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Location: Seven thousand speakers of the Queyu language were reported in a 1991 study.¹ Many Queyu men are applying to enter Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. Consequently, the population growth of the Queyu is expected to slow. The Queyu inhabit the three counties of Xinlong, Yajiang, and Litang in the large Garze Prefecture which covers a vast area of western Sichuan Province. Litang Township lies at an altitude of 4,700 meters (15,400 ft.) above sea level. The Queyu area was formerly part of the Kham Province of Tibet, until it was annexed and incorporated into China in the 1950s.

Identity: The Queyu have been officially counted as part of the Tibetan nationality, primarily because they follow the

Tibetan Buddhist religion. Linguistically, however, the Queyu are closer to the Qiang minority.

Language: Throughout all the places where the Queyu are located, their language is reported to be inherently intelligible. There are no major dialect differences between the different regions. In the Tuanjie Township of Yajiang County the people call themselves *Zhaba*, although the same language as Queyu is spoken there. They should not be confused with another Qiangic language group called *Zhaba* who live in the Zhamai District, also within the Garze Prefecture. The Queyu language has four tones.

History: In late 1955 Chinese authorities ordered the monks of the large Litang Monastery to make

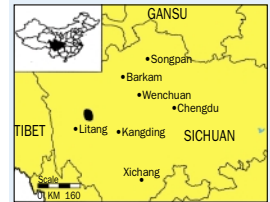
an inventory of the monastery's possessions for tax assessment. The monks refused to oblige. In February 1956, the People's Liberation Army responded by laying siege to Litang Monastery, which was defended by several thousand monks and farmers, of whom many were armed with farm implements. Litang was bombed by Chinese aircraft, destroying the monastery and killing hundreds of people. The Tibetans, outraged by the attack, spread the conflict to the surrounding towns of Dege, Batang, and Chamdo.²

Customs: Although today the Queyu wear clothing similar to the Tibetans, there are a number of ancient *tianlu*, or stone watchtowers, scattered throughout the region inhabited by the Queyu, revealing this group's historic relationship to the Qiang.

Religion: All Queyu are Tibetan Buddhists, although there are also many aspects of shamanism and black magic within their religious practices.

Christianity: Protestant and Catholic missionaries worked in the Litang area until the early 1950s. Today there is a small Protestant church among the Khampa Tibetans in Litang County,³ and there are some Catholics in Yajiang.⁴ Most people in the area, however, have never heard the name of Christ, and there are no known Queyu believers. The situation has changed little since this report in 1922: "This region is not only without a resident missionary, but even the

scouts of Christianity have barely touched it except at one or two points.... What is more serious is the fact that many border mission centers are undermanned or not manned at all."⁵



Population in China:
7,000 (1991)
8,460 (2000)
10,420 (2010)
Location: Sichuan
Religion: Tibetan Buddhism
Christians: None Known

Overview of the Queyu

Countries: China
Pronunciation: "Cue-yoo"
Other Names: Zhaba, Hokow
Population Source: 7,000 (1991 EDCL); Out of a total Tibetan population of 4,593,330 (1990 census)
Location: *W Sichuan:* Xinlong, Yajiang, and Litang counties in Garze Prefecture
Status: Officially included under Tibetan
Language: Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Qiangic
Dialects: 0
Religion: Tibetan Buddhism, Shamanism
Christians: None known
Scripture: None
Jesus film: None
Gospel Recordings: None
Christian Broadcasting: None
ROPAL code: QEY00

