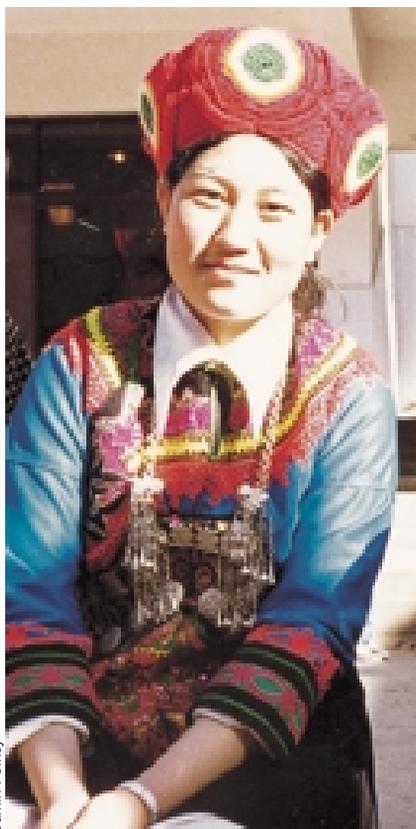


Location: Approximately 25,000 members of the Aluo tribe inhabit two counties in Yunnan Province. The majority of Aluo communities are in Shizong and Luliang counties, east of Kunming.

Identity: The Aluo have been officially included as part of the Yi nationality by the Chinese authorities. They are one of more than 100 subgroups of Yi in Yunnan Province. Aluo is the self-name of this group. Neighboring peoples generally call them *Hong Yi* (Red Yi) because of the predominant color of their clothing. Since the name *Aluo* is taken from a Yi hero, some other groups in Yunnan may also identify themselves by that name, including the Eastern Nasu in Wuding County.

Language: The Aluo language is part of the Southeastern Yi branch, related to Yi languages such as Sani, Axi, and Puwa.¹ Aluo is relatively uniform within itself. Speakers from Aluo villages in different locations have little problem understanding each other.

History: The Aluo believe their race was founded by the legendary *Ah-luo*. They have taken their name from this hero, who was reputed to have possessed superhuman strength. "During his life, according to tribal mythology, there were nine suns and eight moons in the sky, the heat from which caused immense suffering on Earth. Ah-luo shot down all but one sun and moon, making human life possible."² In another story, Ah-luo is credited with single-handedly killing evil monsters that caused great



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human misery. After their death at Ah-luo's hand, the ghosts of the monsters appealed to Yama, the King of Hell, to avenge them. "After his own death, Yama turned Ah-luo's limbs into the Luo grove and his heart into what is now called the Luo Holy Stone."³

Customs: Once every 12 years, in the Year of the Horse, the Aluo celebrate the Paying Tribute to Ah-luo Festival. It takes place at a site where Ah-luo is

believed to have become deified as a god. The venue is made up of 144 small pine trees and 80 small fir trees which form a path leading to the entrance. The 144 pine trees signify the 12 months in a year, multiplied by the 12 years that have elapsed since the last festival.

Religion: A visitor to the Ah-luo Festival related his experiences: "After passing through the arch, I saw the sacrificial altar.... A container holding one hectoliter of grain... symbolized the sacrifices to Ah-luo each year for the past twelve years. On the flat roof of the altar sat an oval pebble, a symbol of the reincarnated body of Ah-luo.... The main altar was presided over by an old shaman who was wearing a special sacrificial costume and chanting prayers from the Sutra scripture. Beside the main altar were eleven smaller altars where eleven other shamans led prayers."⁴

Christianity: There are no known Christians among the Aluo people today. Shizong and Luliang counties received little mission work prior to 1949, and few people there today are aware of the gospel. The Aluo's identity as a people is wrapped up in their reverence of Ah-luo, making it very difficult for them to break free and believe in Christ.



Population in China:

20,000 (1990)
25,100 (2000)
31,500 (2010)

Location: Yunnan

Religion: Polytheism

Christians: None Known

Overview of the Aluo

Countries: China

Pronunciation: "Ah-luoh"

Other Names: Aluopuo, Ah-luo, Hongyi, Red Yi, Ouluo

Population Source:
20,000 (1990 AMO);
Out of a total Yi population of 6,572,173 (1990 census)

Location: *E Yunnan:* Shizong and Luliang counties

Status: Officially included under Yi

Language: Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Burmese-Lolo, Lolo, Northern Lolo, Yi, Southeastern Yi

Dialects: 0

Religion: Polytheism, Animism, Shamanism, Ancestor Worship

Christians: None known

Scripture: None

Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings: None

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: None

