


Population in China:

1,200 (1998)

1,240 (2000)

1,440 (2010)

Location: Yunnan

Religion: Polytheism

Christians: None Known

Overview of the Naheng

Countries: China

Pronunciation: "Nah-heng"

Other Names:

Beiquba Naxi, Pei-ch'u-paa Naxi

Population Source:

1,200 (1998 AMO);

Out of a total Naxi population of 278,009 (1990 census)

Location: *N Yunnan:* Beiquba District of Ninglang County; Shaoping and Zhangzidan districts of Yongsheng County

Status:

Officially included under Naxi

Language: Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Burmese-Lolo, Lolo, Northern Lolo, Naxi, Eastern Naxi

Dialects: 0

Religion: Polytheism, Animism, Ancestor Worship

Christians: None known

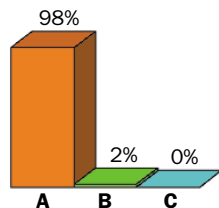
Scripture: None

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

Location: The Naheng ethnic group, who number approximately 1,200 individuals, live primarily in the Beiquba District of Ninglang County, in northern Yunnan Province. Smaller numbers of Naheng also live in the adjoining Shaoping and Zhangzidan districts of Yongsheng County. The area is remote, poor, and rarely visited by outsiders. Few roads were constructed in the mountainous area until recently. Because of its geographic isolation, numerous ethnic groups inhabit this part of China, including the Eastern and Western Lipo, Naxi, Mosuo, Pumi, and the Xiaoliangshan Nosu. One study in 1922 found there to be "as many as 26 different tribes"¹ in the region surrounding Lijiang.

Identity: Although the Chinese authorities officially include the Naheng as part of the Naxi nationality, the Naheng have their own name, speak a distinct language, and view themselves differently from other communities. The Naheng may have originally been part of the Mosuo and Naru groups, but centuries of separation have caused them to possess a distinct ethnicity today.

Language: The Naheng speak a distinct language within the Eastern Naxi branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family. Other Eastern Naxi languages include Mosuo and Naru. The Naheng language is sometimes named *Beiquba Naxi*, after their principal location.²

History: The Naheng language suggests they were once part of the larger

Mosuo group. For an unknown reason the Naheng separated from the main body of Mosuo at Lugu Lake and migrated southeast to their present location. Today the marked differences between the Mosuo and Naheng mean that the two groups no longer acknowledge historical kinship. The main difference, however, is that, whereas the Mosuo are zealous proponents of Tibetan Buddhism, the majority of Naheng are animists.

Customs: Naheng villages consist of closely clustered log homes that are surrounded by a courtyard and gate. The Naheng are hardworking agriculturists. Wheat, maize, and legumes are the primary crops grown. Some families also grow potatoes and turnips. Except for poultry and pigs, they do not herd livestock. The Naheng were once a

matriarchal society. Today their families are monogamous.

Religion: The Naheng live just south of the influence of Tibetan Buddhism in China and just north of the influence of the traditional Naxi religion of Dongbaism. Dongbaism is a mixture of shamanism and the pre-Buddhist Tibetan religion of Bon. Most Naheng today are animists and ancestor worshipers, although they also have a legend of a god of Creation.

Christianity: Living in one of the most gospel-neglected parts of southern China, the Naheng are an unreached people group with practically no knowledge at all of Jesus Christ. The nearest believers to the Naheng are probably the Eastern Lipo farther east, but the Naheng have so far been outside the range of their evangelistic efforts.



Midge Conner