

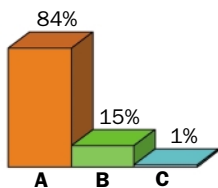


**Population in China:**  
 3,000 (1990)  
 3,870 (2000)  
 4,990 (2010)  
**Location:** Guangxi  
**Religion:** Polytheism  
**Christians:** 15

## Overview of the Luoxiang Iu Mien

**Countries:** China  
**Pronunciation:** “Luoh-sheung-Yoo-Mee-en”  
**Other Names:** Pan Yao, Guoshan Yao  
**Population Source:** 3,000 (1995 Wang Fushi - 1990 figure); Out of a total Yao population of 2,134,013 (1990 census)  
**Location:** *Guangxi:* Jinxu Yao Autonomous County  
**Status:** Officially included under Yao  
**Language:** Hmong-Mien, Mienic, Mian-Jin  
**Dialects:** 0  
**Religion:** Polytheism, Animism, Ancestor Worship, Daoism, Christianity  
**Christians:** 15  
**Scripture:** None  
**Jesus film:** None  
**Gospel Recordings:** None  
**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:** Approximately 3,900 Luoxiang Iu Mien people live in the Dayaoshan (Big Yao Mountains) of the Jinxu Yao Autonomous County within the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in southern China. Jinxu is one of the most fascinating areas in all of China for anthropologists and linguists. Five distinct Yao subgroups, each speaking a different language, live in a small area.

**Identity:** The Luoxiang Iu Mien are part of the Yao nationality in China. The Chinese call them *Pan Yao*, meaning “Yao who worship Pan.” The other Yao groups in Jinxu County are the Kiong Nai, Lakkia, Ao Biao, and Kim Mun.

**History:** The Iu Mien and Kim Mun were the last two groups to migrate into the Dayaoshan Mountains. They found the best land was already taken by the Ao Biao and the Lakkia. The Iu Mien struggled in extremely harsh conditions for many years, were forbidden to own land, and forced to live in bamboo sheds while rendering manual labor to the original inhabitants.<sup>2</sup> Another source states the Iu Mien “came to the Dayaoshan Mountains rather late and found no space for settlement in the wooded hills or river valleys suitable for farming. So they had to live in scattered mountain villages at a high altitude. Earlier, they did not even have a fixed place to live in and, like nomadic tribes, roamed from one mountain

to another. They are, therefore, also known as the *Guoshan Yao* (the Yao who keep crossing mountains).<sup>3</sup>

**Customs:** Despite their extreme poverty, the dress of the Luoxiang Iu Mien is elaborate. Both men and women wear large turbans. The greatest festival for the Iu Mien is the annual Pan Hu Festival, dedicated to the legendary ancestor of the Iu Mien. The Changgu (Long Drum) Dance is the most famous dance of the festival. “The drums used in this dance are shaped like an egg-timer, and their ends are covered with goat’s hide.



Paul Hattaway

**Language:** Chinese linguists have recently determined the Iu Mien language in Jinxu to be a distinct language from all other Iu Mien varieties in China. They labeled it *Iu Mien, Luoxiang*.<sup>1</sup> There are at least four main Iu Mien languages in China. It is not surprising that Luoxiang Iu Mien language is different, as they have been influenced by centuries of contact with their neighbors who speak unique languages. The Iu Mien live very near the Lakkia village of Liuxiang and have probably absorbed parts of their language. The Lakkia speak a Tai language not even related to the Yao language family.

Before the performance, the drums are smeared with yellow mud, presumably to alter the pitch.<sup>4</sup>

**Religion:** Numerous stories abound regarding the heroic exploits of Pan Hu, who is worshiped by the Iu Mien as a spiritual savior.

**Christianity:** The first known penetration of the gospel among the Luoxiang Iu Mien occurred in 1996. A Hong Kong-based ministry won approximately 30 Ao Biao and Iu Mien in Jinxu County to Christ.