Overview of the Asho Chin

Countries: Myanmar, Bangladesh, China

Pronunciation: “Chin-Ah-sho”

Other Names: Ashu, Sho, Kyang, Sho, Qin, Khyang, Khyeng

Population Source: 150 (1996 AMO); 10,000 in Myanmar (1991 United Bible Societies); 1,422 in Bangladesh (1981 census)

Location: W Yunnan

Status: Unidentified

Language: Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Baric, Kuki-Naga, Kuki-Chin, Southern Kuki-Chin, Sho

Dialects: 0

Religion: Animism

Christians: None known

Scripture: New Testament 1954; Portions 1921

Jesus Film: None

Gospel Recordings: Asho Chin #00401

Christian Broadcasting: Available in Myanmar (FEBC)

ROPAL code: CSH00

Population in China:
150 (1996)
167 (2000)
215 (2010)

Identity: The Asho Chin are part of the great Chin race of Myanmar and India. There are approximately 1.4 million Chin, speaking 19 distinct languages and more than 40 dialects. It is not known in what nationality, if any, the Asho Chin of China have been included by the authorities.

Language: Asho Chin is a member of the Tibeto-Burman language family and is most closely related to Siangbaung Chin. It has no traditional script, although a Romanized script was used by missionaries to translate the Asho Chin Bible.

History: Chin history goes back to the dawn of time. “The Chins have a story of the Tower of Babel to account for the various clans that inhabit the range of hills… and traditions of a deluge are found everywhere.” In the past, whole communities of Asho Chin in Myanmar were decimated by malaria. Why this group of Asho Chin migrated from their Myanmar homeland to faraway China is not known.

Religion: Most Asho Chin are animists even though many of the other Chin groups in Myanmar have embraced Christianity. “The people are afraid of evil spirits and of the spirits of their dead ancestors. In order to appease the angry spirits, they offer sacrifices of cows, pigs, buffaloes, goats, dogs or chickens.”

Christianity: The status of Christianity among the Asho Chin in China is unknown. In Myanmar they were a completely untouched people group until native evangelists visited them in 1987: “The tribe was isolated from others — accessible only by dugout canoes, since there was not even a footpath or road to their villages…. During the time the missionaries taught.… 76 people invited Jesus into their lives.”

Gospel radio broadcasts are available in the Asho Chin language, but they are aimed at Myanmar and are probably not received in China.