

Location: The small Xuzhang Lalo group, who number 4,100 people, live in several villages within the Xuzhang Community in Wafang District of Baoshan County. Baoshan is located in the western part of Yunnan Province. The principal village of the Xuzhang Lalo is named Sikeshu.

Identity: Although they have been officially placed under the Yi nationality in China, the Xuzhang Lalo are different from all other ethnic groups. They possess their own identity, language, and customs. A local government source, the *Baoshan Xian Zhi*, states, "There are numerous divisions of the Yi in Baoshan County; based on a combination of autonyms [self-names], languages, and distribution, there are five kinds all together."¹ Three of the Yi groups in Baoshan, the book concludes, are legitimate, distinct people groups.

Language: The Xuzhang Lalo language is part of the Western Yi branch of languages, but is mutually unintelligible with other Yi varieties in the area. One Chinese source states, "They speak Yi, but language differences between this and other groups in the county are fairly sizable."²

History: It seems likely that the Xuzhang Lalo were once part of the large and influential Lalo people of Menghua who dominated the region from at least the eighth century AD. For an unknown reason, perhaps as they searched for more arable land, the ancestors of the Xuzhang Lalo

migrated westward from the main body of Lalo. After centuries of separation they developed their own language, customs, and identity, although their name is only slightly different from the Lalo today.

Customs: Every year during the sixth and seventh months of the lunar calendar, activities known as the Flower Street Festival are organized in some Lalo communities. "On these occasions, people from all over the district come to an open area on a mountain peak.... The young boys and girls participate in singing and dancing. Should a boy wish to pursue a certain girl, he will throw a white handkerchief at her. If the girl is willing to take him as a boyfriend, she will indicate this by picking the handkerchief up."³

Religion: When a Lalo man dies, his relatives hold a feast of mourning which they call *za*. "A pig or sheep is sacrificed in the doorway.... The nearer kindred, on hearing of the death of a relative, take a fowl and strangle it.... The mourner then proceeds to his house and sticks the



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fowl near the head of the corpse as an offering."⁴ This ritual represents the beliefs of the Xuzhang Lalo, which are a combination of spirit worship and ancestor worship.

Christianity: Although Baoshan County contains a number of Lisu and Jingpo Christians, they have not been able to take the gospel to most Xuzhang Lalo because of communication barriers. As a result, there are still no known believers among this group, who have no access to God's Word in printed or audio form in a language they can easily understand.



Population in China:

4,000 (1999)
4,100 (2000)
5,150 (2010)

Location: Yunnan

Religion: Polytheism

Christians: None Known

Overview of the Xuzhang Lalo

Countries: China

Pronunciation:
"Shoo-jung-Lah-loo"

Other Names: Lalo, Tujia

Population Source:
4,000 (1999 J. Pelkey);
Out of a total Yi population of 6,572,173 (1990 census)

Location: W Yunnan: Xuzhang Community in Wafang District of Baoshan County

Status:
Officially included under Yi

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

Dialects: 0

Religion: Polytheism, Animism, Ancestor Worship

Christians: None known

Scripture: None

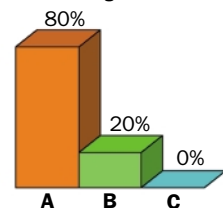
Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings: None

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: None

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