

Location: The Long are one of the smallest ethnolinguistic people groups in China. Approximately 1,300 of them inhabit five villages (Kazhai, Sheyin, Shemuduo, Suojugou, and Pusulu) in the Xincheng District of Huaning County.¹ Huaning is part of the Yuxi Prefecture in central Yunnan Province. Yunnan is easily the most ethnically diverse part of China.

Identity: Though small in number, the Long people are proud of their ethnicity and are considered a distinct group by other people in the area. The Chinese authorities have not been willing to recognize them separately, but included them as part of the large Yi nationality in the 1950s. The Yi classification was created probably to make administration of the numerous tribes in Yunnan an easier task. Instead of having to cater to so many groups and collective needs, the government now only has to deal with one group. The tragedy of such a policy is that groups like the Long now tend “not to exist.” Only people living in the immediate area have any awareness of the Long’s existence. As a further result, these people have never appeared on any Christian mission lists before.

Language: The Long speak a distinct language within the Southeastern Yi language group. The Long have only limited intelligibility with their Yi neighbors such as Ati and Xiqi, who also speak Southeastern Yi languages. The differences between classifications such as Southern Yi, Southeastern Yi, and Western Yi could

be compared to the differences between European languages such as English, French, Spanish, and Italian.

History: Centuries before the Han Chinese conquered Yunnan and migrated into China’s southwest frontier, minority peoples had established independent kingdoms. The Ailao Kingdom, ruled by Tai princes, flourished in western Yunnan around the start of the Christian era. During the Tang Dynasty (618–907) the Long were part of the *Xie Me Tu* people. Along with the Xiqi and Ati, the Long were called *White Lolo* by the Han Chinese during the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties (1271–1911).

Customs: The Long have struggled to retain their traditional customs this century as their culture and ethnicity have been gradually swallowed up and absorbed by the Chinese. The Long claim to have once held their own festivals, but today they have reverted to observing traditional Chinese holidays and celebrations.



Target Ministries

Religion: Most elderly Long are polytheists. They believe a host of spirits control their lives and must be placated in order to have peace and prosperity. Most younger Long have been affected by atheism and no longer observe the rituals of their parents.

Christianity: Huaning County has largely been neglected by Christians throughout the centuries. A few Catholic and Three-Self churches exist in the townships, but very little vibrant witness has ever gone out to the inhabitants of the region. Although gospel recordings are available in their language, the numerically-small Long tribe remains a Christless people.



Population in China:
 1,300 (1998)
 1,360 (2000)
 1,710 (2010)
Location: Yunnan
Religion: Polytheism
Christians: None Known

Overview of the Long

Countries: China
Pronunciation: “Long”
Other Names:
Population Source:
 1,300 (1998 J. Pelkey);
 Out of a total Yi population of
 6,572,173 (1990 census)
Location: Yunnan: Xincheng
 District of Huaning County
Status:
 Officially included under Yi
Language: Sino-Tibetan,
 Tibeto-Burman, Burmese-Lolo,

Lolo, Northern Lolo, Yi,
 Southeastern Yi
Dialects: 0
Religion:
 Polytheism, Animism, No Religion
Christians: None known
Scripture: None
Jesus film: None
Gospel Recordings: Yi: Long
Christian Broadcasting: None
ROPAL code: None

