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Location: Numbering 31,928 speakers at the time of the 1982 Chinese language census, the Nunu people of Guangxi increased to more than 48,000 by the end of the twentieth century. They are one of 11 distinct Bunu subgroups, each speaking a different language. The Bunu totaled 439,000 people in 1982. Nunu communities are located in the northwestern part of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region: in Lingyun, Tianlin, Fengshan, and Donglan counties.

Identity: In most other countries, the Nunu would be classified as a distinct minority group in their own right. In China, however, they have been tucked away as part of the Bunu who, in turn, have been included under the official Yao nationality. Because of this classification, few people

have ever heard of the Nunu even though they possess their own culture, history, language, and ethnicity.

Language: The Nunu speak their own language. They cannot communicate with the speakers of any other Bunu language, although Nunu is distantly related to the Dongnu and Bunuo languages. The Nunu have never possessed an orthography of their own. This has caused them to feel inferior to the Chinese and those other ethnic groups who possess a script.

History: Nunu history is shrouded in stories of past migrations and armed conflict with other people groups. Because of pressure from the Han and the Zhuang, the Nunu were driven from their land and forced into the remote

mountains where the soil is poor and living conditions extremely harsh. In some places the Nunu must walk long distances to collect water from the nearest source.

Customs: Because of the poor soil and rocky ground, the Nunu have become accustomed to survive however they are able. Nunu men have traditionally been great hunters, but today their yields are limited to wild pigs and small game. In the past the region was home to many tigers, deer, and bears. Nunu women are experts at foraging in the forests for food supplements such as edible mushrooms and vegetables. In times of great hunger the Nunu have eaten roots and the bark from trees which they boil into a sticky substance.

Religion: Pan Hu is worshiped by the Nunu. At the great Pan Hu Festival, held on the 16th day of every tenth lunar month, thousands of people come together in a demonstration of devotion to Pan Hu that borders on demonic possession. The Nunu also worship their ancestors.

Christianity: The Nunu are trapped in complete spiritual darkness. They have no known believers or Christian witness. The Nunu are a childlike people. Early missionaries commented on the meekness of character possessed by China's minorities. Paul Vial, who worked among a group in Yunnan, wrote, "The [minority person] is born timid but not fearful; he shuns strangers as if they were bringing the plague....

He is not afraid, but he is not daring. In front of a Chinese, he is as a dog before a tiger.... He is like a large child who follows you, but who never precedes you."¹



Population in China:
 31,928 (1982)
 48,600 (2000)
 62,700 (2010)
Location: Guangxi
Religion: Polytheism
Christians: None Known

Overview of the Nunu

Countries: China
Pronunciation: "Noo-noo"
Other Names: Beilong Yao
Population Source:
 31,928 (1982 census);
 Out of a total Yao population of 2,134,013 (1990 census)
Location: NW Guangxi: Lingyun, Tianlin, Fengshan, and Donglan counties
Status:
 Officially included under Yao
Language: Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Bunuic, Bunu
Dialects: 0
Religion: Polytheism, Animism, Ancestor Worship
Christians: None known
Scripture: None
Jesus film: None
Gospel Recordings: None
Christian Broadcasting: None
ROPAL code: BWX02

