of method in doing social research. One is quantitative research method and the other is qualitative research method. According to Allen Bryman, Quantitative social research method tends more to focus on number while qualitative research method more focuses on word.³²

3.2. Qualitative Social Research Method

The applied method used in this research is a qualitative research method approach. According to Bryman, qualitative research is connected with epistemological understanding on the concept and meaning.³³ This research intends to find the meaning of the local concept on the Chin name of God: *Pathian and khuazing*, and to find out why the Chin name of God is *Pathian*.

3.2.1. Research Paradigm

According to a lecture on social research method,³⁴ the main objectives of social research methods are primarily to see things from the eye of being researched, to investigate how the process of the history was unfolded and finding the causes and identify social structures. By analysing this information, in this context, a social research method is the most relevant method for finding the meaning and the difference between the two national concepts of the name of God in Hakha-Chin. We will find what the Chin Christian now feel when they use the name of God in their own language. Moreover, we also will try to find the other concept of God *khuazing*. In this point, we need to research how they perceive religion and cultures. Especially, how they conceive their national and traditional religion after converting to Christianity. At the end of this research, the understanding of the Chin name of God will be found based on historical, cultural and theological facts and finds.

³² Bryman 2012: 380

³³ Ibid., p. 408

³⁴ Marielle Stigum Gleiss, MET5010: Social Research Method, "Research Question, Introduction to qualitative research. This can also be found in Bryman 2012, page 399.

3.2.2. Research Strategy

In order to find the national concept of theology of the Chin name of God, we need to apply a combination of literature studies and qualitative research method. According to Bryman social research, it involves research that draws on the social sciences for conceptual and theoretical inspiration.³⁵

For literature studies purposes, the researcher used books and dissertations written by former students who studied similar concepts, such as: *In Search of Chin Identity*, by Lianhmung Sakhong 2003, *Innocent Pioneers and their triumphs in a foreign land: A critical look at the work of the American Baptist Mission in the Chin Hills (1899-1966) in Burma from a missiological perspective*, doctoral dissertation by Cung Lian Hup 1993, and *A Chin History of the encounter with British colonial rule and the American Baptist Mission works in the Chin Hills: A story of cultural adaptation and transformation in Burma (Myanmar)*, doctoral dissertation by Biak Hlei Mang 2010. There will be more books on the concept of the Chin national concept of God by others prior Chin students who went abroad for further studies. Particularly, for methodological approach, the researcher applied concepts on *Social Research Methods*, 4th edition by Alan Bryman.

3.3. Selection the Informants

Upon the selection of the informants, the researcher selected people who had a better standing in answering the related research topic as this research is not to find public opinion but a theological concept. There are nine people whom the researcher interviewed: three professors, three pastors and three laymen. There are five men and four women, two women pastors, and two lay women. The reliability of the information brought forth by the interview was a very important aspect in this study. To avoid bias and misinformation, the researcher had to choose carefully as the rural areas have a high number of uneducated Chin people, it is logical that most do not know much about *khuazing* a concept of god before Christianity, and a faith totally against Christianity. In addition, if we go to the evangelical or Pentecostal society, they will surely say no to *khuazing*. Thus, these interviewees are enough for research on this topic.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 5

3.3.1. The Interviewees

The following people are all the interviewees in this research with their title. All of the interviewees agreed to a disclosure of their names in my thesis.

Rev. Dr. Hla Aung

He is an Executive Secretary of Global Chin Christian Federation (GCCF). The Global Chin Christian Federation is formed by the Chin churches outside and inside of Myanmar from around the world. It promotes the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing of the Chins everywhere. He is also the former principal of Chin Christian University (Formerly Chin Christian College). He got his doctorate degree from Germany.

Rev. Dr. Lian Do Kham

He is now serving as the professor in systematic theology in Chin Christian University (CCU) at Hakha. Chin Christian University is the biggest theological institute in Chin state. He has done a lot of research on the concept of *khuazing* for his PhD dissertation. He got his doctorate degree in Hong Kong.

Rev. Dr. Luke Sui Kung Ling

Sui Kung Ling is also one of the professors in Chin Christian University, Hakha. He is one of the reliable people with vast knowledge and experience in teaching theological studies and other academic levels among Chin people. He has been teaching for many years in Chin Christian University.

Rev. C Nei Rem

She is a great women pastor among Chin Christians. She is serving as an associate pastor in Hakha Baptist Church, Hakha which has more than 500 member households. She has also served as a women secretary at Hakha Baptist Association, the largest association in Chin state Christian association.

Pastor Thla Hnem

She is one of the pastors at Salem Baptist Church, Kalaymyo. She is more evangelical and prominent in preaching and teaching. Salem Baptist Church in Kalaymyo is one of the largest Churches among the Hakha Chin in Kalaymyo. Kalaymyo is the city in which many of the Hakha Chin live permanently. More importantly, most of the students from Chin state are studying their higher education in Kalaymyo.

Pastor Lai Cung

He is now working as the secretary of Culture and Literature at Chin Association for Christian Communication, Hakha (CACC). CACC is the most important organization culturally and theologically for the Chin people, especially for the Hakha Chin. He had also some documents and had written about *khuazing and Pathian* in one the chapters in his master thesis.

Antony Ngun Uk

He is a deacon in Lai Baptist Church, Yangon. He was the former public service personnel. He is a linguist, very good in English. He is now retired and translating Our Daily Bread in Chin. He has a sound knowledge on culture and religion about the Chin.

Pi Tum Iang

She is one retired public service personnel. She lives in Yangon and has ever served as the president of woman department at Lai Baptist Church, Yangon, Myanmar. She is one of the most educated and admired women in Chin.

Pi Mah Ngun

She lives in Hakha. She is a devoted Christian woman. She has a lot of experiences in religion and religious activities. Her strong background on the subject matter was among the merits to include her in this research.

3.3.2. Problem Statement on Interview

The interview was done in a good process although there were some challenges. All my interviewees were excited about the topic of my thesis but they had little knowledge on the subject. The confusing question is that whether the Chin name of God *Pathian* is the missionary

created word nor not. In term of *khuazing*, the concept is very similar to the God creator and it can be used interchangeably with *Pathian*.

3.4. The Role of Researcher

The researcher was both a researcher and a student in the field research. Even though the researcher is a pastor, he did not disclose this information during the interview and data collection process. The researcher introduced himself as a researcher and student. This made the informants to feel free and open. Most of the informants were selected for the researcher's credit for this research topic, but the research also tried to match gender equality and social background.

3.5. Method for Collection of Research Material

In order to find the difference between the theological meaning of *Pathian* and *khuazing*, the researcher applied the qualitative research method. The researcher believed that the materials collected and some findings from the interviews were crucial and imperative for my thesis. All the recorded information is kept and stored in an audio format. We have some books about the Chin people written by the missionary and by the local Chin people, although we don't have as many books about this specific topic, the researcher managed to find some dissertations written by the former Chin students who studied in the USA.

3.6. Method for Analyzing Material

In this research method, materials will be analysed with grounded theory. According to Bryman, there are two kinds of theory in analysing data material. One is analytic induction and the other is grounded theory.³⁶ The researcher will use the open coding system in the grounded theory. As Bryman said, open coding is about breaking down, examining, combining, conceptualizing, and categorizing the data,³⁷ the method will be the most appropriate for finding the theological and different concepts of the Chin name of God.

3.7. Reliability, Validity, and Generalization

According to Bryman reliability refers to consistency of a measure of a concept. At the same time, he also mentioned the three indicators of reliability: stability, internal reliability, and inter-

³⁶ Ibid., p. 565

³⁷ Ibid., p. 569

observer consistency.³⁸ From this statement, this research conclusively supports that the finding is reliable because there is stability in the answer about the two Chin name of God, *Pathian* and *khuazing*.

In a qualitative research, reliability, recognized as pertaining to the stability of data-collection measures, remains an important notion. As Bryman said reliability and validity are dependent upon each other, validity presume reliability.³⁹ This research is reliable and valid for a concrete finding on the theological understanding on the Chin name of God.

According to Bryman, the findings of qualitative research are to generalize the theory rather than to concretize. In other words, it is the quality of the theoretical inferences that are made out of qualitative data that is crucial to the assessment of generalization.⁴⁰

³⁸ Ibid., p. 169

³⁹ Ibid., p. 173

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 406

Chapter 4

Background

4.1. Introduction

I have selected the three places for my interview, two of which purposely hold pressing information in context. The three places are; Yangon, the most populous city in Myanmar. Kalay, a diverse city in which many the Chin people are living with other ethnics and the Myanmar people, lastly Hakha, one perceived as the most important place in this research which is the capital city of Chin State.

In this chapter, population, political, and religious background of Yangon and Hakha is going to be presented. In Kalay, I interviewed only a woman pastor, this is due to merit based reasons that Yangon and Hakha complement the Chin theological context on our topic. In Yangon, I interviewed four people, three laymen and one professor. The rest of my interviewees are from Hakha.

This chapter is the short history and introductory background of the research field. I will divide this chapter into three parts. The first part will be the short history of Myanmar. It comprises its short political and religious background. The second part is about the political and religious background of the Chin. The third part of this chapter includes all the American Baptist missionaries to the Chin people and their works, and a short history of the translation work of the Chin Holy Bible in Hakha dialect. Among many things, these missionaries' works especially on education and Bible translation are chosen to be relevant to this research.

4.2. Myanmar

Myanmar, officially The Republic Union of Myanmar, formerly called Burma, is located in Southeast Asia. It lies along the Bay of Bengal. With regard its border, India and Bangladesh are in the Northwest, China in the Northeast, Laos and Thailand in the East. They enclose the Irrawaddy River Valley. Myanmar is divided into seven states and seven divisions. It is clear that all the states belonged to the ethnic minority. The seven states are Kachin State, Kayah State, Kayin State, Chin State, Mon State, Rakhine State, and Shan State. The seven divisions are Sagaing Division, Tanintharyi Division, Bago Division, Magway Division, Mandalay Division, Yangon Division and Ayeyarwady Division. The capital city of Myanmar was moved

from Yangon to Naypyidaw in 2006. At the Myanmar's Armed Force Day which was celebrated on 27th March 2016, there was made an official announcement that Naypyidaw⁴¹ is the capital of Myanmar.⁴²

4.2.1. Population

The earliest census in record in Burmese history was taken in 1359 in the Pinya Kingdom. The first national wide census was taken in 1638, and it was followed by two other national wide censuses in 1784 and 1803. The first modern census was taken in 1891 in the British colonial period. It was carried out in 10 years interval until 1941. In the post-independence area, the census has been conducted 3 times, in 1973, 1983, and 2014.⁴³ According to the census of 2014, the total population of Myanmar was 50,279,900.⁴⁴

⁴¹ It is administered as the Naypyidaw Union Territory according to the 2008 Constitution.

⁴² Wikipedia, 2017. *Naypyidaw*. Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naypyidaw>.

⁴³ Wikipedia 2016. *Census in Myanmar*. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2014_Myanmar_Census.

⁴⁴ The last census was conducted by the Ministry of Migration and Population's Department of Population, and was funded by Western donors, at a cost of US\$74 million, and supervised by the United Nations Population Fund.

Population of states and divisions was as follows:

Division	Population	State	Population	Total
Sagaing	5,325,347	Kachin	1,642,841	
Tanintayi	1,408,401	Kayah	286,627	
Bago	4,867,373	Kayin	1,504,326	
Magway	3,917,055	Chin	478,801	
Mandalay	6,165,723	Mon	2,054,393	
Yangon	7,360,703	Rakhine	2,098,807	
Ayeyawaddy	6,184,829	Shan	5,824,432	
Nay Pyi Taw	1,160,242			
Total	36,389,673	Total	13,890,227	50,279,900

4.2.2. Historical and Political Background

In the early days, people who lived in Myanmar were known as Mon who are believed to have moved to Myanmar region as early as 3000 B.C. Later, during 800s A.D., Burmans, Chin, Kachin, Karen, and Shan were considered to come to Myanmar. It is obvious that in 1044, Anawrahta, a Burman ruler, united the region with different cultures and traditions of people to find a kingdom and that lasted nearly 250 years. With regard to the political situation of Myanmar, several kingdoms arose and fell in the region from A.D. 1000's to 1800's, when the Britain conquered the country of Myanmar. However, Myanmar got its independence with the name Burma in 1948 with expedition led by General Aung San. However, in 1989 the military

government announced that the name Burma had changed and the official name of the country have also changed from the Union of Burma to The Republic Union of Myanmar.⁴⁵ The British and Burmese fought three great wars. The first war was from 1824 to 1826, the second war in 1852 and the final war was in 1885 and the British gradually conquered and took all of Burma. In addition, in 1942, Japan conquered Burma during the time of World War II (1939-1945). In a fight against the Japanese, the Thakins formed the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) which was led by General Aung San and they regained Burma in 1945. However, as they overcame the Japanese with the help of Britain and other Allied powers, the British returned to power in Burma.

On 4 January 1948, Myanmar got independence from British. The leader of Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), General Aung San was assassinated on 19 July 1947.⁴⁶ After the death of General Aung San, U Nu the vice president of the party of AFPFL became the Premier of Burma and leader of the AFPFL. In the election, U Nu became the prime minister as they (AFPFL) got most support. However, because of the communist and rebel ethnic groups who fought the government, the chance was turned to Ne Win to set a military government and Ne Win took over in 1962.

4.2.3. Military Regime

On 2nd March 1962, General Ne win took power in Myanmar. This time was marked as the beginning of authoritarian rule or dictatorship in Myanmar. Ne Win and his party found the Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP), it remained in power until 1988, September; Ne Win resigned as the head of the BSPP and the name was replaced by State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). In 1989, SLORC declared Martial Law after widespread protests. The military government finalised plans for People's Assembly elections on 31 May 1989. In May 1990, the government held free elections for the first time in almost 30 years and the National League for Democracy (NLD), the party led by Aung San Suu Kyi, won 392 out of a total 492 seats (i.e 80% of the seats). However, the military junta refused to cede power and continued to rule the nation as SLORC until 1997. The SLORC changed its name to the

⁴⁵ Guyot 2003: 970

⁴⁶ A gang of armed paramilitaries of former Prime Minister U Saw broke into the Secretariat Building in downtown Rangoon during a meeting of the Executive Council and assassinated Aung San and six of his cabinet ministers.

State Peace and development Council (SPDC) in 1997,⁴⁷ and then later to the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) until its dissolution in March 2011.⁴⁸

4.2.4. The Revolution of Democracy in Myanmar

The National Democratic League (NLD) was officially established in September 1988. This party was headed by Aung San Suu Kyi, an opposition party against SLORC. NLD's objective was to demand human right, implementation of a democratic system following the resolution by the United Nations and justice for minority groups. NLD urged the observation of a parliamentary democracy system to end the military power which ruled the government.⁴⁹ Unfortunately, on 21 July 1989, Aung San Suu Kyi, the general secretary of the opposition NLD was detained under the State Protection Act and placed under house arrest at her mother's home at 54 University Avenue, Rangoon. Since then, Daw⁵⁰ Aung San Suu Kyi was detained for more than fifteen years.

In 2008, the ruling junta State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), announced the new constitution as a part of roadmap of democracy. At the same time, they announced a general election in 2010 according to the new constitution. Nevertheless, the constitution is seen by the opposition as a tool for continuing military control of the country because it reserves 25% Hluttaw⁵¹ legislature's seats for the military. Yet, to promote reformation in Myanmar, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi contested in the 2012 bi-election to fill 48 vacant parliamentary seats. The opposition party NLD won in 43 of the 44 seats they contested (out of 45 available).

General elections were held in Myanmar on 8 November 2015. The NLD won a sweeping victory, taking 86 percent of the seats in the Assembly of the Union (235 in the House of Representatives and 135 in the House of Nationalities). While NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi was constitutionally barred from the presidency⁵² (as both her late husband and her children are

⁴⁷ Guyot 2003: 970-970

⁴⁸ Wikipedia 2017, Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myanmar#Military_rule_.281962.E2.80.932011.29.

⁴⁹ Mohamad Faisal Keling, et el. 2009: 141-142

⁵⁰ Burmese people use courtesy titles to convey social status, and consider them a more essential part of the name than Mr. or Ms. would be in English. Daw is one such prefix; it translates literally as "aunt" but means something more like "madam," and denotes an older or married woman of substance.

⁵¹ Hluttaw is the Burmese word and used for Assembly in 2008 constitution. The assembly of union is called Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

⁵² According to chapter 3, no 59(f) of the constitution, the president must be someone who "he himself, one of the parents, the spouse, one of the legitimate children or their spouses not owe allegiance to a foreign power". "[They shall] not be subject of a foreign power or citizen of a foreign country ... [or] be persons entitled to enjoy the rights and privileges of a subject of a foreign government or citizen of a foreign country," it states.

foreign citizens), she is the *de facto* head of government, after being appointed to a newly created office, the State Counsellor of Myanmar.

4.2.5. Religion Background

Although Buddhism had its origins in India, since second century AD, Buddhism had been practiced in Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos⁵³. Buddhism becomes the great religion in Myanmar because the most population of Myanmar people is Buddhist. Myanmar people practice four great religions: Buddhism, Christianity, Islamic, and Hinduism and some are animatism. Most of the people in Myanmar practice Buddhism and it stands as a favorable religion of the State and majority.

A large majority of the population practices Buddhism; estimates range from 80% to 89%. According to 2014 Myanmar Census, 87.9% of the population identifies as Buddhists. Theravada Buddhism is the most widespread.

According to 2014 census, percentage of Christian population is the second largest religion in Myanmar. However, it is small in percentage as nationwide. It can be found that 6.2% of the population identifies as Christian Myanmar. Other religions as: 4.3% as Muslim; 0.8% as followers of tribal religions; 0.5% as Hindus; 0.2% as followers of other religions; and 0.1% follow no religion.⁵⁴

⁵³ Charles R. Monroe, *World Religions: An Introduction* (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1995), 118.

⁵⁴ Wikipedia, "Myanmar," religion, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myanmar#Religion>, This page was last modified on 31 January 2017, at 12:13. Accessed on 1 February 2017.

The religious situation of Myanmar is as follow:

Name	Buddhist	Christian	Islam	Hindu	Animist	Other Religion	No Religion
Kachin	1,050,610	555,037	26,789	5,738	3,972	474	221
Kayah	142,896	131,237	3,197	269	5,518	3,451	59
Kayin	1,271,766	142,875	68,459	9,585	1,340	10,194	107
Chin	62,079	408,730	690	106	1,830	5,292	74
Sagaing	4,909,960	349,377	58,987	2,793	89	2,928	1,213
Tanintayi	1,231,719	100,758	72,074	2,386	576	567	321
Bago	4,550,698	142,528	56,753	100,166	4,296	12,687	245
Magway	3,870,316	27,015	12,311	2,318	3,353	1,467	275
Mandalay	5,898,160	65,061	187,785	11,689	188	2,301	539
Mon	1,901,667	10,791	119,086	21,076	109	1,523	141
Rakhine	2,019,370	36,791	28,731	9,791	2,711	759	654
Yangon	6,697,673	232,249	345,612	75,474	512	7,260	1,923
Shan	4,755,834	569,389	58,918	5,416	383,072	27,036	24,767
Ayeyawady	5,699,665	388,348	84,073	5,440	459	6,600	244
Nay Pyi Taw	1,123,036	12,293	24,030	516	20	286	61
Total	45,185,449	3,172,479	1,174,459	252,763	408,045	82,825	30844⁵⁵

⁵⁵

4.3. Chin

The Chin ethnic people are minority in Myanmar and they originally occupied the North-Western hills of the Union of Myanmar as one of the States in Myanmar. Chin state was formerly called Chin Taung⁵⁶ because the Chin State is covered with colored hills. The Chin State lies between latitude 24 in the north and 21.45 in the south and between longitude 94.5 in the east and 93.20 in the west. The border countries of Chin State are the Indian state of Manipur in the north and the Indian state of Mizoram in the west, Sagaing and Magwe divisions of Myanmar in the east, Rakhine State of Myanmar in the south and Bangladesh in the south-west. The length of east to west is 100-150 miles and north to south is 250-300 miles. It occupies a land area of 13,902 square miles. The capital city of Chin State is Hakha. In Chin State, there are nine townships and it is divided into two parts: Southern and Northern Chin. In Northern part, Thantlang, Falam, Tidim, Tungzan, and Hakha are included. Mindat, Kanpetlet, Matupi, Paletwah are called Southern Chin. The Chin State is divided into six different major tribal groups; namely, Asho, Cho, Khuami, Lamimi, Mizo, and Zomi, however, all are included under the branch name of Chin.⁵⁷

4.3.1. Population

It is envisaged that Chin people are living not only in the Chin State but also outside of it in different places of Myanmar and even in the diaspora. According to the Census of the Union of Myanmar in 2014, it is officially recorded that the population of Chin people living in Myanmar are 478,801.⁵⁸ The Chin population outside the country is estimated round 40,000 in USA, 5,000 in Australia and 4,000 in Europe – as refugees and asylums.⁵⁹ Chin people are divided and come from different places, dialects, and different tribes although they belong to Chin.

4.3.2. Political background

With regard to the political background, the British conquered Myanmar in 1885, the Chin Hills were conquered only in 1895-96. Before the invasion of the British, the Chin people lived separately and independently in their land peacefully. After the British took power over Chin State, they purposely divided the Chin territory into three districts. Particularly, The Chin Hills District of Burma, the Lushai Hills District of Assam, India, and apportion of southern Chin

⁵⁶ Taung is the Burmese word meaning in English hill. So Chin Taung means Chin Hill.

⁵⁷ Khin Swe Oo 2012: 20

⁵⁸ The Union Report: Religion Census Report, vol. 2-C 2016: 3

⁵⁹ Stanley 2015: 4

which was attached to the Chittagong Hills Tract of Bengal. Within the Chin Hill District in Burma, they divided it into three sub-districts: Paletwa township located in the North Arakan Hills district, Mindat, Kanpalet townships in the Pakoku district, and Hakha, Falam, Tidim in the Chin Hills district. After the independence of Myanmar from British government on 4 January 1948, the Chin State became the Chin Special Division of the U Nu government with two districts; Northern and Southern Chin Hills district on 24, September 1949. In 1973, the Chin Special Division was changed into the Chin State with nine administrative townships by the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Myanmar. This political system and division was practiced until now.⁶⁰ Chin state is the official name in the present 2008 Constitution. Among the seven divisions and seven states, Chin State is the poorest state in Myanmar.

The political system of Chin is inseparable to that of Myanmar. Nevertheless, in Myanmar political history, there are some ethnics armed forces which promote self-determination in local region from the military regime. Therefore, some of our fellow Chin politicians formed Chin National Front (CNF) on 20 March 1988. The CNF is dedicated to securing the self-determination of the Chin people and to establish a federal system in the Union of Burma based on ethnic equality and democracy. The Chin National Front believes in regaining the self-determination of the Chin people and establishing the liberties of freedom, justice, and equality.⁶¹

4.3.3. Religion Background

The religion concept of the Chin people is based on the concept of *khuazing*. Sakhong said that in order to understand the basic principles of traditional Chin religion and theology, we are to begin with the concept of *khua*.” He mentioned them namely: *khua-zing*, *khua-hrum*, *Khua-chia*, *Khua-vang*, and *Mithi-khua*.⁶² The Chin people have many names for spirit. Strait divided spirit names of Chin into nine categories: mountain spirit, ground or field spirit, jungle spirit, village spirit, house spirit, personal spirit, decease spirit, spirits of animals or trees, and the last one is the creator.⁶³ By looking at these names of spirit, there could be a question like; are the Chin people believe in many gods? Can we say them as polytheistic? Yet, we have to keep in

⁶⁰ Oo 2012: 22, 23

⁶¹ Wikipedia, “Chin National Fronts,” History, 2016. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chin_National_Front.

⁶² Sakhong 2003: 22

⁶³ Strait 2014: 848-850

mind that what are the role of the spirit in Chin context? Among the Chin people, there are the village spirit and personal spirit. They worshipped and gave sacrifices corporately or personally. However, there is the spirit of *khuazing* is different. The Chin people gave sacrifices to *khua-hrum* and to other spirits, but not to *khua-zing*. It was why the Chin Religion is very interesting.

A fundamental and essential phenomenon in traditional Chin Religion is the concept of the Supreme God, known as *khua-zing*. The name *khua-zing* is a combination of two separate words: *Khua* and *zing*. The meaning of *Khua* is ‘all beings and all essence within and beyond time and space’, and the literal meaning of *zing* is invisible force. *Khua-zing* lives beyond *Minung-khua* and *Mithi-khua*, has neither been born nor died, but knows who has been born and died. No men can reach him because he is living beyond *Minung-khua* and *Mithi-khua*, but he is very close to human beings because he is *khua-zing* and they are a part of his being.⁶⁴ Strait also mentioned his conversation with Sang Fen the Hakha preacher in his book that in time of stress we call *khua-zing* whom we do not worship but whom we ought to trust in our ordinary living. We do not need to fear the evil spirit in these circumstances but to trust in God the creator.⁶⁵ Stanley, studying his PhD program in USA now, said like this:

For some people, the Chin traditional belief is considered polytheistic because of the belief in some mountains, rocks, rivers, etc. as sacred, as abode of spirits, and as having divine power. Thus, they must be appeased for the protection and blessing of the people. But for some, it is more henotheism because there is a belief in the supreme God (*khuazing*) while believing in the existence of other gods or spirits with different names even before Christianity was introduced. Theologically, therefore, to appease them is not calling them to be with human but to drive out away from them.⁶⁶

Nowadays, most of Chin people have been known as Christians and for some people especially for Burmese; they cannot differentiate Chin people and Christianity because most of them are Christians. That is the benefit of the encountering and attempt of the American Baptist Mission. For no missionary arrived to Chin Hills until 1899, they were in their forefathers’ deity. Arthur E. Carson and Laura Hardin; the first two pioneer missionaries introduce Christianity to the Chin people and in the very short period of time, almost the whole population of the Chin people accept Jesus as their savior and Lord. Before the missionary couple came to Chin Hills, they had been among the Asho Chin in Thayetmyo, which is located in Magwe division. They

⁶⁴ Sakhong (2003): 23

⁶⁵ Strait 2014: 859, 860

⁶⁶ Stanley 2015: 4

arrived at Chin Hills on 15 March 1899.⁶⁷ There were seven succeeding American Baptist missionaries to the Chin people since then. When the Burmese government did not allow any foreign missionaries to stay and work in any part of Burma, the last missionary to the Chin people Robert G. Johnson and his family left Chin Hills on April 28, 1966. They left Burma on May 17, 1966.⁶⁸ With the success of these missionary movements to the chin people, according to the result of the 2014 Census of the Union of Myanmar, 85.5% Chin people in Myanmar have been Christian.

4.4. American Baptist Missionaries in Chinland

The Chin people were Animists before confessing Jesus Christ as their redeemer and savior. Some did not want to use the word animism. They preferred traditional religion. However, animism will be used in this study to refer for the Chin religion before Christianity. Animism is the belief that all-natural things, such as plants, animals, rocks, thunder and earthquakes are associated with spirits and could influence human daily life even calamities.⁶⁹ The same practices and beliefs was practiced by the Chin people before they converted to Christian. After the American Baptist Missionaries like Rev. Arthur E. Carson and his beloved wife Laura Hardin Carson, the first American Baptist Missionaries (ABM) arrived in Chinland, Hakha on 15 March 1899, six weeks after setting out of Thayet Myo, Magway Division in central Burma, where the first Chin Mission was established. Erick Hjamar and His wife Emily Johnson East, the second ABM arrived in Hakha on 21 March 1902. Joseph Herbert and his beloved wife Elezabeth Smith Cope, are the third missionaries who arrived in Chin Land on 21 December 1908. John Gustav and Bessie Livers Woodin, were the fourth Missionary family to arrive in Chin Land on 23 December 1920. Chester U and Florence Talbot Strait, were the fifth Missionary family to arrive in Hakha on 5 April 1926. Franklin O. and Phileda Ogren Nelson, are the sixth missionary family to arrive in Chin Land on 2 December 1939. Robert Gustav and Elizabeth Lue Johnson, are the seventh missionary who arrived in Chin Land. All these missionaries brought the light of Christianity to the unreached and the uncivilized Chin People in the past and changed the whole Chin hill.⁷⁰ They were really the one who changed the Chin people from darkness of their traditional religions to light of Christianity through Gospel. They

⁶⁷ Oo 2012: 53, 54

⁶⁸ Mang 2010: 171

⁶⁹ Sakhong 2000: 57-58

⁷⁰ Bawi-hrin 2002: 108-116

were referred to Chin Christians as their father and mother. They served not only for the extension of God's Kingdom but also for the Chin people in every corner.

4.4.1. The missionaries' works on education to the Chin people

Indeed, the missionaries opened many schools in Chin land. Opening schools in the mission field was the primary task of the American Baptist Missionaries to the Chin people. They believed that education was the best tool for the advancement of all that was good in life: Physically, mentally, morally and spiritually. They established schools, colleges and seminaries in Chin land.

Schools: Missionaries opened eight schools in Chin land within a decade. Carson started the first schools in Hakha in 1900. The Baptist Mission school in Tiddim was opened on 1 May 1902. The third school in Chin Land was opened in 1904. In Tonzan village, the school was opened in 1905. The missionaries also opened a school in Theizang village, but the date is unknown. In June 1905, a Lai Tribe School was opened. In 1906, the Lumbang and Laizo schools were opened. Mission school in Thantlang was also opened in 1907. Moreover, the medical work was another tool to win lost souls. The missionaries supported the Chin people in another way. Carson was not concerned about the schools, medicine and the spiritual life of Chin people. He engaged himself in agriculture, teaching people how to save the first year's crop for seed and how to plant the seeds.

Theological College and Seminaries: On 1st May 1928, the fifth Christian missionary family visited Chin Land, Rev. Chester Strait established the Bible School in Hakha. Likely to the Hakha Bible School, the Tiddim Bible school was established by Franklin Nelson, the sixth missionary to serve Chin land.

Literature and Translations: One of the fundamental goals of the missionaries was to learn the language, to write literatures and to translate the Word of God to the native language of where they were landed. They clearly knew that the Gospel must be heard by the Chin people in their mother tongue and culture. Carson felt sad when he tried to learn the Chin/ Lai Dialect and became difficult for him because the Chins did not have any written document in their language yet. He then later revised the Chin written language which was invented by Surgeon Major Newland in 1893. As a great achievement, the Gospel of Mathew, many Sunday school's lessons plus a catechism, were translated from English Version to Chin/ Lai Dialect by Arthur Carson. Chin Dictionary was written by Carson too. As a tribute to her husband, Carson's wife

(Laura) completed the work on Chin dictionary after ten years of Carson death in 1908. Cope translated three hundred hymns, The New Testament was translated to Tiddim dialect in 1932 and published into 35 small textbooks for schools in the language of Tiddim, Falam, Hakha and Kanpalet. Dr. Strait published a Hakha hymn book in 1932, The New Testament in the Hakha Dialect in 1940 and the following Sunday school Lessons: No. 1 in 1934, no. 2 in 1936, no. 3 in 1938, and no. 4 in 1939.

At the same way, Johnsons also translated and published the following books:

1. Words and Works of Jesus Christ, 1950.
2. The Story of Jesus Christ, 1951.
3. Christian Funerals Service, 1953.
4. Sunday school Instructions, no 3, 1954.
5. Hakha New Songs with Solfa, 1955.
6. Reading, 1956.
7. Christian Wedding Ceremony, 1957.
8. Sunday School Instructions No.4, 1957.
9. The books of Genesis and Exodus, 1958.⁷¹

He translated Old Testament into Hakha dialect. Unfortunately, he could not finish his work because the dictator Government of Burma forced the missionaries to leave Chin Land in 1965 -1966. Johnsons left Burma and could not complete his translation of the Old Testament. Nevertheless, the translation work was handed to Dr. David Van Bik's shoulder, a native Chin scholar and his assistant, David who finished the translation work.⁷²

4.4.2. The Hakha Chin Bible's Translation

At the beginning of the rainy season in 1931, Chester Strait began to translate the New Testament into Hakha (Lai) dialect. Johnson recorded it and by the end of the rain season in 1935 he had finished a rough draft of Matthew and Mark. Strait's wish was to finish the translation of the NT in 1938 and to publish in 1939 and send it to Rangoon (Rangoon has been called Yangon). The first completed NT in the Hakha dialect was published by the missionary press, Rangoon, in summer 1940.⁷³

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 138

⁷² Ibid., p. 135-136

⁷³ Hup 1993: 123-126, 127

Robert Johnson and David Van Bik started to translate the book of Genesis and Exodus from the beginning of April 1957, and finished in April 29, 1958. The British and foreign Bible society published these two books in one volume in 1959. This was the first Old Testament publication in Hakha dialect. They had worked together on that time until Johnson left Myanmar in 1966. From that time on, one-half of the OT was completed and Van Bik continued with the work. After finishing OT, he revised strait's translation of the NT. The complete Hakha Chin Bible was published by the United Bible Society in 1978.⁷⁴

Though there is no indication in strait's letter that he had any helper or helpers in the translation process, Johnson mentioned Rev. Sang Ling as his assistance. Strait used the King James version and the revised standard version of English Bible as his text. Johnson says,

“Dr. Strait did not always accept the Chin idiomatic expressions that Sang Ling suggested, and that this translation was in many ways a “missionary translation.”⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 127.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 124.

Chapter 5

Presentation of the interviews

5.1. Introduction

This chapter is the report and findings of the interview. The interview was done in Chin State of Myanmar. Qualitative social research method was used for this interview. The interview guides were prepared focusing on the research questions. The interview was done in local language Chin dialects. The interview was recorded with mobile audio device and written first in the paper and translated into English. The findings will be presented person by person. The same interview guide was used throughout the interview, but the questions sometimes went differently in each of the informants though. At the same times, some informant has longer answer than the others and some has the very short answer too. Therefore, I will present personally but it will follow the research questionnaires. Mentioning their names within the text, I will use their full name because in the Chin people naming tradition, there is no first name, last name and family name. All the informants agreed to use and mention their name in this research paper.

I interviewed nine people – three professors, three pastors, and three ordinary people. For balancing the gender equality, I chose five males and four females out of nine informants. The presentation will be ordered as three professors, three pastors and three laymen. Unlike other informants, I did not interview Lian Do Kham in person orally. I sent the research questions with email and he accepted my interview eagerly and interestingly. He answered all my questions and sent it to me with the attachment in written.

Base on the research questions, the followings are the findings of the interview. Even though trying to present the interview person by person, the report will be topical according to the research questions were prepared. Most of the presentations will be written in reference style. Direct quotation will also be used in somewhere when appropriate or necessary.

5.2. Rev. Dr. Hla Aung

Hla Aung is one of the Baptist ministers and the present Executive Secretary of Global Chin Christian Federation.⁷⁶ He is also the former principal of Chin Christian University, when it was called Chin Christian College. He got his doctorate degree from Germany.

5.2.1. Name of God

When I ask about the name of God, he explained to me that as raising especially among the Burmese people in plain region of Myanmar when he was young, he was not familiar with the Chin name of God very much. Yet, he knew something about it by reading some documents. They were *khuazing*, *Pathian*, *zingnu* or *zingpa*. He was also very careful these names that he was not very sure about whether all those names signified the same nature of god or the same god.

5.2.2. Concept of Pathian

I asked Hla Aung the concept of *Pathian* plus comparing to other names he mentioned above. In this question, he did not know the exact concept of *Pathian*. However, nowadays, when the missionaries affirmed *Pathian* for the name of God in Chin, the word had been stabilized—other names were diminishing. The main reason was the missionary choosing of the word and included in the Bible.

5.2.3. The meaning of Pathian

The third question was about the meaning of *Pathian*. He defined the meaning of *Pathian* as to be a combination of two word; *pa* and *a thiang*. *Pa* means male or father and *a thiang* means holy. The complete meaning was Holy father in heaven.

Then I asked what do you feel when you use the word *Pathian*. His personal understanding of the Chin name of God was general. He had no special feeling in using the word *Pathian*. *Ka pa* (means father) and *Bawipa* (Lord) were also used equally with *Pathian* (like our father or my father in English). He said he used the name *Pathian* with a lot of adjectives like *a liannganmi*

⁷⁶ Global Chin Christian Fellowship is a fellowship of Chin Christians who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior according to the scriptures and, therefore, seek the unity of Chins all over the world as the body of Christ that they work together in God's mission for holistic salvation around the world.

Pathian (almighty God), *dawtnak Pathian* (Loving God), *ka pa Pathian* (My Father), *cungnung bik Pathian* (Lord most high).

5.2.4. *Khuazing*

When I ask about *khuazing*, he explained me theologically as he was one of the very few professors on systematic theology among the Chin people. He compared the word *khuazing* as the holiest and most important name for the Chin people as Yahweh in the Old Testament. Conversely, the meaning was missing more and more. He also mentioned why the missionary chose the word *Pathian* instead of *khuazing*. He concluded the reason for choosing *Pathian* for the name of God in Chin was that the missionary could be afraid to use *khuazing* for the name of God because the ancestors' unbelief concept would be mixed with Christian belief in the name of God.

5.2.5. The meaning of *khuazing*

Regarding with this question, he said that he did not know the one meaning of *khuazing*. In general, it was understood as the one who was in heaven with love and mercy, the creator and had no direct relationship with earth. He said the concept of *khuazing* was the same with the concept of deism during the middle age.⁷⁷

When I asked why did he think the word *khuazing* is forgotten more and more. He answered without hesitation. It was because the word *Pathian* influenced it. The word *Pathian* influenced *khuazing* by formalizing and using *Pathian* for the name of God in the Bible by the missionaries. The second point was the missionaries to the Chin people were the Baptist. As the Baptist were more evangelical, they did not want to use any cultures and of the traditional beliefs. He claimed that if the missionaries to the Chin were the Lutheran or any of the mainstream denomination, there could be a lot of different from now.

⁷⁷ In this concept, the transcendental concept of God is more emphasized than the Immanuel concept of God. Transcendental concept of God is the belief that God create all the universe but God is in heaven. He has no direct relationship with human. There is the mediator between God and human. The mediator's rule is very important. We cannot pray directly to God, but we pray to God through the channel of angel. Angel speaks for us to God.

5.2.6. Differences and similarities between *khuazing* and *Pathian*

The very clear and his theological answer was that the different between the concept of *khuazing* and of *Pathian* was the former had the concept of transcendental and the second one had Immanuel concept.

There were also some similarities between *Pathian* and *khuazing* in their attributes according to Hla Aung. We could say they were accepted and believed as Creator, mercy, wanted to help, had no discrimination, just and who knew every thing.

5.2.7. Re-introducing the word *khuazing* for the name of God in Chin

I asked this question very simple. Do you think the Chin people need to re-introduce the word *khuazing* for the name of God in Chin? He agreed to introduce the word *khuazing* to a certain theological understanding of the Chin name of God. Otherwise, he said it should not be against *Pathian* or replacing *Pathian*. The Chin people should remember always that some of the Chin cultures had been a good foundation to accept the gospel. We needed to revives the positives elements of the Chin cultures. He also continued saying the new way thinking about Chin contextual theology. Before introducing the word *khuazing*, he pointed out and priotized first the need to write in document more for making the word familiar with the Chin Christians and convinced them that this was one of the Chin national names of God. Then, it will be automatically accepted. Then I continued to ask about how about to include in the Bible. He said that we should take time because it was a difficult thing. First, we must propose the word to Chin Association for Christian Communication (CACC) which owned the copy right of the Chin Christian Bible and Hymn.

He explained more, there was unnecessary to change or to add the word *khuazing* for the name of God from theological perspective. From a cultural perspective, if we used the word *khuazing* for the name of God, it could be a proof that we the Chin people were a nation, one of the people more than the ethnic group. He also affirmed here that *Pathian* was not the missionary created word. It had been being used before the missionaries came to Chin Land. It was more familiar and popular than *khuazing* for it was made official in the Bible by the missionaries. The Chin Christian should also know all the theological word in the Bible and in the church today was not of the missionaries' heritages. God had given to us before the missionary time in Chin Land. In the end, he said the missionary had done nothing new theological word for the Chin people.

5.3. Rev. Dr. Luke Sui Kung Ling

Rev. Dr. Luke Sui Kung Ling was the vice principal and an associate professor in Chin Christian University, at Hakha. He has been teaching systematic theology many years in CCU.

5.3.1. Name of God in Chin

Ling's view on *Pathian* was more different from others. He emphasized *khuazing* as the original name for God among the Chin people. He also said they the zophei area, one of the Chin of clans still use *khuazing* for the name of God today. He said, "Originally, it was *khuazing*. Instead, now we used *Pathian*. *Pathian* meant holy father, this might be why the missionaries chose this name for the name of God."⁷⁸

5.3.2. Meaning and terminology of Pathian

Ling said the meaning of *Pathian* very short and clear. *Pathian* meant the father, who is in heaven and holy.

I asked him where does the word *Pathian* come from. He admittedly said that he did not know when the word started and came from. He supposed the Chin people used *khuazing* from the very beginning.

5.3.3. Other Chin names of God

For God in English, I had no other Chin names for God in my knowledge except *Pathian*. There was one name called *khuahrum*. He said he read about the Chin people worshiped *khuahrum*. He also heard orally about the worship of *khuahrum*. They worshiped *khuahrum* because *khuahrum* was harsh and harmful. They believed that *khuahrum* is the god that punished the sinful people and blessed the good ones. They also believed he directly and constantly did everything to human. On the other hand, *khuazing* was greater than *khuahrum* but had never harm human being rather with love and mercy.

5.3.4. Khuazing

I asked Luke Sui Kung Ling to say more about the relationship between *khuazing* and the Chin name of God. Luke Sui Kung Ling strongly stated *khuazing* as the original name for God in Chin traditional religion. It's theological meaning and concept was exactly the same with God

⁷⁸ Interview on Ling: 2016

in the Bible. But when Christianity came to Chinland, it was disappeared and the word *Pathian* was introduced.

5.3.5. Meaning and terminology of khuazing

The meaning and terminology according to Ling was as follow. *Khuazing* had the two meanings of *khuahrum*, meant the hierarchical lord of the world spirit, *zingnu*, the same with *Pathian*. The complete meaning could be said as the source of our life or root of our life, our protector with mighty and majesty. He defined *zing* personal supposition but without any references to be the same with *Pathian*. As already mentioned above, if we called our *zingnu*, that meant our *Pathian*. In Chin traditional religion, *Pathian* had the same idea of goddess like in the religion Jainism and Shintoism, the greatest god was called goddess. This goddess was called *Pathian* in Chin traditional religion.

Then I asked why did he think the word *khuazing* was forgotten more and more. He answered with historical consistency. The living standard of the Chin people in animism was very poor and undeveloped. When the missionaries came to the Chin, they did many things for their development and they change their social setting. They (the missionaries) were very advanced. There were many things that they help the Chin people. So, the missionaries were automatically higher, honored and respected. At the same time, they accepted and thought what ever the missionaries did and said as higher, better and more perfect. They totally influenced us and we could not deny in no way. Meanwhile, *khuazing* was lower and *Pathian* was higher because *khuazing* was the god of the Chin religion and *Pathian* was the God of missionaries.

On the other hand, it would be very good if the missionaries recognized and used the Chin name in their own traditional religion including their identity, it would be very good and that could had changed everything unlike now. This could be problem or stumble to say *khuazing* and *Pathian* were the same for their ministry. This might be why they used the new name *Pathian* instead of *khuazing*. They might fear that if they used *khuazing* there would be no change in identity and practices. They might think to remove or replace their old way with the new was the best way to change them into Christianity.

5.3.6. Differences and similarities between khuazing and Pathian

When I asked if he thought *khuazing* was the same with *Pathian*, he said that this question was not easy to answer. There could be many who misunderstood this. We worshipped the God of

Jehovah in the Bible now. Sincerely, *khuazing*, the one whom the Chin people worshiped was *Pathian* the one whom we worshiped now. If the missionaries and our fore-fathers said and used *khuazing* for the name of God in the Bible, it would become the Chin name of God. However, they did not want to use it. They replaced with the other new one. Sincerely, the idea and name were the same theologically and contextually. There was only different in name but the same in attributes.

5.3.7. The missionaries naming of God in Chin?

I asked very simply, why did you think the missionaries to the Chin people choose the word *Pathian* for the name of God? “The word *Pathian* meant holy father in English. This meaning could be why the missionaries used the word for the name of God to share the gospel that God is holy, the creator and father of all with love,” said by Luke Sui Kung Ling.

5.3.8. Re-introducing the word *khuazing* for the name of God in Chin

He said that he did not see the need for introducing *khuazing* for the Chin name of God. He clearly said, “In my conviction and theological understanding, they were not contradicted each other. We did not need both to neglect or against *khuazing* and promote extremely.”

5.4. Rev. Dr. Lian Do Kham

Lian Do Kham is a reverend and the associate professor of systematic theology in Chin Christian University (CCU) at Hakha, Chin state in Myanmar. He did an academic research on the concept of *khuazing* for his Ph. D. dissertation. He finished his Doctorate degree in Hong Kong.

5.4.1. Name of God in Chin

The interview question asked did you know the Chin name of God and how did the Chin people call God? Lian Do Kham answered, “Yes! I know the Chin name of God. The word and name *khuazing* was the original name for God in Chin.”⁷⁹

5.4.2. The meaning of *khuazing*

The word *khuazing* is a combination of two words, “*khua*” and ‘*zing*’. *Khua* means author and controller of the universe. *Zing* means the power and spirit of the *khua*. In other words, *khuazing*

⁷⁹ Interview on Kham, 2016.

is the absolute Truth or Being above the universe. *Khuazing* gives every people His *zing* (spirit) in each time of creation to be a living person.

5.4.3. *Pathian*

Regarding with *Pathian*, the question started with what do you feel when you used *Pathian* for the name of God. His answer was, “When I use the word *Pathian*, I feel that it is not the real name of God. It is only the prefix or suffix of *Khuazing*. For example, *A thiangmi Khuazing kan pa* (means our Holy father *khuazing*) or *Maw Khuazing Pathian* (means *khuazing Pathian*). *Pathian* means Holy Father and we can call Holy Father *khuazing* or *khuazing* the Holy Father,” wrote Lian Do Kham.⁸⁰

5.4.4. The Chin name of God in personal prayer

The next question was, what name did you use in your personal prayer – *khuazing* or *Pathian*. His answer was that he always uses *khuazing* in everywhere and in prayer as his personal God. But, he said that he rarely uses *Pathian* in public worship and prayer though some Chin people and the Chin Bible use *Pathian* every day.

5.4.5. Other Chin names of God and spirit names among the Chin people

Asking about the other Chin names of God, he said, “I know some other Chin names for God. They are *Kamphukri* (Matu Chin); *Zingmang* (Teddin Chin); *Zingnu* and *Khuanu*, *Sanglai*, *Dingthlu Lairel* (Hakha Chin); and *Khazo* (Mara Chin). Likewise, there are some spirit names among Chin people such as: *khuachia* (evil), *khuavang* (prophet), *khuahrum* (savior), *Lulpi* (helper), *lasi* (agent of *khuazing*), *sanu* (keeper of *mithi khua*)⁸¹, *mithla* (spirit of the dead), *muthla* (disturbs person).”⁸²

5.4.6. Differences and Similarities between *Pathian* and *khuazing*

Pathian and *khuazing* are neither the same nor similar each other. *Khuazing* is not the same with *Pathian* but higher than *Pathian*. It is the real name of God used by our Chin fore bearers. *Pathian* is the prefix or suffix of *khuazing*. *Pathian* means *a thiangmi pa* (Holy Father).

⁸⁰ Ibid., 2016.

⁸¹ *Mithi khua* means village of dead people.

⁸² Interview on Kham, 2016.

5.4.7. Khuazing

Concerning with the name *khuazing*, I asked him that why did he think the word *khuazing* was forgotten more and more. He said that the Western people didn't know and couldn't understand the Chin cultures and traditional religions definitely. The translators of the Chin Holy Bible⁸³ in Hakha also neglected and were not interested in Chin cultures and traditional religion. Our first missionary to the Chin was Arthur E. Carson and he had used the name *Yahovah* for God in Chin Bible. Carson's wife and David Van Bik used the word *Pathian* in the place of *khuazing* in their translation of Chin Bible in Hakha. Therefore, they didn't use it. I understood that The Western missionaries to the Chins and Chin Bible translators shunned and neglected Our Chin culture and traditional religions in their times. Thus, the name *Pathian* is more popular and *khuazing* is forgotten more and more. There is no the word *khuazing* in our Chin Holy Bible in Hakha-Chin version. Interestingly, Mara Bible still uses *khuazing* for God and some of the Chin people use the word *khuazing* now in culture and in daily use.

5.4.8. The missionaries' translation of the name of God in Chin

The missionaries to the Chin might not choose the word *khuazing*. The Chin translators of the Bible might be more who chose the word *Pathian*. We can say this because Mizo people brought the name *Pathian* into Chin Land through evangelists before the American Baptist missionaries came to Chin Land. Lehman also said that the word *Pathian* is borrowed from Mizo Christians by the Chin. The missionaries were the followers or who say only yes to what the Bible translators of the Chin Bible.

Another question I asked was why do you think the missionaries did not want to use *khuazing*? He answered to me that he assumed the missionaries were influenced by Chin Bible translators to give naming God in Chin. The missionaries didn't have authority in *Pathian* or *khuazing* to use for name of God.

After that I continued to ask does he think the missionaries could have used the word *khuazing* for the name of God rather than *Pathian*. His answer was that if the Chin Bible translators wanted to use the word *khuazing*, the missionaries could have used it exactly. For his personal preference, he wanted the missionaries and the Chin Bible translators to use *khuazing* rather than *Pathian*.

⁸³ The Chin Bible in Hakha is called Lai Baibal Thiang.

5.4.9. Re-introduce the word *khuazing* for the Chin name of God in the Church today

The first question was if he had any problem to use *khuazing* for the name of God today. He answered, “I have a problem to use *khuazing* for the name of God today because there is no *khuazing* in Chin Bible. *Pathian* is used in that place. Most believers of the Chins follow and use to call the name of God according to the Bible. Using *khuazing* without the Bible is the most problem here. If we revise our Chin Bible by using *khuazing* in all places of *Pathian*, our problem will be finished or disappeared. If we want to obey our culture, we must use the word *khuazing* because *khuazing* tradition always keeps Chin culture just like Yahweh tradition for the Jewish.”

The second question was that do you think would it be possible to re-introduce the word *khuazing* for the name of God in the Church among the Chin people. He said, “I think it would be possible to introduce in the church after discussing about the importance of Chin God’s name that had been in use before the coming of Christianity in Chinland. The Kachin ethnic group use their traditional name of God, *Karai Kasang* in their Bible and the Kayins also use their traditional God *Kasa Ywa* in their Bible translation.⁸⁴ We should also use our traditional name of God as *khuazing* in our future revised Bible translation.”

5.5. Rev. C. Nei Rem

Nei Rem is the present pastor of women department and orphanage department of Hakha Baptist Church, Hakha.

5.5.1. Name of God in Chin

When I asked her about the name of God in Chin, she answered the Chin name of God as *Pathian* without hesitation. I continued my question with the meaning of *Pathian* and its terminology. She did not know where the word came from but she believed that *Pathian* was the creator of all things and of the universe. In order to inquire more about the Chin names of God, I asked whether she knew other Chin names for God. Then, she mentioned *khuazing* which she heard often from Rev. Van Hre.⁸⁵ Conversely, she never used it by herself. The question continued with the spirit names among the Chin people. The spirit names which she had ever heard were *khuachia* (devil in English), *khuavang* (prophet in English), and *Pinu* (female devil).

⁸⁴ Kachin and Kayins are the ethnic groups in Myanmar.

⁸⁵ Van Hre was the late and former pastor of Zion Baptist Church, Hakha.

5.5.2. Differences and similarities between khuazing and Pathian

I asked her whether she believe the word *khuazing* and *Pathian* were the same. She believed *khuazing* and *Pathian* were the same because the Chin Christian nowadays belief on *Pathian* is the same with the *khuazing* belief in the Chin traditional religion. Nei Rem said that the Chin people, before Christianity, believed *khuazing* as the one who provided them everything and the one who knew everything. She firmly believed the way we saw God, whom we called *Pathian* today and the way our forefathers saw *khuazing* during that time were the same almost totally. Even now, we do not use only *khuazing* for the name of God, but we use together with *Pathian*... like *khuazing Pathian*. She did not see any big different on them.

I asked why did she think the word *khuazing* was forgotten more and more. Her answer was that in the belief and concept of the Chin people, the word *khuazing* was automatically related with *laiphung* (the Chin way of religion or Chin traditional religion), not Christian faith. The main reason could be this concept said her.

5.5.3. The missionaries' translation of the name of God in Chin

I asked the question, "Do you want or prefer the word *khuazing* than *Pathian* in translating the name of God in Chin?" *On this question*, she totally agreed with the missionary translation and using of *Pathian* for the name of God. At the same time, she found no problem to use the two words together like *khuazing Pathian*. She had no preferences. She did not like to change the Chin name of God *Pathian* with *khuazing*.

5.6. Rev. Thla Hnem

Thla Hnem is a pastor of Salem Baptist Church, Kalaymyo in Myanmar. She is a woman reverend and more evangelical, prominent in preaching and teaching among the Chin churches.

5.6.1. The Chin name of God

I asked Thla Hnem what was the name of God in Chin and she replied me that there were no other words than she had learned for "*Pathian*," especially in Lai, Hakha Chin. She also continued that since she was the one who studied the Bible, she was familiar with the word *Pathian*, the missionary translation of the name of God in the Chin Bible. I did not inquire much about how our forefathers used and called God.

5.6.2. Meaning terminology of Pathian

I asked her where did the word *Pathian* come from. She told sincerely and honestly, she did not know about this.

However, she said to me that this question in a more faith based personal reflections. She said that *Pathian* (God in English) was an omnipresence and he had been even before the creation of the world. “He was the creator of all things, the God of gods, He was the one who was the controller and was most authoritative God. He was an omnipresent God before we were even born,” said by Thla Hnem.

I continued the question about her personal feeling of using the Chin name of God. The question was, “How and what is your feeling of using the word *Pathian*?” She answered that she was fully satisfied with using the name *Pathian*. The name was more precious than of the word father and mother.

5.6.3. Other Chin names of God

She told that aside from *Khuazing*, there were no other words I knew. However, she said she had never used *khuazing* for her personal. I asked her that whether she used any other Chin names for the English word God than *Pathian* in your personal prayer. Then she said, “No, I can’t pray without using the name *Pathian*. I was not satisfied without using the word *Pathian*. I prayed in His name so as to be contented with.” In this question, I asked her some of the adjectives that she used together with *Pathian*. In her answer, there was no *khuazing*. She just told God as *sertu Pathian* (creator of all), *zumhawktlak Pathian* (faithful and loyal God), *khuaruah har Pathian* (amazing and marvelous God), *thihnak teitu Bawi* (the conqueror of death and grave), and *a thin a sau i tihawktlak Pathian* (durable and tough God).

5.6.4. Spirit names in Chin

I never knew the names of spirit in Chin personally. Though I once read a book which was the relevance to what we were discussing now. In the past, our forefathers did not experience God. When they contemplated to find the new borough to settle down, they used to bring the crowed rooster to analyze whether the ward they were to find would be secure and favorable. If the rooster crowed well, they then corroborated at this place because it was secure and they settled down there, but if the rooster did not cackle, they stepped forward. Seeing that they did comprehend God, they put their trust in that crowing rooster.

5.6.5. The meaning of *khuazing*

I asked her to tell more about *khuazing* and its meaning. The answer was that she believed and learnt our forefather adopted *khuazing* for the name of God before they had the Bible and Christianity existed in Chin Land, and even our forefathers did not learn of God. No more than this information, she did not certainly enquire much further.

5.6.6. Pathian and *khuazing*

Since I heard her saying *khuazing* as the name for God in Chin traditional religion and in Christian time as *Pathian*, I constantly asked her whether did she believe *Pathian* and *khuazing* were the same. To the question, she assumed that it would probably be the same, since they did not experience God during that time, they called God as *khuazing*. Nevertheless, *khuazing* was changed to *Pathian* in the Bible at our present time. She said, “I guessed it would be the same.”

5.6.7. Similarities between *Pathian* and *khuazing*

Her reflections on the similarities of *Pathian* and *khuazing* was as follow. In *khuazing*, they (our forefathers) put their trusts in him just as we put our trusts in *Pathian*, God today. They also believed *khuazing* was all-powerful as the same with *Pathian*. The only discrepancy was the way we called. In view of being born after the existence of the Bible, we called God as *Pathian* in accordance with the Bible. As they had no knowledge about God at that time, they called *khuazing*. However, the way we believed at that time and today were the same.

5.6.8. The missionaries' translation of the name of God in Chin

The question continued as why did he think the first Chin Christian use *Pathian* for the name of God in stead of *khuazing* for the word *khuazing* has been using in the Chin traditional religion before the missionaries' time in Chinland. She said that she had never thought about that. She said, “At any rate, I guessed our hearts and minds were far more important than how we called his name.” She also gave the example through the Bible as the followings. As we saw in the acts of the apostle, the apostle Paul told the people of Athens that he even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. He told them this was what he was going to proclaim to them. I just accepted like our forefather did not know how to call God. *Khuazing* was the one that they knew in that time. As for me, I would not mind calling Him as *khuazing*, if our faiths didn't get lost in the interest of calling Him as *khuazing*. To ask the question, why did she think

the word *khuazing* was forgotten more and more? She told that she had never think about that and did not know.

5.6.9. Khuazing

I asked whether she accepted to use the word *khuazing* as an adjective with *Pathian*. Then she replied me that she accepted to use *khuazing* together with *Pathian*.

5.7. Pastor Lai Cung

Lai Cung is a pastor of Hakhathar Baptist Church, Hakha, Chin State and the secretary of Culture and Literature department at Chin Association for Christian Communication (CACC),⁸⁶ Hakha.

5.7.1. The Chin name of God

When I asked the Chin name of God, pastor Lai Cung answered me that the Chin people used the name of God as *Pathian*. Secondly, I continued the question by asking where does *Pathian* come from. He told that he had no idea how the word came and when it originated.

5.7.2. The meaning of Pathian

Then we continued our interview with the meaning of *Pathian*. But regarding with the meaning of *Pathian*, he had a knowledge that the word *pa* was used for a person particularly for male, and *thian* is an adjective, meaning clean or holy. So, the name *Pathian* is meant holy father.

The question continued about his personal conviction on using the name *Pathian*. His clear conviction and answer was that when he used the word *Pathian*, there was no sense of evil. “And when I heard the word *Pathian*, there appeared in the name *Pathian*, the one who can do everything, the living one, savior, loving, kind, and provider in my conscious,” said Lai Cung. I asked, “What is the name you use at home or personal prayer for God?” Pastor Lai Cung said that he used the word *Pathian* with some adjectives in his personal prayer such as father and living God. So, our living Father was the one that he used most.

⁸⁶ CACC is the important organization culturally and theologically for the Chin people, especially for the Hakha Chin. It is the center where our cultures are preserved.

5.7.3. Other Chin names for God

Then in term of other Chin names for God, he told the Chin people had the names that exactly matched with the English name God. He did not know and used them personally but he attained them from our Chin parents. The name was not only *Pathian*. The first name they always told was *khuazing*. This *khuazing* was also called *zingnu*. The second one was *dingthlu lairel*. The meaning of *dingthlu lairel* was the one who judged with justice and righteous. Therefore, everything in their life, they believed *dingthlu lairel* shall judge with righteous and justice. They strongly believed and said often there was *dingthlu lairel* when they were in doubt somebody or something. However, pastor Lai Cung said that he did not know whether *dingthlu lairel* was the same with *khuazing*. He personally did not believe they were the same.

The third one that our fore-parents told us was that when a person told a lie, they used to say, “Ai, do not tell a lie. There is *sanglai* at the entrance of the door.” They meant *sanglai* heard you what you said. So, do not tell a lie. They also believed *sanglai* knew whether you told a lie or not and he knew what ever you said and did. Pastor Lai Cung assured that the above three names were the Chin names about God in English that the Chin people had and handed to us with oral. The way they believed and accepted these three was almost totally the same with *Pathian* for the name of God what we use now.

5.7.4. The meaning of khuazing?

Among these three names, I asked the meaning of *khuazing*. He gave the definition of *khuazing* by referencing two books. His answer was worth to note because he had a reference. He first said that he did know personally. He had ever heard the word *khua* was a place or village. It also meant the world we live now. He told this to heard from others, Sing Khaw Khai had to had written as *khuazing* was a poetical word – which was use in songs and poem. G. Biak Nawl also had ever said, “*khuazing* came from the Burmese name *kuzinmedaw*.”⁸⁷

5.7.5. Pathian and khuazing

Between the two names, *Pathian* and *khuazing*, I asked him whether they were the same or not? Pastor Lai Cung said that it was hard to say about these three names – *khuazing*, *dingthlu lairel*, and *sanglai* whether they were similar or not. Nobody did research on this case. What was clear was that they had different history and different personalities. There were also some problems

⁸⁷ Kuzinmedaw was the name of Burmese Buddhist female god.

in the question whether *khuazing* and *Pathian* were the same. Personally, *khuazing* was a poetical word and *sanglai* was the living God. This was what appeared in my understanding. When you asked me only about *khuazing*, that was why I said there was some problems in this question. There were some comparisons between *khuazing* and *Pathian*. However, we had to think about first what did *khuazing* really mean – *sanglai* or *dingthlu lairel*. I was a little confused with your question said Lai Cung.

5.7.6. The similarity and differences between *Pathian* and *khuazing*

Similarities between *Pathian* and *khuazing*, Pastor Lai Cung said, “If we accepted them all *khuazing*, *sanglai*, and *dingthlu lairel* were the same in concept, called *Pathian* in Chin, the fathers of our Chin people had the idea of God the creator and living.”

Besides, I continued to ask the differences between *khuazing* and *Pathian*. He answered me in a clear statement. He stated that the way our Chin people in Laiphung (Chin culture) believed *khuazing* and the belief of *Pathian* after Christianity in Chinland were different. They did not worship the old *khuazing*, *sanglai*, or *dingthlu lairel* because they thought them as good or did not do any harm to human being. As far as the Chin traditional religion was studied, it was clear that the Chin people worship some spirits because they feared them that they (evil spirit) would harm them in some way. That was why they did not see *khuazing* needed to be worshiped.

However in Christianity nowadays, we believed *Pathian* as the living God, the provider, creator, and loving. We now believed *Pathian* as the God who was our everything and worthy to be worshiped. This was the difference between the beliefs on *khuazing* and of *Pathian*.

5.7.7. *Khuazing*

I asked Lai Cung specific question about why did he think the word *khuazing* was forgotten more and more? He answered this question base on the missionary word from the very beginning. He supposed the reason for extinguishing the name *khuazing* now could be the missionary way of teaching about Christianity and *laiphung* (Chin’s ways of life, or religion). They were thought all the customs and ways of doing the Chin religion were seen as evil or unclean. Firstly, they the first Chin Christian did not accepted *khuazing* as the real living God. Secondly, they were converted to Christianity, they did not want to relate these kinds of name and all the Chin customs or cultures with the newly accepted faith. Therefore, they used to say the two phrases, *laiphung* (Chin traditional religion or Chin ways of life) and *Khrihfa phung*

(Christianity). When they said *laiphung* that meant Chin traditional religion and *khrihfa phung* meant Christianity. When they converted to Christianity, they saw all the old way of life as evil, not good, and unclean. This concept could be the reason why the word *khuazing* had no place in the mind of the Chin people and disappearing of the name.

5.7.8. The missionaries' translation of the name of God in Chin

His answer for choosing the name *Pathian* for the name of God was all the Chin national words or things were seen as bad, or unclean. At the same time, when they taught them about God, they told them that He was a living God, holy and mighty. Thus, they gave the name of God in Chin according to the way they taught them the nature of God. Then, it became *Pathian*, meant the One, who is holy and Father.

Then I asked, "Why do you think the missionaries could have used the word *khuazing* for the name of God rather than *Pathian*?" Lai Cung did not want to say the missionary wrong or right in choosing the name of God in Chin. He had no preference on *Pathian* or *khuazing* and others like *sanglai and dingthlu lairel*. He had no problem with *Pathian* too. But he said he some thought why they did not use any of the national names. We already had some names, but they chose the other name *Pathian*. For now, he did not think the need for change of name for it had been from the very beginning of Christianity in Chinland. The name *Pathian* had no problem for him. It was perfect said pastor Lai Cung.

5.7.9. Reintroducing *khuazing*, *sanglai*, or *dingthlu lairel*

I asked Lai Cung, "Do you think we need to reintroduce as he was well aware of the Chin national concept of name of gods in Chin traditional religion, I asked him that whether he saw the need for introducing the names *khuazing*, *sanglai*, and *dingthlu lairel*. He answered that it was necessary. God had given us language, cultures, and history as nation. In all of these God's given, the revelation of God can be seen in many aspects. The problem in Chin Land was the missionary taught the Chin people that all the old Chin customs and cultures were seen as evil and unclean. However, it has been a time to change the attitudes towards the Chin culture culture that they were God's given. To protect the Chin cultural heritage was in the hand of the Chin people itself. It could be the problem doctrinally among the Chin people in some way. Thus, we needed to do this carefully and theologically.

5.8. Pi Mah Ngun

Mah Ngun lives in Hakha, Chin state, Myanmar. She is an ordinary Christian woman.

5.8.1. Name of God in Chin

When I asked the name of God in Chin, she easily answered as *Pathian*. Then, I continued asking the question where did the word *Pathian* come from. She said, “I did not know about it.”

5.8.2. The meaning of Pathian

Mah Ngun defined the meaning of *Pathian* as savior and creator. She also said that *Pathian* was the triune God. After that I asked her what other names did she ever use in her personal prayer. She mentioned the two phrases; *ka pa* (my father), *Bawipa* (Lord).

5.8.3. Other Chin names of God

Mah Ngun said that she had ever heard *khuazing*. The Chin fore-fathers used to say our *khuazing*. However, I did not believe that they called *khuazing* was *Pathian*, a living God.

After that I continued the question, if you did not believe that *khuazing* neither a living God nor *Pathian*, what should be *khuazing*. She said that *khuazing* was the one whom they worshiped by our fathers and mothers before we were Christian.

5.8.4. Similarities and differences of Pathian and khuazing

I asked first, “Did you think the *Pathian* and *khuazing* are the same?” She replied, “No! They were not the same.” As she said they were not the same, I asked their differences. She had nothing to point out particularly and concretely. She said that we believed *Pathian* as savior but not *khuazing*. In *khuazing*, they had fear in some circumstances, the main purpose of worshiping *khuazing* and sacrifice in Chin traditional religion was just to please some evil spirits. But our God is loving father.

I kept asking, if you said they were different, then do you think we need to abolish the name *khuazing*? She said that it did not mean to abolish the word totally. However, I meant we used *Pathian* for the name of God. It was complete. I asked her again, how did you think, if you were supposed to use the word *khuazing*, is there any problem for you? How did you feel? She answered, “I have never used *khuazing*. I did not think to use *khuazing*. If I was supposed to

use, I can accept it. Yet, if it was to replace the word *Pathian*, I may not be able to accept it. I can use *khuazing* together with *Pathian*, but not to replace *Pathian* totally.”⁸⁸

5.9. Pi Tum Iang

Pi Tum Iang lives in Yangon, Myanmar. She introduced herself as a retired. She is free now and is a deacon in Lai Baptist Church in Yangon, Myanmar.

5.9.1. Chin name of God

For all the interview, the Chin name of God was the first question. Tum Iang also said that *khuazing* was the original Chin name of God. At the same time, it could be used *khuazing Pathian* together but we used only *Pathian* for the name of God in Chin. We could say *khuazing* was the old word or name.

5.9.2. The Origin of *khuazing* and *Pathian*

Tum Iang answered me the Chin name of God with both *Pathian* and *khuazing* – *Pathian* for Christianity and *khuazing* as the original. Therefore, I asked her about their original term that how did they come. Concerning with this question, she stated boldly and clearly that the word *Pathian* was only being in used after the missionaries from American came to Chin Land. *khuazing* was the name before that time, when the Chin people practiced *laiphung* (Chin Culture) in Chin traditional religion, said Tum Iang.

5.9.3. The meaning of *Pathian*

Regarding with the meaning of *Pathian*, Tum Iang honestly said, “She did not know the meaning of *Pathian* very well.” I continued, when she said she did know the exact meaning of *Pathian* and as she said *khuazing* as the original Chin name of God, I asked her another question that what did she use the name in her personal prayer. She used *Pathian* with the adjective phrase loving father. She had never used *khuazing*.

5.9.4. Other Chin names for God?

When I asked if she knew other Chin names for God, she did not know other names except *khuazing*. Keeping the question on other spirit names among the Chin people, he could tell me

⁸⁸ Interview on Ngun, 2016.

some spirit names in Chin. They are: *khuavang* (prophet) and *khuachia* (evil) that were the most familiar words that she heard for evil spirit among the Chin people before we were Christian.

5.9.5. About *khuazing*

Then the interview was going well and we turned to discuss about *khuazing*. Concerning with *khuazing*, she told me her supposition. She believed *khuazing* as the god whom they worshiped in the Chin traditional religion. I said, “If so, why did you think the word *khuazing* was forgotten more and more nowadays?” She answered this question very clearly. The word *khuazing* was disappeared or forgotten more and more for the conscious of *laiphung*, the Chin traditional way of life (animism) was seen as sin or unclean. Some people did not want to use the word *khuazing* because they thought the word was related with *laiphung*. Tum Iang gave this a very good reason for the extinction of the word *khuazing*.

5.9.6. Similarities of *Pathian* and *khuazing*

In the next question, I asked her that did she think the word *Pathian* and *khuazing* were the same. Then she agreed to have been the two word were the same God in different times and condition.

I continued and asked her, “Could you tell me the similarity between *Pathian* and *khuazing*?” She said, “*Khuazing* was believed and accepted as the highest god in Chin traditional religion, the same was *Pathian* when we converted to Christianity until now. The Chin people worshiped *khuahrum* and *khuachia*, but they accepted *khuazing* as highest of them all.

5.9.7. The missionaries’ translation of the name of God in Chin

When asking about the missionary chose the word *Pathian* for the name of God, she said that the missionary wanted to change all the things and the old ways of life style in *laiphung* (the Chin traditional religion). They did not want to use *khuazing*. They created and used the new name *Pathian*.

5.9.8. Re-introducing the word *khuazing*

I asked Tum Iang about how did she think about reintroducing the name *khuazing* among the Chin Churches today. “I think, it was good to introduce in the Church today,” said Tum Iang. She also added this will help to understand God better. At the same time, to introduce this word,

all the ministers must first use from pulpit and in their prayer. If not, it will be difficult for the ordinary people to use this word for right now. If the pastors, minister use often and explain more, the ordinary people will familiar with the word and concept. It will become our own name of God the same with *Pathian*. After that I continued asking the question, if there is a doctrinal problem using and introducing the word *khuazing*, how can we deal with it? She answered reasonably. She said that for some Chin Christians, using the word *khuazing* was seen as too to be liberal. Most of the conservative and Pentecostals did not want to introduce and to use all these kinds of Chin traditional ways of doing religion. Consequently, I asked focusing on this crisis if there was something problem for some. She said that we should not fear about that instead we should accept the word *khuazing*. Because it was our own language. *Pathian* the missionary word, we should accept both for the name of God instead.

5.9.9. From a women perspective

I asked her from a woman perspective on the name *Pathian*. The question was if *Pathian* meant the holy father, how do you feel when you say and hear the name. She said, “From a woman perspective, it depended on our conscious. I did not find any discrimination against women on *Pathian*. I more prioritized on He was the creator of all, loving God.”

5.10. Antony Ngun Uk

Antony Ngun Uk is a deacon in Lai Baptist Church, Yangon, Myanmar. Now he is a retired and translating Our Daily Bread into Chin. He is rich in the culture and religion of the Chin people. I went to his home to interview him.

5.10.1. Chin name for God

When I asked about the Chin name of God, his answer was very clear. He said that the name of God in Chin was *khuazing* in the very original Chin language. In later, we used the name *Pathian*, which was said to have come from *Lusei*.⁸⁹ *Pathian* was used by all the former Chin Christian. From that time on, *khuazing* was influenced by *Pathian* and we now rarely use *khuazing*.

The second question I asked him was, “Did you know how and where the word come from?” Antony Ngun Uk had some knowledge on the coming of *Pathian* to Chinland. He said that the

⁸⁹ The Lusei are the Mizo ethnic group. They are the native Indian who live in north-eastern India, the western part of Myanmar.

beginning of using the word *Pathian* in Chin Land could be when the *Lusei* people came to Chin Land. It was hard to say in specific year. It was a saying that it began when the *Lusei* people preach the gospel to the Chin people. It could be started from around 1930. Antony Ngun Uk also explained that the ones who brought this name were not kind of missionary but they were just like evangelist, who were coming to Chin Land with a personal commitment to preach and share the gospel.

5.10.2. The meaning of *Pathian*

Then I asked the meaning of *Pathian*. He said that he did not know the meaning of *Pathian*. However, he explained it was *Pathian* used by the *Lusei* people and the Chin used this name for the Chin name *khuazing*. Hereby, it was clear that what the Chin people called *khuazing* was later called *Pathian* which was the *Lusei's* name. The Chin name *khuazing* was replaced with the *Lusei's* name *Pathian*.

To know his personal conviction on the two names of God in Chin; *khuazing and Pathian*. I asked him, “What was the name you use the Chin name for God in your prayer?” He admitted that there was no other strange name that he used when he prayed. However, he used the two words together sometimes. He used *khuazing* and *Pathian* conditionally. The most he used was *Pathian* which was the modern name for God in Chin nowadays.

5.10.3. Other Chin names for God

I asked Antony Ngun Uk about other Chin names for God. I specified the question, “Did you know any other Chin names for God, except *khuazing*?” He answered, “For the English word God, we the Chin people had no other names except *khuazing* and *Pathian*.”

5.10.4. The meaning of *khuazing*

We continued the interview with discussing about *khuazing*. I asked him the meaning of *khuazing*. He discussed enthusiastically and said that the Chin people were very aware of *khuazing*. They also called *zingnu*. *Zingnu* could mean female, a goddess. In accordance with Antony Ngun Uk, *zingnu* means the God of love, like a mother rather than God is female.

5.10.5. The uniqueness of *khuazing* from other Chin spirits names like *khuachia* and *khuavang*

After that I asked Antony Ngun Uk about the uniqueness of *khuazing* from other Chin spirit names. The following was his explanation on the Chin religiosity or concept of *khuazing* and other spirit names. In Chin religion, *khuazing* was the name that they called instantly in times of injury or some kinds of worry. *Khuazing* had no relation with evil or devil. *Khuachia*, evil in English, was the one who made us worry and harm. They gave some sacrifices to *khuachia* or *khuahrum* to make them please and to stop them from making harm to man. We did not trust them. They were like enemy in reality. The worship of *khuachia* or *khuahrum* was not due to love or not to show any reverence but only for fear. In the other hand, *khuazing* was seen as loving and kind. They believed *khuazing* as their creator, protector, helper, and security. These were the differences and uniqueness of *khuazing* in Chin traditional religion according to Antony Ngun Uk.

5.10.6. Similarities and differences of *Pathian* and *khuazing*

I asked Antony Ngun Uk, “Did you think that the word *Pathian* and *khuazing* were the same?” He replied that he believed *khuazing* and *Pathian* were the same. Nevertheless, he gave the different meanings of the two words. It was interesting and distinguishing between each other. He said, “When we used *Pathian*, we thought as male. If we used *khuazing*, then we felt as a female’s name. But it did not mean they were a couple. We just portrayed the one God in two ways or names.” It did not mean that they were a couple. It was just portraying the one God in two different names.”

5.10.7. The use of *khuazing*

I asked Antony Ngun Uk that why did he think the word *khuazing* was forgotten more and more? He replied me that this question was very good and worth to find the reason. He was continuing and discussed his personal opinion, *khuazing* was not forgotten totally. We just believed that *Pathian* was our *khuazing*. Yet, we used only *Pathian* every day, without *khuazing*. In written, in everyday used, *Pathian* influenced *khuazing* almost disappearing. In it’s concept of name of God in Chin between these two names, they were the same in meaning. I did not think the word *khuazing* was forgotten or disappeared totally.

5.10.8. The origin of *Pathian* in Chin Land

I continued questioning, “Did you mean the word *Pathian* had been in use among the Chin people before the missionary came to Chin Land?” Concerning with this question, he replied me that *Pathian* was actually the word that was used after we were converted to Christianity. It did not mean the word was created or brought by the missionaries. The *Lusei* people brought this word to Chin Land and we used it for *khuazing*. Antony Ngun Uk gave this statement on the coming and the beginning of *Pathian* in Chin Land. He believed the Chin people borrowed the word *Pathian* from the *Lusei*.

5.10.9. The missionaries’ translation of the name of God in Chin language

When I asked whether had he thought about why the missionary dismissed the national name *khuazing* for the name of God in Chin or whether did he thought the missionary should had chosen the word *khuazing* for the name of God, he replied me with a firm and open answer. He did not think about why the missionary did not choose *khuazing* for the name of God in Chin. He believed *Pathian* and *khuazing* were the same and they were interchangeable. When he said the word *Pathian* and *khuazing* were the same, then I continued to ask why *khuazing* was forgotten more than *Pathian* secondly. The answer was the same with others. He said that they were the same. *Pathian* was more popular and used more than *khuazing* because it was officialised in Lai Baibal Thiang.⁹⁰

5.10.10. Reintroducing the word *khuazing*

Since he said many times *khuazing* and *Pathian* were the same, I asked him do we need to use and reintroduce the word *khuazing* more for the name of God. His answer was, “Yes! We should and we can use *khuazing* for the name of God as *Pathian*. They were different in name but the same in concept.” Then I kept asking the question, “How should we use *khuazing* today? The question was if you said to introduce and use *khuazing*, how did you think and wanted to use it and introduce it? In this question, he did not mean to replace the word *Pathian* with *khuazing*. He had no problem with *Pathian*. If someone wanted to use *khuazing* instead of *Pathian* then it should be accepted. Because they were the same. It should be allowed to use together or either.

⁹⁰ Lai Baibal Thiang is a Holy Bible in Hakha Chin.

5.11. Summary of the interview findings

In these interviews, the findings are very interesting and invaluable. Most of the correspondences are the same. There are some slightly differences too. Almost all the informants have the same answer on the Chin name of God, of *Pathian* and of *khuazing*. The most different answer was about the future reintroducing of the word *khuazing*.

Chapter 6

Discussion

6.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, all the interviews about naming God in Chin have been presented. From the interview results, there are some reasons of using Pathian for the name of God in Chin and there are also reasons to not using khuazing much when referring God. The Chin people had names for God before the arrival of missionaries to the Chin Land. The names are Pathian for God and khuazing for Supreme Being in Chin traditional religion. Therefore, in this chapter, we will discuss about the Chin concept of Pathian and of khuazing in relation to the materials obtained from the field. The discussion will focus also on the theological base on naming God in Chin.

The second section of this chapter will discuss about how the Chin name for God originated. In the interview reflections, the missionaries were the important translators of the name of God in Chin. They did not create the new name for God in Chin, but they translated and affirmed the word for the name of God. In this process of naming God in Chin, the interview strongly pushed us to the issues of contextual theology, particularly on naming God. Thus, this topic will also discuss about the missionary translation whether it was contextual or not.

The third part of this chapter will discuss about the vision of the Chin name for God in the future. Based on the interview results, we will discuss whether is it possible to re-introduce the word khuazing for the name of God. Lastly, this chapter will conclude with a summary of the interview findings.

6.2. The Chin concept of *khuazing*

The discussion on this topic focuses on why did the missionary neglected *khuazing* when they translated the name for God into Chin. The second concern is about why the word *khuazing* is forgotten more and more nowadays. We will discuss particularly for these two questions. Before discussing these two questions, we will look at the meaning of *khuazing* and present the findings on the concept of *khuazing*. All the discussions are based on the interviews results.

Before the arrival of the American Baptist Missionaries in Chinland, the Chin were animists. They were not conscious about God, but they believed that there was a supernatural being in their unconscious mind. This is revealed through their sacrifices given at big trees, mountains, and huge rocks as they believed the power of spirits or gods might be dwelling in these places. It is clear that the sacrifices were made to please the evil spirits that they might not do any harm to human beings. In this traditional religion of the Chin people, the name of this supernatural being was called *khuazing*. Apart from that we will go to the meaning of *khuazing*. There are some differences and similarities answers on the meaning of *khuazing* from the informants. Some do not know the meaning *khuazing* for explanation.

6.2.1. The meaning of *khuazing*

Hla Aung did not give the meaning of *khuazing* specifically. He summarized its meaning as creator, loving and mercy.⁹¹ Luke Sui Kung Ling also added that, “The word has two meaning, *khuahrum* – lord of the hierarchical, lord of the world spirit, *zingnu*, the same with *Pathian*.⁹²

Lian Do Kham defined *khuazing* as the controller of the universe. He is the absolute Truth and absolute Beings.⁹³ This understanding related to what Nei Rem explained that *khuazing* means the provider of all and the one who knows everything.⁹⁴

Antony Ngun Uk explained the meaning of *khuazing* with the same name but in different meanings with the idea of goddess. He said,

“The Chin people were very aware of *khuazing*. They also called *zingnu*. *Zingnu* could mean female, a goddess. But it meant he was the God of love like a mother rather than meaning God was a female.”⁹⁵

If we evaluate the interviews on the questionnaires number one, what is the name of God in Chin, there are four informants who directly answered *khuazing* is the original name of God in Chin. One of the informants said that they are still using *khuazing* for the name of God in their tribal languages.⁹⁶ The findings about the similarities and differences between *khuazing* and *Pathian* also show that *khuazing* is the same as *Pathian*. Because more than fifty percent of the

⁹¹ Interview on Hla Aung: 2016

⁹² Interview on Luke Sui Kung Ling: 2016

⁹³ Interview on Lian Do Kham: 2016

⁹⁴ Interview on C. Nei Rem: 2016

⁹⁵ Interview on Antony Ngun Uk: 2016

⁹⁶ Interview on Luke Sui Kung Ling: 2016

informants said that they are the same. One informant said that, “*khuazing* is bigger than *Pathian*”.⁹⁷ These findings suggest that *khuazing* is also accepted as one of the God’s names in Chin.

6.2.2. The reasons of the extinction of *khuazing*

There are two questions regarding the extinction of the word *khuazing*. The first question is why did the missionaries neglect *khuazing* if the local Christian of the present time accept it for the name of God? The second one is what make the word *khuazing* unpopular now? Thus, some hypotheses or reasons can be found in the interview results on why the missionaries to the Chin people did not use the word *khuazing* for the name of God in naming God in Chin. The most common and popular answer on this question is that missionaries were afraid that the Chin people will see Christianity as the same with Chin traditional religion if they use the word *khuazing* which is the name for traditional religion god. There are also another reason supposing that the word *khuazing* is against *Pathian*. *Khuazing* is unclean because it is the name of animism or of traditional religion.

Secondly, when I asked all the informants about why the word *khuazing* was forgotten more and more, there was a common and same answer from all the informants. That the name is forgotten because the name *Pathian* was made an official and started to be used in the Bible for the name of God by the missionaries. The second point was more academic and scholarly, the missionaries to the Chin people were Baptist, since the Baptists were very evangelical, they did not want to use any of the cultures and of the traditional beliefs from the local people. If the missionaries in Chin were the Lutherans or any of the mainstream denomination, there could be a lot of difference to now.

There is also the presumption that since the missionaries came to Chin people were very evangelical and they did not like Chin culture. They told the local people how they were against Christianity and their wish to abolish them all if they were to become a Christian. So many people thought *khuazing* is the Chin traditional god, which is not a Christian God. In this way, the use of *khuazing* started to deteriorate and it was forgotten as time went on.

⁹⁷ Interview on Lian Do Kham: 2016

6.3. The Chin concept of *Pathian*

Pathian is the present name for God in Chin. When the American Baptist Mission sent Rev. Arthur E. Carson and his wife to the Chin Land on March 15, 1899, they preached about salvation. They learned the language first and preached about the gospel. They also did many social developments work for the people. Most importantly, they invented the Chin literature for the people. They translated the Bible into Chin and used *Pathian* for the name of God. From that time on, the name of God was used as *Pathian* orally and in written. It was difficult to say when and how the word *Pathian* originated in Chin Land. The word has been being established firmly among the Chin people. In the followings, we will discuss about the meaning of the word and the origin of the word and how does the word become for the name of God based on the interview results. Some of the sentences are a repetition of the informants' words from the previous presentation chapter.

6.3.1. The meaning of *Pathian*

There is no different meaning of *Pathian* which was mentioned in the interviews. The meaning of *Pathian* according to Hla Aung is the combination of two words; *pa* and *a thiang*. *Pa* means male and *a thiang* means holy. The complete meaning was Holy father in heaven.⁹⁸ Ling said the meaning of *Pathian* very short and clear. *Pathian* meant the father, who is in heaven and holy.⁹⁹ Lai Cung also answered the meaning of *Pathian* as holy father in heaven.¹⁰⁰ Lian Do Kham said that the name *Pathian* was just the prefix or suffix of *khuazing*. Among the four women informants, the two said they did not know the meaning. Among the other two, Mah Ngun said that, "The word *Pathian* means saviour and creator. And He is the triune God."¹⁰¹ From the above answers, the word *Pathian* means holy father who is in heaven.

6.3.2. The origin of *Pathian*

Any of the informants was able to tell about the origin of *Pathian*. Two informants, Antony Ngun Uk and Lian Do Kham tried to explain. Antony Ngun Uk told me as a history. He said,

"It was hard to say what specific year did the name started to be used. It is said that it was from the time the *Lusei* people came to preache the gospel in Chin. If

⁹⁸ Interview on Hla Aung: 2016

⁹⁹ Interview on Luke Sui Kung Ling: 2016

¹⁰⁰ Interview on Lai Cung: 2016

¹⁰¹ Interview on Mah Ngun: 2016

we can guess a year, it could be around 1930. The one who brought this name were not kind of missionaries but they were just like evangelist, who were coming to Chin Land with a personal commitment to preach and share the gospel.”¹⁰²

Lian Do Kham also affirmed in reference to Lehman stating that the Mizo people brought the word *Pathian* to Chinland, before the arrival of American Baptist missionaries.”¹⁰³

6.4. Differences and similarities between *khuazing* and *Pathian*

The different between the concept of *khuazing* and of *Pathian* can be seen as follow. These two names seem different but looks the same in many of their attributes. The first (*Pathian*) has the concept of transcendental concept and the second one (*khuazing*) has Immanuel concept. *Pathian* was accepted as the real name for Christian God although *khuazing* was there before Christianity came to Chin referring to the same God.

Another similarity is that, both are accepted as they both refer to Creator, the merciful. Many of the Chin Christians are still using the two words together till today. However, there is a very strange answer in the interview regarding with the question on similarity and differences between *Pathian* and *khuazing*. One informant was against these similarities. His argument lies on the reference of bigger and smaller God. He said, “*khuazing* is not the same with *Pathian*. *Khuazing* is higher and bigger than *Pathian*.”¹⁰⁴

All arguments in this study lead to one point that, Chin Christians accepted *Pathian* as the name for the living God in the Bible. The name *Pathian* was not brought by the missionaries as it was thought before, its the Chin Bible translators who sorted it out as a reference to God. This is the reason why this name became so popular nowadays. Slowly, *khuazing* has been forgotten. There could be many reasons of why this name is forgotten, but the strongest point could be the missionary exclusion of the name from the Christian writings especially in the Chin Bible.

6.5. Bevans and Schreiter’s models in naming God in Chin

The Chin people were converted to Christianity within a very short period of time by the work of American Baptist mission. This magnificent mission works, this research wants to scratch

¹⁰² Interview on Antony Ngun Uk: 2016

¹⁰³ Interview on Lian Do Kham, through email: 2016

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., : 2016

on naming God in Chin. There are many things that the missionaries did for the Chin people. In general, their mission approaches to the Chin people seem very holistic because they opened many schools and they provided medical ministry which was the people most needs on that time. Though, in this research, we are going to look on naming God in Chin from the contextual perspective. As we have mentioned in chapter two, some of the models from Bevans and Schreiter will be applied on naming God in Chin.

6.5.1. Bevans' models on naming of God in Chin

The Chin's names for God, neither *Pathian* nor *khuazing* are the missionaries' invention. In naming God in Chin, the missionaries were very important. The missionaries' judgement on the local people and their cultures had a major impact on naming God in Chin. Applying some models of Bevans to naming God in Chin, it can be discussed as the followings.

What we can see and understand from the interview result is that the word *Pathian* has the gospel or Christian value while *khuazing* is of the traditional value in the beliefs on the Chin people. It can be said that the missionaries were not clever on this point. It is hard to say they use the translation model. But what striking is that the gospel value, *Pathian* is preserved exclusively.

If we look the similarities between *Pathian* and *khuazing*, many of the informants accepted they are the same, but the missionaries did not want to imposed the concept of *khuazing* for the name of God even as one of the adjectives. Or if we look the Old Testament, many God names can be found inclusively. By looking at this, it can be said that the missionaries were not care about the synthesis model, anthropological model, praxis model totally.

In the last from Bevans's point of view, the missionaries to the Chin people used countercultural model conversely. The word 'fear' and 'they did not want' can be found from some of the informants' reflections on if they use the word *khuazing* for the name of God. This clearly showed that instead of mutual engagement with the Chin cultures, they were against the culture. Their model became anti-cultural model which was the danger point of the model rather countercultural model. They treated the cultures with over suspicious.

6.5.2. Schreiter's models on naming God in Chin

Schreiter had three models and three approaches to culture. Schreiter's three models are translation model, adaptation model, and contextual model. Three approaches in study of

culture are called functional approach, ecological approach, and structural approach. In fact, naming God in Chin, specially on *Pathian* and *khuazing*, is doing local theology according to Schreiter because the two names are both local words. The contextualization is taken place in choosing the word for the name of God.

Between *Pathian* and *khuazing*, there is no any idea of kernel and husk belief. Consequently, we can say this translation model is irrelevant to this research. Adaptation model, we have to think about how the word *Pathian* has become so popular with a positive social change. If we look the interview result, all informants are satisfied with the name *Pathian*. It has a positive impact on the Chin people without neglecting the old name *khuazing*. The Chin people can easily adapt the missionaries' use of *Pathian*. Though contextual model is Schreiter choice for the long run, this model does not seem to be relevant to naming God in Chin. Because contextual model emphasis on identity and social change. It can be known by the missionaries' approaches to the Chin cultures.

If the missionaries were aware of this Schreiter's functional approach and structural approach, they would had had listen to traditional religion of the Chin people which had been a well foundation for accepting the gospel. The Chin people had been unified and identified in this traditional religion system. Yet, the missionaries did not approach the Chin people from this way in delivering of the gospel to them.

6.6. Summary

This is the summary on the findings of *khuazing* and *Pathian*. This is also, in the other words, the theological understanding of the Chin people on the concept of *Pathian* and *khuazing*.

6.6.1. Summary on *khuazing*

The question, why did the first missionaries neglected the name *khuazing* is worthy to raise a question from a contextual perspective. The name *khuazing* is the common name for a supreme being in Chin traditional religion which was used even before Christianity came to Chin Land. The response of the informants suggests that *khuazing* is the original name for God or supreme being, higher than any other spirits. Many of the informants agree that *khuazing* is the original name for supreme being in the traditional religion of the Chin people though *Pathian* has been used too.

In general, *khuazing* is understood as the one who is in heaven with love and mercy, the creator and higher than any other spirits. Though, *khuazing* was the one who does not need any sacrifice, yet faithful providing guidance. Though, *khuazing* was the one who does not demand for any sacrificial worships, yet he was considered as the supreme being in Chin traditional religion.

The name was only seen as unclean name for God because it belongs to animism. All the newly converted Chin Christians were encouraged to abolish all the customs and everything from the Chin cultures, and the traditional names started to fade away and lose its fame. Perhaps this may be one of the reasons to establish the roots of the name *Pathian*.

6.6.2. Summary on *Pathian*

As mentioned above, the word *Pathian* is the Chin name for God since the missionary time. The origin of the word is difficult to trace clearly because of lack of reliable preserved documents. Its meaning and use in Chinland is approved by the response of the informants during the interview process. From the findings, ninety nine percent (99%) of the informants explained that *Pathian* is the name for the creator of heavens and earth and the living God. Another informant added that,

“*Pathian* is the same name as Jehovah in the Old Testament. *Pathian* is smaller to *khuazing*. *Pathian* is the suffix of *khuazing*.”¹⁰⁵

Recently, after the affirmation of the name *Pathian* as the Chin name for God, in the process of translating the Bible in Hakha Chin, it was included and the name has been strongly used among the Hakha Chin people. This led to other names for God and other spirit names to be diminished.

This suggests that, the name *Pathian* is the proper name for God in Chin. There are many other adjectives which are used together with this name like *Ka pa* (means father), and *Bawipa* (Lord) used before and after the name *Pathian* as a prefix or suffix like *Ka pa Pathian* (Father God), *Bawipa Pathian* (the Lord God). *Khuazing* is also used with *Pathian* too like *khuazing Pathian*. The Chin people also use the name *Pathian* with a lot of adjectives like *a liannganmi Pathian* (almighty God), *dawtnak Pathian* (Loving God), *cungnung bik Pathian* (Lord and highest God). On the interview with Rev. Dr. Lian Do Kham he seems to be against what others think of. He

¹⁰⁵ Interview on Lian Do Kham: 2016

said, “When I use the name Pathian, I feel like it is not the real name for God. It is only a prefix or suffix of *Khuazing*.”¹⁰⁶

The word is thought to have been borrowed from Mizo people, but what time it came to Chin Land is difficult to mention. It should have been before the missionaries came to Chin Land. All of this is because the Mizo people had been doing evangelism sharing the gospel among the Chin people through trading and visiting.

From the above explanations, it suggests that the word *Pathian* is borrowed from Mizo people. Two interviewees explained the same thing to support the root of the name *Pathian*. The following quote is taken from Antony Ngun Uk’s interview. It said,

“The missionaries might have not chosen the word *khuazing* as the name for God in Chin. I am pretty sure that Chin Bible translators might be the one who chose word the name *Pathian*. In fact, this was brought by Mizo people in their mission to bring Gospel to Chin people even before Christianity”¹⁰⁷

Lehman was referenced too by Lian Do Kham on the same point that the word *Pathian* is borrowed from Mizo Christians who visited Chin land mainly for evangelization”¹⁰⁸

6.7. Concluding remark

The concluding remark for this chapter are in two parts. The first part is the original name for God in Chin, the origin of *Pathian* and the reason for extinction of *khuazing*. The interview responses to the question of the name of God in Chin clearly show that the original Chin name for God is *khuazing*. Many of the interviewees agree that the name of God in Chin was ‘originally, known as *khuazing*, but after the arrival of the missionaries to Chin Land, the name of God became *Pathian*.’

The second thing is the reasons for the disappearance of the word *khuazing*. The research findings tell us that the missionaries did not take into account the traditional religion of the Chin people in contextual theology, this is the reason for the unpopularity of the word *khuazing* to the Chin people several generations down the line. Upon reflections of the feedbacks from the interviewees responses, the word *khuazing* can be used interchangeably contra the

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., : 2016

¹⁰⁷ Interview on Antony Ngun Uk: 2016

¹⁰⁸ Interview on Lian Do Kham by email: 2016. It can also be found on page 177 from Lehman’s book called Structure of Chin Society.

name *Pathian* vis-a-vis. However, *khuazing* is authentically confirmed to be the original name of God in Chin.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

7.1. Introduction

Since the topic of the thesis is **Naming of God in the Chin Language: Towards a Contextual Approach**, this research paper explores a deeper and higher theological understanding of naming God in the Chin language, particularly on the concept of *Pathian* and the concept of *khuazing*.

The main research question asks what really is the proper name for God in the Chin language. The research sub-question is why the Chin churches today use *Pathian* and why the traditional name for God in the traditional religion of the Chin people, *khuazing*, disappears. Other sub-questions are what is the Chin name of God. What is the concept of *Pathian*? What is the concept *khuazing*? Why do the missionaries use the word *Pathian* instead of *khuazing* for the proper name of God in Chin?

Exploring a proper name for God in the Chin context has been in my vein all the times since this is a not-ever-done topic among the Chin people. Moreover, the rise of contextual theology pushes me to do this research paper. Although some of the Chin people among the Hakha-dialect speaking Chins use the word *khuazing* for the name of God separately or along with *Pathian*, there is no a single word of *khuazing* for the proper name of God in the Chin Bible, (In Hakha Lai Baibal Thiang). This is a proof of the need for a contextual approach in naming God in the Chin language.

The research was done among the Hakha Chin people living in Yangon, Kalay, and Hakha. Since the research intends to find out the Chin local theologies on the names of God, namely on *Pathian* and *khuazing*, I employed the two books from Stephen B. Bevans and Robert J. Schreiter as theoretical reference books. To answer all the above questions, I used the qualitative social research method. The method employs both material analysis and interview method. The research is basically grounded on the interviews.

7.2. The Chin concepts of God's name

According to the result of the interviews, the name of God in Chin is Pathian because hundred percent of the informants say the Chin name of God as Pathian. However, it is clear that the concept of God's name in Chin has more than Pathian. *Khuazing* is even a more relevant name for God. There are the additional answers to this question from some informants. There are four informants who said convincingly the word *khuazing* as the Chin original name of God whereas they did not reject to employ the word *Pathian* for the name of God today as the two concepts are seen as originally from the Chin context.

7.2.1. Concept of Pathian

The research showed that the name *Pathian* was not the missionaries' creation, but rather the missionaries' translation for the proper name of God in Chin. It is most probable that the word is originally coming from the Mizo/Lusei people, one of the Chins ethnics group, before the missionaries arrived in Chin Land. If we summarize the Chin concept of *Pathian*, He is God the creator, living and saviour of the world. He is the missionaries' God or the Christian God for the Chin people.

7.2.2. Concept of *khuazing*

What is striking from the result of the research is that *khuazing* was the name of Supreme Being in traditional religion of the Chin people. As Bevans said, "Doing theology is both new and old, the past experience and the presence experience," the idea and concept of *khuazing* in traditional religion of the Chin is still practiced in naming God along with *Pathian* among Chin Christians today.

7.2.3. The reason for choosing *Pathian* for the proper name of God in Chin

The reason for choosing *Pathian* for the name of God in Chin is very convincing by looking at the result of this research. As mentioned above, the name was the missionaries' translation, they feared that the Chin people would not be able to differentiate the Christian God from the gods of traditional religion if they used the word *khuazing* for the name of God. At the same time, they introduced the Christian God as holy and mighty by using the *Pathian* which means the Holy One/Father who is in heaven.

7.3. The proper name for God in the Chin language

According to the research findings, the reason of disappearing the usage of the word *khuazing* in the Chin Christian society totally depends on the total negative view of the missionaries on the traditional usage and their insensitiveness to traditional religion of the Chin people along with their identity. Most of the informants' answers on the reason for disappearing the word *khuazing* is due to the missionary inclusion of the word *Pathian* and exclusion of *khuazing* for the name of God during the Chin Bible translation. Looking critically on the result of this research paper, it is evident that the missionaries to the Chin people had been very insensitive to the local traditional religion and identity.

This research finds that there are two possible and acceptable names for the proper name of God in Chin. But now, we use only one, *Pathian*. The reasons for disappearing the word *khuazing* is the missionaries' unhealthy approaches to traditional religion of the Chin people and their insensitive to the local identity. Thus, we can say with boldness that the Chin people need a more contextual approach to naming God.

7.4. My contributions

The word *Pathian*, as mentioned above, had become popular when it was included and made official in the Chin Bible for the name of God. This also made the word *khuazing* unpopular and disappeared. In the process of the Chin Bible translation, the missionaries did very important work because they invented the Chin written literature. However, the problem is that many young people do not use the name *khuazing* in their prayer and in their writings though some older Chins use it.

Undeniable fact is that the word *khuazing* is a very traditional name for God among the Chin people. As the contextual or indigenous theology arose nowadays, I see the need or possibility of re-introducing the word *khuazing* to the Chin people. It might be challenging, but this is a must. *khuazing* must be one of the Chin names for God, not to abolish or replace *Pathian*, but to include it for the name of God both from a theological perspective and cultural contextual perspective. That will also strengthen and lead the Chin people into a deeper and fuller understanding of God.

Therefore, it is primarily imperative to employ the word *khuazing* widely in speaking and writing to let people understand its contextual and deep meaning. Almost 90% of the interviewees agreed to introduce the word *khuazing* to the Chin people for promoting Chin

contextual religiosity by giving a certain theological understanding in Chin traditional religion. Some of the Chin cultures are good foundations for accepting the gospel. We need to revive the positive elements and reconstructs the transported Gospel in Chin land.

The primary way to introduce the name *khuazing* is to introduce it in the Chin Holy Bible, called Lai Baibal Thiang in Hakha dialect. This important task must be proposed to Chin Association for Christian Communication (CACC) that has the copy right of the Chin Christian Bible and Hymns.

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Appendix 1

Interviews

1. Rev. Dr. Hla Aung ... Interviewed on September 10, 2016.
2. Rev. Thla Hnem Interviewed on September 20, 2016.
3. Rev. C. Nei Rem Interviewed on September 26, 2016.
4. Rev. Dr. Luke Sui Kung Ling Interviewed on September 27, 2016.
5. Pastor Lai Cung Interviewed on September 27, 2016.
6. Tum Iang Interviewed on October 3, 2016.
7. Antony Ngun Uk Interviewed on October 5, 2016.
8. Mah Ngun Interviewed on October 6, 2016.
9. Rev. Dr. Lian Do Kham Interviewed by email on September 29, 2016.

Appendix 2

Interview questionnaires

1. Do you know the Chin name for God?
2. Do you know how and where the word came from?
3. What does that name mean?
4. What do you feel when you use *Pathian*?
5. What is the name you use at home or in your personal prayer?
6. Do you know any other Chin names for God?
7. Can you tell me any spirit names among the Chin people?
8. Have you ever heard the word *khuazing* among the Chin people?
9. Could you tell me the meaning of *khuazing*?
10. Do you think that *khuazing* is the same as *Pathian*?
11. Is there any similarity between *Pathian* and *khuazing*?
12. Is there any difference?
13. Do you think the word *khuazing* is forgotten?
14. Did the missionaries chose *Pathian* for the name of God? Why?
15. Did the missionaries neglected the use of *khuazing*? If yes, why?
16. Why do you think the missionaries could have used the word *khuazing* for the name of God rather than *Pathian*?
17. Do you have any problem to use *khuazing* for the name of God today (because it is the name used before Christianity)?
18. Do you think it will be possible to introduce the use of *khuazing* in the Church?