


Population in China:

344,600 (1999)
353,400 (2000)
443,500 (2010)

Location: Yunnan

Religion: Polytheism

Christians: 200

Overview of the Central Luoluopo

Countries: China

Pronunciation: "Luoh-luoh-po"

Other Names: Luoluopuo, Lolo, Lolopo, Bai Yi, White Yi, Gaoshan, Tu, Alu, Lulupu, Luolu, Hei Yi, Black Yi, Gaoshanzu

Population Source:

344,600 (1999 J. Pelkey);
Out of a total Yi population of
6,572,173 (1990 census)

Location: *Yunnan:* Chuxiong (83,000), Nanhua (74,000), Yao'an (43,000), Jingdong (34,000), Shuangbai (33,600), Mouding (31,000), Lufeng (21,000), Xiangyun (8,000), Yuanmou (6,000), Wuding (3,400), Xiping (3,100), Nanjian (3,000), and Lijiang (1,500) counties

Status:

Officially included under Yi

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

Dialects (3):

Nanhua, Chuxiong, Yao'an

Religion:

Polytheism, Animism, Christianity

Christians: 200

Scripture: None

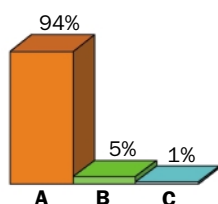
Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings:

Yi: Luoluopo #04937

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: YIC00

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

Location: More than 350,000 Central Luoluopo live in the central and north central parts of Yunnan Province. The great majority are located in Chuxiong Prefecture. In a 1957 study, Chuxiong reportedly contained 140,000 Luoluopo.¹

Identity: The name *Luoluopo* means "tiger-dragon people" in the Luoluopo language. It is not the same name as *Lolo*, which was used by the Chinese in a derogatory manner to describe all Yi people until recently.² The Central Luoluopo are one of more than 100 subgroups of Yi in Yunnan.

Language: The Central Luoluopo speak a language belonging to the Central Yi language group, which in 1987 contained a total of 470,000 speakers.³ The Yi script is not used by the Central Luoluopo.

History: The Central Luoluopo have been in their present location for many centuries. Over time the best land on the plains was taken by the Han. The Central Luoluopo were forced to migrate into the isolated mountains.⁴

Customs: The Central Luoluopo celebrate numerous festivals over the course of the year, most of which have religious significance. In January they observe the two-day Dragon Worship Festival. Sacrifices are made to the dragons of the water to ensure a good harvest and to prevent drought and famine. In Dayao County, the Central Luoluopo celebrate the Open Street Festival every February. It affords the

chance for Luoluopo from different locations to meet and trade. Luoluopo youth dress in their finest clothes and take the opportunity to meet prospective partners. The social activities of the week include a unique traditional dance in which participants may only dance on their left foot. At all Central Luoluopo festivals a huge feast is prepared. Luoluopo men and women have the habit of smoking long pipes. Central Luoluopo youth are expected to be sexually active before marriage. All villages have a "flower house" where young people are allowed to come together after dark. Fidelity in marriage is stressed only after the first baby is born.

Religion: The Central Luoluopo celebrate the Tiger Festival between the eighth and the 15th days of the first lunar month. The Luoluopo believe they are

descended from tigers. The hero of the festival is the tiger, a person in costume who, after dancing on the open ground, rides a Mountain god float to call on each home in the community and offer them a blessing.

Christianity: French Catholic missionary Alfred Liétard and his team worked among the Central Luoluopo in the early part of the twentieth century. They wrote a detailed account of the group in 1913.⁵ The missionaries also translated the text of the "Prodigal Son" into Central Luoluopo,⁶ although this is no longer available. Today there are a small number of Central Luoluopo Christians attending churches in the townships, but the majority of Luoluopo have never heard the gospel. Central Luoluopo gospel recordings were produced in 1998.



Jamin Pelkey