of Jubilee (Lev 25.50). This alleged obsession with time may well be true of many laborers, but whether it has anything to do with the contextual meaning of the present phrase is something that requires examination.

Among the various major English language translations, NJB suggests a rendering for 16.14 and 23.15 as follows: "(Within three years) as a hired worker reckons them." This rendering is hardly informative and seems to imply that the laborer had a unique way of reckoning the length of a year. This of course is not just meaningless, it is verging on the ridiculous. NIV is a little more enlightening, stating that "(Within three years) as a servant bound by contract would count them." Similarly, REB has "(In three years,) as a hired labourer counts them off exactly ... " Both NIV and REB make the similarity component the fact that laborers were particularly conscious of time served and kept a close count. Tanach (NJPSV) is only a little different when it says "(In three years), fixed like the years of a hired laborer." In other words, there is an exegetical tradition prevailing in some major modern translations that read into the phrase, "like the days/years of a laborer," a laborer's alleged concern with time. TEV, on the other hand, simply says "In exactly three years ... ," with no mention of the laborer at all. It too seems to imply that what is typical of the laborer is a concern with time, since it suggests a rendering that echoes that of REB. As noted above, KJV, NAB, RSV, and NRSV keep close to the Hebrew form and so are essentially meaningless.

This phrase I would argue has become a fixed form for characterizing longer or shorter periods of time. The over-interpretation that is given to the phrase "days of a laborer" in the above translations must be dismissed as altogether unjustified exegetically. However, as an aside, it would be interesting to know how those who render the phrase in terms of a laborer's obsession with time might handle the phrase "days of a king" were they to apply the same thought processes to their treatment of it. What we have in this formal pattern "like the days/years of a laborer/king" are contrasting idioms for a short period of time ("days/years of a laborer,") and a long period of time ("days/years of a king").

Translators would do well to render Isa 16.14 and 21.16 as "In three short (and painful) years, like those of a laborer, ... " or similar. In this way the brevity of the laborer's life that provides the contextual meaning of the phrase can be brought out. Isa 23.15 is a little simpler to handle since the period of seventy years specified in the text already represents a long period of time. By translating the text as it stands it is clear that "days of a king" refers to a long period of time. It probably also implies that it is a period of relative ease and comfort.

NORM MUNDHENK

WHO IS GOD IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA?

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During the United Bible Societies' Triennial Translation Workshop in 1991, one of the main themes under discussion concerned the matter of how to translate the name of God. A document containing various recommendations was produced at

that time, and made available to translators around the world in the October 1992 issue of *The Bible Translator*. The emphasis of that document was primarily on a correct exegetical understanding of the Tetragrammaton and how this understanding should be reflected in translations into different languages.

Early in his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul says that "Ever since God created the world, his invisible qualities, both his eternal power and his divine nature, have been clearly seen; they are perceived in the things that God has made. So ... people have no excuse at all! They know God, but they do not give him the honor that belongs to him, nor do they thank him" (Rom 1.20-21, GNB). Even after the coming of Christ and the beginnings of Christianity, it took hundreds of years for the message of Christ to reach most parts of the world. Yet in this passage Paul states clearly that people's knowledge of God is not limited by their knowledge of God's revelation in Jesus Christ. Certain key aspects of God's nature have been clearly visible to everyone, ever since the creation of the world.

If Christians take seriously this point that Paul is making, it would seem to suggest that when Christianity first arrives in a new territory, where people are hearing for the first time the message of Christ's saving power, it is fair to assume that people there already have some knowledge of God. Similar ideas are expressed, though with different emphases, in Ps 139.7-12, Amos 9.7, and Acts 17.24-27. So if Christians already know something about God, it should not be surprising if we find that they also have some way of referring to God.

It is a fearsome responsibility to be involved in choosing the correct "Christian" vocabulary in a language where Christ's message has not previously been known. It is likely that many (if not most) of the terms selected will catch on and continue to be used for years to come. If they convey the wrong meaning or a misleading nuance, they may contribute to theological confusion or even heresy on the part of those who use them. These terms cannot be chosen carelessly or too quickly. Instead, those responsible for making these decisions should try to think through carefully the full range of meaning of each term, including all of the connotations, to be sure that the meaning conveyed is as accurate as possible. In many cases this will require a careful analysis of a whole domain of meaning. To do this adequately, one will need to have a full understanding of the way that the words in question function in the culture of the area.

Jesus tells the woman of Samaria, "God is Spirit" (John 4.24). Therefore, when trying to find the word for "God" in a language, one would ordinarily begin by studying the words in the domain for "spirit beings." In many languages there are a number of different spirit beings or types of spirit beings which are known. If the people who speak a particular language knew about God in their traditional culture, then it seems quite possible that he will appear as one of the spirit beings in this domain.

In practice, there are a number of different approaches that have been followed in deciding how to refer to God in the different languages of the world. Sometimes, a term has been found from within the vocabulary of the language, just as we have suggested. In other cases, God has been called by the term used by the language spoken by the first missionaries or by some other influential language of the area.

If an attempt is made to find a term for God from within the language, it often happens that none of the terms for "spirit being" provides a perfect match for the Christian understanding of God. Perhaps a particular spirit being is known as the creator of the world, but this same being is said to have been married and to have children. Is this God or not? If possible, this question should be answered by mature Christians from the language group.

There are at least two different positions that have been taken by people forced to make such a decision. Sometimes people will say, "Of course it is God. But now we know that our ancestors believed many things about him that are not true." The term will then be carried over into Christian vocabulary, but the old stories will no longer be believed and gradually be forgotten.

On the other hand, people sometimes react in precisely the opposite way: "Obviously this cannot be God. Look at all of the questionable things that this being is known to have done." In a case like this, even though a language has a term which might seem close to the right word for "God," it will often be necessary to find a different expression or to borrow the term for God from an important language of the area.

It has sometimes happened that the early missionaries themselves did not find time to fully understand the culture and the related vocabulary of the people they were working with. Perhaps they did not discover a term for God at all. Or perhaps they did discover a possible term, but they rejected it because it had some of these questionable concepts associated with it. The decision not to use a term from within the language might be made either by (Christian) native speakers of the language or by missionaries or by both. However, in cases like this it sometimes happens that later Christians will wonder why other languages have a local term for "God" while their language uses a borrowed term. In some cases attempts may be made to "restore" a local term to its "correct" use.

In many parts of the world, Christianity has been present in an area for a long time and the term for God has been long established. Translators and those advising them will probably have no reason even to consider what term should be used for God. However, in other areas this decision can still be a live issue. This is still the case in some parts of the country of Papua New Guinea. In this paper, I would like to look at the ways that this issue has been dealt with in different languages in that country.

Before we turn our attention to the Papua New Guinea situation there is one more point that I would like to make. This concerns the matter of God's name. In Hebrew it is usually said that the term *Elohim* is not God's name, but that it describes the status or position of being God or a god. To catch this sense in English one would need to translate it as "the God." God's name is YHWH, the Tetragrammaton. In English, however, *Elohim* is usually translated as "God" and YHWH as "the LORD." The result of these translations is that in English the grammatical functions of the two terms have been reversed. "God" (without an article) serves in English as the name of the One God. If one wants to talk about other gods, one would ordinarily have to give them a different name or call them "a god" or "the god." "God" is the name of our God, and it is by this name that we would address him when praying, for example: "Dear God ... " On the other hand,

"LORD" serves in English as a title. This is why it is usually necessary to use the article with it and say "the LORD." As a result, these two terms in English seem to serve precisely the opposite functions that *Elohim* and YHWH serve in Hebrew.

God's name in Papua New Guinea

The country known as Papua New Guinea is a country of some four million people, located just to the north of Australia. Papua New Guinea occupies the eastern half of the large island of New Guinea, along with a number of other islands to the north and east, including the large islands of New Britain, New Ireland, and Bougainville. As a result of Christian missionary work over the last 130 years, most of the people of the country are now at least nominally Christian. It is said that there are some 800 languages spoken in the country, which means that hundreds of times during the last century or so, someone has faced the question: "What do we call God in this language?"

The answers that were given to this question can be divided into a number of different categories. The main ones are:

1) A name for God was taken from within the language.

2) A name was invented from within the language, usually a descriptive term.

3) A name in use in another Papua New Guinea language was used.

4) A name was taken from an outside language, such as Latin, Hebrew, Greek, or English.

Several generations have come and gone since these decisions were first made, especially in the case of a number of the coastal languages. In many cases the local people themselves no longer remember and can no longer explain the original source of the term for God now used in their language. For further information one needs to turn to the writings of the early missionaries, or to more recent summaries of those writings. One such source is the first book in the United Bible Societies' Helps for Translators series, a book by Helmut Rosin called *The Lord is God: The Translation of the Divine Names and The Missionary Calling of the Church* (1956).

In this paper I will give examples of the various approaches that have been used. Because of their importance to the church in Papua New Guinea, some of the examples discussed go back to the early days. However, there are a number of languages where people are still actively wrestling with the question "What do we call God in our language?" Some of these cases will have the bulk of our attention.

1) A name from within the language

Two "classical" examples

The Madang area

Many of us looking back with our own prejudices on the pioneer missionaries of the late 19th century might expect that they would all have been inclined to use the name of God from their own languages when evangelizing "primitive tribes." It is interesting to see that this was by no means always the case. Many of the early missionaries seem to have assumed that the term for "God" should

come from within the language (or at least from a related neighboring language). The results of their efforts led mainly in two different directions. In some cases a local spirit being was identified with God. In other cases, they apparently found it impossible to use the name of a known spirit being. Instead, a term for "God" was invented, using the forms of the language. We will look first at cases where the name now used for God was originally the name of a spirit being known to the people.

Rufus Pech ("The Name of God in Melanesia," *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 1.1 [1985]: 30-46) quotes from a letter written by a German Lutheran missionary near the end of the 19th century. This missionary had been presenting the story of Creation to some villagers north of Madang, on the north coast of New Guinea. When he had finished, the villagers said, "You are quite right, but the Creator is not called Jehovah, but Kiliwob." This missionary and others apparently accepted the villagers' opinion, and *Kiliwob* (later spelled *Kilibob*) was used in this area for some years as the name for God. However, missionaries working in nearby areas preferred the name *Anute* or *Anut*, and the matter remained a source of controversy among the Madang missionaries for some time. Pech goes on to explain that in spite of doubts, the name *Anut* was eventually agreed on. One of the missionaries wrote (in 1907), "Since the Kilibob legends contain much that is impure, we have shied away from using this word for the true and holy God." One reason for the doubts was that *Anut* was not well known in much of the area, and the missionaries' decision was to cause serious problems for the church when "a later generation of Christians concluded that their prayers were unheard because they were delivered to the wrong address" (Pech 1985:31).

The Kâte of Finschhafen

One reason that the Lutherans in Madang decided on the name *Anut* was that their co-workers in the Kâte language of the Finschhafen area (northeast of Lae) had chosen a very similar name, *Anutu*. Theo Aerts ("Naming the Christian God," unpublished manuscript, 1996:60) summarizes the reason for this choice:

> Only Anutu—despite his apparent insignificance in the mythological system—could not be placated by humans, whereas the tibud and buga or lesser deities could be manipulated and deceived by human wiles .... Thus, although the ... name Anutu had several variations and was understood in several ways, it was apparently for the Kâte people, living in the cradle of the Lutheran Mission, the most acceptable translation for "the Lord" or "God."

We will meet *Anutu* again in a later section.

The modern situation

Interestingly enough, there continue to be situations in which missionaries from a variety of backgrounds as well as local Christians are wrestling with this question and deciding to use names from within the language. There have also

been situations such as those already described, where people have attempted to re-introduce a traditional name long after the arrival of Christianity.

It seems to be the case that local names are being routinely used in a number of areas where Christianity has been introduced fairly recently. A recent report about languages in the West New Britain Province where the New Tribes Mission is working stated that in eight different languages, traditional names are being used for God:

> In each language it is a different name. However, there is one important factor that is common to each of these names. For each of these traditional names for God, there was quite a bit of teaching that needed to be done regarding His positive attributes, but very little needed to be done in the way of "unteaching" regarding any negative attributes He may have. In other words, when the people told us a traditional name for God, we did not mind the fact that they did not know much about Him (either good or bad), but if a name carried with it some serious negative attributes, there would be definite questions regarding its suitability. (New Tribes Mission 1993)

Let us now look in more detail at two case studies from different parts of the country.

Ap ma

The Ap ma or Botin language is spoken around Samban in the East Sepik Province. In Ap ma, God is known as *Yamom*. *Yamom* is the creator. He made the trees and everything else we see in the world around us. There is no tradition as to where *Yamom* lives, and he is never seen. "We do not know him directly. We know only that he was in his own place and at his word everything was created. A person might sit somewhere and reflect, 'How could such a thing as a coconut tree grow out of that nut?' The answer is that these things that people could never do could only have been done by Yamom."

Yamom is sometimes referred to as Yadima, which means "word" or "story." It is a kind of euphemism so that one doesn't have to say the real name. There is a feeling that if the name is used carelessly, the person may experience some kinds of problems.

According to the traditional culture, *Yamom* himself never gave anyone direct messages. However, the *konim* "spirits," would sometimes mention him: "*Yamom* says the rains are coming," or "*Yamom* says the eels are coming."

Huli

Huli, one of the larger languages of Papua New Guinea, is spoken in the area around Tari in the Southern Highlands Province. When the first missionaries, teachers, and catechists came to the Huli country in the 1950s, they may have done some investigation of the Huli worldview before they began to preach. But they apparently did not find any obvious local word for "God," and they began teaching the people about *Ngode*, a Huli-ized form of the English name. In recent years some Huli people have suggested that in fact the Huli did have their own name for God: *Datagaliwabe*.

This led the missionaries of both the Evangelical Church of Papua and of the Roman Catholic Church to investigate the matter more carefully. It soon became clear that there was a traditional figure with this name *Datagaliwabe* who was still talked about by the Huli people. This immediately raised the question, Who is *Datagaliwabe*? If he is not God, is there some other figure that is playing a role in the belief system of the people? What did the Huli people believe about *Datagaliwabe*?

According to traditional Huli belief, *Datagaliwabe* lives up above the clouds in a place called *Dahuliya andaga*. This is in fact the term which has been used to translate "heaven" in the Huli Bible. *Datagaliwabe* is very concerned about how people act. People know what is right, but they often act in ways that they know are not right. When they do this, *Datagaliwabe* may punish them. He is able to know what people are doing wherever they are. It is not possible to hide one's actions from him or to deceive him. If a person wants to get away from one of the evil spirits, one can always run away to another area. One cannot run away from *Datagaliwabe*.

Before Huli people became Christian, they were very much afraid of powerful spirits who could do much to harm them, such as causing sickness. It was important to make offerings to appease these spirits and to keep them on one's good side. Interestingly, the same argument was made again among the Huli that we saw much earlier across the country among the Kâte: *Datagaliwabe* was not like these evil spirits who had to be "paid" in order to get their help. One never made offerings to him. Therefore he must be God.

In times of sickness or trouble, people would sometimes call out, "Father *Datagaliwabe*, help me."

All of these traditional beliefs certainly supported the possible connection of *Datagaliwabe* with God. On the other hand, there was at least one problem. For the Huli, *Datagaliwabe* was not the creator. The old Huli stories said that it was the Sun (*Ni*) who created the world. This seemed to be a relatively small point that could easily be dealt with. The most serious problem seemed in fact to be that Christians were used to calling God *Ngode*. Would they be willing to change?

The translation of the Old Testament was in process while this investigation was going on, so the matter was discussed in detail by the checking team, which included representatives of almost all of the major churches working in the area. Most of the group felt that it was willing to give *Datagaliwabe* a chance. As books were being completed, it was the policy of the team to publish trial editions. So for several years an experiment was conducted, using both *Ngode* and *Datagaliwabe* together in the text. Readers were told that they were not supposed to read both names, but to choose whichever one they preferred.

In the meantime, a more serious problem surfaced. Representatives from one of the churches on the edge of the language argued that in their area *Datagaliwabe* has other characteristics different from those described above, which make it inappropriate to use this name as a name for God. As the time for publication of the Bible neared, it was clearly necessary to make a choice.

At first, different churches made different choices, and it looked as though the Bible Society might be put in the unhappy position of having to publish separate editions with different names for God. However, as the Huli people thought about the implications of this decision, they themselves realized that some other solution must be found. Representatives from the different churches were invited to another series of meetings, where they were apparently convinced of the importance of finding a single solution that everyone could accept.

The eventual decision was to continue the practice of the various trial editions, printing both names together in the text, as "*Ngode Datagaliwabe*." Readers will presumably be told (in an introduction and through teaching) that they are not being asked to read both names, but to read only the name that they prefer.

One important point to note in the Huli case is that even if the churches had all decided to continue to use "*Ngode*," the experiment would nevertheless have still been a valuable exercise. As a result of the experiment, it should now be clear to all Huli Christians that *Datagaliwabe* is none other than God himself, and not a part of some separate belief system.

2) An invented name

Two "classical" examples

The Southeast

Several missions (Anglican, Methodist, and the London Missionary Society) working in the southeastern part of the country (what is now the Milne Bay Province) somehow agreed to use the term *Eaubada* for God. According to the agreement, this term was to be used in two important languages of the region, Suau and Dobu. The meaning of the term is said to be "I am great."

I do not know the full story behind the choice of this term, and in particular I do not know whether this type of expression was completely invented in order to name the Christian God, or whether it was in some way already associated with a powerful spirit. But I suspect that it was invented, and is therefore a good example of this approach to the problem.

Hula

In the Hula (more correctly, Vula'a) language of the Papuan coast, the name now used for God is *Palagu*. I have questioned Hula Christians about the derivation of this term, but no one seems to have a clear tradition or memory of how this term was chosen.

Apart from the meaning "God," *palagu* is used in ordinary speech to mean something like "spirit of human-ness." Each person is born with their own *palagu*, and this is what makes them able to become mature human beings. If the *palagu* leaves a person, then that person will begin to act in strange ways. In this way it is rather like the English word "mind."

There is a special concern for babies, because the *palagu* of a baby is easily separated from the baby. When preparing to give a baby a bath, or if a

person is carrying a baby under big trees, or at night, people are often encouraged to call out *Kivani palaguna o, onove rake kaumai.* "Baby's spirit, come after us." If the baby's *palagu* does not come, then the baby will become very fussy and difficult. The family must then try to figure out how to get the *palagu* to come back. Perhaps they will pray. There is often a feeling that something has gone wrong within the family, and this must be straightened out before the baby's *palagu* will return.

One man's son used to have fits, and they would burn hair near his nose to make the *palagu* come back.

If a mature person is not acting mature (for example, if a person has been warned many times to stop doing bad things, but they do not change), someone may say to them, *Oi e ma palagu na pa*? "Don't you have a *palagu*?" This is quite a strong criticism.

If a person is acting in a strange way, such as we might call a mental case, people may say *Palagu rakavana e rulivoo agi ana.* "Other spirits are in control of him, not his own *palagu*." In this case *avuavu rakavana* may also be used, instead of *palagu rakavana*. The common word for evil spirit is *avuavu*; *rakavana* means "other."

If a person is startled or frightened, they might say that their *palagu* has run away. Similarly, if someone is very sick and becomes very pale and white, it may be interpreted that the person's *palagu* is gone. People may say that a sorcerer (*meamea auna*) is trying to carry the *palagu* away, and another sorcerer may be paid to sort things out.

It seems very likely that when the early Christian evangelists first came to Hula, they could not find any word that meant "God." If they were looking for a word which meant "spirit," it looks as though the only two choices were *palagu* and *avuavu*, already mentioned as meaning "evil spirit." *Palagu* is certainly a much better choice than *avuavu*. It would be very interesting to find out more about how the choice was made, because "spirit" strikes me as a somewhat unusual area of meaning for "God." The choice of *Palagu* for God is also related to the next meaning of *Palagu*.

It seems that there was no word in Vula'a which could be used to cover all different kinds of spirit being. There were the *avuavu*, which were often the spirits of people who had died as well as the spirits of different areas, such as the river, the reef, etc. On the other hand, each person had a *palagu* which could sometimes cause problems for them by leaving them. In this ordinary meaning, *palagu* can be considered to be a kind of spirit.

It is hard to know how the language may have changed in the last hundred years, but it seems likely that neither *avuavu* nor *palagu* were originally used to refer to spirit beings in general. Nevertheless, it seems that the early Christians decided to give this sense to *palagu*. If this is correct, then they intended that the word *palagu* should mean spirits of all kinds, including God himself. God was the great Spirit, the great *Palagu*. It seems quite possible that it was a thought process something like this that led to the choice of *Palagu* as the name for God.

The use of *palagu* to cover all spirit beings can be found in the Hula New Testament in several places (the New Testament is a missionary translation dating from 1890s, with additions and revisions into the 1950s), but this sense of the word does not seem to be very clear among the Hula people themselves. In the New Testament, since all spirit beings are *palagu*, then the evil spirits of the New Testament are quite naturally called *palagu rakava* "evil *palagu*."

A separate term *aneru* was introduced from another language (it does not seem to be a true Hula word) to mean "angel." Most Hula people today probably do not consider *aneru* to be a kind of *palagu*. But Heb 1.14 tells us that the angels are ministering spirits sent out to do God's work. In the Hula New Testament, this verse says that the *aneru* are *palagu*.

The Holy Spirit is *Vea'a Palaguna*. *Vea'a* means "holy." Other things that are *vea'a* are the church building, the Bible, the Sabbath (Sunday), the commandments, and the hymns and choruses. Even the white clothes worn on Sunday are called *mavea* "holy things." The basic meaning here is that these are things connected with God which should be treated with great respect.

In fact, the term *Vea'a Palaguna* could also mean "Holy God." So there is not a strong contrast between the meaning of God and Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew often refers to the spirit of God. In these cases the Hula people who are currently working on the translation often use *palagu Palaguna* "spirit of God" rather than *Vea'a Palaguna*.

Modern examples

Waran

The Waran language is spoken in the far southeastern corner of the East Sepik Province. There are two main dialect areas, somewhat separated from each other. In one of the areas, the people know of a person named *Gasuwa*. This person is thought of as a powerful culture-hero, a creator spirit, generally benevolent, important in the success of the yam crops. People would ask him to "Please hold off the rain" during a crucial period when the yams were maturing. People traditionally would steel themselves against fear by the use of *Gasuwa's* name. If they were alone in the bush, with frightening noises around them, they might say, "I cannot be afraid. I am walking in *Gasuwa's* strength."

The people of this area also have a story of *Gasuwa* warning people that sand would soon fall from the sky. This gave them time to take precautions by stockpiling water and food in their homes, so that when the sand did fall, they were able to successfully shelter themselves from the danger.

There is also a story some tell about *Gasuwa's* son *M'rim'rom* who somehow died and was cremated (the traditional way of disposing of the dead), but then later came back to life.

Obviously not all of these stories can be applied to God, but *Gasuwa* was the creator, and serious consideration was given to the option of calling God by this name in the Waran translation. However, the connection of *Gasuwa* with God is not accepted by the people of the other dialect area, along the

Keram River. These people have stories of him visiting and killing lots of people.

For these people, the one who created everything is known as *Mik* "The Great One." In reference to things which were created from nothing, such as the earth, the forest, the rivers, fish, and so on, where no one knows who actually created them, one says *Mik ka rangarangin.* "The Great One created everything." It seems that they know nothing else about this *Mik*, but this word is being used for "Lord" in their area, and they are quick to say that the one that they knew so little about is obviously the Christian God, and that their Christian faith has filled in all the enormous gaps in their knowledge.

Not only is *Mik* used for "Lord," but the term that has been invented for "God" incorporates this word. "God" is *Nor Mik* "the Great Father." Since this term can be understood in both dialect areas, it is being used, even though it is primarily a descriptive expression.

"Our Creator"

Several languages where the New Tribes Mission works in West New Britain Province have settled on a term meaning "Our Creator." In the Aria, Ivanga, and Mouk languages, they are using a nominalized form of the verb "to create." This form must be possessed, so its actual meaning is "Our (inclusive) Creator." It is said that in many of the New Britain languages, there is a "create" verb different from the ordinary verb "to make." This "create" verb is said to refer strictly to a divine action. The verb cannot be used with a human subject. This suggests that these languages must have had named divinities to associate with this verb, but apparently there were various problems in using these names for God, and a new term was invented.

Pawaia

Missionaries working in the Pawaia language reported that the local people had originally been using the word "Got." However, this name had been confused by the people with "an unsavory character in a legend." Because of this the missionaries decided to try an expression meaning "The Powerful One." They say that the term chosen has been accepted by the people.

Zimakani

The Zimakani language is spoken around Lake Murray in the Western Province. In Zimakani there were supernatural beings called *'bi'buki*. The stars are among the *'bi'buki*, as are the sun and moon. *Kau* was the traditional god of the Zimakani, their ancestral folk hero. They would say *Kau* is ***our*** *'bi'buki*. Using this term as a base, a form *'Bi'bukia'mene* was developed. It means "The True (masc sg) *'bi'buki*." This is the term being used for God.

3) A name from another Papua New Guinean language

A "classical" example

The most widespread local name for God in Papua New Guinea is the name *Anutu*, already mentioned as the name for God in the Kâte language. This language was selected by the early Lutheran missionaries working in the area to serve as a church lingua franca. As the Lutheran church spread through the Finisterre Mountains and on into the Highlands, the Kâte language went along. God therefore became known in all of these areas as *Anutu*.

In areas where the Lutherans remain strong, the name *Anutu* tends to be used even today. In other areas, such as among the Melpa speakers around Mount Hagen, many Lutherans continue to use *Anutu*, but this name has not been acceptable to Christians of other denominations. On the other hand, *Anutu* is still used in the Baiyer River area, north of Mount Hagen, even though most Christians in the area are now Baptist rather than Lutheran.

No modern example

It seems likely that in isolated places this pattern is still used today. The Christian message has penetrated into most parts of the country, but there are still a few isolated areas which have had little contact with the outside world. If the Christians who first bring the gospel to these areas happen to be using a traditional name for God, then this name could be borrowed by the people being evangelized.

The most likely places where we might encounter this scenario today are in the Enga Province, where Lutherans might still be expanding the range of the name *Anutu*, and in remote areas of the Gulf or Western Provinces, where the Toaripi name *Atute* or the Motu name *Dirava* might be introduced ... But in fact, I do not have evidence of any places where this has actually happened in recent years.

4) Names from outside languages

"Classical" examples

Almost every imaginable outside name for God has been used in some part of Papua New Guinea. The most common name is "God" or some variation of it such as the Mend Angal name *Ngor*.

In addition, one finds names for God based on Greek *theos*, on Hebrew *el* or *Elohim*, on Latin *deo*, and on the traditional English "Jehovah."

The modern situation

Given the fact that the two languages with the highest prestige and importance in Papua New Guinea today (English and Tok Pisin) both use "God," this is the only likely current source for non-indigenous borrowings of the name of God. Given that one of these sources is Tok Pisin, a language which is very Papua New Guinean, one cannot really claim any longer that the name is non-indigenous. Anyway, the fact is that many languages today do use the

word "God" or some variation of it. In fact, Tok Pisin itself provides a good example of the situation. Tok Pisin has no final /-d/, and the word God is actually pronounced /got/. But even though in the last few years there have been two major revisions of the way that Bible names are spelled in Tok Pisin, no one has dared to change "God" to "Got."

Another modern example comes from the Yagaria language of the Eastern Highlands. Carol Gutwein, of the New Tribes Mission, described their search for a term for God in a memo she wrote to me in 1993:

> We are now using a transliteration of "God." I tried Bigavi De, literally "Way-up-there Being" for a while, as it was a term they used widely for Deity. But they never would accept it in writing (no doubt influence of Tok Pisin), and I don't hear them using it any more (additional influence of writing transliteration).

Conclusion

There are many different factors to be considered when selecting a name for God. If one accepts the arguments given at the beginning of this paper, then one will agree that the place to begin the search is in the traditional belief system of the culture. To do this adequately will require careful consideration of the full range of words in the domain for "spirit being," as well as a careful review of all of the traditions associated with these beings. As has been pointed out, the wrong choice of a name for God can lead to serious problems in the church. However, for the most part, I believe that the decision should be an informed decision by mature Christians from within the language group, rather than by missionaries or theologians who do not know the language.

Partly because the decision must be made by the people who are to use the name, there are other factors to be considered that have little to do with a linguistic or anthropological analysis of the language and culture. This has to do with subjective feelings that the people may have about their relationship to the larger culture of the country. Even though we may feel that on principle one should use a name from the language, the speakers of that language may feel that one should not! If they feel strongly this way, their opinion needs to be respected.

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TRANSLATION ISSUES WITHIN THE BIBLE PUBLICATION PROCESS (Part 2)

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(This is the second part of the article on Typography and Format in Bible publishing. Part 1 was published in the October 2003 issue of The Bible Translator, Practical Papers.)

Format: Duplicating the dynamics of biblical discourse in print

The biblical writers composed their texts in a meaningful way so that the text would have the desired impact, appeal and relevance, and so be remembered.