



Population in China:
 6,300 (1999)
 6,450 (2000)
 8,100 (2010)
Location: Yunnan
Religion: Polytheism
Christians: None Known

Overview of the Da Hei Neisu

Countries: China

Pronunciation: “Da-Hay-Nay-soo”

Other Names: Da Hei Yi, Black Yi, Big Black Yi, Wopu, Nasu, Greater Neisu, Neisupo, Nisu, Xiqi

Population Source:
 6,300 (1999 J. Pelkey);
 Out of a total Yi population of
 6,572,173 (1990 census)

Location: *Yunnan:* Mile (2,200), Luxi (1,500), Luliang (1,300), Lunan (800), and Shizong (500) counties

Status:
 Officially included under Yi

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

Dialects: 0

Religion: Polytheism, Animism, Shamanism

Christians: None known

Scripture: None

Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings: None

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: None



Paul Hattaway

Location: More than 6,300 Da Hei (Greater Black) Neisu live in Yunnan Province.¹ They inhabit widespread communities in four different prefectures. They live within Mile² and Luxi counties of Honghe Prefecture; Shilin (Lunan) County in Kunming Municipality; Shizong and Luoping counties of Qujing Prefecture; and Qiubei County in Wenshan Prefecture.³

Identity: Commonly called *Da Hei Yi* (Big Black Yi) by the Chinese, this people group refers to itself as *Neisu* or *Nasu* meaning “black people.”⁴ Linguist Jamin Pelkey has stated that “when widely different cultures and languages are encountered among one of these ‘Black People’ groups a clarifying title must be given to distinguish dissimilarities.”⁵

Language: The language of the Da Hei Neisu is mutually intelligible with the Xiao Hei Neisu. In the past, the ruling castes felt that it was important to distinguish themselves by using a different dialect from the slave class. Today, “only in larger population pockets is the Da Hei Neisu language still spoken by young and old.”⁶

History: Like the Nosu of Sichuan, the Da Hei Neisu have come from a society in which they were the traditional landlords

and slave-owners. “Although their counterparts in Sichuan emerged from the slave system as late as the 1950s, this people seem to have begun slowly adopting new ways hundreds of years ago.... The Da Hei Neisu entered Honghe Prefecture from Luoping and Qiubei counties and from as far away as Zhaotong. That this people migrated from Zhaotong Prefecture lends credence to a possible connection between this and the Liangshan Nosu system of slavery.”⁷

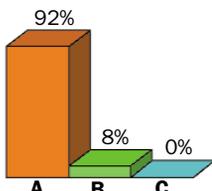
Customs: Although it is possible that dialects and cultures have diverged between the communities living so far apart, the Da Hei Neisu continue to see themselves as a homogeneous people group. A Da Hei Neisu wedding usually lasts from four to seven days. After marriage it is customary

for the new husband and wife to sleep in separate beds. Da Hei Neisu traditional dress has disappeared in most regions, and many customs are also on the decline.

Religion: The Da Hei Neisu are polytheistic animists who believe a person’s soul leaves the body at death or when the person is sick. To prevent this from happening, they tie string around the wrists of an ill person and fasten it to a bedpost or piece of furniture. Shamans are summoned to call the spirit back into the body.

Christianity: Although Catholic missionaries from the Paris Foreign Missionary Society worked among the Sani and Axi people in the 1880s, experiencing much success, no record exists of outreach to the Da Hei Neisu people farther south of the French mission stations. Today, there are no known believers among the Da Hei Neisu. Few have any awareness of the name of Jesus Christ. Much prayer is needed to break down the powerful influence of the occult among the Da Hei Neisu. There are presently no Scriptures or evangelistic materials available in the Da Hei Neisu language.

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