



Population in China:
 16,476 (1982)
 25,080 (2000)
 32,350 (2010)
Location: Guizhou, Guangxi
Religion: Polytheism
Christians: 20

Overview of the Baonuo

- Countries:** China
- Pronunciation:** "Baow-nuoh"
- Other Names:** Baikou, Baikou Yao, White Pants Yao, Na Klao, Nao Gelao, Nao Klao, White Trouser Yao, Pou Nuo
- Population Source:**
 16,476 (1982 census);
 Out of a total Yao population of 2,134,013 (1990 census)
- Location:** SE Guizhou: Yaoshan Township of Libo County; N Guangxi: Nandan, Hechi, and Tian'e counties
- Status:**
 Officially included under Yao
- Language:** Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Bunuic, Naoklao
- Dialects:** 0
- Religion:** Polytheism, Animism, Ancestor Worship, Christianity
- Christians:** 20
- Scripture:** None
- Jesus film:** None
- Gospel Recordings:** Yao: Bai Ku
- Christian Broadcasting:** None
- ROPAL code:** BWX04

Location: The Baonuo are the largest Yao group in Guizhou Province. More than 10,000 are located in Libo County in the southern part of the province. Guizhou contained a total of 19,400 Yao people in 1990.¹ In addition, about 10,000 Baonuo inhabit the mountains of Nandan, Hechi, and Tian'e counties in the northern part of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Identity: The Baonuo are commonly called *Baikou Yao* (White Pants Yao) by the Chinese. They are so named because the men wear white trousers. Far from being different merely because of their clothing, however, the Baonuo also possess their own ethnicity and speak their own distinct language.

Language: The Chinese officially classify Baonuo as a dialect of the Bunu language, but it is mutually unintelligible with any of the other Bunu varieties. The majority of Baonuo can only speak their own language and do not understand Chinese.

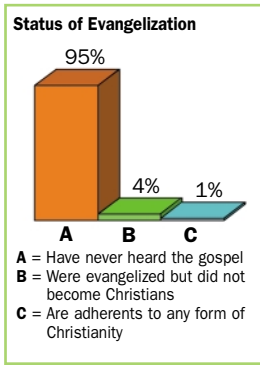
History: The Baonuo have this fascinating account of why they wear their distinctive clothing: A tribal headman once sent troops to attack the Baonuo's villages, intending to exterminate them. The Baonuo king led his troops out in battle to resist the invasion. "The headman's armies were stronger and drove the Baikou [Baonuo] back into the mountains. The king himself was severely wounded. Being trapped in the mountains with no escape, an old villager pointed out a path on the cliff which led down the mountains. When the king

heard this he was overjoyed, and happily slapped his knees. His two bleeding hands left five-fingered bloody hand-prints on both his trouser legs. While breaking through the enemy troops, his trouser legs below the knees were torn to shreds. The king eventually died from his wounds, but the Baikou [Baonuo] commemorate him by wearing knee-length trousers with bloody hand-prints sewn in with red yarn."²

Customs: On the back of Baonuo women's blouses are square patterns representing King Pan's agreement with the Chinese to release the Yao from having to pay tax. The Baonuo say they were once cannibals. When someone died, they cut the corpse up and ate it. Since the suggestion of a small boy named Laga, who could not bear to see his own mother eaten, the Baonuo have killed a bull instead.³

Religion: At funerals the Baonuo hold a traditional bull-beheading ceremony. "Thirty or more brass drums are hung from a frame. The Baikou [Baonuo] consider their brass drums sacred. They are normally hidden away except for special occasions. An offering of wine, meat, rice and water is performed by the head of the family.... After the drum beating a large water buffalo is beheaded, with four or five strokes of sharp knives."⁴

Christianity: The Baonuo are an isolated and primitive people, most of whom have never heard of the name of Jesus, although a small number have believed in Christ in recent years. The Baonuo live in extremely remote villages and are terrified of outsiders. Several foreigners who visited a Baonuo village in the mid-1980s, without prior notice, were stoned to death.⁵ Baonuo gospel recordings were first produced in 1999.



Yao Update