

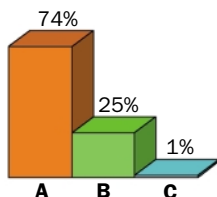


Population in China:
 38,000 (1999)
 38,950 (2000)
 48,900 (2010)
Location: Yunnan
Religion: Polytheism
Christians: 150

Overview of the Xinping Lalu

Countries: China
Pronunciation: "Shin-ping-Lah-loo"
Other Names: Lalu
Population Source:
 38,000 (1999 J. Pelkey);
 Out of a total Yi population of
 6,572,173 (1990 census)
Location: *S Yunnan:* Xinping
 (28,700), Zhenyuan (8,000),
 Mojiang (1,000), and Yuanjiang
 (400) counties
Status:
 Officially included under Yi
Language: Sino-Tibetan,
 Tibeto-Burman, Burmese-Lolo,
 Lolo, Northern Lolo, Yi,
 Western Yi
Dialects: 0
Religion: Polytheism, Animism,
 Ancestor Worship, Christianity
Christians: 150
Scripture: None
Jesus film: None
Gospel Recordings:
 Yi: Lallu #04936
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

Location: More than 38,000 Xinping Lalu are distributed throughout the soaring Ailao Mountain range in southern Yunnan Province. They are primarily found in the southwestern districts of Xinping County (28,700) and in the western districts of Zhenyuan County (8,000). A small number spill over into Mojiang (1,000) and Yuanjiang (400) counties.

Identity: The loconym *Xinping* has been added to this group to distinguish them from other Lalu and Lalo groups in southern China. The various Lalu peoples, although all officially counted as part of the Yi nationality, have little in common with each other except their names. Each group possesses distinct customs and languages. Jamin Pelkey has said about this group, "The Lalu have a strong sense of identity, and do not consider themselves to be part of the Yi nationality. For that matter, other peoples in Lalu regions do not consider the Lalu to be Yi either."¹

Language: Although they were once part of the great Lalo group of Menghua, the Xinping Lalu are believed to have migrated away from the main body of that ethnic group long ago. For this reason, their language is today one of the most divergent of the Lalu or Lalo varieties in China. Xinping Lalo is part of the Western Yi language group. Xinping Lalu living in some villages near the Honghe River basin have begun to lose the use of their mother tongue, but all those living in the mountains retain vigorous use of their language.

History: The Xinping Lalu are recognized as among the earliest inhabitants of the Ailao Mountains. For centuries they have been influenced by Han, Hani, and Hongjin Tai cultures more than by the Yi.

Customs: The Xinping Lalu greatly enjoy music. They love to get together and sing old traditional songs and play folk instruments. During the second lunar month of each year, on the day of the ox, the Xinping Lalu hold a singing competition. The victorious young man and girl are considered the most eligible marriage partners by the community. They will be greatly sought after by prospective suitors from that time on.

Religion: For generations the Lalu have been polytheists who worship many gods, ghosts, demons

and disembodied spirits. They believe that when people die they will become either good or bad spirits, depending on their character while living.

Christianity: There is a church among the Hongjin Tai people in the Moshu District of Xinping County. This church uses the Tai language to worship, and some of the believers who are bilingual in Chinese are known to have taken the gospel to their Xinping Lalu neighbors. As a result, there are about 150 Christians among the Lalu in Xinping today, meeting in two churches. Kado and Biyo believers in Mojiang and Yuanjiang may have impacted the small number of Lalu living there. In 1998 gospel recordings in Xiaping Lalu language were produced for the first time.



Jamin Pelkey