



Population in China:

3,500 (1999)
3,590 (2000)
4,500 (2010)

Location: Yunnan

Religion: Polytheism

Christians: None Known

Overview of the Northern Awu

Countries: China

Pronunciation: "Ah-woo"

Other Names:

Awupu, Awuzhe, Xiangtan

Population Source:

3,500 (1999 J. Pelkey);
Out of a total Yi population of
6,572,173 (1990 census)

Location:

N Yunnan: Yongsheng County

Status:

Officially included under Yi

Language: Sino-Tibetan,
Tibeto-Burman, Burmese-Lolo,
Lolo, Northern Lolo, Yi,
Northern Yi

Dialects: 0

Religion: Polytheism, Animism,
Ancestor Worship

Christians: None known

Scripture: None

Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings: None

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: None



Paul Hattaway

example, "are widely diverse in their language and in their customs and habits... [many Yi languages] are mutually unintelligible and indeed more different from each other than are the various Han Chinese dialects such as Mandarin, Min, and Cantonese."¹

History: The Northern Awu have lived in their remote part of Yunnan Province for many centuries. They may have been former slaves of the Xiaoliangshan Nosu, who dominated the lives of people in the area until slave trade was finally abolished in the late 1950s.

Customs: Numerous festivals are celebrated by the Yi peoples of northern Yunnan. The Northern Awu participate in many of them, including the Garment Competition which

Location: Numbering just 3,500 people, the Northern Awu inhabit the Peiyuan, Shuiping, and Yongle communities within the Da'an District of Yongsheng County in northern Yunnan Province. Yongsheng is the only area known to be inhabited by the Northern Awu.

Identity: Although the Northern Awu share the same autonym as the Southeastern Awu, the two groups speak vastly differing languages and live separated by more than 200 miles of rugged mountains. The Northern Awu have been officially included under the Yi nationality by the Chinese government, even though they possess their own customs, ethnicity, and language.

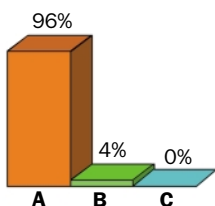
Language: The Northern Awu are so named because they speak a language from the Northern Yi branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family. It is related to other Northern Yi varieties in the area such as Xiaoliangshan Nosu, Talu, Liwu, Tagu, and Naza. Many people are surprised to learn of the great linguistic diversity found among minority peoples in southern China. Even the various groups of the Yi nationality, for

involves the women's embroidery skills. All the women are dressed in their finest attire, which causes the hillsides to come alive with color. Later, there is singing and dancing, and special competitions are held. This festival affords young people a chance to meet prospective partners. It also allows older participants a time to relax from their work and to catch up with their friends and relatives from other areas.

Religion: The Northern Awu believe in a host of spirits and deities which must be appeased in order to bring peace and prosperity to their communities. They also believe the human soul lives on after death and travels back to the abode of ancestors.

Christianity: Little Christian activity has ever taken place in Yongsheng County. The remote mountains and former threat of slavery combined to keep evangelists and missionaries away from the area. As a result, the Northern Awu are an unreached and unevangelized people group with no access to the gospel and no contact with Christians.

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