



Population in China:

100,000 (1981)
137,200 (2000)
164,100 (2010)

Location: Guangxi, Yunnan

Religion: Shamanism

Christians: 1,000

Overview of the Nung

Countries: Vietnam, China, Laos, USA, Canada, Australia, England

Pronunciation: "Noong"

Other Names: Tai Nung, Thai Nung, Nong, Nawng, Lawng

Population Source:

100,000 (1981 Wurm & Hattori);
Out of a total Zhuang population of 15,489,630 (1990 census);
706,000 in Vietnam (1991);
A few in Laos;
7 in USA (1981 SIL);
Also in Canada, Australia, England

Location: SW Guangxi;
SE Yunnan: Wenshan Prefecture

Status: Officially included under Zhuang

Language: Daic, Tai, Central Tai

Dialects (1): Longzhou

Religion: Shamanism, Ancestor Worship, Animism, No Religion, Christianity

Christians: 1,000

Scripture:

Portions 1971; Work in progress

Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings:

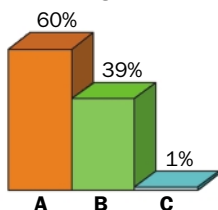
Thai Nung #3327

Christian Broadcasting:

Available (FEBC)

ROPAL code: NUT00

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



Nung Chih Cao, and his descendants fled to Guangning.⁵ Later, during the Mongol reign of the thirteenth century, "a number of tribes pushed into Vietnam and Laos, such as the Tho and later the Nung."⁶ In the 1860s the Nung in Vietnam sided with Sioung, a self-proclaimed Hmong king. Sioung's armies raided gold from Buddhist temples and seized large tracts of land from other peoples.⁷

Customs: Every Nung household has a plot of land to grow cotton and indigo. The cloth is dyed several times, then beaten until its surface becomes shiny.

Location: More than 137,000 Nung are located in southern China, along the China-Vietnam border in both Guangxi and Yunnan provinces. Most Nung (706,000) live in northern Vietnam where they are one of the largest of that nation's 54 official ethnic groups. Small communities of Nung are also found in Laos, the United States, Canada, Australia, and England.¹

Identity: The Nung are closely related to the Tho. The Nung were listed as a distinct people group in a tribal survey of the early 1900s,² but since the 1950s they have been combined with other groups to form the official Zhuang nationality.

Language: The term *Nung* can refer to any of several different varieties of the Southern Zhuang language.³ Nung is closely related to Tho and Southern Zhuang in China. Speakers of the Yaguang and Dejing varieties of Southern Zhuang, which are intelligible with Nung in Vietnam, refer to their languages as *Nong*. Rev. J. H. Freeman, a Presbyterian missionary, found the Nung tone and pronunciation were "quite close to [Tai] Lu [although] a large admixture of Cantonese and Mandarin caused difficulty in making them understand me."⁴

History: The Nung tribe suffered a massive military defeat in 1053. The Nung general,

Religion: The Nung have a deep-rooted sense of their ethnic identity and a great loyalty to each other. While many of the current generation of Nung youth are nonreligious, shamanism has traditionally been the religion of this group. More than 30 shaman priests still serve Nung communities in northern Vietnam.⁸

Christianity: Several books of the Bible were translated into Nung by missionaries Janice Saul and Nancy Freiberger between 1963 and 1966. The translators used the Vietnamese script which is not understood by the Nung in China. After 17 years of silence, the translators were encouraged when they received letters from the Nung in Vietnam, "telling of answers to prayer, of recent Nung converts and of the growth of the church."⁹ The Nung in China's southwest Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region lived in the vicinity of the large and effective Lungchow (now Longzhou) and Ningming mission stations before 1949. Most of the Nung believers in China today are still located in that area. Gospel recordings are available in the Nung language. The Far East Broadcasting Company's gospel radio programs have allowed many Nung to hear the gospel, but the tightly controlled social structure of the Nung makes it difficult for them to change.