



Population in China:

12,000 (1990)
15,480 (2000)
19,950 (2010)

Location: Sichuan

Religion: Tibetan Buddhism

Christians: None Known

Overview of the Mawo Qiang

Countries: China

Pronunciation:
“Chee-Ung-Mah-wo”

Other Names:
Chiang; Mawo, Mawo

Population Source: 12,000 (1998 Liu Guangkun – 1990 figure); 15,000 (1998 J. Matisoff); Out of a total Qiang population of 198,252 (1990 census)

Location: *W Sichuan:* Heishui County; Mawo, Zhawo, Shuangliusuo, Xi'er, Hongyan, and E'en districts

Status:
Officially included under Qiang

Language: Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Qiangic, Qiang, Northern Qiang

Dialects: 0

Religion: Tibetan Buddhism, Animism, Polytheism

Christians: None known

Scripture: None

Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings: None

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: None



Paul Hattaway

Location: In 1990 there were 12,000 speakers of the Mawo Qiang language reported in China. They live wholly within the borders of Heishui County (in the districts of Mawo, Zhawo, Shuangliusuo, Xi'er, Hongyan, and E'en) in northwestern Sichuan Province.¹

Identity: The Mawo Qiang are one subgroup of the official Qiang nationality in China. Interestingly enough, some Qiang claim to be descended from sheep, hence the character for their name. (The upper radical of the Chinese character for *Qiang* defines “sheep,” the lower one “son.”)

Language: Mawo Qiang is one of four varieties of Northern Qiang spoken in Sichuan Province. It takes its name from Mawo District which was the location chosen by scholars to study this language. Many Mawo Qiang are bilingual in Tibetan or multilingual in both Tibetan and the Sichuan dialect of Mandarin Chinese.

History: During certain occasions in the past, whole Qiang communities were wiped out because of plagues and disease. In recent years the government has given mass treatment of black fever and

hookworm to the Qiang, which has greatly reduced the danger of these epidemic diseases.

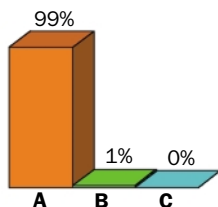
Customs: Qiang men and women typically wear homespun linen gowns with sheep-skin vests called *guagua*. They wear their vests with the fur turned inward for cool weather and turned outward during rainy weather. Both men and women wear variously colored scarfs on their heads. Qiang women wear embroidered shoes called *Yun Yun* shoes. An old legend says that long ago a Han girl named Yun Yun enjoyed close friendship with her Qiang sisters and taught them spinning, weaving, and embroidery. One day Yun Yun and her Qiang sisters went up a mountain to cut firewood and got caught in a storm; Yun Yun slipped and fell into a deep valley, leaving behind only her embroidered shoes. In memory of Yun Yun the Qiang girls wear shoes patterned after hers and

call them *Yun Yun* shoes. Unmarried girls often send their painstakingly embroidered Yun Yun shoes as gifts to the man they love. When they marry, they place several pairs in their dowry.²

Religion: One of the festivals celebrated by the Qiang is called *Zhuanshan* (Mountain Circling). In the past, villagers led an ox and carried food and wine up a mountain to sacrifice to the Mountain gods. Monkeys, wild boars, and rats, all made of paper, were set on fire to symbolize the destruction of the pests that devoured the Qiang's grain.

Christianity: The Mawo Qiang are possibly the most unevangelized of the Qiang groups in China. Their language is very different from the Southern Qiang language groups, which contain most of the known Qiang believers. If evangelists were to visit the Mawo Qiang they would need to communicate in Chinese which, although it is understood by some of the people, is not their “heart language.” Mission history shows that the gospel must be presented in the native language of a people group for Christianity to penetrate to the core of a community and change it.

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