



Population in China:
 11,400 (1999)
 11,650 (2000)
 14,600 (2010)
Location: Yunnan
Religion: Animism
Christians: None Known

Overview of the Daizhan

Countries: China

Pronunciation: "Die-zhahn"

Other Names: Daizhan Aza, Azar, Daizhanpo, Pula

Population Source:
 11,400 (1999 J. Pelkey);
 Out of a total Yi population of
 6,572,173 (1990 census)

Location: Yunnan: Baige District of Kaiyuan County in the Honghe Prefecture; More are suspected to live in the Ashe District of Yanshan County.

Status:
 Officially included under Yi

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

Dialects: 0

Religion: Animism, Ancestor Worship, No Religion

Christians: None known

Scripture: None

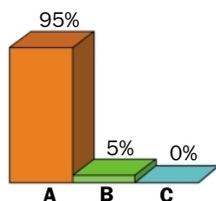
Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings: None

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: None

Status of Evangelization



A = Have never heard the gospel
B = Were evangelized but did not become Christians
C = Are adherents to any form of Christianity



Jamin Pelkey

Location: Approximately 11,600 people belonging to the Daizhan ethnic group inhabit villages in the Baige District of Kaiyuan County in the Honghe Hani-Yi Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan Province.¹ An unspecified number of Daizhan are believed to live in the adjoining Ashe District of Yanshan County. The Daizhan live in simple houses near streams or some other water source.

Identity: The Daizhan are one of five distinct tribes in Kaiyuan County who have been combined by the Chinese under the name of Aza.² These five groups, in turn, have been placed under the official Yi nationality. Although they speak many distinct languages and go by dozens of ethnic names, most Yi groups in China have a loose common historical affinity for each other. Many say their ancestors were two brothers, Wusa and Wumeng, who, "like Esau and Jacob, struggled together in the womb of their mother; hence... the wildness of our hearts and our fondness for fighting."³

Language: Although many Daizhan people now exclusively speak Chinese, the Daizhan language is still spoken among people over 40 years of age and in villages away from the township of Baige. Daizhan is a

Southeastern Yi variety, related to Puwa, Digao, Asahei, Ani, and Labapo.

History: The Daizhan have lived in their present location for more than 300 years. They have gradually been assimilated by the Han Chinese, who have migrated into the area in large numbers over the past century.

Customs: In the past, when a Daizhan couple decided to get married, the groom fixed an auspicious date, assembled flute players, and danced around his sweetheart's home until nightfall. All of a sudden he took the girl in his arms and ran away into the dense forest. Before the girl was accepted as a full-fledged member of her new family,

however, she had to kill a chicken. Only then was she considered a full member of the family, never again to live with her parents. One month after they were married, the wife took her new husband to visit her parents. The husband made apologies to his in-laws and brought grain to his father-in-law as a gift of gratitude. Most Daizhan customs like this have now been lost.

Religion: The Daizhan are predominantly animists. They believe a person's soul leaves the body during illness or at death. Red cord is tied around a sick person's arm in a bid to prevent the soul from departing the body.

Christianity: There are no known Christians among the Daizhan. The small amount of mission work done in Kaiyuan targeted the Han Chinese and Miao. Efforts to reach them will best be done by Chinese believers. Mission statesman Roland Allen once said, "Foreigners can never successfully direct the propagation of any faith throughout a whole country. If the faith does not become naturalized and expand among the people by its own vital power, it exercises an alarming and hateful influence, and men fear and shun it as something alien."⁴