

Location: Numbering about 22,000, the Jino have survived for countless centuries in the forests of southern Yunnan. They live in 46 villages — covering an area of 3,000 square kilometers (1,170 sq.mi.) — in the jungles and mountains of the Xishuangbanna Prefecture in southwest China.¹

Identity: The Jino gained recognition as an official minority in 1979, becoming the 55th and most recent group to gain status in China. Previously, the Jino were considered part of the Dai nationality. The name *Jino* comes from the words *ji* “uncle” and *nuo* “descendants”, therefore meaning “the descendants of the uncle.”²

Language: The Jino language is part of the Tibeto-Burman stock and is similar to Sanda and Ake — two related groups also in Xishuangbanna. There are two mutually unintelligible Jino languages: Jino proper and Buyuan Jino — which is spoken by 1,000 people. The differences are mainly in vocabulary. All Jino are able to speak their language. Many can also speak Tai Lu, Chinese, or Akha, depending on their location. The Jino do not have a written script. In the past, they tied strings around their wrists or carved notches in wood or bamboo to help remind them of things they needed to do. In the event of an emergency, the Jino sent a feather or a piece of charcoal to their neighbors as a sign they needed help.

History: One link between the Jino and the Bible is the Great Flood. Every Lunar New Year in February, the Jino celebrate by dancing around a large ox-hide drum. For centuries the Jino have orally passed on from generation to generation a story about how the human race perished in a huge flood. Their ancestors were able to survive because they found shelter in a huge drum. Being directed by a god, they received ten calabash seeds that sprouted and produced all the races in the world.

Customs: Jino women are easily identified by their large triangular hoods. When a Jino dies, they are buried in a hollowed-out tree and small huts are constructed over the graves.

Religion: The Jino have their own unique religion. Around AD 200, Kong Ming — also known as Chu-ko-Liang or Zhu Geliang — helped establish the Minor Han Dynasty. The Jino served in Kong Ming’s military campaign into southwest China, but many were left behind.³ Kong Ming remains a favorite war hero of the Chinese. In 1724 he was included in a kind of Chinese *Hall of Fame* when his tablet was admitted to the Confucian Temple.⁴ Kong Ming is the



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main god among many worshiped by the polytheistic and superstitious Jino.

Christianity: Until recently there had never been a known Jino church or believer. In 1994 Tai Lu and Han Chinese believers from Jinghong and Mengla targeted the Jino. As a result, 31 Jino house churches have been established in a short period of time, containing more than 300 believers.⁵ The young church has met with strong persecution. The local authorities handed out aid to all Jino except the Christians after a severe hailstorm destroyed their crops in 1997.⁶ Churches have been ordered to close by village leaders who are afraid of the new religion.



Population in China:
 17,021 (1990)
 21,950 (2000)
 28,320 (2010)
Location: Yunnan
Religion: Polytheism
Christians: 300

Overview of the Jino

Countries: China
Pronunciation: “Jee-nor”
Other Names: Jinuo, Youle, Chi-no
Population Source:
 18,021 (1990 census);⁷
 11,974 (1982 census)
Location: SW Yunnan: 12,000 live in Jino Mountains of Jinghong County. The rest are scattered in Jinghong and Mengla counties in the Xishuangbanna Dai Prefecture.
Status:
 An official minority of China

Language: Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Burmese-Lolo, Lolo, Southern Lolo, Jino
Literacy: 49%
Dialects: 0
Religion: Polytheism, Animism, Christianity
Christians: 300
Scripture: None
Jesus film: None
Gospel Recordings: Jino #04792
Christian Broadcasting: None
ROPAL code: JIU00

