



Population in China:
 188,500 (1999)
 193,300 (2000)
 242,600 (2010)
Location: Yunnan
Religion: Polytheism
Christians: 100

Overview of the Western Luoluopo

Countries: China
Pronunciation: "Luoh-luoh-po"
Other Names:
 Lolo, Western Lolo, Lolopo
Population Source:
 188,500 (1999 J. Pelkey);
 Out of a total Yi population of
 6,572,173 (1990 census)
Location: *Yunnan:* Jingdong
 (57,000), Jinggu (47,000),
 Lancang (31,500), Zhenyuan
 (28,000), Simao (14,500), and
 Pu'er (10,000) counties
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, Christianity
Christians: 100
Scripture: None
Jesus film: None
Gospel Recordings: None
Christian Broadcasting: None
ROPAL code: None



Jamin Pelkey

Location: According to researcher Jamin Pelkey, 188,500 Western Luoluopo live in six counties of northern and central Simao Prefecture in Yunnan Province. In descending order, the Western Luoluopo are found in Jingdong County (57,000), followed by Jinggu (47,000), Lancang (31,500), Zhenyuan (28,000), Simao (14,500), and Pu'er (10,000).¹

Identity: Although they share the same autonym with the Central Luoluopo and the Southeastern Luoluopo, the languages of these three groups differ widely. Each comes from a different branch of the Yi linguistic group. These names reflect each group's linguistic affiliation, rather than a geographic orientation: the Western Luoluopo speak a Western Yi language; the Central Luoluopo speak a Central Yi language, etc. *Luoluopo* is the self-name of these groups. In the past, Lolo came to be the derogatory term used freely by the Chinese to describe all Yi people. As a result, many Luoluopo today prefer to identify themselves as *Yi* to outsiders.

Language: Western Luoluopo is one of more than 20 distinct Western Yi varieties in China. In some locations, such as Jingdong County, the Western Luoluopo live near speakers of Central Luoluopo. Speakers from the two groups cannot understand each other without using Chinese.

History: The ancestors of the Western Luoluopo used to live farther to the north of

their present location. In the past, war between different Yi tribes and clans was frequent, resulting in massive loss of life. Because of these conditions, many groups migrated out of the area. One historian described the hostilities: "War tactics were... mundane: ambushes and surprise attacks

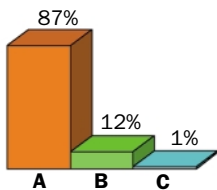
were favored; because of lack of ammunition, battles were often hand to hand; the goal was not so much to kill the enemy as to capture him. A Black Yi would be held for ransom or allowed to commit suicide; White Yi or slaves were held for ransom or enslaved. Witchcraft and amulets were used extensively."²

Customs: These battles were often ended "by the mediation of a third clan, or by a 'waiting-at-home' bride related to both parties (if her pleas were unsuccessful, she would commit suicide). Peace negotiations were long and required expert debaters: compensation had to be decided upon for each life lost."³

Religion: Polytheistic animism is the main religious adherence of the Western Luoluopo. Ancestor worship is also prevalent. Two or three ancestral rites are performed every year in honor of the Luoluopo forefathers.

Christianity: Although little is known about the extent of Christianity among the Western Luoluopo, there may be a small number of believers among them. As a result, The Luowu remain completely unreached today, although the first ever gospel recordings in the Luowu language were produced in 1999. With no Scriptures, recordings, or ministries targeting them, however, most Western Luoluopo have never heard of Christ.

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