

Xishuangbanna's (Southern Yunnan's)
UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS



People Group

Akeu

% Christian

0

Govt. called

Hani (Akha)

Self called

过克

Population

11000

Location

Mengla, menghai county, jinghong county

Belief

When asked what they believe, most Ake will say they do not have a religion. In practice, the majority worship their ancestors. They also attempt to live at peace with nature and the spirits which they believe control their communities. An increasing number of Ake youth are becoming atheists and do not feel the need to continue the practices of their parents.



Location

60km southeast of jinghong county; Mengla County

Belief

The Bit practice a mixture of Theravada Buddhism and animism. They believe a person has five souls. After death, one soul remains in the house; one goes to the fields; one settles in the foot of the tree that was felled to make the coffin; one lives in the funeral home; and the last remaining soul flies to the sky. They worship all kinds of ghosts and gods, coupled with the influence of Dai Buddhism, they seldom care about the issue of immortality.

People Group

Bit

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

are called Buxin by the Chinese; Chinese officially view the Bit as part of the Khmu.

Self Called

Bit

Population

900

People Group

Angku

% Christian

0

Govert Called

Bulang

Self Called

Angku

Population

9030

Location

Yunnan province: Baoshan, Dai Lincang, Simao, menghan & southwest of jinghong

Belief

Buddhism 95% & Animism
Angku life revolves around the local temple. Traditionally all Angku boys become novice monks and live in the temple until they are 12 years old. The Angku obey the three tenets of Buddhism: practicing self discipline, teaching, and discussing doctrine. Buddhist temples are found in most Angku villages.



Location

Menghai, shuangjiang, lin cang, lan cang, mo jiang, 60km south of Baoshan.

Belief

Buddhism
Temples and idols are located throughout their communities. Many Bulang men enter the Buddhist monkhood, which brings great honor to their families. Few Bulang have ever heard of Christ, and few care to seek for anything beyond what they already believe. They strive to observe the Buddhist Tripitika (Three Baskets) teaching: practicing selfdiscipline, preaching, and discussing doctrine. The Bulang believe that right thinking, sacrifices, and self-denial will enable the soul to reach nirvana, a state of eternal bliss.

People Group

Bulang

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Bulang

Self Called

Bulang

Population

10300

People Group

Hu

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Bulanf

Self Called

Hu

Population

1890

Location

Jinghong county's xiaomeng yang xiang.

Belief

Buddhism & Animism, be afraid of ghost, bad things are from the ghost.



People Group

Kemei

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Unidentified
(as a part of khmu in Laos)

Self Called

Kemei

Population

1620

Location

80KM east of jinghong & south of mengla & west of mengban; the largest village Kami Zhai.

Belief

Animism demonolatr
The Kemei practice animism, with a demonic element to their rituals. To determine where a burial site should be, they carry an egg to the mountains and, with the help of mediums, are led by the spirits. When they reach the appointed place, the egg supernaturally turns black. The Kemei say the spirit of a dead person often returns home, so they continue leaving out food on the table for it.



Location

20KM north of Jinghong; five remote villages north of Jinghong City

Belief

Before the Communist Revolution in China the Kong Ge believed in Zao Zi, a protective spirit. The Kong Ge sacrificed a cow before planting their rice to ensure that the spirits would allow the rice to grow. Every Kong Ge family worships their ancestors. Ancestral worship ceremonies are held after the planting season to ask for a good crop.

Location

15KM south of Jinghong

Belief

Animism demonolatr & ancestor worship
Some Kuan have been converted to Theravada Buddhism by the Tai Lu. They also worship a hierarchy of demons and ghosts. Every year the Kuan hold a festival to worship the spirits of the village and their ancestors.

Remarks

Many aspects of their culture are similar to the Khmu, including their family names - which are taken from the names of sacred animals or plants. For the duration of their lives, the Kuan are not allowed to touch the particular animal or plant that bears their name.

People Group

Kongge

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Bulang

Self Called

Kongge

Population

1870

People Group

Kuan

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Unidentified

Self Called

Kuan

Population

1620

People Group

Kucong

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Yellow Lahu

Self Called

Kucong

Population

52150

Location

Mojiang, Xinping, Mengla, 15km south of Jinghong

Belief

Animism demonolatr, Buddhism, Christian

The Kucong are primarily Theravada Buddhists, in comparison to the majority of Lahu who are either animists or Christians. they also maintian a strong animistic belief system alongside their Buddhist faith .In the past, Christianity was not able to spread from the Lahu to the Kucong because of the many prejudices between the two groups.

Remarks

Interns went to find this group in Febuary 2019. They spent 2 days in Meng Ban, visiting 4 villages in the area. There was supposed to be a mountain named after this group, but no local person knew of it. Eventually it was found that the map name was not the name that the local people call the mountain. They call the mountain "Liu Ba Ling Di". This is boarder between Lao and China. There are a lot of soldiers in the area, as a result. One village named "Hong Wei Chun" was at the foot of the mountain is actually Yi People. They could all understand Mandarin. Some people used black magic, others seemed agnostic. One Lao-Chinese lady we met had heard of the KuCong people as a child, her mother's family in Lao is this people group. She was very interested in discussing spiritually things and hearing about Jesus' story. There is no way to contact her to continue follow up, she does not have access to a phone. There are government development departments working in this area, and it has had a large effect of Mandarinizing this area.



People Group

Manmet

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Unidentified

自称

Manmet

人数

1700

Location

20km northeast of Jinghong
(live in five villages in the mountains northeast of Jinghong)

Belief

Most Manmet adhere to a mixture of animism and Theravada Buddhism, which is the prevalent religion in the Xishuangbanna region. Around Jinghong there are numerous temples, which serve as the focal point of each community's social life as well as a place for practising religious rituals.



Location

20KM northwest of jinghong. Nanliangshan (Nanliang Mountains) in the Gashai District of Jinghong County.

Belief

The ancestral altar is the focus for all ceremonies relating to the Muda's ancestors. The Muda share the Akha belief in a supreme being, Apoe Miyeh, who is also considered the link between their ancestors and the present-day generation. The Muda believe Apoe Miyeh to be their original male ancestor and the progenitor of their race. Great care is taken during ancestral rituals to feed and honor the spirits of the deceased. In this way the Muda also hope their children will take care of their souls after death. The Muda also worship "inside" and "outside" spirits.

Remarks

Interns visited this ppg in March 2019. This mountain 24-30 villages that are all Muda people. This information was obtained from a drunk man, the rest of the people identify as "Akha". Local Akha sister also informed us of this separate ppg that has similarities to Akha. In 2 days, the inters visited 9 villages. They found 3 middle and highschool students from different villages that were interested in spiritual matters, and but had no knowledge of a God of heaven. One of the middle school girls seemed fairly interested, and will continue to follow up. This people group seems to really love birds. They seem to be interested in art in their culture. The men were found to drink alcohol in excess. Young people have a high drug risk. They tie strings on their wrists for protection and healing. The children's sir name is determined by the last sylable of their father's name. They have three main holidays. March, August, and Chinese New Year are the months of these days, but not sure of the meaning behind these days.

Location

South of Mengla

Belief

Spirit worship and ancestor worship are practised by the Pana. In many respects the Pana rituals mirror those of their Akha neighbors and relatives, although it appears they do not follow the Akhazang system that is a dominant feature of the Akha throughout Southeast Asia.

People Group

Muda

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Hani - classified by government.
Sangkong - called by Han

Self Called

Muda

Population

2820

People Group

Pana

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Hani - Pana

Self Called

Pana

Population

5200

People Group

Paxi

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Huizu or Daizu

Self Called

Dai Muslims

Population

1400

Location

30Km north of menghai; eight kilometers (five mi.) from Menghai Township, at the foot of Jingwang Mountain in Xishuangbanna.

Belief

Islam

The entire Paxi population are Sunni Muslims. Strictly adhering to the Muslim way of life, the Paxi follow Islamic teachings, do not eat pork, and worship in a small mosque. They receive frequent visits from Hui scholars and teachers who help them in their faith and understanding of the Qur'an.



People Group

Puman

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Bulang (Khmu)

Self Called

Puman

Population

22000

位置

40km north of mengla; west of the Lancang (Turbulent) in shuangjiang county.

Belief

The Puman are devoted members of the Theravada sect of Buddhism. In southwest China the Buddhists have many stories regarding the coming of a Savior, a blessed one who fits the description of Jesus Christ in many respects. this Theravada Buddhist messiah: "His coming is to be preceded by a falling away from the practice of religion, morality, and righteousness. His forerunner shall level every mountain, exalt every valley, make crooked places straight, and rough places smooth. ... Only the pure in heart and life shall be able to see him. But those who see are to be delivered from the thralldom of rebirth. He is to be recognized by his pierced hand.



Location

100km southwest of jinghong; bulang mountains

Belief

The Samtao are zealous followers of Theravada Buddhism. Their whole ethnic identity is wrapped up in their adherence to Buddhism."the Sam Tao have been Buddhists for 900 years, and are the best Buddhists we have met"

Remarks

The samtao in Myanmar are part of what used to be a collection of three distinct tribes: samto,samtuan and sen chun.

Location

20KM north of Mengla

Belief

During the Cultural Revolution the Han Tai Buddhists suffered much persecution. Cadres even dug up the skeleton of a revered Buddhist abbot and used his bones as fertilizer, in a bizarre bid to provoke the people and destroy their religion. Pa Ya Shanmudi, the legendary Tai folk hero, laid down several commandments to ensure the survival of his people. One of these instructs each village to build a shrine, called a zaixin, as the symbolic heart of the community. "It serves as a ritual center. ... To destroy it or obstruct access to it would be the height of sacrilege."

People Group

Samtao

% Christian

0

Govt. Called

Bulang

Self Called

Samtao

Population

200

People Group

Han Tai

% Christian

less than 0.5%

Govt. Called

Dai (HanDai)

Self Called

TaiLu

Population

70700

People Group

Hani

% Christian
less than 0.5%

Govt. Called

Hani

Self Called

Hani

Population

755200

Location

80KM southeast of Mojiang

Belief

Animism demonolatr

The Hani have three major religious clergymen. The zuima is a male from the oldest household who directs all religious activities. The beima perform magic rites and exorcisms. Male and female nima make predictions and administer medicinal herbs.



People Group

CuoSuo

% Christian
?

Govt. Called

PaiJiao of Hani

Self Called

CuoSuo

Population

200+

Location

ManGang in MengBan County

Belief

primitive religion: All things have spiritual and polytheistic worship. eg: Natural worship, totem worship, reproductive worship, ancestors worship ,etc.

Remarks

The Cuosuo (also known as Pajiao people) is a group of people who fled from Laos to China in 1944. There are 47 families in the village, totaling more than 200 people. There are only 500 +people in the whole world. They have their own language, no written language and believe in primitive religion. A sister welcomed us, and because a govert guy was with us, we had no chance to share Jesus. We don't know if anyone has shared good news with the Cuosuo people, or if there are disciples of Jesus among them.



Location

3 pockets from Xinping to Jinghong

Belief

The Huayao Tai practice a mixture of Theravada Buddhism and animism. " Animism in its Tai form ranges from the worship of natural force ... to include the practice of shamanism, sorcery and black magic. "

Location

South of Jinghong,also west 80 KM; in the Shanyong District adjacent to China's border with Laos and south of the Nanla River in Mengla County.

Belief

Most Khmu believe their lives are controlled by the spirit world. This complex hierarchy of spirits includes the spirit of heaven, the spirit of thunder, the spirit of the water snake, etc. Every year the Khmu in Laos hold festivals to worship the spirits of the village and their ancestors, as well as to pray for a plentiful harvest and good fortune.

People Group

Hua Yao Tai

% Christian
less than 0.5%

Govt. Called

Dai

Self Called

Hua Yao Tai

Population

89200

People Group

Khmu

% Christian
0.1%

Govt. Called

Unidentified

Self Called

Khmu

Population

1830

People Group

Kim Mun

% Christian

0.2%

Govt. Called

Kim Mun

Self Called

Kim Mun

Population

332800

Location

on the border of Laos and Vietnam; the Jinping area of southeastern Yunnan Province

Remarks

Approximately 50,000 people living on Hainan Island are officially included as part of the Miao nationality, but they speak the same language as the Kim Mun on the Mainland who are included as part of the Yao nationality.

Belief

The Kim Mun believe that when bad people die they go to a terrible place, their perception of hell - a thick, dark forest with no villages or clearings. It is believed that good people will go to one of several levels of heaven, depending on how much care their eldest son gives the spirit of his dead parent. Men without sons, therefore, do whatever it takes to procure a son, since their soul will be lost without one. The Kim Mun worship their ancestors by sacrificing pigs three times each year to honor them.



Location

100KM southeast of Jinghong

Belief

Animism demonolatry

Although the Pula people are regarded as a branch of the Yi people, they have their own unique customs, languages and history. The Pula may have been a tribal group and were forced to use the Yi language. They believed that there was a god named Mumi who created heaven and earth, human beings and all living beings. On the first "Rabbit Day" after the New Year, they will worship the sky, the first "ox day" they worship the ground and village gods, and the first "Tiger Day" they will ask the gods to help them. They use the pigs as the sacrifices, then they hold a banquet under the sacred trees in the village.

People Group

Pula

% Christian

less than 0.5%

Govt. Called

Yi

Self Called

Pula

Population

25450

People Group

Nasu; Jinghong

% Christian

less than 0.5%

Govt. Called

Yi

Self Called

Nasu; Jinghong

Population

23150

Location

western and northwestern Jinghong County, and 6,000 inhabit areas of northeastern Menghai County

Belief

Animism demonolatry

Spirit worship is practiced by the Jinghong Nasu at certain times throughout the year. Despite living alongside the Theravada Buddhist Tai Lu for generations, no Nasu are known to have converted to Buddhism.



Location

Six villages in the Sanda Mountains between Jinghong and Menglian in Xishuangbanna

Belief

Animism demonolatry

The inhabitants of the six Sanda villages are animists. All Sanda homes possess spirit altars, which are hung in a prominent position in the main room of their homes. The Sanda say that in the past they were a spiritual people, but during the Cultural Revolution they lost their soul. The Sanda place great importance in burial practices. The corpse is placed in the ground for burial if the person was more than 60 years old. If someone dies by accident or before the age of 60, the body is cremated.

People Group

Sanda

% Christian

1.4%

Govt. Called

Unidentified

Self Called

Sanda

Population

1430

People Group

Tai Lu

% Christian

0.3%

Govt. Called

Dai (Shui Dai)

Self Called

Tai Lu

Population

782600

Location

All of southern Yunnan

Belief

Xishuangbanna is a Chinese translation. Its Dai name is "Sip Song Pan Na", meaning "thousands of paddy fields". Laos, Vietnam, Thailand and Myanmar also have Dalu people. Dailu is the largest ethnic group in China. Dailu people believe in Buddhism. They believe that as long as life is good, they can be reborn into a higher social class, and if they do evil, rebirth will become an animal. At a certain time, Dailu people should offer sacrifices to honor the gods who blessed their descendants. At that time, the roads close to the village were blocked by branches, and the whole village was surrounded by straw ropes or white cotton thread, indicating a wall forbidding entry and exit. No outsiders were allowed to attend these ceremonies, and even monks or rulers were not allowed to attend, so there was no relevant information. There are also spiritual barriers in Dailu people. They are more resistant to gospel.



People Group

Xiangtang

% Christian

0.12%

Govt. Called

Yi

Self Called

Xiangtang

Population

103400

Location

From Jinghong to the west of Mojiang

Belief

The Xiangtang in rural areas are a superstitious people. Ancestor worship, mixed with animism, remains the dominant religion among the Xiangtang, although many who live in urban areas have forsaken all religious practices. The Xiangtang living in Honghe are the only speakers of a Western Yi language in that prefecture. "While their language is widely different from the Yuanyang Nisu they live beside, the Xiangtang of Luchun County have been influenced by the Nisu culturally. Both groups worship and revere the dragon, but the Xiangtang also have reverence for the 'spirit of the ravine' whom they call to their aid every eighth day of the second lunar month."



Location

South and east of Mojiang

Belief

In the past, Baihong people were called "Ma Hei". Baihong people have a long history and are proud of their ancestors. The importance of Baihong ancestors has been spread through their proverbs, "Nine hairs are worth a strand of ancestor's hair". Baihong women's clothing is unique. They wore short, tight pants with about 30 centimeters of blue cloth on the back, and were decorated with silver balls glued to the blue cloth. When they walk, the blue cloth looks like a tail. Baihong people call this "armor". If Bai women don't wear such clothes, they will be considered impolite. Today there are about 5,000 Baihong Christians, mostly of the local Cardo and Biyo faiths. These Christians have been persecuted many times for their beliefs. Many Baihong people living in remote villages have never heard of the gospel.

Location

Around Jinghong and Mengla area.

Belief

The Jino have their own unique religion. Around AD 200, Kong Ming - also known as Chu-ko-Liang or Zhu Geliang - helped establish the Minor Han Dynasty. The Jino served in Kong Ming's military campaign into southwest China, but many were left behind. Kong Ming is the main god among many worshipped by the polytheistic and superstitious Jino. The Jino people have no written language of their own. In the past, they used to knot ropes around their waists or carve marks on wood and bamboo to remind themselves of what to do. In an emergency, they send a feather or charcoal to their neighbors to show that they need help. There are some connections between the Jino people and the Bible, and their legends also contain stories of great floods. In February of the Lunar New Year, they celebrate their festival by dancing around a big cowhide drum. For centuries, they have passed down orally a story about how man was wiped out in a great flood. Their ancestors survived because they found refuge in a big drum. Under God's guidance, they got ten gourd seeds, which later germinated and produced all the races in the world.

People Group

Bauhong

% Christian

2%

Govt. Called

Hani

Self Called

Baihong

Population

239200

People Group

Jino

% Christian

3%

Govt. Called

Jino

Self Called

Jino

Population

28300

People Group

Jino, Buyuan

% Christian

2%

Govt. Called

Jino

Self Called

Jino, Buyuan

Population

1620

Location

20km south of Jinghong

Belief

The Buyuan Jino are polytheists, worshipping a multitude of demons and gods. They also worship Kong Ming. Jino homes are constructed in the shape of a cube with a pointed roof to resemble the hat Kong Ming reputedly wore into battle. Jino boys wear shirts with a circular pattern embroidered on the back, alleged to be the eight diagrams Kong Ming used in his divination.

Although they belong to the official Jino ethnic group, they use their own unique language. In 1942, the Kuomintang government dispatched an official to collect tobacco tax in the remote mountainous areas. But the official died suddenly on his way back. The government blamed the local mountain people for poisoning the official and sent the army to rob, burn and kill him. Jino people rose up and sent urgent letters to villages of Dai, Yao, Lahu, Ami and Han nationalities. They asked them to send representatives to gather in Zaoyuan Mountain to discuss countermeasures. So these nations gathered together, they killed bulls and supported the Jino people by blood alliance. In the end, their resistance failed and many Jino people were massacred. Despite the failure of this rebellion, the Dai and Li people still sing, "The strongest animal in the forest is the rhinoceros, and the bravest man in the world is the Jino people", in order to celebrate their martyrs. There is a unique cultural phenomenon of Jino ethnic group which is different from other ethnic groups in China. That is their "long house". The whole Jino clan lives in a big house.

