

History of Bible Translation in China

Matthias Gerner

RFLR Monographs



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Volume 1

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with chapters on the Hmu, Kam, Neasu, Nuosu peoples



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God has driven the efforts of Bible translators who have been active in China for 1400 years (Jonah 4:11).

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Preface

Part of the Bible was translated into Middle Chinese as early as 650 A.D. placing Chinese at par with other European languages in terms of ancient Bible translations. By 2019, portions of the Bible were translated into 70 languages, a share of 12 percent of the approximately 600 languages spoken in China. This relatively low penetration rate is due to the overwhelming prominence of Mandarin Chinese in nationwide and regional communication and to the fact that Chinese dialects and minority languages are not as compartmentalized as the small languages of other world regions such as Europe or India.

This monograph is made up of two parts, first, a state-of-the-art report of the Bible translation histories in 70 languages spoken in China and second, a collection of ethno-religious sketches of four ethnic groups residing in Southwest China: the Hmu (Miáo 苗 nationality), Kam (Dòng 侗 nationality), Neasu (Yí 彝 nationality) and Nuosu (Yí 彝 nationality) peoples. Pioneer Bible translation will come to an end in the next few years as many of the smallest vernacular languages are not acquired adequately anymore by young speakers who have more incentives to become proficient in Chinese.

I have gathered data on translation projects in languages of China since 1995. For Kam (Dòng 侗 nationality) and Kaduo (Hāní 哈尼 nationality) I researched the archives of the Liebenzell Mission and Marburg Mission in Germany. The process of writing and composing the materials began in 2014 and was completed in 2018.

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Abbreviations

* (before expression)	ungrammatical
# (before expression)	unnatural, odd
~	reduplication
1.PL	First Person Plural
1.SG	First Person Singular
2.SG	Second Person Singular
3.SG	Third Person Singular
3.PL	Third Person Plural
ADVL	Adverbializer
AMS	American Bible Society
APM	American Presbyterian Mission
ART	Article
ART.DIST	Distal Article
ART.PROX	Proximal Article
BCM	Methodist Bible Christian Mission
BD	Binding Domain
BFBS	British and Foreign Bible Society
CIM	China Inland Mission
CL	Classifier
CMS	Church Missionary Society
COV	Coverb
DEM.DIST	Distal demonstrative
DEM.MED	Medial demonstrative
DEM.PROX	Proximal demonstrative
DET	Determiner
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
DP	Dynamic perfect
EPM	English Presbyterian Mission

EXCL	Exclamative
EXH	Exhaustion
EXP	Experiential
FDC	Friedenshort Deaconess Mission
GET	Resultative derived from 'get'
IBT	Institute of Bible Translation
IDE	Ideophone
LMS	London Missionary Society
LOG.PL	Plural logophor
LOG.SG	Singular logophor
NEG	Negation
NT	New Testament
NUM	Numeral
NUM.10	Numeral 'ten'
OMF	Overseas Missionary Fellowship
OT	Old Testament
PASS	Passive
PMU	Pentecostal Missionary Union
PROG	Progressive
QUOT	Quotative
RFLR	Research Foundation Language and Religion
SENT.TOP	Sentence topic
SIL	Summer Institute of Linguistics
TOP	Topic
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
ZOP	Zoom-on-possessee

Part I

Chapter 1

Bible Translation in China

1.1 Summary

The History of Bible Translation in China can be divided into four periods:

- The Era of Sporadic Bible Translations: A.D. 635–1800
- The Struggle for the Authoritative Chinese Bible: 1800–1920
- The Rise of the Authoritative Chinese Bible: 1920–1980
- The Marginalization of the non-Chinese Bibles: 1980–present

1.1.1 Sporadic Bible Translations (635–1800)

The era of sporadic Bible translations is characterized by irregular missions from the Middle East and Europe to China, often in combination with trade activities. The missionaries were a subgroup of a larger set of people who had established contact with the Chinese for various reasons. The first missionaries who migrated to China were Nestorian Christians in A.D. 635. They moved to China via the ancient Silk Road together with other Middle East traders. The Muslim *Huí* 回 people, whose population is distributed unevenly throughout Modern China, are descendants of these traders. The Nestorian missionaries translated several books of the Old and New Testament into *Middle Chinese*.¹ No manuscript

¹ Linguists divide the history of Chinese into five periods:

Old-Chinese 上古文	B.C.	1000–0;
Middle-Chinese 中古文	A.D.	0–900;
Old-Mandarin 古代汉语	A.D.	1000–1200;
Middle-Mandarin 近代汉语	A.D.	1368–1644;
New-Mandarin 现代汉语	A.D.	1800–today.

survived to the present day, but the Nestorian stela of Xi'an referred to the translation of Bible portions. These portions were probably secondary translations based on the ancient Syriac Bible, the Peshitta. During the Mongol empire in the medieval period, Pope Nicholas IV appointed John of Montecorvino as his special envoy to the Mongol court. Venetian trader Marco Polo traveled to China at approximately the same time as John, although he was more motivated by commercial gains than religious interests. In 1307, John of Montecorvino translated the Psalms and the New Testament into *Old Uyghur*, the language used by the Mongol elite. No manuscript was preserved, but John mentioned his achievements in two letters to the Pope. The third language into which portions of the Bible were translated was the Formosan *Siraya* language. During the Dutch occupation of Táiwān in 1661, reformed preacher Daniel Gravius translated the Gospel of Matthew into Siraya. As a member of the Dutch Reformed Church clergy, he was employed by the Dutch East India Company, which was a chartered trading company. Dutch missionary activities had impacted the indigenous people until the early eighteenth century. None of three aforementioned Bible translations had any lasting effect nor were circulated widespread as there was no strategic plan to push these efforts. They were drops in the bucket (Isaiah 40:15), yet they were imperceptible beginnings that laid claim to Christianity's ancient roots in China.

1.1.2 Struggle for the Authoritative Bible (1800–1920)

The nineteenth century saw the struggle for the authoritative Chinese Bible. This struggle depended on another conflict: the choice of the *lingua franca* (common language) that could unify the Chinese empire. The Manchu government used the speech of Běijīng² as the language in which daily business was conducted. However, only a limited number of people in the populous south could speak this language fluently. Classical Chinese enjoyed prestige in the nineteenth century, but like Latin, nobody spoke it as a native language. Over 50 years, the Protestant missionaries had translated five versions of the Classical Chinese Bible. None of these endeavors, however, appealed to Chinese Christians, for which we might present two reasons. First, the Bibles were translated in a dead, albeit prestigious, language. Second, there was no consistent language policy behind Classical Chinese to promote it as a vehicular language for ordinary people. In the later

² It was called Guānhuà 官话 or language of the Mandarins.

1.1.3 Rise of the Authoritative Bible (1920–1980)

nineteenth century, it became increasingly clear that the speech of Běijīng might assume the role as the *lingua franca*. Frustrated by the lack of an authoritative Bible, in 1890, the Protestant missionaries established three interdenominational translation committees: one for the high register of Classical Chinese, one for its low register, and one for Mandarin, the speech of Běijīng. Only the Mandarin committee survived the long translation process of 30 years; the classical committees were dissolved in the meantime. These decisions were influenced by political developments. At a national conference in 1913, the young Republic of China decided to adopt the speech of Běijīng as its national language. When the Mandarin committee completed their work and published the Chinese Union Bible in 1919, the timing could not have been better. Between the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Protestant missionaries also translated portions of the Bible into approximately 26 Chinese dialects. These Bibles were circulated locally, and they accommodated the needs of the nascent church communities until the authoritative Chinese Bible arrived. Moreover, Bible translations into three important minority languages were commenced or achieved in the nineteenth century: Manchu (1822), Tibetan (1862), and Modern Uyghur (1898). Fascinating stories are attached to each of these projects.

1.1.3 Rise of the Authoritative Bible (1920–1980)

The Rise of the Authoritative Chinese Bible correlates to the rise of Mandarin Chinese as the national language. During the Republican period (1911–1949), preparations for the promotion of Mandarin Chinese were made; however, real changes were only implemented during the Communist era after 1949. According to Chinese scholar Zhōu Mínglǎn 周明朗,³ the Chinese language policy followed two models of nation-state building: the Soviet model (1950–1980) and the Chinese model (1980–present). In the 1950s, the Chinese government imposed a multilingual language order in which Mandarin Chinese became the *lingua franca* of Chinese dialect areas, which was supplemented by the local dialects where necessary. A minority language became the *lingua franca* of an ethnic autonomous area, and Mandarin Chinese was spoken as a complementary language. During this phase of nation-state building, Mandarin Chinese marginalized all other Chinese dialects. The last Chinese dialect in which a Bible portion was translated was the Teochew 潮汕 dialect (Southern Mǐn) in 1922. This

³ See Zhōu (2003, 2013).

marked the beginning of a gradual process in which all dialect translations fell into disuse while the *Chinese Union Version* rose to prominence. Exceptions are the Hokkien and Hakka dialects, which are spoken by a sizable diaspora abroad, and for which the Bible Society of Táiwan published revised Bible translations in 2008 and 2012.

1.1.4 Marginalization of non-Chinese Bibles (1980–today)

The Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) destroyed the multilingual language order, but a reversion to the old order seemed impossible. The government amended Article 19 of the Constitution in 1982 and made Mandarin Chinese the *lingua franca* (*Pǔtōnghuà*) of all nationalities. This led to the Chinese model of nation-state building with a monolingual language order in place. The transition was accentuated by the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the introduction of economic reforms. Labor and household registration rules were reformed; people were no longer required to work in the location where they were born. This led to a strong increase of internal migration from poor rural areas to richer coastal areas. In particular, young people left the countryside, whereas elderly people stayed behind. Some observers estimated (Zhōu 2013: 25) that the number of migrants increased to 100 million in the 1990s and to 200 million in the 2000s. The fusion of new populations boosted demand for Mandarin Chinese as the *lingua franca* at the expense of the Chinese dialects and minority languages. Furthermore, economic development created the need for a common language for communication, thus alienating minority people from their mother tongue, which is now perceived as a negative instead of a positive. As a result, minority languages began disintegrating at an alarming pace. This trend was exacerbated during 2010–2019 due to the emergence of mobile communication (the surface language of mobile devices is Mandarin Chinese) and the boom of construction projects (part of the land population was relocated into tower buildings in Hân areas where the dominant language is Mandarin Chinese). Foreign missions came to China in the 1990s to translate the Bible in minority languages. Some of these projects have borne fruit in the past 10 years and added about five new languages to the set of languages with Scriptures. Yet, under prevailing obstructive conditions, the momentum for new translation projects is irrevocably lost; therefore, efforts to reach out to minority people will increasingly involve the Chinese Union Bible. There are a few exceptions though. The Ahmao, Flowerly Lisu, Nasupu, and Nuosu languages show rigorous use of the Bible by

1.1.5 Languages with Scriptures in China

Christians.⁴ The assimilation of these languages to Mandarin Chinese is expected to be slower than other languages. In Táiwān, Mandarin Chinese has risen to a dominant position in public life as well. The Formosan languages are endangered to various degrees. Bible portions were translated in 10 minority languages over the past 60 years; the translation projects proceeded without repression. However, Táiwān's economic development has undermined the use of minority Bibles in a similar way.

1.1.5 Languages with Scriptures in China

Over the past 1,400 years, missionaries have translated Bible portions in 70 languages. The following table categorizes these languages along their genetic affiliation.

Group/Family	Translated Languages
Sinitic	29
Altaic	5
Miáo-Yáo	4
Tai-Kadai	6
Tibeto-Burman	14
Austro-Asiatic	2
Formosan	10
Total:	70

Table 1.1: Language groups with Scriptures in China

More than 38 Christian organizations based in 14 countries and affiliated with 11 denominations participated in Bible translation projects. Organizations from the United States of America and Great Britain have contributed most to Bible translation in China. The following table classifies the contribution toward Bible translation in China according to the Christian organizations, their denominations, and their country of origin.

⁴ Ahmao is spoken in Guizhōu Province; Flowerly Lisu is spoken in Yúnnán Province; Nasupu is spoken in Yúnnán Province; Nuosu is spoken in Sìchuān Province.

Denomination	Organization	Country of Origin	Translated Languages
Orthodox	Syrian Orthodox Church	Syria, Iraq	1
	Russian Orthodox Church	Russia	2
Catholic	Roman Catholic Church	Italy	3
Three-Self	China Christian Council/Three-Self Patriotic Movement	China	6
Anglican	American Episcopal Mission	USA	3
	Church Missionary Society	UK	6
	Church of England Zenana Missionary Society	UK	1
Reformed	Dutch Reformed Church/Mission	Netherlands	2
	Swedish Missionary Society	Sweden	1
Congregational	American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions	USA	4
Presbyterian	English Presbyterian Mission	UK	4
	American Presbyterian Mission	USA	10
	Canadian Presbyterian Mission	Canada	2
	Presbyterian Church of Táiwan	Táiwān	2
Baptist	Baptist Serampore Mission	UK, India	1
	Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society	USA	1
	American Southern Baptist Mission	USA	2
	American Baptist Missionary Union	USA	3
Methodist	American Methodist Episcopal Mission	USA	2
	American Southern Methodist Episcopal Mission	USA	1
	United Methodist Mission	UK	2
	United Methodist Free Church	UK	1
	English Wesleyan Mission	UK	1
	Bible Christian Mission	UK	1
Pentecostal	Dutch Pentecostal Missionary Society	Netherlands	1
	Swedish Free Mission	Sweden	1
Interdenominational	Anonymous Individuals	---	3
	Asian Christian Service	USA	1
	London Missionary Society	UK	6
	China Inland Mission (until 1964)	UK	11
	Overseas Missionary Fellowship (after 1964)	UK	1
	Basel Missionary Society (until 2001)	Switzerland	1
	Institute for Bible Translation	Russia	1
	Research Foundation Language and Religion	Germany	4
	Vandsburger Mission/Marburger Mission	Germany	1
	Moravian Church Mission	Germany	1
	Zentralasien-Gesellschaft	Germany	1
	Summer Institute of Linguistics/Wycliffe Bible Translators	USA	5
	Bible Society of Táiwan	Táiwān	7
	United Bible Societies	---	8

Table 1.2: Translated languages by Christian missions in China

1.2 Chinese dialects

1.2.1 The Syrian Orthodox Mission

Parts of the Bible were first translated by Nestorian⁵ Christians after A.D. 635 when the Syrian missionary Alopen⁶ came to Cháng'ān (today's Xī'ān).

A stela was found in Xī'ān in 1625 commemorating Christian activities in China during the Tang dynasty (A.D. 618–907). The stela was erected in A.D. 781, after the Nestorian missionaries had evangelized the local population for some time. In A.D. 720, China became an ecclesiastic province of the Church of the East, under the name of Beth Sinaye.⁷ The Church of the East in China disappeared after the fall of the Tang dynasty in A.D. 907.

The text on the stela mentions “Scriptures were translated,” which unequivocally refers to the translation of some portion of the Bible. However, no Bible translation has been preserved. In 1907, Nestorian documents were found⁸ in the Mògāo Caves 莫高窟⁹ in Dúnhuāng 敦煌,¹⁰ which mentioned Chinese translations of the Pentateuch (referred to as “牟世法王经”), including the Book

⁵ Nestorius (386–450), Patriarch of Constantinople, emphasized the disunion of the human and divine natures of Christ. His teachings were condemned as heretical by the Council of Ephesus (431). As he was separated from the Western Churches, he associated himself with churches in Syria, Iraq, and Persia to form the Church of the East. Some historians have warned, though, that the churches of Syria, Iraq, and Persia had not unequivocally embraced Nestorius's monophysitism and that the Church of the East should not be identified with the doctrine of Nestorius (see Hofrichter 2006).

⁶ Alopen (Chinese: Āluóběn 阿罗本) is known exclusively from the Nestorian Stela in Xī'ān. He was probably a Syriac speaker from Persia. His name might be a transliteration of the Semitic “Abraham.”

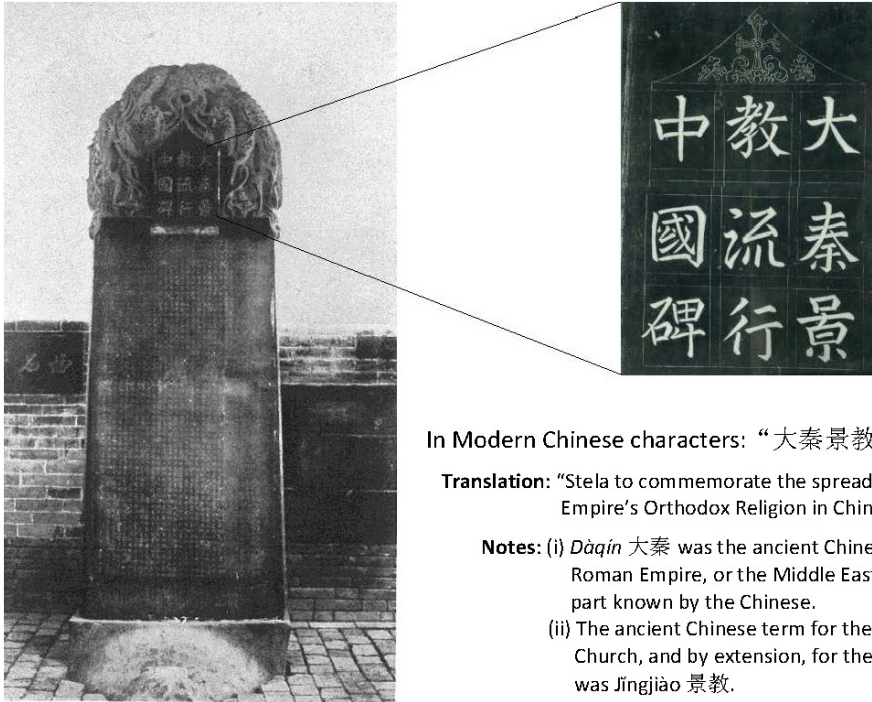
⁷ See Baum and Winkler (2003).

⁸ The French Orientalist Paul Pelliot 伯希和 (1878–1945) discovered many of the Dúnhuāng manuscripts.

⁹ The Mògāo Caves 莫高窟 are located 25 km southeast of Dúnhuāng 敦煌 and contain examples of Buddhist fine art spanning a period of 1,000 years as well as a large number of documents in various languages such as Chinese, Tibetan, Uyghur, Sanskrit, and Sogdian. In 1907, Nestorian Christian works were found in the Caves. The International Dúnhuāng Project was established by the British Library in 1994, and it is a cooperative effort of 24 institutions from 12 countries to conserve, catalogue, and digitize the manuscripts found there.

¹⁰ Dúnhuāng 敦煌 is a county-level city in Northwestern Gānsù Province. It was a major stop on the ancient Silk Road connecting straight to the Chinese plains leading to Cháng'ān (Xī'ān).

of Genesis (“浑元经”), the Psalms (“多惠圣王经”), the Gospels (“阿思翟利容经”), Acts of Apostles (“传代经”), and a few others.¹¹ The language in which these portions were translated was Middle Chinese.



In Modern Chinese characters: “大秦景教流行中国碑”

Translation: “Stela to commemorate the spread of the Western Empire’s Orthodox Religion in China”

Notes: (i) *Dàqín* 大秦 was the ancient Chinese name for the Roman Empire, or the Middle East, which was the part known by the Chinese.
 (ii) The ancient Chinese term for the Syrian Orthodox Church, and by extension, for the Nestorian Church, was *Jǐngjiào* 景教.

*The Nestorian Stela*¹²

1.2.2 The Roman Catholic Mission

During the Míng dynasty 明朝 (1378–1644), long after the disappearance of the Nestorian faith in China, Catholic missionaries came to China. Francis Xavier

¹¹ See Saeki (1937).

¹² The Nestorian Stela was excavated in Xī’ān in 1625 and is presently held at the Xī’ān Bēilín Museum 西安碑林 (Photo from Broomhall, 1934, p. 16; English translation, Horne, 1917, pp. 381–392).

1.2.2 The Roman Catholic Mission

(1506–1552), a Basque Catholic who was the companion of Ignatius of Loyola¹³ and co-founder of the Society of Jesus, traveled as a pioneer to India, Japan, Borneo, and Maluku Islands to evangelize native populations. He died on the island of Shàngchuān 上川島 in the South China Sea before reaching the Chinese Mainland.

The Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci 利玛竇 (1552–1610) led a group of Jesuits to China and introduced Western science, particularly mathematics and astronomy, to the imperial court. He initiated¹⁴ an inter-cultural dialogue with Chinese Confucian philosophers. Many Chinese intellectuals converted and became priests of the Society of Jesus, one of whom was Jesuit Shěn Fúzōng 沈福宗.¹⁵ Matteo Ricci translated portions of the Bible into Chinese, mainly liturgical selections but not entire books. The only preserved translation is the Ten Commandments.

The *Chinese Rites Controversy* was a dispute in the seventeenth century among Catholic missionaries over the religious nature of Chinese customs¹⁶ and Confucian rites,¹⁷ such as ancestor reverence or the principles of *Tiān* 天¹⁸ and

¹³ The Spanish nobleman and theologian, Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), was a leader of the Counter-Reformation and co-founder of the Society of Jesus, with Francis Xavier.

¹⁴ David Mungello (2005) counted 920 European Jesuits who had participated in the China mission between 1552 (the year when Francis Xavier died) and 1800. According to Kenneth Latourette (1929), there were likely 240,000 Roman Catholics in China in 1844 and 720,490 in 1901.

¹⁵ Shěn Fúzōng 沈福宗 (?–1691), whose Latinized name was Michael Alphonsius, was a Qīng dynasty official from Nánjīng 南京. He converted to the Catholic faith and became one of a few Chinese who had traveled to Europe in the seventeenth century. Shěn met with French King Louis XIV in 1684 and English King James II in 1685, and continued on to Lisbon, Portugal, where he entered the Society of Jesus. On his return to China, he died in Mozambique in 1691.

¹⁶ Chinese folk religion is diverse in origins, founders, local rites, and philosophical traditions. The most common rites practiced are Chinese shamanism 巫教 (manipulation of spirits) and Chinese exorcism 傩文化 (expulsion of spirits).

¹⁷ Confucianism 儒家 is an ethical and humanist system developed by Confucius 孔子 (B.C. 551–479). Confucius emphasized family importance and formulated principles of ethical governance. Confucius viewed religious practices such as ancestor worship and sacrifice to spirits from a humanist standpoint, that is, religious rites aim to maintain social harmony. Throughout history, Confucianism was a belief system of Chinese elite, not of ordinary people.

¹⁸ *Tiān* 天 is the concept of Heaven, of the Supreme God, and of the universe itself.

Qì 气.¹⁹ Tolerant Jesuits argued that these practices were secular in nature and compatible with the Christian faith, while other missionaries²⁰ disagreed and contacted the Pope for guidance.

Between 1646 and 1720, the dispute embroiled Pope Clement XI (papacy 1700–1721), the Chinese Emperor Kāngxī 康熙帝 (1654–1722), scholars of European universities, and the Holy See's Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith.²¹ Pope Clement XI issued the decree *Cum Deus Optimus*²² in 1704, in which he condemned the Confucian and Chinese folk rites. Specifically, the Pope

- forbade the use of *Tiān* 天 “Heaven” and *Shàngdì* 上帝 “Lord Above,” but allowed the term *Tiānzhǔ* 天主 “Lord of Heaven” as names for God;
- proscribed Christians from participating in Confucian rites; and
- prohibited Christians from participating in rites of the Chinese folk religion such as ancestor worship or rites during which the soul of a deceased person is directed to the afterworld.

In 1715, Pope Clement XI further condemned the practice of Chinese religious rites in his papal bull *Ex illa die*.²³ Chinese Emperor Kāngxī was vexed by the papal decree, changed his benevolent attitude toward Christianity, and banned Christian missionary activities in his imperial decree of 1721.²⁴ The

¹⁹ Qì 气 means “air” and is the substance of life. This classical Chinese concept is reminiscent of the four basic elements in Ancient Greece: fire, air, water, and earth.

²⁰ The Dominicans and Franciscans started missionary work in China in the seventeenth century. Because these missionaries came from the Spanish colony of the Philippines where they adopted a policy of non-accommodation, they rejected the local customs and Jesuit practice in China.

²¹ The congregation was founded by Pope Gregory XV in 1622, but after a name change, it is currently the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

²² The decree title in Latin means “With the Best God.”

²³ A papal bull is a sealed decree of the Pope. The meaning of the Latin title *Ex illa die* is “from that day.”

²⁴ Li Dun Jen (1969, p. 224) translated the following from the *Decree of Kāngxī*: “Reading this proclamation, I have concluded that the Westerners are petty indeed. It is impossible to reason with them because they do not understand larger issues as we understand them in China. There is not a single Westerner versed in Chinese works, and their remarks are often incredible and ridiculous. To judge from this proclamation, their religion is no different from other small, bigoted sects of

1.2.2 The Roman Catholic Mission

Chinese Rites Controversy undermined the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Chinese government. Relationships have not been recovered, even today.

During the Chinese Rites Controversy, French missionary Jean Basset 巴设 (1662–1707) of the Paris Foreign Mission Society²⁵ noted the lack of Bible translations into Chinese. Based in Sichuān Province, he finally undertook the task together with Chinese scholar John Xu 许若翰. Before Father Basset died in 1707, he translated 80% of the *Vulgate Version* of the New Testament, but his work was never printed. Englishman Hodgman brought a copy of this translation to England in 1737, where it was deposited in the library of Sir Hans Sloane²⁶ and later in the British Museum. Protestant missionary Robert Morrison made a copy of this text, which he used for his translation of the Bible in 1823.

After several private projects of Scripture translation by Catholics in the eighteenth century, Jesuit Louis de Poirot 贺请泰 (1735–1814) translated the New Testament and most of the Old Testament into Chinese. The manuscript was preserved for a long time in the Běitáng Church 北堂²⁷ Library in Běijīng and is now held in Shànghǎi. The translation was based on the Vulgate. Basset and de Poirot's translations are difficult to understand for modern Chinese speakers as the following excerpt of the Gospel of Luke illustrates.

Buddhism or Taoism. I have never seen a document, which contains so much nonsense. From now on, Westerners should not be allowed to preach in China, to avoid further trouble.”

²⁵ The Missions Etrangères de Paris is a Roman Catholic missionary organization established in 1663 by instruction of the Holy See's Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. The organization's original purpose was to be independent of the Spanish and Portuguese colonial powers, and this organization remains active today, especially in East Asia.

²⁶ This information is based on the article by Bernward Willeke (1945) titled *The Chinese Bible Manuscript in the British Museum* in *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 7, pp. 450–453.

²⁷ The Běitáng Church in Běijīng was built by the Chinese Emperor Kāngxī 康熙皇帝 in 1703.

Gospel of Luke 1: 13–19

Basset's Translation (1707)	de Poirot's Translation (1814)	Chinese Union Translation (1919)	NIV English Translation (1979)
13 [...] 尔妻依撒伯， 将与尔生子，尔必名 之若翰 [...]	13 [...] 尔妻依撒伯尔 要与你一子，尔宜取 名若翰 [...]	13 [...] 你的妻子伊利 沙伯要给你生一个儿 子，你要给他起名叫 约翰 [...]	13 [...] Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John [...]
14 [...] 且众以其生为 乐矣。	14 [...] 尔得此子，尔 心乐多，人亦大喜。	14 [...] 有许多人因他 出世，也必喜乐。	14 [...] and many will rejoice because of his birth,
15 盖其为大主前，酒 与麴皆不饮，犹在母 腹，而满得圣风矣。	15 此子在主前本是 大，他不宜饮酒及凡 从菓压出的汁，自母 腹即满被圣神。	15 他在主面前将要为 大，淡酒浓酒都不 喝，从母腹里就被圣 灵充满了。	15 for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born.
16 且多化依腊尔子归 于厥主神。	16 使多依斯拉耶耳嗣 妇本主	16 他要使许多以色列 人回转，归于主他们 的神。	16 He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.
18 [...] 我妻亦暮年 矣。	18 [...] 妻年亦迈。	18 [...] 我的妻子也年 纪老迈了。	18 [...] and my wife is well along in years.
19 [...] 我乃加别尔在 神前者，使出语尔， 报此福音。	19 [...] 我是上主前的 加彼厄尔，我奉命语 尔，报尔此佳音。	19 [...] 我是站在 神 面前的加百列，奉差 而来对你说话，将这 好信息报给你。	19 [...] I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.

Table 1.3: Bible excerpt in three historical Chinese Bibles

1.2.3 The Protestant Missions

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries are the era of Protestant Scripture translation. The milestone in this process is the publication of the *Chinese Union Version* in 1919, which is the authoritative and most prevalent Bible version of the twentieth century in China. This Bible is the endpoint of 100 years of rivalries, disappointments, and struggles²⁸ and finally achieves a consensus between missionaries of different countries.

The struggle for an authoritative Chinese Bible was shaped by the struggle for a *lingua franca* that could unify the whole country, which was intense at the turn of the twentieth century. Since the Tang dynasty (A.D. 618–907), there were two literary standards, Wényán 文言,²⁹ the classical literary language, and Báihuà 白話,³⁰ the vernacular standard of ordinary people. Wényán 文言 enjoyed great prestige among the population in the early twentieth century and was accorded the status of the language of the learned. The vast majority of Chinese literature, history, philosophy, and other sciences were written in Wényán 文言, the only truly national form of Chinese. Like Latin, Wényán 文言 and Báihuà 白話 are

²⁸ The “Term Question” controversy, which became the tangled part of the Chinese Rites Controversy mentioned earlier, was one important source of conflict. It developed in two stages. During the first stage between 1846 and 1855, Walter Henry Medhurst combed the Chinese Classics to define the meaning of *Shén* 神 and *Shàngdì* 上帝. According to Medhurst’s study, *Shàngdì* is perceived as the source of creation, the one without origin, while *Shén* is an emanation of *Shàngdì* that has to fulfill a function. He argued that the pair *Shàngdì/Shén* can render the dichotomy that exists in English between God/gods. James Legge 理雅各 supported this view by claiming that in ancient times, the Chinese believed in monotheism, which was then supplanted by polytheism. The terms *Shàngdì* and *Shén* are roughly representative of these two periods. William Boone dissented from this view. He emphasized that the Hebrew *Elohim* is a generic term, not a proper name, that must be rendered as such in other languages. For Boone, the generic term is *Shén*, not *Shàngdì*. No agreement was reached at this point. During the second stage of the Term Question controversy, between 1863 and 1877, members of the Běijīng committee pushed for the use of the Catholic term *Tiānzǔ* 天主 “Lord of Heaven,” which was met with resistance. The term was perceived as being merely definitional and too close to Catholicism. In the following years, the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) printed its Bibles with *Shàngdì*, while the American Bible Society used the term *Shén* or *Tiānzǔ*. The controversy has not been resolved, but Chinese members of the Union Bible committees preferred the term *Shén*, which was used in the Union Bible of 1919 with a preceding blank case.

²⁹ The nineteenth century missionaries called Wényán 文言 “High Wénlǐ” 深文理, but it is not a standard name used in China.

³⁰ The nineteenth century missionaries called Báihuà 白話 “Easy Wénlǐ” 易文理, but it is not a standard name used in China.

written languages that cannot be spoken. They are different from any current Chinese dialect and thus cannot assume the role of a *lingua franca*. In 1913, a language commission was established in Beijing with representatives from all over China. A controversy erupted over which dialect should be selected as China's *lingua franca*. Finally, the northern representatives forced their point, resulting in the Beijing dialect being chosen as the Standard Language.

In the nineteenth century five different complete translations of the Bible into Wényán 文言 were completed, with the first two under intense governmental persecution (see chapter endnotes):

- 1822: by Joshua Marshman 马士曼^① and Johannes Lassar 拉撒尔^② (Baptist Missionaries);
- 1823: by Robert Morrison 马礼逊^③ and William Milne 米憐^④ (London Missionary Society);
- 1847: by W. H. Medhurst 麦都思,^⑤ K. Gützlaff 郭士立,^⑥ and E. Bridgman 裨治文,^⑦ whose translation was adopted by Hóng Xiùquán 洪秀全,^⑧ the leader of the Tàipíngtiānguó 太平天国 movement;
- 1854: the *Delegates' Version*^⑨ by W. H. Medhurst 麦都思,^⑤ W. J. Boone 文惠廉,^⑩ W. M. Lowrie,^⑪ J. Stronach,^⑫ and E. C. Bridgman 裨治文;^⑦ and
- 1863: by E. C. Bridgman 裨治文^⑦ and M. S. Culbertson 克陞存^⑬ after they separated from the Delegates' Committee.

In the 1880s, the Protestant churches were disappointed in the lack of an authoritative translation and convened a General Mission Conference³¹ in 1890 to prepare a new translation in Wényán 文言, Báihuà 白話, and Vernacular Mandarin Chinese, the speech of Beijing.³² Three translation committees were formed.

³¹ See Zetsche (1999) and the volume edited by Eber, Sze-Kar Wan, and Walf (1999).

³² Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky 施约瑟 (1831–1906) was a Lithuanian Jew, who studied in Germany, emigrated to the United States, converted to the Christian faith, studied theology at the General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in New York, and volunteered as a missionary. He was sent to China by the American Episcopal Mission, which belonged to the network of Anglican missions, and arrived in Shànghǎi in 1859. He founded St. John's College and was ordained as the Anglican Bishop of Shànghǎi in 1877. He was a member of the translation committee for the Standard Běijīng language, and he translated most of the Old Testament. He was a Bible translator extraordinaire whose work influenced the *Chinese Union Version* of 1919.

1.2.3 The Protestant Missions

As it became increasingly clear that Mandarin would become the *lingua franca*, the classical language committees were dissolved by 1907, and the Mandarin translation was published in 1919 under the name *Chinese Union Version*. It remains the authoritative Chinese Bible version but was revised once in 2010 by the Hong Kong Bible Society.

Besides the Classical languages and Mandarin Chinese, missionaries also translated the Bible into other Chinese dialects. The European and Chinese definitions of “language” 语言 and “dialect” 方言 differ throughout history. In the European understanding, two speeches are dialects if they are intelligible; they are languages if not. The Chinese use ethnic and political traits to correlate two speeches. Two speeches are dialects if the people who use them share the same ethnic group or nationality; they are two languages if they belong to different groups.



Speakers of the Chinese dialects are the ethnic Hàn 汉, but the linguistic variation between these dialects is comparable to or even more significant than that of the Germanic or Romance languages. There are nine Chinese dialect groups, and each has a complex subsystem.

Dialect Group	Population
Mandarin 官	960 Million
Jìn 晋	48 Million
Gàn 赣	31 Million
Mǐn 闽	70 Million
Yuè 粤	60 Million
Píng 平	3.8 Million
Hakka 客家	30 Million
Xiāng 湘	38 Million
Wú 吴	80 Million
Huī 徽	4.6 Million

Table 1.4: The Chinese dialects

Translations of the Bible in Chinese dialects emerged shortly after the completion of the first Bibles in Wényán 文言. Bibles in Mandarin were published in 1874, in four different Mǐn 闽 dialects in 1884–1922, in Cantonese in 1894, in four different Wú 吴 dialects in 1901–1914, and in Hakka in 1916. Portions of the Bible were translated in 28 different Chinese dialects. Details are displayed in the following chart and in appendix II of this chapter.

ISO639-3	Dialect	Chinese Dialect Group	Book	NT	Bible
ltc	Middle Chinese	Root	650 (?)		
lzh	High Wénlǐ 深文理	Literary 文言文	1810	1814	1822
lzh	Easy Wénlǐ 易文理	Literary 文言文	1883	1885	1902
cmn	Standard 普通话	Guān 官, Běijīng 北京	1864	1872	1874
cmn	Nánjīng 南京	Guān 官, Jiānghuái 江淮	1854	1857	
cmn	Yāntái 烟台	Guān 官, Jiāoliáo 胶辽	1918		
cmn	Jǐnán 济南	Guān 官, Jīlǔ 冀鲁	1892		
cmn	Wúhàn 武汉	Guān 官, Xīnán 西南	1921		
hak	Méizhōu 梅州	Hakka 客家	1860	1883	1916
hak	Hépó 河婆	Hakka 客家		1916	
hak	Lóngyán 龙岩	Hakka 客家	1919		

1.2.3 The Protestant Missions

ISO639-3	Dialect	Chinese Dialect Group	Book	NT	Bible
cdo	Fúzhōu 福州	Mǐn 闽, Eastern 东	1852	1856	1891
mnp	Shàowǔ 邵武	Mǐn 闽, Northern 北	1891		
mnp	Jiàn'ōu 建瓯	Mǐn 闽, Northern 北		1896	
mnp	Jiànyáng 建阳	Mǐn 闽, Northern 北	1898		
cpx	Púxiān 莆仙	Mǐn 闽, Púxiān 莆仙	1892	1902	1912
nan	Teochew 潮汕	Mǐn 闽, Southern 南	1875	1896	1922
nan	Hainanese 海南	Mǐn 闽, Southern 南	1891		
nan	Hokkien 福建	Mǐn 闽, Southern 南	1852	1873	1884
wuu	Wēnzhōu 温州	Wú 吴, Ōujiāng 瓯江	1892	1902	
wuu	Shànghǎi 上海	Wú 吴, Tàihú 太湖	1847	1870	1908
wuu	Níngbō 宁波	Wú 吴, Tàihú 太湖	1852	1868	1901
wuu	Hángzhōu 杭州	Wú 吴, Tàihú 太湖	1879		
wuu	Sūzhōu 苏州	Wú 吴, Tàihú 太湖	1879	1881	1908
wuu	Tāizhōu 台州	Wú 吴, Tāizhōu 台州	1880	1881	1914
wuu	Jīnhuá 金华	Wú 吴, Wùzhōu 务州	1866		
yue	Liánzhōu 连州	Yuè 粤, Luōguǎng 罗广	1904		
yue	Cantonese 广东话	Yuè 粤, Yuè-Hǎi 粤海	1862	1877	1894

Table 1.5: Bible translation in Chinese dialects

The only Bible translations that are still used today are the Mandarin, Hokkien, and Hakka translations. Since 1949, Mandarin Chinese has gradually risen to such prominence that virtually all Hànn Chinese acquired native competence of the *lingua franca*. Churches have adapted to this situation by shifting usage to the Mandarin Chinese Bible (the *Chinese Union Version*) in the twentieth century. The Scriptures are either entirely read in Mandarin Chinese or instantly translated into the respective dialect from the Mandarin Bible. Since the nineteenth century, sizable Hokkien and Hakka populations migrated to other countries in Southeast Asia and North America. Hokkien (Taiwanese) is also spoken by 70% of the population in Táiwān. These Hokkien and Hakka diaspora communities continued using the Bibles of 1884 and 1916. Under the authority of the Bible Society of Táiwān, the Bibles were revised or retranslated to adapt to language use in the twenty-first century: in 2008, for Hokkien and in 2012, for Hakka.

1.3 Chinese Jews and Muslims

1.3.1 Jews

The earliest specific evidence³³ of the presence of *Jews* in China comes from the Tang dynasty (A.D. 618–907). An eighth century manuscript in Hebrew script was found in the Mògāo Caves 莫高窟 in Dúnhuāng 敦煌, a station on the ancient Silk Road. According to Arabic sources, Jews were among the many foreigners killed in the agitation of Khân-fū (Canton 广州) in 878. The Jewish community at Kāifēng 开封 in Henan Province was founded during the Song dynasty (960–1279); their synagogue (*qīngzhēnsì* 清真寺) was built in 1163. Chinese people referred to the Jewish religion as *tiǎojīnjiào* 挑筋教, literally “the religion which removes the sinew,” which likely refers to the Jewish prohibition of eating the tendon attached to the socket of the hip (see Genesis 32:32). The Jew Moshe ben Abram (1619–1657), whose Chinese name was Zhào Yǐngchéng 赵映乘, became a special envoy of the emperor at the end of the Míng dynasty 明朝 (1368–1644). He helped rebuild the Kāifēng synagogue that was destroyed in a flood in 1642. The Jewish community practiced the Rabbinic prayers and festivals. They copied 13 Torah scrolls in Hebrew. There is no information available on Jewish efforts to translate portions of the Torah into Chinese. Four stelae in Chinese that are dated 1489, 1512, 1663, and 1679 were inscribed with information about the religion, festivals, and the history of the community. At its height, the Jewish community in Kāifēng had more than 5,000 members.

A number of setbacks occurred after the sixteenth century, which contributed to the decline of the Kāifēng Jewish community and of other Jewish communities in China, such as floods, calamities, and the turmoil caused by the Heavenly Kingdom 太平天国 rebellion in the nineteenth century. In 1850, the Kāifēng synagogue was reported to be in poor shape. By 1866, the synagogue had been dismantled, and no synagogue was rebuilt afterwards. Donald Leslie, the author of *Jews and Judaism in traditional China*, reasoned that the decline is mainly due

³³ Scholars do not consider the mention of “Sinim” in Isaiah 49:12 to refer to the Chinese, nor do they accept the theory that Noah and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet, reached China, as Muslim sources from the A.D. tenth century had suggested. Scholars also disregard claims that the Chinese classics of the first millenary B.C. such as the *Yījīng* 易经 or Laozi’s *Dàodéjīng* 道德经 are connected to the Hebrew Torah. No linkage between the Hebrew and Chinese language or script is believed to exist. Finally, scholars also reject the idea that the Chinese are linked to the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel (see Leslie 1998).

1.3.2 Muslims

to the lengthy isolation from other Jewish communities in the world. In the twentieth century, the Chinese government classified the Kāifēng Jews within the Hàn nationality. The Kāifēng Jews are reported to use seven Chinese surnames, among which are Lǐ 李 and Gāo 高. These surnames supposedly represent the names of Levi and Cohen.

1.3.2 Muslims

The Chinese Government defines the *Huí* 回 nationality, without regard to religion, as the descendants of Arab and Central Asian people who had settled in China during the Tang (A.D. 618–907) and Song (A.D. 960–1279) dynasties. The *Huí* ancestors mainly originated from places along the ancient Silk Road. The overwhelming majority of the 10.5 million *Huí* people are Muslims. *Huí* communities exist across the country, but are concentrated in Northwestern China (Níngxià, Gānsù, Qīnghǎi, and Xīnjiāng provinces). The Government also includes the 5,000 *Utsuls* 回輝 people on the Hǎinán Island within the *Huí* nationality. Their ancestors are Austronesian Muslims who arrived from Vietnam during the Ming dynasty (A.D. 1368–1644). The *Huí* people have no indigenous language but speak Mandarin Chinese. As they are Muslims, part of their religious vocabulary differs from that of the *Hàn* Chinese.

Information on the number of *Huí* Christians is unknown. In 2010, an anonymous mission organization published a *Huí* Bible in Hong Kong. The language of this Bible is similar to that of the *Chinese Union Version* (Hong Kong Bible Society) or *Chinese New Version* (World Wide Bible Society), except for keywords such as God, Jesus, or Christ. Some differences are listed below. The differences relate to how the *Huí* people traditionally transliterate religious terms from Arabic into Chinese. For example, the term *Màixīhā* 麦西哈 is a transliteration of “Messiah” in Arabic or Hebrew, while the term *Jīdū* 基督 is a transliteration of “Christ” in Greek. The different choice for the name of God, “True Lord” (*Huí*) versus the polytheistic concept of *Shén* 神 (*Hàn*), is reminiscent of the nineteenth century when Protestant missionaries disagreed on using *Shén* 神 versus *Shàngdì* 上帝.

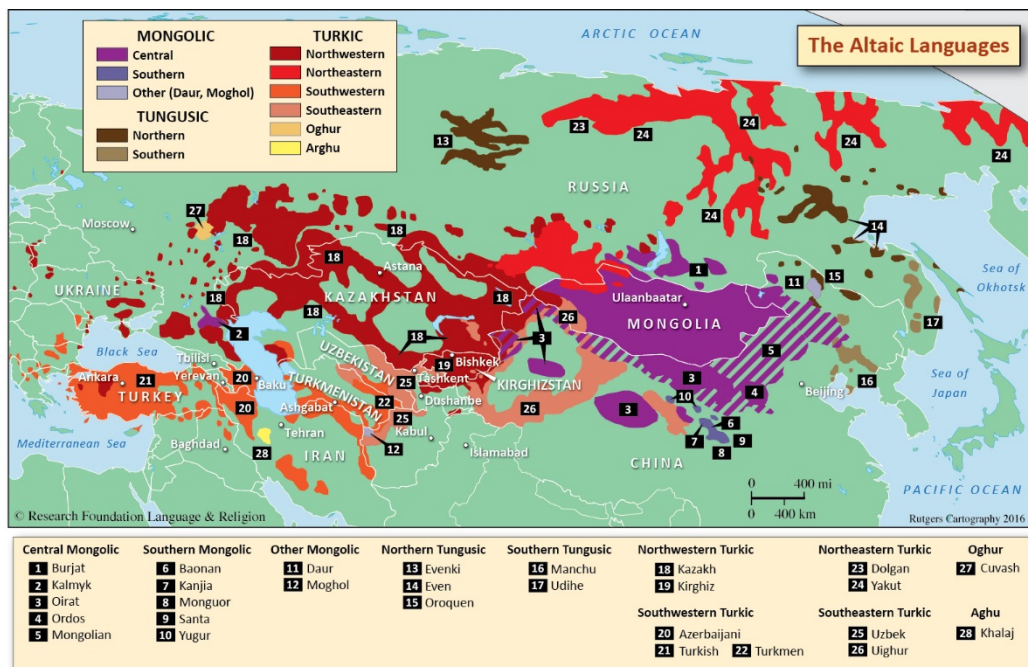
Huí Bible (2010)	Chinese Union Version (1919)	English	Reference
真主	神	God (Yahweh)	Mt. 3:9
主	主	Lord	Mt. 4:7
神明	神	god (not Yahweh)	Jn. 10:35
尔撒	耶稣	Jesus	Mt. 1:1
麦西哈	基督	Christ	Mt. 1:17
麦西哈的弟子	基督徒	Christian	Ac. 11:26
易卜劣廸	魔鬼	devil	Mt. 4:1
天仙	天使	angel	Mt. 13:39
佳音	福音	Good News	Mt. 4:23
礼拜堂	会堂	Synagogue	Mt. 4:23
哲玛提	教会	Church	Mt. 16:18
坟坑	阴间	Hades	Mt. 11:23

Table 1.6: Terms in Huí Bible

1.4 Altaic Minorities

The Altaic languages are a sprachbund or family of about 67 languages of which the geographical origin is the Altai Mountains in Central East Asia, spanning over Russia, China, and Mongolia. The Altaic languages consist of three subgroups: the Turkic (42), the Mongolic (13), and the Tungusic (12) languages. Two Altaic peoples ruled over China: the Mongols during the Yuán dynasty 元朝 (1271–1368) and the Manchus during the Qīng dynasty 清朝 (1644–1911).

1.4.1 Mongolian



The subsequent table illustrates the portions of the Bible that were translated into five Altaic languages of China: one Mongolic, two Tungusic, and two Turkic languages (for detailed information see appendix III of this chapter).

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book	NT	Bible
mvf	Chahar-Mongolian 内蒙古语	Altaic, Mongolic, Central	3,380,000		2004	
mnc	Manchu 满语	Altaic, Tungusic, South	20	1822	1835	
evn	Evenki 鄂温克语	Altaic, Tungusic, North	11,000	2002		
oui	Old Uyghur 回鹘语	Altaic, Turkic, Southeast	?		1307	
uig	Modern Uyghur 维吾尔语	Altaic, Turkic, Southeast	8,400,000	1898	1914	1950

Table 1.7: Bible translation in Altaic languages of China

1.4.1 Mongolian

Among the Altaic groups, the *Mongols* 蒙古 assume a prominent historical role. Genghis Khan (1162–1227) founded the Mongol Empire in Avarga³⁴ in 1206 and

³⁴ Avarga is located in Khentii Province, Mongolia.

started the Mongol Invasions, which, at their peak in 1279, resulted in the conquest of most regions of Eurasia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. Yet, the Mongols endured a decisive defeat against the Muslim Mamluks³⁵ in the Battle of Ain Jalut³⁶ of 1260.

Shortly before this battle, European crusaders led by French King Louis IX (1214–1270) were likewise defeated by the Muslim Mamluks in the Battle of Al Mansurah³⁷ of 1250. Sharing a common enemy but different strategic goals,³⁸ the Mongols and the Europeans considered forming an alliance against the Muslim forces. Pope Innocent IV (1195–1254) initiated an overture toward the Mongols. In his letter *Dei patris immensa*³⁹ written in 1245, he explained the Christian faith to Güyük Khan⁴⁰ (1206–1248) and invited him to receive baptism. In his reply in 1246, Güyük Khan demanded submission of the Europeans.

Contact continued even when the Mongolian empire separated into four khanates⁴¹ in the 1260s. In particular, Kublai Khan⁴² (1215–1294) of the Yuán Khanate and Arghun Khan (1258–1291) of the Western Asian Ilkhanate

³⁵ Mamluks were slave-soldiers that Arab Fatimid Caliphs brought from Central Asian tribes to form their military elite corps, similar to the *Légion étrangère* (Foreign Legion). The Mamluks supplanted the Fatimids in 1174 and ruled over Egypt and the Middle East until the fifteenth century.

³⁶ Ain Jalut, “Spring of Goliath,” is a place in the Jezreel valley of Southeastern Galilee. The European crusaders in Palestine allowed the Egyptian Mamluks to traverse it to fight the Mongols in 1260. See Cline (2002).

³⁷ Al Mansurah is situated northeast of Cairo in the Nile delta and is the capital of the Dakahlia Governorate in modern-day Egypt.

³⁸ In their military campaigns, the Mongols wanted control over all Eurasian people. The Europeans waged the crusades to allow pilgrims access to the Holy Land under Muslim control and to overcome the schism of 1054 between Catholic and Orthodox churches. The Orthodox churches were in Turkish-controlled territory.

³⁹ Translation from Latin into English: “The Boundlessness of God the Father.”

⁴⁰ Güyük Khan (1206–1248) was the third Great Khan of the undivided Mongol Empire. He was the grandson of Genghis Khan.

⁴¹ A khanate is a Turkish and Mongol term to designate a polity or kingdom. A khanate is the polity ruled by a khan.

⁴² Kublai Khan Emperor 元世祖忽必烈 (1215–1294) was the first Emperor of the Yuán dynasty. He was the grandson of Genghis Khan.

corresponded with the Pope. They requested Catholic missionaries to visit the courts of the Mongol Khans. The communication most sympathetic to Christianity was a letter from Arghun Khan⁴³ to Pope Nicholas IV in 1290 in which he discussed baptism. However, these written exchanges ceased after the death of Pope Nicholas IV (1227–1292) and of the two Khans.

Pope Nicholas IV sent John of Montecorvino (1247–1328) as his special envoy to Arghun Khan and Kublai Khan. As a member of the Franciscan order, John was the forerunner of missionaries of the Middle Ages. He settled in Běijīng in 1294, shortly after the death of Kublai Khan. He built a church, established three mission stations, and learned Old Uyghur, the language spoken by the Mongol ruling elite. In 1307, he translated the New Testament and the Psalms into Old Uyghur. Although his Bible manuscripts did not endure, John's accomplishments were reported in his two letters⁴⁴ to the Pope. He died in Běijīng in 1328, and his mission in China continued for 40 years before the new Míng 明 rulers expelled foreign missionaries from China in the 1360s.

⁴³ An approximate English translation from Mostaert and Cleaves's (1952) French translation: "You have sent a message saying: 'The other peoples of the universe, whoever they are, being people who pray according to their own religion and scriptures (Buddhists, Muslims, etc.), are praying falsely. The religion of *Misiqa* (Messiah, the Christ) adores Heaven and is true.' May the Ilkhan now adopt the religion of *Misiqa*? Saying that our good father—because the religion of *Misiqa* is the right one—as well as our good grandmother had also received *silam* ["baptism," a Syrian loanword], you have also again and again made communications, sent ambassadors and bearers of urgent oral messages who said 'May nothing bad be committed against the Christians!' Your saying 'May the Ilkhan receive *silam*' is legitimate. We say: 'We the descendants of Genghis Khan, keeping our own proper Mongol identity, whether some receive *silam* or some don't, that is only for *Eternal Tengri* (Heaven) to decide. People who have received *silam* and who, like you, have a truly honest heart and are pure, do not act against the religion and orders of the *Eternal Tengri* and of *Misiqa*. Regarding the other peoples, those who, forgetting the *Eternal Tengri* and disobeying it, are lying and stealing, are there not many of them? Now, you say that we have not received *silam*, you are offended and harbor thoughts of discontent. But if one prays to *Eternal Tengri* and carries righteous thoughts, it is as much as if he had received *silam*. We have written our letter in the year of the tiger, the fifth of the new moon of the first summer month (May 14th, 1290), when we were in Urumi." The red seal inscription was 輔国安民之宝 ("Seal of the State patron and the source of peace for the People").

⁴⁴ The letters are held at the Laurentian Library in Florence and at the National Library in Paris. Both letters are included and translated in Yule's book of 1866, pp. 197–209.

The Mongol armies moved back and forth along the Silk Road, a ten-thousand-kilometer route on which traders, soldiers, nomads, pilgrims, and monks exchanged goods,⁴⁵ diseases,⁴⁶ technologies,⁴⁷ philosophies,⁴⁸ and religions.⁴⁹ The Silk Road was a crossroad of cultures. The ancient travelers included Chinese, Indians, Persians, Syrians, Greeks, Romans, and Sogdians.

Two major stops on the Silk Road were Samarkand in Uzbekistan and Turfan 吐鲁番 in the Chinese Xīnjiāng 新疆 Province. *Samarkand* was the multi-religious center of the Sogdian people.⁵⁰ Sogdian was the *lingua franca* used on the Silk Road during the Táng dynasty 唐朝 (618–907) from which other languages had borrowed vocabulary. The Chinese noun *diàn* 店 “hotel”, for example, is borrowed from the Sogdian noun *tym* “hotel.” The descendants of the Sogdians were supplanted by Uzbek and Tajik tribes in the sixteenth century. Before the ninth century, *Turfan* was under Tibetan control. With the defeat of the Uyghur armies by Kirghiz forces in 840, there was a massive influx of Uyghur people into Central Asia. Uyghur people took control of Turfan and relocated there. They established a kingdom with the capital in Qocho or Gāochāng 高昌, 30 kilometers away from Turfan. This kingdom existed between 856 and 1389, but it became a vassal state

⁴⁵ The Silk Road derived its name from the lucrative silk trade initiated during the Hàn dynasty 汉朝 (B.C. 207–A.D. 220). However, silk textiles were not the only goods that were traded.

⁴⁶ The *Black Death*, a pandemic that killed an estimated 100 to 200 million people in the years 1346–1353, is believed to have originated from Central Asia where it traveled along the Silk Road and reached Europe. In 2010, scientists analyzed the DNA of victims and suggested this scenario. See Bos, K.I. et al. (2011), “A draft genome of *Yersinia pestis* from victims of the Black Death” in *Nature* 478 (7370): pp. 506–10.

⁴⁷ Metallurgical, agricultural, and medical technologies were exchanged on the Silk Road beginning with the Hàn dynasty 汉朝.

⁴⁸ *Manichaeism*, for example, was a religious philosophy that expanded along the Silk Road.

⁴⁹ Jewish, Christian, and Islamic religions came to China on the Silk Road during the Táng dynasty 唐朝 (618–907). Even before, Buddhism had traveled on the Silk Road in the reverse direction reaching the Greco-Roman world in ancient times.

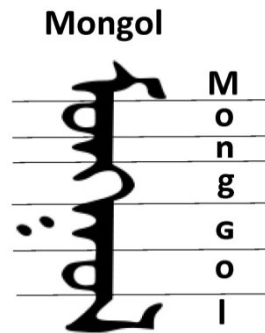
⁵⁰ The Sogdian language is an Eastern Iranian language of the Indo-European family that was spoken in Samarkand and Bukhara, Uzbekistan, during 100 B.C.–A.D. 1000. Sogdian is different from Persian, a Western Iranian language. The modern Yaghnobi language, spoken by approximately 12,000 people in Tajikistan, is the direct descendant of Sogdian.

1.4.1 Mongolian

of Mongol rulers after 1250, before being integrated into the Moghul Khanate,⁵¹ a Mongolian Islamic kingdom. Originally, the Uyghur people believed in Manichaeism⁵² but later converted to Buddhism. In the fifteenth century, the Mongol rulers began their forced conversion of the Uyghurs to Islam, which was completed in 1500.

The Sogdian people adopted the Old Syriac alphabet, which was derived from the Aramaic alphabet. The Sogdian script was used for secular and religious texts. During the ninth century, the Uyghur created a script, which was adopted from the Sogdian alphabet. Influenced by the prestigious Chinese script, the Uyghur changed the direction of the script from horizontal (right-to-left like the Sogdians) to vertical (top-to-bottom like the Chinese). The Uyghur script was used by the Uyghur and Yugur people in Gānsù 甘肃 Province of China until the nineteenth century, when they changed to the Arabic-Persian script and Cyrillic script. Their original writing system fell out of use.

In the thirteenth century, the illiterate Mongol rulers decided to create their own script based on the Old Uyghur script. The Mongolian script in turn formed the basis of writing systems in the Tungusic languages of Manchu, Xibe, and Evenki. Today, the Mongolian script is still in use in China and Mongolia. The following three charts illustrate the alphabetic make-up of a written word and show the consonantal and vocalic graphemes of the Mongolian script.



The word *Mongol* in Mongol script

⁵¹ The Moghul Khanate was a kingdom that broke away from the Chagatai Khanate in 1347. Chagatai (1183–1242) was the second son of Genghis Khan. His khanate was one of four khanates that were under the unified rule of his father.

⁵² Manichaeism was founded by the Persian Mani (A.D. 216–276). Manichaeism teaches a dualistic cosmology: an ongoing struggle between a good, spiritual world of light and an evil, material world of darkness. Manichaeism spread to the Middle East, Europe, and Central Asia and rivaled with Christian orthodoxy, which viewed it as a gnostic movement.

Traditional Mongolian Script

Mongolian Consonants	Labial				Alveolar				Palatal				Velar				Uvular			
	Mongolian				Mongolian				Mongolian				Mongolian				Mongolian			
	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final
Stops	voiced	ᠪ	ᠬ	ᠭ	ᠳ	ᠲ	ᠳ	ᠳ					ᠭ	ᠭ	ᠭ	ᠭ	ᠭ	ᠭ	ᠭ	ᠭ
	unvoiced	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ									ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ
Fricatives	voiced	ᠪ	ᠪ	ᠪ					ᠰ	ᠰ	ᠰ	ᠰ					ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ
	unvoiced	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠰ	ᠰ	ᠰ	ᠰ	ᠰ	ᠰ	ᠰ	ᠰ					ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ
Affricates	unvoiced				ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ								
	aspirated				ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ	ᠳ								
Nasals		ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ					ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ				
Laterals					ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ												
Glides					ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ								
Trills					ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ	ᠮ												

Table 1.8: Mongolian consonants

Mongolian Vowels	Front				Central				Back			
	Unrounded		Rounded		Unrounded		Rounded		Unrounded		Rounded	
	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final
Close	i	ᠢ	ᠢ	ᠢ	y	ᠢ	ᠢ	ᠢ	u	ᠤ	ᠤ	ᠤ
Open	e	ᠡ	ᠡ	ᠡ					a	ᠠ	ᠠ	ᠠ

Table 1.9: Mongolian vowels

The first complete Bible was published using the traditional script in Khalka Mongolian, the official language of Mongolia, in 2004, centuries after the Mongolian conquests. However, for Chahar-Mongolian, spoken in the V. R. of China, an independent translation was necessary. There are three translations of

1.4.2 Manchu and Evenki

the New Testament in Chahar-Mongolian that were produced in the twenty-first century. The first version, called *Ariun Nom*, was completed in 2004 by a team coordinated by Stefan Müller of Zentralasien-Gesellschaft. It is the version with the widest circulation in the churches of Inner Mongolia. The second is a dynamic equivalence translation completed by members of the *Summer Institute of Linguistics* (SIL) and was published in 2007 with the title *Shine Geree*. The third translation was completed by Bao Xiaolin, a pastor of the Three-Self Church, in cooperation with the United Bible Societies; the manuscript was published by Amity Press in 2013.

1.4.2 Manchu and Evenki

The Manchu 满族 people⁵³ are descended from the Jurchen 女真 people,⁵⁴ a Tungus group who inhabited the area of present-day Liáoníng 辽宁 Province. During the second half of the Sòng dynasty 宋朝 (960–1290), the Jurchen people rebelled against the ruling Sòng and established the Jīn dynasty 金朝 (1115–1234)⁵⁵ in Northern China.

The Jurchen or Jīn people were later subjugated by the Mongols. In the late Míng dynasty 明朝 (1368–1644), Jurchen chieftain Nurhaci 努尔哈赤 (1559–1626) unified the Jurchen tribes through three measures: he commissioned a script based on the Mongolian script, established a military and societal system called the Eight Banners,⁵⁶ and started a military campaign against the ruling Míng.

⁵³ There have been different opinions on the etymology of the self-named Manchu. According to the Qīng dynasty's official historical record, Manchu is derived from the Buddhist term *Manjusri*, a bodhisattva associated with transcendent wisdom. Other scholars associate Manchu with Lǐ Mǎnzhù 李满住, the name of a Jurchen chieftain. However, others believe that Manchu is derived from the compound word *mangga-ju* "strong-arrow," which means "intrepid arrow." The term "Mandarin" adopted in European languages is derived from *mǎn dà rén* 满大人, which means "High Manchu Official."

⁵⁴ The Sùshèn 肃慎 tribe emerged as early as the sixth century B.C. in Chinese documents. The Sùshèn are believed to be the ancestors of the Mòhé 靺鞨 people, who are mentioned in documents of the Hàn 汉 dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220). The Mòhé people are the direct ancestors of the Jurchen people.

⁵⁵ The Jīn dynasty 金朝 (1115–1234) established by the Jurchen people must not be confused with the Jìn dynasty 晋朝 (265–420).

⁵⁶ The Eight Banners symbolized eight Manchu elite armies in addition to the ordinary standing green army. The banners incorporated Manchu ethnic identity and each bannerman's membership

Nurhaci's son, Hóng Tàijí 洪太極 (1592–1643), adopted the name Qīng 清⁵⁷ and declared himself the emperor of Qīng. Control over all of China was won by Nurhaci's grandson Shùnzhi 順治⁵⁸ in 1644 through continuous military campaigns.

Manchu was destined to become the official language of the Chinese empire in 1644, but it lacked the administrative, scientific, and even practical vocabulary found in Chinese; Chinese inevitably influenced the Manchu language. Despite efforts made by the Emperor Kāngxī 康熙皇帝 (1654–1722) and Emperor Qiánlóng 乾隆皇帝 (1711–1796) to maintain the Manchu language, it steadily declined.

In 1859, the Imperial Government allowed Hàn Chinese immigration⁵⁹ into Manchuria, which contributed to the final decline of the Manchu language. By the end of the Qīng government in 1912, the Manchu language disappeared completely from public life. However, the discovery of several Manchu-speaking villages in Liáoníng Province in the 1960s revived interest, and the Chinese Government began a revitalization program; however, there are probably only approximately 20 active speakers of Manchu today. The Manchu script, consonant and vowels, is introduced in the following two charts.

Manchu	
	M
	a
	n
	ch
	u

The word *Manchu* in Manchu script

was hereditary. The eight banners were: (1) Plain Yellow Banner 正黄旗, (2) Bordered Yellow Banner 镶黄旗, (3) Plain White Banner 正白旗, (4) Bordered White Banner 镶白旗, (5) Plain Red Banner 正红旗, (6) Bordered Red Banner 镶红旗, (7) Plain Blue Banner 正蓝旗, and (8) Bordered Blue Banner 镶蓝旗.

⁵⁷ Pamela Crossley (1997) proposed that the name Qīng 清 (“clear” or “pure”) might be a response to the name of the Míng 明 dynasty, which means “bright” or “clear.” The character 明 is composed of 日 “day” and 月 “moon” and thus associated with the idea of “fire,” while 清 contains the water radical 氵; this association would refer to the Qīng’s conquest of Míng as the elemental defeat of fire by water.

⁵⁸ He was the first Qīng Emperor to rule over China. This picture is held at the Palace Museum, Beijing 故宫博物院.

⁵⁹ See Gorelova (2002).

Traditional Manchu Script

Manchu Consonants	Labial				Alveolar				Palatal				Velar				Uvular			
	Manchu				Manchu				Manchu				Manchu				Manchu			
	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final
Stops	voiced	b	ᠪ	ᠪ	d	ᠳ	ᠳ						g	ᠭ	ᠭ		q	ᠬ	ᠬ	
	unvoiced	p	ᠪ	ᠪ	t	ᠲ	ᠲ						k	ᠭ	ᠭ	ᠭ	q	ᠬ	ᠬ	ᠬ
Fricatives	voiced	v	ᠪ	ᠪ					ʃ	ᠶ	ᠶ						x	ᠬ	ᠬ	
	unvoiced	f	ᠪ	ᠪ	s	ᠰ	ᠰ	ᠰ	ʃ	ᠶ	ᠶ	ᠶ	x	ᠭ	ᠭ		x	ᠬ	ᠬ	
Affricates	unvoiced				z	ᠰ			tʃ	ᠶ	ᠶ									
	aspirated				ts ^b	ᠰ			tʃ ^b	ᠶ	ᠶ									
Nasals		m	ᠪ	ᠪ	n	ᠨ	ᠨ	ᠨ					ŋ	ᠭ	ᠭ	ᠭ				
Laterals					l	ᠨ	ᠨ	ᠨ												
Glides / Trills					r	ᠨ	ᠨ	ᠨ	j	ᠶ	ᠶ									

Table 1.10: Manchu consonants

Manchu Vowels	Front								Central				Back			
	Unrounded				Rounded				Unrounded				Rounded			
	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final	IPA	initial	medial	final
Close	i	ᠶ	ᠶ	ᠶ	y	ᠶ	ᠶ						u	ᠭ	ᠭ	ᠭ
	ɪ		ᠶ	ᠶ									ʊ	ᠭ	ᠭ	ᠭ
Close-mid	e	ᠶ	ᠶ	ᠶ									o	ᠭ	ᠭ	ᠭ
Open									a	ᠶ	ᠶ	ᠶ				

Table 1.11: Manchu vowels

Stepan Vaciliyevich Lipoftsoff (1773–1841), an official of the Russian Foreign Office who studied Manchu for 20 years in China, translated the Gospel of Matthew (1822) and the New Testament (1835)⁶⁰ into Manchu before 1859, when Manchu began its final decline.

George Borrow was appointed by the *British and Foreign Bible Society* (BFBS) to help finalize the manuscript. In Beijing, George Borrow obtained an unpublished manuscript of the Manchu Old Testament that the Jesuit missionary Louis Antoine de Poirot had completed in 1790. This manuscript enabled Borrow to learn the Manchu language in six months and to proofread Lipoftsoff's New Testament. The BFBS published the New Testament manuscript in St. Petersburg in 1835 using Manchu characters, and it has been reprinted often since then.

The Evenki language, a Tungus language, is spoken by 20,000 people in China and 6,000 people in Russia. Nadezhda Bulatova and David Kheïzell of the *Institute of Bible Translation* (IBT)⁶¹ in Moscow translated the Gospel of Luke into the Tura dialect of Evenki in 2002. The manuscript was published by IBT in Moscow in 2002 and republished as Evenki/Russian diglot with audio recording in 2013, making it usable for the Evenki in Inner Mongolia and Hěilóngjiāng, China.

1.4.3 Uyghur

More than 10 million, predominantly Muslim, *Uyghur* 维吾尔 people live in Xīnjiāng 新疆 Province of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan today. About 50 manuscripts written in Old Uyghur were found in Turfan, a stop on the Silk Road, and some of these manuscripts are Christian texts, which have been digitalized at the *Brandenburg Academy of Social Sciences and Humanities*⁶² in Germany. As mentioned previously, Catholic missionary John of Montecorvino (1247–1328) translated the New Testament and the Psalms into Old Uyghur before 1307, as Old Uyghur was the *lingua franca* used by the Mongol rulers in

⁶⁰ A copy of the New Testament is held at the library of the University of Western Sydney.

⁶¹ See <http://ibt.org.ru/english/bible/evk.html> (Accessed on September 12th, 2019).

⁶² See http://turfan.bbaw.de/dta/ch_u/dta_chu_index.html (Accessed on September 12th, 2019).

1.4.3 Uyghur

Běijīng. Although no Bible manuscript survived, information on the existence of the translated New Testament is contained in a letter by John to the Pope.

Modern Uyghur is not the direct descendant of Old Uyghur. Old Uyghur developed into the Western Yugur 西裕固⁶³ language, which is spoken today by about 5,000 speakers in the Sùnnán 肃南 County of Gānsù 甘肃 Province. Instead, Modern Uyghur is the name of the literary Chagatai language as it is spoken in Kāshghar 喀什 in Xīnjiāng 新疆 Province. Modern Uyghur was standardized in the 1930s, and it is in this language that the New Testament was translated.

The first missionary to the Uyghur people in the modern era was Johannes Avetaranian,⁶⁴ who was recruited by the *Mission Union of Sweden*.⁶⁵ At the end of his first explorative trip with Swedish missionaries to Kāshghar in 1892, Avetaranian stayed behind. He quickly learned Modern Uyghur, which is related to his native language, Turkish. By 1897, he had translated the four Gospels. Swedish missionaries Lars Erik Högberg⁶⁶ and Gösta Raquette,⁶⁷ who settled in Kāshghar after 1893, were critical of Avetaranian's translation, and the

⁶³ The Western Yugur language is a Turkic language whereas the Eastern Yugur language, also spoken in Gānsù Province, is a Mongolian language.

⁶⁴ Johannes Avetaranian (1861–1919) was a Turk from Erzurum in Turkey. His original Islamic name was Mehmet Şükri. His father was a dervish, an ascetic of Sufism (Sufism is a mystical movement within Islam.) Johannes Avetaranian adopted an Armenian Christian name ("Son of the Gospel") after studying the New Testament and converting to the Christian faith. He was based in Kāshghar during 1892–1897. After 1897, he was appointed by the German Orient Mission as a missionary to Bulgaria. He died in Wiesbaden, Germany in 1919. See Avetaranian (1930).

⁶⁵ The Mission Covenant Church of Sweden (Svenska Missionskyrkan) was a church denomination that was founded in 1878 and merged in 2012 with the Baptist Union of Sweden and the Methodist Union of Sweden, under the new name Joint Future Church (Equmeniakyrkan). Before 2003, the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden was called Mission Union of Sweden. It was a free reformed church with roots in pietism.

⁶⁶ Lars Erik Högberg (1858–1924) was sent to Kāshghar by the Mission Union of Sweden. He was the undisputed leader of the Swedish Mission in Kāshghar until 1916.

⁶⁷ Gösta Raquette (1871–1945) was stationed in Kāshghar between 1896–1901 and 1913–1921. He wrote Uyghur grammar, which was published in Berlin in 1912, and contributed to the revision of the New Testament. He accepted a lectureship at Lund University after his retirement from the field.

differences of opinion resulted in strained relations. Without resolving the dispute, the BFBS published the four Gospels in 1898 using Arabic script.

Avetaranian left Kāshghar in 1897 and did not return. The dispute smoldered on for 20 years. When he was stationed in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, Avetaranian completed the first draft of the Modern Uyghur New Testament. The BFBS initiated two mediation conferences—one in Berlin (1909) and one in London (1911)—and a compromise was reached. Avetaranian and Swedish missionary Gösta Raquette collaborated on the revision in Plovdiv. By 1914, 2,000 copies of the New Testament were printed in Plovdiv, but the distribution was delayed due to the outbreak of the First World War.

The Swedish mission thrived in Kāshghar between 1901 and 1939 with 60 field missionaries.⁶⁸ Different Swedish missionaries translated the books of Genesis (1917), Job (1921), and Psalms (1923). Gustaf Ahlbert, who settled in Kāshghar in 1912, coordinated the translation work after the closure of the Swedish mission in 1939. Together with Uyghur convert Nur Luke and Oskar Hermansson, he was exiled to Bombay in India, where he died in 1943. With the assistance of Moulvi Munshi and Moulvi Fazil, Oskar Hermansson completed the first Uyghur Bible in 1950. The BFBS published this translation in Cairo in 1950.

The “Dunyaning Nuri” (“Light of the World”) website includes the original *Cairo Bible*⁶⁹ of 1950 and a *revision of the Cairo Bible*⁷⁰ completed in 2013. The Uyghur Bible Society was created in the early 2000s and is based in Turkey. It uploaded a retranslation of almost the entire Bible *online*⁷¹ in 2005. Furthermore, two printed versions were published in Turkey in 2005: one in Arabic script for use in China and the other in Cyrillic script for use in Kazakhstan and other countries.

⁶⁸ See Hultvall (1981).

⁶⁹ See <http://www.dunyaningnuri.com/lat/muqeddes-kitab-1950.html> (Accessed on September 12th, 2019).

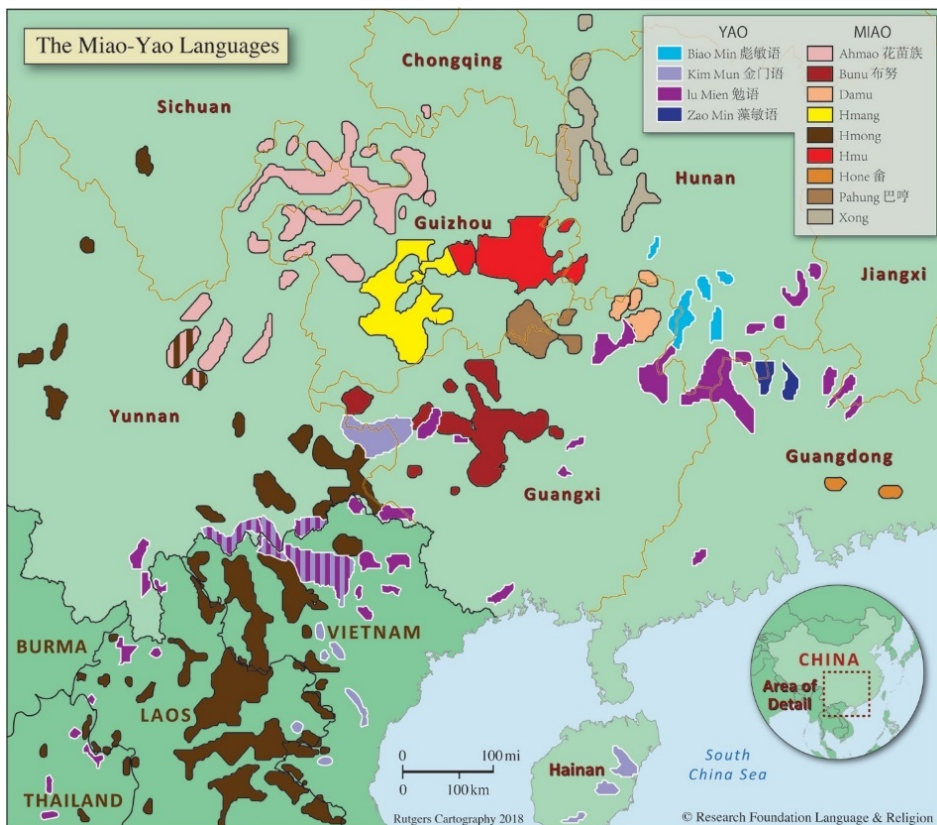
⁷⁰ See <http://www.dunyaningnuri.com/lat/muqeddes-kitab.html> (Accessed on September 12th, 2019).

⁷¹ See <http://www.umkj.org/> (Accessed on September 12th, 2019).

1.5 Miáo-Yáo Minorities

The Miáo-Yáo languages 苗瑶语系 constitute a small family of about 80 languages. Miáo 苗 is the name used by the Chinese during the Qin dynasty (221–206 B.C.) for non-Chinese groups living in the Yangtze valley south of the Hàn areas. Its etymology is uncertain. During the A.D. first millennium, Miáo-Yáo groups were forced by the expansive Hàn population to migrate southward to what is known today as the Hunan, Guìzhōu, Sìchuān, and Yúnnán provinces.

After the eighteenth century, some Miáo groups emigrated from China to other Southeast Asian countries, such as Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar. In the aftermath of the Second Indochina War (1960–1975), about 100,000 ethnic Miáo fled to the United States, France, and Australia because they were allied with the anti-communist forces, which lost the war.



Portions of the Bible were translated into four Miáo languages spoken in Guìzhōu and Sìchuān provinces (for detailed information see appendix IV of this chapter).

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book NT	Bible
hmd	Ahmao 花苗语	Miáo-Yáo, Miáo, Western	300,000	1907 1917	2009
cqd	Chuāndiān Hmong 川滇苗语	Miáo-Yáo, Miáo, Western	95,000	1922 2017	
hea	Hmu 黑苗语	Miáo-Yáo, Miáo, Central	1,250,000	1928 1934	
hmj	Gejia 革家语	Miáo-Yáo, Miáo, Central	60,000	1937	

Table 1.12: Bible translation in Miáo languages of China

1.5.1 Ahmao

The service of English Methodist missionary Samuel Pollard 柏格理 (1864–1915) to the Ahmao people was successful and had long-lasting results. The Ahmao people listened to Pollard’s message and converted in large numbers to escape the despair that gripped their ethnic psyche.⁷² For a long period, they had endured the rude treatment by Yí and Hàn landlords. Samuel Pollard created an alphabet, loosely based on the Latin alphabet, with special characters devised by him (called “Pollard Script”). Soon after he had completed the New Testament in Ahmao, Pollard died from typhoid in 1915. Hudspeth, his missionary successor, revised the manuscript and took it to Japan in 1917 to print 5,000 copies. Hudspeth retranslated the New Testament in the 1930s and published it in Shanghai in 1936. In 1936, Hudspeth wrote that there were 40 organized Ahmao churches with a total of 18,300 members. After 1949, these churches were reorganized as Three-Self Churches. The entire Bible was completed in 2009 by a Three-Self-Church Committee and printed by Amity Press in Nánjīng, China.

1.5.2 Chuāndiān Hmong

English Methodist Missionary Harry Parsons 张道惠 (1878–1952) translated the Gospel of Mark into Sìchuān Hmong in 1922, using the Pollard Script. He was based in Dōngchuān 东川, a district in Yúnnán Province close to Sìchuān Province, for most of the time. Parsons was a colleague of Pollard assisting him at different times with the Ahmao work in Guìzhōu. The Sìchuān Hmong are

⁷² See Pollard, Walter (1928) and Pollard, Samuel (1954).

closely related to the Hmong in Wǔdìng 武定 county, Yúnnán, who converted in great numbers during the ministry of Parsons and China Inland Missionary Gladstone Porteous. Wáng Zhīmíng 王志明 (1907–1973), a native Hmong of Wǔdìng, was ordained as a pastor in 1951 following the departure of the foreign missionaries. After Wáng's refusal to participate in the denunciation of other Christians, he was arrested in 1969 and executed four years later in a stadium in front of 10,000 people. Many of those present were Christians who were indignant. Shortly after the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), Wáng was rehabilitated, and the church in Wǔdìng grew more than tenfold in the following years. Wáng is remembered at the Westminster Abbey in London as one of 10 twentieth-century martyrs.⁷³

1.5.3 Hmu and Gejia

Australian China Inland Missionary Maurice Hutton 胡致中 (1888–?) introduced the *Phonetic Alphabet* 注音字母 in the 1920s and completed the New Testament (1934) in the Hmu language as well as the Gospels of Mark and John (1937) in the Gejia language, another Miáo language spoken in Guizhōu Province. Hans Grass⁷⁴ of Research Foundation Language and Religion retranslated the New Testament into Hmu in 2009 and revised it in 2018 (see sections 2.4.2 and 2.5.2).

1.6 Tai-Kadai Minorities

The Tai-Kadai family consists of more than 96 languages spoken by 100 million people in China, Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos. Tai-Kadai people are believed to originate from some of the ancient Bǎiyuè 百越 people,⁷⁵ who lived more than 2,500 years ago.

⁷³ Statues of twentieth-century martyrs are displayed on the façade above the Great West Door of Westminster Abbey, London. Those commemorated from left to right are Maximilian Kolbe, Manche Masemola, Janani Luwum, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, Óscar Romero, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Esther John, Lucian Tapiedi, and Wáng Zhīmíng 王志明.

⁷⁴ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

⁷⁵ From the Zhōu dynasty 周朝 (1046–256 B.C.), the term *Bǎiyuè*, or Hundred Yuè, referred to southern barbarians in a vast territory from Zhèjiāng to Yúnnán Provinces. In the linguistic classification system, the Yuè languages are now designated as the group of Chinese dialects in which Cantonese belongs.

In manuscripts of the Hàn dynasty 汉朝 (206 B.C.–A.D. 220), the Zhuàng 壮, the Bùyī 布依,⁷⁶ and the Hlǎi 黎 people were variously referred to as Luòyuè 雒越; the Tai people were called Diānyuè 滇越. Scholars agree that the Tai people outside of China originated from Guìzhōu, Guǎngxī, and Guǎngdōng provinces within China. Different theories exist about the exact time when the Tai people migrated to Yúnnán, Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos.



⁷⁶ The Bùyī were also called Zhòngjiā, written as 仲家 or as 种家.

Historian Henry Davies proposed in 1909 that after the defeat of the Dàlǐ Kingdom 大理国⁷⁷ by the Mongols in 1253, there was a massive migration of Tai people into Southeast Asia; this theory is based on the idea that the Dàlǐ Kingdom and the earlier Nánzhào Kingdom 南诏国⁷⁸ were established by Tai people. In 1923, missionary-scholar William Clifton Dodd⁷⁹ forwarded a slightly refined hypothesis, which claimed that the Mongolian conquest of 1253 was the last and not the first in a series of drivers for Tai migration into Southeast Asia. The connection of the Tai people with the Nánzhào Kingdom was disproved by several scholars⁸⁰ who argued that in both kingdoms, the ordinary people were Bái⁸¹ and the ruling elite Yí.⁸² The Tai people did not have a sufficiently significant role to justify fear of a Mongolian invasion. Using evidence from Chinese manuscripts of different dynasties, these historians further claimed the existence of a Tai Kingdom in today's borders since at least the Western Hàn dynasty 西汉朝 (206 B.C.–A.D. 9).

Spurred by discoveries of archaeological sites such as Ban Chiang, Thai scholar Wongthet (1986) suggested a prehistoric presence of Tai people in Thailand. Upon inspection of the Rock Paintings of Huā Mountain (花山壁画)⁸³ in

⁷⁷ Duàn Sīpíng 段思平 established the Dàlǐ Kingdom in 937. This kingdom was ruled by a dynasty of 22 kings before being subjugated by Mongolian armies in 1253.

⁷⁸ In A.D. 738, Pí Luógé 皮罗阁 unified six ethnic tribes into a new kingdom called Nánzhào 南诏. With the support of Chinese emperor Táng Xuánzōng 唐玄宗 (712–756), Pí Luógé established the capital in Tàihé 太和. Today, Tàihé is a village of Dǎlǐ City in Yúnnán Province. Successors of Pí Luógé turned against the Chinese and won two battles with armies of the Táng dynasty. By 829, the Nánzhào Kingdom expanded into Sìchuān, all of Yúnnán, Thailand, and Laos. Yet, after reaching its peak in 850, the Nánzhào Kingdom went into steady decline. See Blackmore (1960).

⁷⁹ See Dodd (1923). *The Tai Race: Elder Brother of the Chinese*. Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Torch.

⁸⁰ See Backus (1981), Mote (1964), Terwiel (1978), Chen and Du (1989), and Winai (1990).

⁸¹ Linguists classified the Bái 白 language either as a Chinese language that was influenced by the Tibeto-Burman language or as an offshoot of the Proto-Sinitic language that had extended contact with Tibeto-Burman languages. The Bái people are known to be the only ethnic group of Buddhist faith in the area. Anthropologists have used this fact to connect the Bái people to the Nánzhào and Dàlǐ polities, which were Buddhist kingdoms.

⁸² The Yí 彝 are now a nationality in the People's Republic of China whose members speak Tibeto-Burman languages and not Tai languages.

⁸³ The Rock Paintings of Huā Mountain (花山壁画) are believed to represent paintings of the ancient Luòyuè 雒越 people, the ancestors of the Zhuang people, and to date back at least to the period

Guǎngxī Province, Wongthet (1994) modified his theory in 1994 and speculated that Guǎngxī, the homeland of the Zhuang people, might be the historic origin of the Tai people.⁸⁴ Chinese historians, including Chen Lǔfan (1990), proposed a similar theory according to which the Tai people originated from the ancient Luòyuè 雒越 people, one subgroup of the Bǎiyuè 百越 people.⁸⁵

From a linguistic perspective, Chamberlain (1997) proposed the Tai-Kadai hypothesis, which is now rather widely accepted. According to this theory, Proto-Tai separated from other Kadai languages around 330 B.C. Although Tai-Kadai people account for more than 22 million speakers in China, no full Bible has ever been completed in any of these languages. The New Testament was translated into three languages—Southern Kam, Yōngběi Zhuàng, and Tai Lǔ—and Old Testament translations are in progress (for detailed information see appendix V of this chapter).

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book	NT	Bible
kmc	Southern Kam 侬语	Tai-Kadai, Kam-Sui	1,000,000			2006
pcc	Buyi 布依语	Tai-Kadai, Tai, Northern	2,600,000	1904		
zyb	Yōngběi Zhuàng 邕北壮语	Tai-Kadai, Tai, Northern	2,000,000			2016
khb	Tai Lǔ 傣仂语	Tai-Kadai, Tai, Southwestern	550,000	1921		1933
cuu	Tai Ya 花腰傣语	Tai-Kadai, Tai, Southwestern	50,000	1922		
tdt	Tai Nǔa 傣那傣语	Tai-Kadai, Tai, Southwestern	540,000	1931		

Table 1.13: Bible translation in Tai-Kadai languages of China

between 400 B.C. and A.D. 400. The main painting is located in Níngmíng 宁明 County close to the Míng River 明江 in Guǎngxī Province.

⁸⁴ The Guǎngxī-Guǐzhōu area is also proposed as the origin of proto-Tai by scholars who examined the spatial variation of terms connected with wet-rice farming. See Luo Wei, John Hartmann, Li Jinfang, and Vinya Sysamouth (2000).

⁸⁵ See Meacham (1996).

1.6.1 Kam

Hans Grass⁸⁶ of Research Foundation Language and Translation translated the New Testament into Southern Kam (Dòng) with 5,000 copies printed in 2006 (see section 3.4.2 for more information).

1.6.2 Buyi and Zhuang

The British missionary Samuel Clarke 克拉克 (1853–1946)⁸⁷ was stationed in Guizhōu Province in the early 1890s to work among the indigenous people. He first learned the Hmu language and by 1896, he compiled a Hmu language primer, a catechism, some tracts, and several hymns. After the tragic murder of his colleague William Fleming 明鑑光 in 1898 by opponents to the mission, Clarke turned to the Bùyī people and devised a Romanized script in which tones are marked by diacritics. By 1904, he and a team of native speakers translated the Gospel of Matthew in Bùyī, which was published by the BFBS in Shànghǎi in the same year. Subsequently, Clarke did not translate other portions of the Bible into Bùyī because he assumed the more general function of a mission superintendent. A couple of American missionaries began a new translation of the Bible in Bùyī in the early 2000s. Informal drafts of the translation are still circulating.

Two American missionaries settled in Guǎngxī 广西 Province in 1992 and translated the New Testament into Northern (Yōngběi) Zhuàng 邕北壮语 in 2016.

1.6.3 Tai languages

Portions of the Bible were translated into three Tai languages in the early twentieth century: Tai Lǚ, Tai Ya, and Tai Nǚa. The ministry of Claude Mason and Lyle Beebe of the American Presbyterian Mission among the Tai Lǚ people is remarkable. They arrived in Sipsongpanna/Xīshuāngbǎnnà (สิบสองปันนา/西双版纳)⁸⁸ in 1917 to evangelize the Tai Lǚ people. It was allotted a piece of land by the Tai chieftain in the Jǐnghóng 景洪 district, and it built a church and hospital. The ministry reached out to the outcasts of the Tai society: the lepers and demon-

⁸⁶ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

⁸⁷ See Clarke (1904).

⁸⁸ In the Tai Lǚ language, “Sipsongpanna” (or its Chinese transliteration “Xīshuāngbǎnnà”) means “the paddy-rice twelve-townships.”

possessed people (there existed a somewhat arbitrary and sometimes abusive process by which people were declared demon-possessed.)⁸⁹ These outcasts were forced to roam in the wilderness to survive until they died a dreadful death. Mason and Beebe evangelized them and settled them in special “Christian villages.” Mr. and Mrs. Lyle Beebe translated the Gospels of Luke and John into Tai Lü by 1921 and the entire New Testament by 1933. The number of baptized believers increased to 300 after the publication of the New Testament. By 1942, the missionaries had to leave because of the general political situation, and in the 1950s, church activities came to a gradual halt. In the 1980s, after the Cultural Revolution, Christian life was resumed, the “Christian villages” were reorganized, and the churches were rebuilt.

William Clifton and Isabella Eakin Dodd of the American Presbyterian Mission arrived in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand in 1886. William Dodd took a number of significant exploratory trips into Eastern Burma and Southern China and wrote travel reports and scholarly papers that raised interest in the Tai people. On several of his trips during 1910–1916, he evangelized the Tai Ya in Hónghé 红河 and Yùxī 玉溪 prefectures, China. William Dodd and his wife settled in Jǐnghóng 景洪 in 1917 to better reach out to the different Tai groups in China, but he died only two years later in 1919. His widow, Isabella, adapted the Lao script for writing in Tai Ya and translated the Gospel of Matthew into Tai Ya by 1922, which was published by the American Bible Society in Bangkok.

The Swedish Free Mission,⁹⁰ a mission of Pentecostal Assemblies in Sweden, started working in Yúnnán Province in 1922 under the auspices of Anna and Zakris Zakrisson. Their colleague, Endy Johansson, was appointed as a missionary to the Tai Nüa in Déhóng 德宏 Prefecture, which borders Myanmar, at the beginning of the 1920s. As the Tai Nüa people have their own 700-year-old alphabetic script for writing Buddhist texts, called Tai Le,⁹¹ Johansson used this script for Bible translation.⁹² In 1931, Johansson completed the Gospel of

⁸⁹ See Ai (2016).

⁹⁰ The Swedish name is *Svenska Fria Missionen*, and its former name was *Svensk Pingstmission*. The mission in Yunnan was officially registered under the Chinese name of 瑞典神召会 (*Ruidiǎn Shén Zhàohuì*, *Swedish Assemblies of God*), see Tiedemann (2009: 219).

⁹¹ See Zhōu (2003) and Everson (2001).

⁹² The Tai Le script was also used by Miss Stileman, wife of Harry Stileman of the Bible Churchman's Missionary Society, in the 1940s for transliterating two books (Luke and Acts) of the

Mark with the assistance of his Tai Nüa teacher Kong, and the BFBS published the Gospel in the same year. Endy Johansson left Yúnnán before completing the New Testament.

1.7 Tibeto-Burman Minorities

The Tibeto-Burman languages total more than 450 languages, and together with the Sinitic languages, they form the Sino-Tibetan language family. The Tibeto-Burman people dwell in India, Nepal, Myanmar, Bhutan, Thailand, and China.



Shan Bible into the Tayok dialect of Shan. The Shan Bible was completed in 1892 and published in Burmese characters in Myanmar. Because the Tayok dialect is closely related to Tai Nüa, the use of the Tai Le script helped accommodate the readers of this dialect.

Five complete Bibles were translated in Tibeto-Burman languages of China, Standard Tibetan (1948), Flowery Lisu (1968), Achang (2011), Black Lisu or Lipo (2016), and Black Yí or Nasu (2016). There are six languages with only New Testaments and three languages with only Bible portions. Details are shown in the following chart (and also in appendix VI of this chapter).

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book	NT	Bible
bod	Standard Tibetan 藏语	Tibeto-Burman, Bodish	1,070,000	1862	1885	1948
atb	Zaiwa 景颇语	Tibeto-Burman, Burmish, North	80,000	1939	2009	
acn	Achang 阿昌语	Tibeto-Burman, Burmish, North	60,000		1992	2011
lis	Flowery Lisu 花傈僂语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central	600,000	1921	1938	1968
lpo	Black Lisu 黑傈僂语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central	250,000	1912	1951	2016
yna	Alupu 干彝语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central	41,000	1912	2016	
ywq	Nasupu 黑彝语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central	250,000	1923	1948	2016
lhi	Lahu Shi 黄拉祜语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central	117,000	2009	2015	
nuf	Nusu 怒语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central	12,000	2010		
ygp	Kopo 白彝语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, North	50,000	1913	2015	
iii	Nuosu 凉山彝语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, North	2,000,000		2005	
yig	Neasu 黔西彝语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, North	600,000		2018	
ktp	Kaduo Hani 卡多哈尼语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, South	20,000	1939		
nxq	Naxi 纳西语	Tibeto-Burman, Tangut-Qiangic	300,000	1932		

Table 1.14: Bible translation in Tibeto-Burman languages of China

1.7.1 Tibetan

More than one million speakers of Standard Tibetan dwell in Tibet, China and only 100,000 live in India and Nepal. The story of the Tibetan Bible began in 1856, when Khedrup Gyatso (1838–1856), the eleventh Dalai Lama, suddenly died in the Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet.⁹³ Tempu Gergan, the Minister of Finance, was suspected of murdering the Dalai Lama. He fled Lhasa and settled down in the Luba valley near Leh (Ladakh) in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir.⁹⁴ In the 1850s, the Moravian Church, with roots in the reformer Jan Hus (1369–1415), sent William Heyde, Edward Pagel, Heinrich August Jäschke, and later August Francke to Western Tibet. They settled down in Leh in 1858 and benefited from

⁹³ The Potala Palace in Lhasa was the residence of the Dalai Lama until 1959.

⁹⁴ This story is recorded in Maberly (2001).

1.7.2 Zaiwa

the help of Tempu Gergan, the owner of the land where they established a mission. After the death of Tempu Gergan, his son, Sonam Gergan, converted to Christianity and changed his name to Yoseb Gergan.

Yoseb Gergan became the main translator of the Tibetan Bible. Jäschke, who led the translation project, chose Lhasa Tibetan as the basic speech but allowed elements of Classical Tibetan in the target language. The Gospel of John was translated in 1862 and printed in Lahul, India. The New Testament was completed in 1885 and printed in Ladakh, India, two years after the death of Jäschke. An Old Testament committee was formed in 1891, which included August Francke of the Moravian Church, British trade agent David MacDonald at Yatung, and Tibetan pastor Yoseb Gergan. Gergan produced the first draft of the Old Testament in 1910 and sent it to Francke, who corrected the manuscript and discussed it with MacDonald. The entire Bible was completed before the Second World War, but was not published until 1948 by the Bible Society of India and Ceylon in Lahore.

1.7.2 Zaiwa

The *China Inland Mission* (CIM) missionaries Francis and Jennie Fitzwilliam 李崇德 (USA) settled in Yúnnán Province in 1927 to work with the Lisu. However, after their first furlough in 1935, they began working with the *Zaiwa* people in Lǒngchuān 陇川 along the Burmese border and translated the Gospel of Mark into Zaiwa in 1938. They used the Fraser script (originally devised for Lisu), and the manuscript was published privately and printed in Zhǐfú 芝罘, Shandong, China. After the death of Francis Fitzwilliam in 1940, the translation project was canceled. Half a century later in 1990, Mark Wannemacher of Wycliffe USA settled in Thailand to work from there with the Zaiwa people in China and Myanmar. A team of native speakers coordinated by Wannemacher translated the New Testament into Zaiwa in 2009, using the Zaiwa orthography created by the Chinese Government in the 1950s.

1.7.3 Achang

The *Achang* translator Nasaw Sampu completed the first New Testament in 1992 using the Romanized script of the Chinese Government. The manuscript was published by the *Asian Christian Service*, which printed 1,000 copies in Hong Kong. Doug and Connie Inglis of Wycliffe Canada, who were stationed in

Thailand, advised the Old Testament project with Nasaw Sampu, who served as the main translator.⁹⁵ The entire Bible was completed in 2009 and published by the Bible Society of Myanmar in Rangoon.

1.7.4 Flowery Lisu and Black Lisu

James Outram Fraser 富能仁 (1886–1938) of the *China Inland Mission* (CIM) had a successful ministry among the *Flowery Lisu* people in Northeastern Yúnnán Province. He designed the Fraser Script for translating the New Testament into Lisu. Fraser organized converts into self-supporting indigenous churches. He completed the Gospel of Mark in 1922, went on a furlough to England during 1924–1926, and continued the work after his return. He was joined by CIM missionaries Allyn and Leila Cooke. The Cookes, with the help of Lisu assistant Moses Nguali, took responsibility for the translation work in the 1930s. The Cookes and Moses Nguali completed the New Testament in 1938, which is the same year Fraser died from malaria. He was buried in Baoshan, Yúnnán, leaving his wife and three children. An estimated 600 Lisu believers were baptized by 1918. By 1950, this number grew to 14,800 and by the 1990s, to more than 100,000. The translation of the Lisu Old Testament began in 1956 in Chiang Mai, Thailand by a committee established by the China Inland Mission, which was renamed the Overseas Missionary Fellowship in 1964. The committee included Allyn Cooke, John Kuhn, and Allan Crane. The translators completed the entire Bible in 1968.

George Edgar Metcalf 王懷仁 (1879–1956), an English missionary of the *China Inland Mission* (CIM), translated the Gospel of Matthew into *Black Lisu* (*Eastern Lipo*) in 1912 and the entire New Testament in 1951. Upon completion of the New Testament, he was forced to leave China following the Communist victory over the Republican government. Metcalf carried a hand-written copy to Hong Kong and left one copy with the Lisu/Lipo church that he had established. However, the church's copy was lost, but Metcalf's copy survived and was printed at the China House in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, the copies that were sent to Yúnnán Province were never received. In 1999, George Metcalf's daughter Ruth presented the Black Lisu New Testament to the Religious Affairs Bureau in Wǔdìng 武定 County, Yúnnán. Since the beginning, the Black Lisu people have been receptive of Christianity as evidenced in 1912, when hundreds of Eastern

⁹⁵ See Inglis and Inglis (2003).

1.7.5 Naxi

Lisu were reported baptized. According to one account, there were 60,000 Lisu/Lipo Christians in Eastern Chǔxióng 楚雄 in 1999. An anonymous mission organization published the entire New Testament in Pollard Script in 2002, probably using Metcalf's original translation.

In 1992, before Ruth Metcalf presented her father's translation of the New Testament to the Religious Bureau of Wǔdìng, the Yúnnán Three-Self Church instituted a Lipo translation committee, including Elder Bi Hongzheng and 13 Lipo pastoral co-workers. The group integrated, revised the New Testament of 1951, and translated the Old Testament during 1992–2013. During the translation process, the committee engaged consultants of the United Bible Societies for assistance. In 2016, the China Christian Council published the Bible.

1.7.5 Naxi

The Naxi 纳西 Nationality in Yúnnán Province has attracted international scholarly attention⁹⁶ mainly because of their cultural features: their matriarchal family structure and traditional pictographic script. After coordinating with the China Inland Mission 内地会, a group of Dutch Pentecostal missionaries,⁹⁷ including Elize Scharten (1876–1965),⁹⁸ began missionary work in Lǐjiāng 丽江 in 1912.

⁹⁶ Austro-American botanist Joseph Rock (1884–1962) and author of *The Ancient Na-Khi Kingdom* (1947) resided in Lǐjiāng in the same neighborhood as Elize Scharten between 1922 and 1945. Rock worked in the Lǐjiāng area as an explorer, first for the U.S. Department of Agriculture of Washington D.C. and then for the National Geographic Society. During 1944–1945, he was a consultant to the U.S. Army Map Service.

⁹⁷ Cecil Polhill, one of the “Cambridge Seven Band” who joined the Chinese Inland Mission in 1885 as a missionary to China, returned to Europe in the wake of the Boxer uprising in 1900. He received Spirit baptism when he attended the meetings at Azusa Street, Los Angeles in 1908 (Robeck, 2006: 69). Upon his return in 1909, Polhill founded the Pentecostal Missionary Union (PMU) in London, which sent missionaries to China and elsewhere (Hocken 1988: 125-126). The Dutch Pentecostal Mission was formed in 1920 and channeled its missionaries through the PMU (Van der Laan 1997).

⁹⁸ Elize Scharten (1876–1965) was the daughter of a Lutheran minister in Amsterdam, the seventh of nine children. Elize experienced Spirit baptism after she attended meetings of the nascent Pentecostal movement in Amsterdam in 1908. During a conference in Sunderland, England, she received her missionary calling to China. She left for China in April 1912 and joined other Dutch Pentecostal missionaries in Yúnnán Province. Interrupted by two furloughs and the civil war period in 1927, Elize stayed for more than 34 years on the mission field and returned to the Netherlands in 1947 (Van der Laan 1997).

After 1923, the group was joined by Pentecostal missionaries from England and Germany.⁹⁹ Elize Scharten studied the Naxi language, adapted James Fraser's Lisu script to Naxi, prepared a dictionary, and translated the Gospel of Mark, a catechism, and a song book. The Gospel of Mark was printed by the BFBS in Shànghaǐ in 1932. Scharten founded a church attended by the Naxi and Lisu people and trained their leaders. The church, however, did not survive the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976); the building was confiscated, many members were incarcerated, and several spiritual leaders Scharten had trained died during their long imprisonment. Visitors from England and Germany in the 1980s found the memory of Elize Scharten among survivors still vivid. Xuan Ke, a music and English teacher whose father belonged to Scharten's trainees requested a copy of the Gospel of Mark which was delivered by the German Pentecostal Mission in 1988.¹⁰⁰ Plans of reprinting the Gospel translation have been not been carried out due to the uncertain spiritual needs of the Naxi people in the Lijāng area.

1.7.6 Nasupu

The Australian missionary Gladstone Porteous 张尔昌 (1874–1944) of the China Inland Mission experienced a successful ministry among the Nasupu 黑彝 people in Lùquàn 禄劝 and Wǔdìng 武定 Counties in Chuxiong, Yúnnán. He arrived in Yúnnán in 1907, established a theological training center in Sāyíngpán 撒营盘 township of Lùquàn by 1912, and reached out to the Nasupu and Hmong (Miáo). He translated the Gospel of Luke into Nasu in 1923. Before completing the New Testament, Gladstone Porteous died from typhoid in 1944 in Sāyíngpán, where he was buried. His collaborators finished the translation of the New Testament in 1948 using the Pollard Script. The manuscript was published by China Bible House in Shànghaǐ in the same year.

At Porteous' death, there were 20,000 Nasupu (Yí) and Hmong (Miáo) believers in Lùquàn and Wǔdìng; by 2011, this number reportedly doubled. Lùquàn and Wǔdìng counties are still Christian strongholds today, partly because of the testimony of Wáng Zhímíng, a native Hmong pastor of Wǔdìng, who

⁹⁹ A dispute appeared between the British-led Pentecostal Missionary Union and the Dutch missionaries, when a British missionary was appointed to lead the work in Lijāng but whom the Dutch rejected. The Dutch missionaries separated from the PMU but later managed to work beside the British missionaries (Van der Laan 1997).

¹⁰⁰ See van der Laan (1997).

1.7.7 Other Languages

refused to participate in the denunciation of other Christians during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). When he was arrested in 1969 and executed four years later in a stadium in front of 10,000 people, many villagers in Lùquàn and Wǔdīng converted to Christianity.

In the 1990s, the Yúnnán Chinese Christian Council (CCC) instituted a translation committee for the Nasupu Old Testament, including native pastor Wen Fu. The committee completed the Old Testament before 2010 and then revised the New Testament of 1948. After a lengthy approval process, the entire Bible was published by the CCC in 2016 and printed at Amity Press in Nánjīng.

1.7.7 Other Languages

Hans Grass¹⁰¹ of Research Foundation Language and Translation with two teams of Sìchuān Yí and Guìzhōu Yí Christians translated the first New Testaments into Nuosu and Neasu in 2005 and 2018 (see sections 4.4.2 and 5.4.3 for more information). Other Tibeto-Burman languages with translated Bible portions include Kaduo (Luke 1939), Zaiwa 景颇 (NT 2009), Alupu 干彝 (Mark 1912, OT 2016), Lahu Shi 黄拉祜 (NT 2015), Nusu 怒 (Mark 2010), and Kopo 白彝 (NT 2015). Some of these translations have been completed recently.

1.8 Austro-Asiatic Minorities

The Austro-Asiatic family has approximately 168 languages spoken in Southeast Asia. Prominent languages are Vietnamese (Vietnam) and Khmer (Cambodia). There are two Austro-Asiatic peoples in China forming two official nationalities, the Blang 布朗 and the Wa 佤. They are located in the southernmost part of the Yúnnán Province at the border to Myanmar and Thailand. In both languages Scriptures of the Bible were translated (see also appendix VII of this chapter).

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book	NT	Bible
blr	Blang 布朗	Austro-Asiatic, Palaungic	55,000	2015		
wbm	Wa 佤 (Vo)	Austro-Asiatic, Palaungic	40,000			2016

Table 1.15: Bible translation in Austro-Asiatic languages of China

¹⁰¹ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

The Wa Bible translation is viewed by the Wa people as fulfillment of an ancient saga. According to an old Wa myth, one day a “white brother” would bring them a book about the lost God. In the 1880s, Pu Chan, a Wa leader summoned his tribesmen that the “white brother” might be near and that they should stop killing each other and doing evil things. William Marcus Young 永伟里 of the Boston Missionary Society settled in the town of Kengtung, Burma in 1892 and set up a mission station. One day in the 1890s, Pu Chan prepared a white Wa pony that, according to a vision, would bring them to the “white brother.” The tribesmen arrived exactly at the mission station that Young had established. They asked William Young to bring them “the” book, and the Wa people converted in large numbers in the following years.¹⁰² In 1912, William’s son, Marcus Vincent Young 永文生, moved to the district of Nuòfú 糯福 in Mènglián 孟连 County, China. He devised Romanized scripts for the Wa (Parauk dialect) language and built churches and a school there. Assisted by native Wa speakers Yaw Su, Sai Pluik, and Sara Ngao Meung, who were from Myanmar, Marcus Young translated the Gospel of John into Wa by 1934 and the entire New Testament by 1938. Both manuscripts were published by the American Baptist Mission Press in Rangoon, Burma, in 1934 and 1938, respectively.

After the mid-1980s, the Wa in China and outside of China produced independent translations of the Old Testament. The Yúnnán CCC and the Three-Self-Patriotic-Movement appointed a team of Wa pastors, including Bao Guangqiang 包光强, in 2002. The team was forced to stop its work by 2005 due to a lack of technical equipment. The United Bible Societies, which was called for assistance, sponsored computers and software, and assigned Simon Wong 黄锡木 as a consultant. The reorganized team completed the translation of the Old Testament and the revision of the New Testament in 2016, when the CCC published the entire Wa Bible. The Bible was printed by Amity Press in Nánjīng and dedicated on October 22, 2016.¹⁰³

¹⁰² See Richardson (1981).

¹⁰³ See Bao (2016).

1.9 Formosan Minorities

1.9.1 History of Táiwān

The Formosan languages¹⁰⁴ are Austronesian languages¹⁰⁵ spoken by the indigenous people of Táiwān.¹⁰⁶ Linguists estimate by about 26 Formosan languages: 10 of which are extinct, four are moribund, and three more are endangered. The indigenous speakers belong to 16 official tribes,¹⁰⁷ totaling 533,600 people; this comprises 2% of the island's population.

Táiwān History	Time
Pre-Chinese	4500 B.C.–A.D. 222
Chinese Expeditions	222–1624
Dutch	1624–1664
Chinese Qīng 清	1664–1895
Japanese	1895–1945
Republic of China	1949–today

Table 1.16: Eras in Táiwān history

The discovery of pottery and weaponry of the Neolithic Age (4500 B.C.–A.D. 400) convinced scholars to connect Táiwān's aborigines both to Mainland China and other Polynesian groups. Chinese rulers had sent expeditions to Táiwān

¹⁰⁴ Before 1958, Táiwān was called Formosa, a name derived from the Portuguese expression *Ilha Formosa* to mean “Beautiful Island.”

¹⁰⁵ The Austronesian languages are distributed over a triangle covering Madagascar, Southeast Asia, and islands in the Pacific Ocean. They number more than 1,200 languages. Linguists have shown that the Austronesian languages originate from languages spoken in Táiwān.

¹⁰⁶ According to William Campbell 甘为霖, the name Táiwān was given by the Dutch who adopted the term *Taiyoan* (“foreigner”) from the now-extinct Siraya 西拉雅语 language to name the coastal area where they had established a commercial post. This area corresponds to the modern-day county of Ānpíng 安平. The Siraya term was also adopted in Hokkien and other Chinese dialects, before being accepted as a generalized name for the island.

¹⁰⁷ According to *The China Post* on June 27, 2014, there are 16 officially recognized tribes in Táiwān: Amis 阿美族, Atayal 泰雅族, Bunun 布农族, Saaroa 沙阿鲁阿族, Kanakanvu 卡那卡那富族, Kavalan 噶玛兰族, Paiwan 排湾族, Puyuma 卑南族, Rukai 鲁凯族, Saisiyat 赛夏族, Yami 雅美族, Thao 邵族, Tsou 邹族, Truku 太鲁阁族, Sakizaya 撒奇莱雅族, and Seediq 赛德克族.

throughout the Three Kingdom period 三国时期 (A.D. 222–280)¹⁰⁸ and the Sui dynasty 隋朝 (A.D. 590–618).¹⁰⁹ After the ninth century, small groups of immigrants from the Zhejiang 浙江 coastal area settled on the Pescadores Islands 澎湖岛, which lies midway between China and Táiwān.

At the onset of the Mongol reign in 1260, many Chinese from the Yellow River valley moved to Táiwān and settled there. Constant conflicts between Chinese and Japanese pirates during the Míng dynasty 明朝 (1368–1644) had caused thousands of Chinese to take refuge in the southern part of Táiwān. At the end of the Míng dynasty, Chinese immigrants arrived in greater numbers and settled in the plains of Central Táiwān. They gradually displaced the aboriginal people, who retreated to the mountains or were assimilated to Chinese culture.

When Spain annexed Portugal in 1580, Dutch ships were blocked from doing trade with Lisbon. The Dutch decided to turn toward Asia and founded the Dutch East India Company in the early 1600s. The goal of the company was to establish trade with China. The Dutch forced the Chinese into a deal over the Pescadores Islands and Táiwān. In 1624, the Dutch were accorded Táiwān, where they built Fort Zeelandia at Taiyoan, close to modern-day Tánán 台南. They extended their control over the whole island after they defeated Spanish invaders in 1642. By using or threatening force, the Dutch pacified the indigenous villages. In 1635, a rebellion broke out in the village of *Mádòu* 麻豆, killing 60 Dutch men. Troops, who were called in from abroad, quickly overcame the resistance.

The Dutch East India Company employed members of the Dutch reformed clergy (*predikanten*)¹¹⁰ on short-term posts, generally less than 10 years. During the Dutch period, about 32 clergymen worked in Táiwān. When a village was pacified and the villagers forsook their idols, clergymen and catechists would baptize the aboriginal people, initiate worship services, and build churches and schools. By 1650, reports of baptized indigenous believers ranging from 1,000 to

¹⁰⁸ Sūn Quán 孙权 (229–252), the King of Wú 吴 in Southeast China, sent the first recorded expedition to Táiwān. The name given to Táiwān at this time was *I-chou*.

¹⁰⁹ The emperor Yáng Guǎng 楊廣皇帝 (reign 604–617), second emperor of the Sui dynasty 隋朝, sent a force of 10,000 soldiers to conquer the island. With the demise of the Sui dynasty, this enterprise failed. At that time, Táiwān was called *Liúqiúqún Dǎo* 琉球群岛, which later became the Chinese name for the Ryukyu Islands.

¹¹⁰ In Dutch, a *predikant* is a preacher, pastor, or minister.

5,000 reached Holland. In 1661, Zhèng Chénggōng 郑成功, a Míng supporter whose honorary name was Koxinga 国姓爷, fled the Manchu control, went to Táiwān, and overthrew the Dutch empire in 1662. The indigenous people persevered with Christian faith for several decades, which was attested by a Jesuit traveler in 1715. It took until the mid-nineteenth century for Western missionaries to reach the island and begin their work with no spiritual foundations to build upon.

The Míng loyalists, who fled to Táiwān, were defeated by the Manchu rulers in 1683. Long-term instability with numerous rebellions by Míng supporters and by indigenous people caused the Manchu Government to station tens of thousands of troops in Táiwān. By the nineteenth century, Táiwān was divided into four counties. Each county had urban centers, Chinese villages, assimilated indigenous villages, and “savage” native villages.

Spanish Dominican missionaries from Manila arrived in Táiwān in 1859, one of whom was Father Fernando Sainz. During the 15 years of their ministry, several hundred aborigines converted to the Christian faith. In the 1860s and 1870s, three English Presbyterian missionaries, James Maxwell 马雅各 (1836–1921), William Campbell 甘为霖 (1841–1921),¹¹¹ and Thomas Barclay 巴克礼 (1849–1935), settled in Táinán and established Presbyterian churches. The Christian movement among the aborigines started in the 1870s. By 1877, the Presbyterian mission statistics numbered 1,031 baptized adults in 26 chapels with 24, mostly native, preachers. The converts were essentially Siraya people.

In the wake of the Treaty of Shimonoseki (《马关条约》)—an unequal treaty to end the First Sino-Japanese War between the Empire of Japan and the Manchu government—Táiwān was ceded to Japan in 1895. The Japanese abandoned the Manchu strategy of containing the aborigines and adopted a more repressive policy. At the same time, the Japanese investigated the Formosan languages and cultures, publishing their findings for the outside world. After the “savage” indigenous people in the mountains were pacified in the early twentieth century, Japanese officials learned their languages and interacted with them. For this reason, older aborigines still favorably recall the Japanese era today.

¹¹¹ See Campbell (1903).



After the Japanese defeat in World War II and the retreat of the Běijīng Republican Government to Táiwān in 1949, a new era began. The missionary movement among the “savage” aborigines, which had started in 1929, gained momentum after 1949 when Bible portions were translated into a range of indigenous languages. This movement among all the Formosan groups would eventually bring about 50% of the aborigines to the Christian faith. By 1949, there were 120 Protestant churches with 20,000 believers; by 1959, the figures tripled with 360 churches and 60,000 members. Catholic churches grew strongly in numbers only after the mid-1950s. The particular experience of the Formosan

1.9.2 Siraya

people supports the conventional thinking that any movement to the Christian faith must be sustained by Scripture translation. Portions or entire Bibles were translated into 10 languages of Táiwiān (see also appendix VIII of this chapter).

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book	NT	Bible
ami	Amis 阿美语	East Formosan, Central	138,000	1957	1972	1997
bnn	Bunun 布农语	Bunun	38,000	1951	1973	2000
dru	Rukai 鲁凯语	Rukai	10,500		2001	2017
fos	Siraya 西拉雅语	East Formosan, Southwest	<i>Extinct</i>	1661		
pwn	Paiwan 排湾语	Paiwan	66,100	1959	1973	1993
tao	Yami 雅美语	Malayo-Polynesian, Philippine, Bashiic	3,380	1970	1994	
tay	Atayal 泰雅语	Atayalic	84,300	1964	1974	2003
trv	Seediq 赛德克语	Atayalic	20,000	1956	1963	2005
pyu	Puyuma 卑南语	Puyuma	8,490	1990		
tsu	Tsou 邹语	Tsouic	2,130		2012	

Table 1.17: Bible translation in languages of Táiwiān

1.9.2 Siraya

The first Bible portion translated in an aboriginal language of Táiwiān was completed in 1661. Daniel Gravius, who was a Dutch clergyman (*predikant*), worked in Táiwiān during 1647–1651. He settled in an indigenous village of the Siraya people close to Fort Zeelandia. Otness (1999) credited Gravius with introducing livestock raising among the aborigines. Gravius learned and transcribed Siraya using a Romanized script. He translated the Gospel of Matthew and a catechism into Siraya. Parallel Siraya and Dutch texts were published in Amsterdam in 1662. Gravius was accused of slander and fined, but he was later completely exonerated by a Dutch court in what is now Jakarta, Indonesia. He returned to the Netherlands in 1661 with his reputation restored. During the Qīng dynasty 清朝 (1644–1911), the number of Siraya speakers declined, and in the late nineteenth century, the language became extinct.

1.9.3 Bunun

It took 289 years before missionaries were able to translate Bible portions in another aboriginal language. Pastor Hú Wénchí 胡文池 of the Presbyterian Church and his team translated the Gospel of Matthew in the Bunun language in 1951.

1.9.4 Seediq

Several missionaries settled in Táiwān in the early 1950s. The Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society¹¹² appointed Ralph Covell (1923–2013) and his wife, Ruth, as missionaries to the Nuosu people in Liángshān 凉山 in Sìchuān Province. They arrived in Liángshān in 1947/1948, but before accomplishing any work, they were forced to leave in 1951 and relocated to Táiwān. The Covells started a Bible translation project in the Seediq language in 1953 and engaged two native translators, Tailong Litok and Howat Pisao.¹¹³ The policy of the Táiwān government in the 1950s was to transcribe aboriginal languages using the Bopomofo script (注音符号) to differentiate itself from the Communist government, which employed the Romanized script for the minorities on the continent. Covell and his team completed the Gospel of Mark in 1956 and Acts and First Corinthians in 1957; they published the text as a monoglot. They translated the first New Testament in 1963 and subsequently the entire Bible in 2005.

1.9.5 Other languages

Other major translations have been the Paiwan Bible in 1993, the Yami New Testament in 1994, the Amis Bible in 1997, the Bunun Bible in 2000, the Atayal Bible in 2003, the Tsou New Testament in 2012, and the Rukai Bible in 2017. For all aboriginal languages, the translation of key terms was a long and difficult process. The following table shows the titles of the Trinity in three aboriginal languages: Bunun, Seediq, and Paiwan. The name for God in the Bunun language was newly created because no suitable concept existed in the language previously.

Terms	Bunun	Seediq	Paiwan
God	“Father of Heaven”	“The Spirit Above”	“The Spirit” (with impersonal article)
Son of God	“Child of God”	“Child of God”	“Child of God”
Holy Spirit	Sele (from Japanese 聖霊 “Seirei”)	“Power of God”	“Most Excellent Spirit”

Table 1.18: Bible terms in three Formosan languages

¹¹² The Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society was formed in Chicago, Illinois in 1943. It was renamed the Conservative Baptist International in 1994, and then World Venture in 2005.

¹¹³ See Covell (1998).

I. Chapter Endnotes

① Joshua Marshman (1768–1837) was a colleague of William Carey and was based at the Baptist Serampore Mission in Calcutta, India. Marshman and Carey coordinated Bible translation into several Indian languages. With the assistance of Johannes Lassar, Marshman published the Chinese Bible incrementally in Serampore.

② Johannes Lassar was an Armenian born in Macao. He prepared a first draft of the New Testament in 1816 based on the Greek text and the English *King James Version*. He and Marshman used the term Shén 神 “God,” Shèng Fēng 圣风 “Holy Spirit,” and zhàn 蘸 “baptize.”

③ Robert Morrison 马礼逊 (1782–1834) was sent by the London Missionary Society 伦敦传道会 to China, and he arrived in Macao in 1807. Under intense governmental persecution, he completed a translation of the Bible in 1823. He returned to the United Kingdom on a furlough in 1824, where he was made a fellow of the Royal Society for his work on a Chinese-English dictionary. He was also awarded the title of Doctor of Divinity by the University of Glasgow. The keywords Morrison used in his translation of the Bible were the terms Shén 神 “God,” Shèng Fēng 圣风 “Holy Spirit,” and xǐ 洗 “baptize.”

④ William Milne (1785–1822) was the second missionary of the London Missionary Society who was sent to China. He arrived in Macao in 1823 and was the only assistant of Robert Morrison. He baptized Chinese evangelist Liáng Fā 梁发, who later preached the gospel to the Chinese rebel leader Hóng Xiùquán 洪秀全. In 1815, Milne moved to the Malayan Straits Settlement of Malacca (present-day Malaysia), where he continued to serve Chinese immigrants. Collaborating with Robert Morrison on the translation of the Chinese Bible, he contributed by translating the books of Deuteronomy through Job.

⑤ Walter Henry Medhurst 麦都思 (1796–1857) was a missionary of the London Missionary Society. He was sent to Malacca in 1816, where he learned Malay and Chinese. In 1842, he moved to Shànghǎi and collaborated with Karl Gützlaff and Elijah Bridgman on the translation of the Bible in Classical Chinese, which was completed in 1847. He was an influential discussant in the “Term Question” controversy; he had combed Chinese Classics for different names for God.

⑥ Karl Gützlaff 郭士立 (1803–1851) was a German missionary who went to Singapore and Bangkok, where he translated the Gospel of Luke in Thai in 1834. He then moved to Macao and Hong Kong, made short trips to Japan, and successfully translated the Gospel and Epistles of John in Japanese in 1837. After 1840, he started working on a Chinese Bible translation in cooperation with William Henry Medhurst and Elijah Bridgman. He contributed by translating most of the Old Testament. The entire Bible was completed in 1847. Due to the government’s interdiction of foreign missionary activities in Inner China, he started a school of “native missionaries.” In 1851, he discovered the fraud of the “missionaries” whom he had engaged: these “missionaries” reported activities at places to where they had never traveled. Shortly afterwards, he died. As a prolific writer, he inspired numerous people in Europe. A street in Hong Kong is named after him.

1 Bible Translation in China

⑦ The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions appointed Elijah Coleman Bridgman 裨治文 (1801–1861) as its first missionary for service in China, and he arrived in Guǎngzhōu in 1830. He contributed to the translation of the Bible in Classical Chinese and was active in Christian education. He later moved to Shànghǎi, where he died and was buried with his wife.

⑧ Hóng Xiùquán 洪秀全 (1814–1864) was a Chinese Hakka rebel leader who led an insurrection against the Manchu Government (Spence 1996). When he failed the provincial examinations on four occasions, he saw visions of a fatherly and of a brotherly figure. After a Christian missionary provided him with summaries of the Bible, he interpreted the fatherly figure as God the Father, the brotherly figure as Jesus Christ, and proclaimed himself the younger brother of Jesus Christ. During the 1840s, he received further instructions by Christian missionaries and adopted the translation of Medhurst, Gützlaff, and Bridgman as the doctrinal base of his emerging organization of believers. In 1851, Hóng Xiùquán gathered 30,000 followers and tensions with the Manchu government arose. He rebelled when the government troops tried to disperse his followers. Hóng defeated the government troops, occupied Nánjīng in 1853, and established a kind of theocracy, the “Heavenly Kingdom” or *Tàipíngtiānguó* 太平天国. His rule was terminated in 1864 when government forces overcame the rebel’s defense lines, and Hóng Xiùquán was killed in 1864. He continued to inspire the Miáo rebel movement in Guizhōu.

⑨ In 1843, 12 missionaries representing various missionary organizations decided to revise the Bible. They established committees in the five ports determined in the Treaty of Nánjīng of 1842: Shànghǎi 上海, Guǎngzhōu 广州, Níngbō 宁波, Fúzhōu 福州, and Xiàmén 厦门. Each committee sent a delegate (hence the name *Delegates’ Version*) to a central committee that made final decisions on different issues.

⑩ William Jones Boone 文惠廉 (1811–1864) was a missionary of the American Episcopal Mission, who arrived in Macao 1839 and relocated to Shànghǎi in 1844, where he served as an Anglican Bishop until his death. He was on the committee of the *Delegates’ Version* and played an influential role in the “Term Question” controversy. He argued for the use of *Shén* 神 for God.

⑪ Walter Macon Lowrie 娄理华 (1819–1847) was a missionary appointed by the American Presbyterian Mission. He arrived in China in 1842.

⑫ John Stronach 施敦力 (1810–1888) was a British missionary of the London Missionary Society. He was stationed in Xiàmén 厦门 and was the representative of the Xiàmén committee on the *Delegates’ Version* committee.

⑬ Michael Simpson Culbertson (1819–1862) was a missionary of the American Presbyterian Mission. He was stationed in Níngbō from 1845 to 1851 and later in Shànghǎi from 1851 to 1862.

II. Appendix: Chinese dialects

ISO639-3	Dialect	Chinese Dialect Group	Book	NT	Bible
ltc	Middle Chinese	Root	650 (?)		

A stela was found in Xī'ān in 1625 commemorating Christian activities in China during the Tang dynasty (A.D. 618–907). The stela was erected in A.D. 781, after the Nestorian missionaries had evangelized the local population for some time. The text on the stela includes the mention “Scriptures were translated,” which refers to the translation of some portion of the Bible, although no text has been preserved. In 1907, Christian documents were found in the Mògāo Caves 莫高窟 in Dúnhuāng 敦煌 that mentioned Chinese translations of the Pentateuch (referred to as “牟世法王经”), including the Book of Genesis (“浑元经”), translation of the Psalms (“多惠圣王经”), the Gospels (“阿思翟利容经”), Acts of Apostles (“传代经”), and a few others. The language in which these portions were translated was Middle Chinese.

lzh	High Wénlǐ 深文理	Literary 文言文	1810	1814	1822
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The term High Wénlǐ 深文理, coined by missionaries, designates the Classical Chinese language spoken during 500 B.C.–A.D. 200. The first complete book of the Bible was the Gospel of Matthew, which was translated by Joshua Marshman and Johannes Lassar in Serampore, India, in 1810. It was based on the Greek text and the English *King James Version*. Within the same year, Robert Morrison, who was assisted by William Milne, published the Acts of the Apostles in Guǎngzhōu 广州. Morrison’s translation relied on the Greek text, Jean Basset’s 1707 translation, and the English *King James Version*. The New Testament was first completed by Robert Morrison and William Milne in 1814. However, Joshua Marshman and Johannes Lassar completed another version of the New Testament in 1816. They completed and published the entire Bible in Serampore in 1822. Robert Morrison, with the support of William Milne, translated another version of the entire Bible in 1819 but published it in Guǎngzhōu 广州 in 1823. The *Delegates’ Version* was completed in 1855 by W. H. Medhurst (London Missionary Society), W. J. Boone (American Episcopal Mission), W. M. Lowrie (American Presbyterian Mission), J. Stronach (London Missionary Society), and E. C. Bridgman (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions).

lzh	Easy Wénlǐ 易文理	Literary 文言文	1883	1885	1902
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Easy Wénlǐ 易文理 is also a term created by missionaries and corresponds to simplified Classical Chinese, in which the literary balance and richly embroidered figures of speech are abandoned in favor of a more direct communication of ideas. Easy Wénlǐ 易文 and High Wénlǐ 深文理 were superseded by Mandarin Chinese after 1919. The Gospels of Mark and John were first translated in 1883 by Griffith John 楊格非 (1831-1912) of London Missionary Society, who also completed the New Testament in 1885. The entire Bible was completed in 1902 by S. I. J. Schereschewsky (American Episcopal Mission) and others from the Easy Wénlǐ Union Bible Committee, and it was published in the same year by the American Bible Society in Shànghǎi.

cmn	Standard 普通话	Guān 官, Běijīng 北京	1864	1872	1874
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In Standard Chinese, the Gospel of John was first translated in 1864 by the Beijing Committee, which included William A. P. Martin (American Presbyterian Mission), Joseph Edkins (London

1 Bible Translation in China

Missionary Society), S. I. J. Schereschewsky (American Episcopal Mission), J. S. Burdon (Church Missionary Society), and H. Blodget (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions). The Beijing Committee was appointed in 1861. The New Testament was first translated in 1872 by the Beijing Committee. The Old Testament was completed in 1874 by S. I. J. Schereschewsky. His Old Testament version and the Beijing Committee's New Testament version became the standard Mandarin Bible until the publication of the *Union Version*. In 1919, the Union Bible Committee, which included J. Edkins, J. Wherry, D. Z. Sheffield, T. W. Pearce, and L. Lloyd, completed an authoritative Bible translation, which is still in use today. The *Chinese Union Version* was published in 1919 by the American Bible Society in Shànghǎi. The first integral Catholic translation of the Bible was completed in 1953 by a team led by Italian Father Gabriele M. Allegra (1907–1976) in Hong Kong.

cmn Nánjīng 南京 Guān 官, Jiānghuái 江淮 1854 1857

The Gospel of Matthew was translated in 1854 from the *Delegates' Wénlǐ Version* by a Chinese, under the supervision of W. H. Medhurst and J. Stronach (both from the London Missionary Society), and the New Testament was similarly completed in 1857. The New Testament was published in the same year by the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) in Shànghǎi.

cmn Yāntái 烟台 Guān 官, Jiāoliáo 胶辽 1918

Kiaotung is an older name for this Guān dialect spoken in Yāntái 烟台, a city in Shāndōng Province. The Gospel of Mark was translated in 1918 by missionaries of the North China Baptist Mission, a branch of the American Southern Baptist Mission.

cmn Jīnán 济南 Guān 官, Jīlǔ 冀鲁 1892

The Gospels of Luke and John were translated in 1892 by Charles Henry Judd 祝名扬 (1842-1919) (China Inland Mission).

cmn Wǔhàn 武汉 Guān 官, Xīnán 西南 1921

The city is formerly known as Hànkǒu 汉口 from which modern-day Wǔhàn 武汉 evolved. The Gospel of Mark was first translated in 1921 by J. H. L. Patterson (London Missionary Society).

hak Méizhōu 梅州 Hakka 客家 1860 1883 1916

The Hakka language in Meixian 梅县 (literally “Plum County”), a district in Méizhōu 梅州 Prefecture, Northeastern Guǎngdōng Province, is the standard dialect of Hakka. The Gospel of Matthew was first translated in 1860 by missionaries of the Basel Missionary Society, including R. Lechler, P. Wilmes, C. P. Piton, and Kong Fatlin, an ordained Chinese pastor. It was published in Berlin in the same year. The first New Testament was completed in 1883 by missionaries of the Basel Missionary Society, including the same individuals mentioned above. The version using the Roman script was published in Basel in 1883 by the BFBS, while the version using Chinese characters was published in Guǎngzhōu in the same year by the BFBS. The first entire Bible in Chinese characters was completed in 1916 by A. Nagle, G. A. Guzman, and W. Ebert (all from the Basel Missionary Society) and was published in Shànghǎi in the same year by the BFBS. The Bible was retranslated between 1984 and 2012 and published by the Bible Society in Táiwān in Táiběi in 2012, in both Romanized Hakka and Chinese characters.

II. Appendix: Chinese dialects

hak Hépó 河婆 Hakka 客家 1916

Wukingfu 五经富 is a town in Hépó 河婆, which is a subdistrict of Jiēxī 揭西 County in Guangdong Province. The English Presbyterian Mission established a mission there in 1871. The first New Testament was translated by a committee of the English Presbyterian Mission, including M.C. Mackenzie and Phang Ki Fung.

hak Lóngyán 龙岩 Hakka 客家 1919

A former name of this Hakka dialect was the Tīngzhōu 汀州 dialect. The Gospel of Matthew was translated in 1919 by C. R. Hughes and E. R. Rainey (London Missionary Society).

cdo Fúzhōu 福州 Mǐn 闽, Eastern 东 1852 1856 1891

The Gospel of Matthew was first translated into the Fúzhōu 福州 subdialect of Eastern Mǐn in 1852 by Moses Clark White 怀德 (American Methodist Episcopal Mission) and published in Fúzhōu by the American Bible Society in the same year. The New Testament was first completed in 1856 by William Welton 温敦 (Church Missionary Society) and Lyman Birt Peet 弼利民 (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions), and it was published by the American Bible Society in Fúzhōu in the same year. The Old Testament was completed by a committee, which included Caleb Cook Baldwin 摩嘉立, James Walker (both with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions), John Richard Wolfe 胡約翰, Llwellyn Lloyd, William Banister (all with the Church Missionary Society), and Nathan Plumb (American Methodist Episcopal Mission), in 1888. A revised version of the Old Testament and the New Testament was jointly published as the first complete Bible by the American Bible Society and BFBS in 1891.

mnp Shàowǔ 邵武 Mǐn 闽, Northern 北 1891

The Epistle of James was translated in 1891 by J. E. Walker (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions).

mnp Jiàn'ōu 建瓯 Mǐn 闽, Northern 北 1896

The first New Testament was translated and revised in 1896 by L. J. Bryer (Church of England Zenana Missionary Society).

mnp Jiànyáng 建阳 Mǐn 闽, Northern 北 1898

The Gospel of Mark was first translated in 1898 by Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Phillips (Church Missionary Society).

cpx Púxiān 莆仙 Mǐn 闽, Púxiān 莆仙 1892 1902 1912

The older name for the Púxiān Mǐn 莆仙闽 dialect is Hinghua Mǐn 兴化话 spoken in Pútán 莆田 County. William Nesbitt Brewster 蒲鲁士 (American Methodist Episcopal Mission) translated the Gospel of John into Púxiān Mǐn in 1892. Aided by native speakers, he completed the first New Testament in Púxiān Mǐn in 1902 and the first entire Bible in 1912. The Bible was published in the same year by the American Bible Society.

1 Bible Translation in China

nan Teochew 潮汕 Mǐn 闽, Southern 南 1875 1896 1922

The Book of Ruth was translated in 1875 by S. B. Partridge (American Baptist Missionary Union). The New Testament was completed in 1896 by missionaries including S. B. Partridge, W. Ashmore, and A.M. Fields (American Baptist Missionary Union). The entire Bible was completed in 1922 by English Presbyterian Missionaries, including W. Duffus, George Smith, J. C. Gibson, and H. L. Mackenzie.

nan Hainanese 海南 Mǐn 闽, Southern 南 1891

In 1891, C. C. Jeremiassen (American Presbyterian Mission) translated the Gospel of Matthew with the help of F. P. Gilman.

nan Hokkien 福建 Mǐn 闽, Southern 南 1852 1873 1884

Hokkien has three subdialects: the Quánzhōu 泉州, Zhāngzhōu 漳州 and Xiàmén 厦门 (Amoy) dialects, which are all spoken in Fújiàn Province and Táiwān. The Bible was translated into the Xiamen (Amoy) dialect. The Gospel of John was first translated in 1852 by Elihu Doty (Dutch Reformed Mission) and published in the same year by the BFBS in Guǎngzhōu. The New Testament was translated into the Amoy dialect by the first missionary to Táiwān, James Laidlaw Maxwell 马雅各 (English Presbyterian Church) in 1873, by using the Péh-ōe-jī orthography. The Old Testament was completed in the Amoy dialect by James Laidlaw Maxwell 马雅各 (English Presbyterian Church) in 1884, by using the Péh-ōe-jī orthography. In 1930, Thomas Barclay 巴克礼 (English Presbyterian Church) retranslated the New Testament in 1916 and the entire Bible, using the Romanized Péh-ōe-jī orthography. The Amoy Romanized Bible was published in 1933. It was later transliterated in Chinese characters and published in 1996.

wuu Wēnzhōu 温州 Wú 吴, Ōujiāng 瓯江 1892 1902

W. E. Soothill, (United Methodist Free Church) translated and revised the Gospel of Matthew in 1892, and the entire New Testament in 1902. The manuscript was published in the same year by the BFBS.

wuu Shànghǎi 上海 Wú 吴, Tàihú 太湖 1847 1870 1908

Walter Henry Medhurst 麦都思 (London Missionary Society) translated the Gospel of John in 1847 and privately published it in Shànghǎi in the same year. The New Testament was completed in 1870 by John Marshall Willoughby Farnham 法納姆 (American Presbyterian Mission) and published in Roman characters by the American Bible Society in Shànghǎi in the same year. The entire Bible was completed in 1913 by the Shànghǎi Bible Committee and published by the American Bible Society in Shànghǎi.

wuu Níngbō 宁波 Wú 吴, Tàihú 太湖 1852 1868 1901

The Gospel of Luke was translated in 1852 by missionaries in Níngbō, including W. A. Russell (Church Missionary Society), D. B. McCartee, W. A. P. Martin, and H. V. V. Rankin (American Presbyterian Mission). The New Testament was completed in 1868 by J. H. Taylor (China Inland Mission), F. F. Gough, and G. E. Moule (Church Missionary Society). A revised edition was published in 1874 by the American Bible Union in Shànghǎi. The entire Bible was completed in 1901 by R. Goddard (American Baptist Missionary Union), W. S. Moule (American Presbyterian

II. Appendix: Chinese dialects

Mission), and N. B. Smith (Church Missionary Society). It was published in the same year by the BFBS in Shànghǎi.

wuu Hángzhōu 杭州 Wú 吴, Tàihú 太湖 1879

The Gospel of John was first translated in 1879 by G. E. Moule (Church Missionary Society) with reference to the Beijing Mandarin version.

wuu Sūzhōu 苏州 Wú 吴, Tàihú 太湖 1879 1881 1908

The Gospels and Acts of Apostles were translated in 1879 by John W. Davis (American Presbyterian Mission) and published in the same year by the Shànghǎi American-Chinese Book Company. The New Testament that was adapted from the *Shànghǎi Version* by G. F. Fitch (American Presbyterian Mission) and A. P. Parker (American Southern Methodist Episcopal Mission) was completed in 1881. The entire Bible was adapted and retranslated in 1908 by J. W. Davis, D. M. Lyon, J. H. Hayes (American Presbyterian Mission), and T. C. Britton (American Southern Baptist Mission).

wuu Tāizhōu 台州 Wú 吴, Tāizhōu 台州 1880 1881 1914

The Gospels were translated in 1880 by William David Rudland 路惠理 (1839-1912) (China Inland Mission), assisted by his missionary colleagues, including C. Thomson, C. H. Jose, and J. G. Kauderer. The New Testament was translated in 1881 by Rudland and his missionary colleagues: Thomson, Jose, and Kauderer (all with the China Inland Mission). The entire Bible was completed in 1914 by Rudland (China Inland Mission) and his colleagues.

wuu Jīnhuá 金华 Wú 吴, Wùzhōu 务州 1866

The Gospel of John was translated in 1866 by Horace Jenkins 薑感思 (American Baptist Missionary Union) and published in the same year by the American Bible Society in Shànghǎi.

yue Liánzhōu 连州 Yuè 粤, Luōguǎng 罗广 1904

The Gospel of Matthew was translated by Eleanor Chestnut 车以纶, a medical missionary of the American Presbyterian Mission in Liánzhōu in 1905. The manuscript was published by the American Bible Society in 1905. In the same year, Eleanor Chestnut was killed by villagers in Liánzhōu.

yue Cantonese 广东话 Yuè 粤, Yuè-Hǎi 粤海 1862 1877 1894

Charles Finney Preston 丕思业 (American Presbyterian Mission) translated the Gospels of Matthew and John into Cantonese 广东话 by 1862. The Gospels were published by the American Bible Society in Guǎngzhōu in the same year. George Piercy 俾士 of the English Wesleyan Mission completed the New Testament in 1877, and it was privately printed in Guǎngzhōu in the same year. The entire Bible in Cantonese was completed in 1894 by a committee of the American Presbyterian Mission, including Benjamin Couch Henry 香便文 and Henry Moyes 那夏礼. The manuscript was published by the American Bible Society.

III. Appendix: Altaic languages

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book	NT	Bible
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mvf	Chahar-Mongolian 内蒙古语	Altaic, Mongolic, Central	3,380,000			2004
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Chahar-Mongolian 内蒙古语, the language of Mongolians living in China, has linguistic differences from Khalka Mongolian, the official language of Mongolia, and requires an independent translation of the Bible. There are three translations of the New Testament in the twenty-first century. The first version, called *Ariun Nom*, was completed in 2004 by a team, including Stefan Müller of Zentralasien-Gesellschaft. It is the version with the widest circulation in the churches of Inner Mongolia. The second version is a dynamic equivalence translation completed by members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), and was published in 2007 with the title *Shine Gereee*. The third version was completed by Bao Xiaolin, a pastor of the Three-Self Church, in cooperation with the United Bible Societies and was published by Amity Press in 2013.

mnc	Manchu 满语	Altaic, Tungusic, South	20	1822	1835	
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Manchu, a Southern Tungus language, was the primary language of the elite at the beginning of the Qīng Dynasty, but it went into steady decline thereafter. There are approximately 20 speakers remaining today in the Chinese Manchu nationality of more than 10 million people. Stepan Vaciliyevich Lipovtsov (1773–1841), an official of the Russian Foreign Office who studied Manchu for 20 years in China, translated the Gospel of Matthew into Manchu in 1822 prior to the final decline of Manchu in 1859. The BFBS had 550 copies of the Gospel printed in St Petersburg, but only a few copies were distributed in China because the rest of the copies were destroyed in a flood. Stepan Lipovtsoff of the Russian Foreign Office translated the New Testament into Manchu by 1833, and George Borrow was appointed by the BFBS to help finalize the manuscript. In Beijing, George Borrow obtained an unpublished manuscript of the Manchu Old Testament, which the Jesuit missionary Louis Antoine de Poirot had completed in 1790. This manuscript enabled Borrow to learn the Manchu language in six months and to proofread Lipovtsoff's New Testament. In 1835, the BFBS published the New Testament manuscript in St. Petersburg using Manchu characters. It has been reprinted often.

evn	Evenki 鄂温克语	Altaic, Tungusic, North	11,000	2002		
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The Evenki language is also spoken by about 6,000 people in Russia. Nadezhda Bulatova and David Kheizell of the Institute for Bible Translation in Moscow translated the Gospel of Luke into the Tura dialect of Evenki in 2002. The manuscript was published by the Institute of Bible Translation (IBT) in Moscow in 2002 and republished as Evenki/Russian diglot with audio recording in 2013, making it usable for the Evenki in Inner Mongolia and Hēilóngjiāng, China.

oui	Old Uyghur 回鹘语	Altaic, Turkic, Southeast	?	1307		
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The Modern Uyghur language is not developed from Old Uyghur. Instead, Modern Uyghur is a mixture of the literary Chagatai language and the speech of Kāshghar. What was called Old Uyghur developed into a distinct modern language, that is, Western Yugur. It was in the 1930s that the name of Uyghur was redefined. The papal envoy John of Montecorvino, a Catholic missionary

IV. Appendix: Miáo-Yáo languages

ahead of his time, translated the New Testament into Old Uyghur in 1307. John was based in Běijīng, where Old Uyghur was spoken as the *lingua franca* of the Mongol ruling elite.

uig	Modern Uyghur 维吾尔语	Altaic, Turkic, Southeast	8,400,000	1898	1914	1950
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The Modern Uyghur language is not derived from Old Uyghur. Instead, Modern Uyghur is a mix between the literary Chagatai language and the Kashgar speech. Old Uyghur has evolved into the modern Western Yugur language (the name Uyghur was redefined in the 1930s). The Gospels were first translated in 1898 by J. Avetaranian (Swedish Missionary Society) and published by the BFBS in Leipzig in the same year. The New Testament was translated by J. Avetaranian and G. Raquette (Swedish Missionary Society) and published in 1914 by the BFBS in Plovdiv (Bulgaria). In exile from Xinjiang, the first Bible was completed in 1950 by G. Ahlbert, O. Hermansson, Nur Luke, Moulvi Munshi, and Moulvi Fazil in India. It was published by the BFBS in Cairo in 1950. In 2005, the Uyghur Bible Society published a new translation of the New Testament and portions of the Old Testament.

IV. Appendix: Miáo-Yáo languages

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book NT	Bible
hmd	Ahmao 花苗语	Miáo-Yáo, Miáo, Western	300,000	1907	1917 2009

Ahmao or Flowery Miáo is the language spoken in Shimenkan 石门坎 and Weining 威宁 in Western Guizhōu. Samuel Pollard 柏格理 of the Bible Christian Mission (Methodist, UK) settled in Shíménkǎn 石门坎 in 1905 to evangelize the Ahmao people. Since the Yí landowners (and also Hàn settlers) in that area severely exploited the Ahmao people by means of excessive taxation, the Ahmao people listened to Pollard's message and converted in large numbers to escape the despair that gripped their ethnic psyche. Many episodes in Pollard's diary describe the rude treatment of the Ahmao people by Yí and Hàn landlords. Samuel Pollard created an alphabet, loosely based on the Latin alphabet, with special characters devised by him ("Pollard Script"). With his assistants Stephen Lee 李司提反 and James Yang 杨雅各, Pollard translated Mark into Ahmao by 1907. The manuscript was published by the BFBS and 5,000 copies were printed. Samuel Pollard of the Bible Christian Mission, again assisted by Stephen Lee and James Yang, completed a first draft of the New Testament in 1915, weeks before he died from typhoid fever in September 1915. William Hudspeth and Arthur Nicholls (both of the United Methodist Mission) reviewed the draft of the New Testament and completed it in 1917. The manuscript in the Pollard Script was published by the BFBS and 5,000 copies were printed in Yokohama, Japan in 1917. The manuscript was reprinted in 1919 and 1929, with a total circulation of 10,000 copies. This was followed by a revision of the New Testament by William Hudspeth and Arthur Nicholls, which was completed in 1936, and another 7,000 copies were printed. In the 1980s, leaders of the Ahmao churches in Yúnnán met and decided to work on a translation of the Old Testament. In January 1991, with the consent of the Yúnnán Chinese Christian Council and the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, the Ahmao Old Testament translation team was formed in Kunming. By 2001, the team had drafted the entire Old Testament, when a delegation of the United Bible Societies toured the minority areas in Yúnnán.

1 Bible Translation in China

Contacts were established and Yu Suee Yan of the United Bible Societies was appointed as consultant of the Ahmao Old Testament translation project. The team revised, reviewed, and partly retranslated the Old Testament until 2006, when an acceptable translation was completed. As Pollard's original New Testament translation was outdated, the team retranslated the New Testament during 2006–2008. The first Ahmao Bible was published by the China Christian Council and printed by Amity Press in Nanjing in 2009. Ten thousand copies were dedicated on September 5, 2009 and distributed within days.

cqd Chuāndiān Hmong 川滇苗语 Miáo-Yáo, Miáo, Western 95,000 1922 2017

Chuāndiān Hmong 川滇苗语 is spoken by scattered Miáo groups in Sichuān and Yúnnán provinces. The people mostly residing in Sichuān province are called “River Miáo”. Harry Parsons 张道惠 of the Bible Christian Mission (Methodist, UK) was stationed in Shíménkǎn 石门坎, Guìzhōu during 1906–1911, 1917–1920 and 1922–1926. During his second stay in Shíménkǎn 石门坎, Parsons worked on the Sichuān Hmong language, which is spoken on the opposite side in Gǒng 珙 and Xùyǒng 叙永 counties of Sichuān Province. Parsons translated the Gospel of Mark into Sichuān Hmong in 1922 using the Pollard Script. (Pollard was Parsons' mission colleague.) The manuscript was published by the BFBS in Kunming. The Gospel of Mark was revised by Hmong speaker Yang Kuanyi and jointly published by the BFBS and American Bible Society in Shanghai in 1938. Robert and Carey McLaughlin (麦瑞祥 and 裴明明) of Wycliffe USA arrived in Yúnnán in the early 2000s to work with the Hmong Soud/Nzhuab people in the Hóngghé and Wénshān prefectures. The Hmong Soud/Nzhuab dialect and Sichuān Hmong dialect are two different varieties of (Chuānqiāndiān) Hmong. The McLaughlins worked on a grammar and adopted the Romanized orthography created by the Chinese government in the 1950s for use in Hmong Soud/Nzhuab (McLaughlin 2012, 2018). A team of Hmong translators completed the New Testament in 2017.

hea Hmu 黑苗语 Miáo-Yáo, Miáo, Central 1,250,000 1928 1934

Hmu is the autonym of these people; their Hàn Chinese exonym is Black Miáo 黑苗. China Inland Mission missionary Maurice Hutton 胡致中 (Australia) settled in Pánghǎi 旁海 in 1912 to work with the Hmu people. He adapted the National Phonetic Script (Bomofu) as an orthography for Hmu. Together with his main assistant Wáng Xuéguāng 王学光, Hutton translated the Gospels of Matthew and Mark into Hmu in 1928. The manuscript was published by the BFBS in Zhǐfú 芝罘, Shandong, China in 1928. Hutton, assisted by Wáng Xuéguāng 王学光 and other Hmu people, also completed the New Testament in 1934, and it was published by the BFBS in Zhǐfú 芝罘, Shandong, China in 1934. In the 1950s, the number of believers declined. Most copies of the New Testament were burned during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). The New Testament was retranslated in 2009 by Hans Grass¹¹⁴ of Research Foundation Language and Religion (RFLR) and the Hmu speaker Lǐ Fù 李富¹¹⁵ by using the Romanized script of the Chinese Government. A revision of this New Testament appeared in 2018. Both editions were published by Verlag für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft in Nuremberg, Germany and printed in Hong Kong, with 7,000 copies and 3,000 copies for the 2009 and 2018 editions, respectively.

¹¹⁴ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

¹¹⁵ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

V. Appendix: Tai-Kadai languages

hmj Gejia 革家语 Miáo-Yáo, Miáo, Central 60,000 1937

The Ge people, classified as ethnic Miáo under the name of Chong'anjiang Miáo 重安江苗 in Huangping County, Guizhōu, do not accept being classified as Miáo. Missionaries in the 1930s used the spelling *Keh Deo* derived from the older name Gedou Miáo 革兜苗 for this group. After China Inland Mission missionary Maurice Hutton 胡致中 (Australia) completed the New Testament in Hmu, he worked on the Ge language. In 1933, he adapted the National Phonetic Script (Bomofo) to Ge according to the same rules he had used for Hmu. Assisted by Liao De'en 廖德恩 and Liao Ruyin 廖如银, Hutton completed the Gospels of Mark and John by 1937. The National Bible Society of Scotland printed the manuscript in Shanghai in 1937.

V. Appendix: Tai-Kadai languages

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book	NT	Bible
kmc	Southern Kam 侗语	Tai-Kadai, Kam-Sui	1,000,000		2006	

Kam is the autonym and Dòng is the Hàn Chinese exonym of this group of people. The Dòng 侗 nationality is one of the 56 official nationalities in China. There are two nonintelligible Dòng languages: Northern Dòng and Southern Dòng. Northern Dòng is moribund, but the language use of Southern Dòng is vibrant. The translation of the New Testament in Southern Dòng was completed in 2006 by Hans Grass of Research Foundation Language and Religion and the Kam speakers Lǐ Fēng 李锋, Zhāng Xiǎoguāng 张晓光 and Wú Qiáng 吴强.¹¹⁶ The manuscript was published in the same year by Verlag für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft in Nuremberg, Germany.

pcc	Buyi 布依语	Tai-Kadai, Tai, Northern	2,600,000	1904		
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The Buyi language is spoken by the Buyi people, one of the 56 official nationalities in China. The Buyi people live in Guizhōu province, and their language forms a dialect chain with the Zhuang languages in Guangxi Province. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Hàn people referred to the Buyi as Zhòngjiā 中家. China Inland Mission missionary Samuel Clarke 克拉克 (UK), with the assistance of Bouyei helpers, translated the Gospel of Matthew into Buyi in 1904 using a Romanized script in which the tones were marked by diacritics. The manuscript was published by the BFBS in Shànghǎi in the same year. Clarke acknowledged in his publications that most Buyi can speak and read Chinese and could read a Chinese Bible when available (Clarke 1907: 269).

zyb	Yōngběi Zhuang 邕北壮语	Tai-Kadai, Tai, Northern	2,000,000	2016		
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Yōngběi 邕北 Zhuang is a Northern Tai language and constitutes the basis of Standard Zhuang. This variety includes Wǔmíng Zhuang, which is the speech of Wǔmíng 武鸣 County in the north of the Yōng 邕 river. The New Testament was completed in 2016 by a team of native Zhuang led by two anonymous American linguists.

¹¹⁶ These four names are pseudonyms to protect the identity of the translators.

1 Bible Translation in China

khb Tai Lǚ 傣仂语 Tai-Kadai, Tai, Southwestern 550,000 1921 1933

Tai Lǚ 傣仂语 is the Tai language spoken in the Xīshuāngbǎnnà 西双版纳 Prefecture in the south of Yúnnán Province. The name of this prefecture is derived from the Tai Lǚ place name Sipsongpanna, which means the “Twelve-Paddy-Rice-Townships.” Claude Mason and Lyle Beebe of the American Presbyterian Mission, together with their wives, arrived in Sipsongpanna/Xīshuāngbǎnnà (สิบสองปันนา/西双版纳) in 1917 to evangelize the Tai Lǚ people. They were allotted a piece of land by the Dai chieftain in the Jǐnghóng 景洪 district and built a church and hospital. The Tai Lǚ converts were two kinds of outcasts of the society: lepers and Pipa (=demon-)possessed people. Both groups were healed and settled together in “Christian villages.” Mr. and Mrs. Beebe adapted the Lao script for writing texts in Tai Lǚ. They formed a Bible translation group and finished Luke and John in 1921. Their manuscript was published by the American Bible Society and printed in Yokohama, Japan in 1921. In 1933, Mr. and Mrs. Beebe, with the assistance of Kru Myang, Cha Suh Phommah, Nan Tanawadi, and Cha Sincha, completed the first New Testament in Tai Lǚ in 1933. The manuscript was published by American Bible Society and printed in Bangkok in 1933. The number of baptized believers increased to 300 after the publication of the New Testament. By 1942, the missionaries had to depart, and church activities came gradually to a halt in the 1950s. In 1980, Christian life in the villages was revitalized, the “Christian villages” were reorganized, and the churches were rebuilt.

cuu Tai Ya 花腰傣语 Tai-Kadai, Tai, Southwestern 50,000 1922

William Clifton and Isabella Eakin Dodd of the American Presbyterian Mission settled in Jǐnghóng 景洪 in 1917 to evangelize the Tai Ya in Hónghé 红河 and Yùxī 玉溪 prefectures, but William Clifton died only two years later in 1919. His widow, Isabella, adapted the Lao script for writing in Tai Ya and translated the Gospel of Matthew into Tai Ya by 1922, which was published by the American Bible Society in Bangkok.

tdt Tai Nüa 傣那傣语 Tai-Kadai, Tai, Southwestern 540,000 1931

Tai Nüa, also called Yunnanese Shan, is mainly spoken in Déhóng 德宏 Prefecture of Yúnnán Province. The Tai Nüa are part of the Dai 傣 nationality in China. The Gospel of Mark was completed in 1931 by E. Johansson (Swedish Free Mission), aided by Kong, a mother tongue teacher. It was published in the same year by the BFBS.

VI. Appendix: Tibeto-Burman languages

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book	NT	Bible
bod	Standard Tibetan 藏语	Tibeto-Burman, Bodish	1,070,000	1862	1885	1948

Standard Tibetan is the Tibetan language used as the official language in the Tibet Autonomous Region, China. The written form contains numerous elements that are influenced by Classical Tibetan. The Acts of Apostles was the first book of the Bible that was translated into Tibetan. It was

VI. Appendix: Tibeto-Burman languages

completed in 1862 by a committee of the Moravian Church Mission including H. A. Jäschke, W. Heyde, and F. A. Redslob. The New Testament was completed in 1885 by a committee of the Moravian Church Mission, including H. A. Jäschke, A. W. Heyde, and F. A. Redslob. It was published in the same year by the BFBS in Berlin. The New Testament was revised in 1903 by a committee, including A. W. Heyde, D. MacDonalds, and J. F. Frederickson. The entire Bible was completed before World War II by A. H. Francke and Y. Gergan (Moravian Church Mission). The manuscript was sent to England, where it was stored during the war in the crypt of Ripon Cathedral. The 1948 Bible contains a revised New Testament by Chandhu Ray.

atb Zaiwa 景颇语 Tibeto-Burman, Burmish, North 80,000 1939 2009

Zaiwa, which is also known as Atsi language, is a language spoken in Yúnnán Province, Dehong Prefecture, by people belonging to the Chinese Jingpo nationality 景颇族. The Gospel of Mark was translated in 1939 by F. J. Fitzwilliam (China Inland Mission) using the Fraser Script. In 1951, the Gospel of Mark was transliterated into Roman characters by E. J. Cox (China Inland Mission) and published in Rangoon by the BFBS. A committee of the United Bible Societies completed the New Testament in 2009, which was published in the same year in Rangoon.

acn Achang 阿昌语 Tibeto-Burman, Burmish, North 60,000 1992 2011

About 30,000 Achang people live in China and about 30,000 live in Myanmar. The selfname of the Achang people is Ngochang. The Achang translator Nasaw Sampu, who was sponsored by the Asian Christian Service, completed the first New Testament in 1992. The manuscript was published by the Asian Christian Service, and 1,000 copies were printed in Hong Kong. Doug and Connie Inglis of Wycliffe Canada settled in Thailand in 1990 to work from there with the Achang people in China and Myanmar. They analyzed the phonology of Achang, compiled a dictionary (Inglis and Inglis 2003; Sampu et al. 2005), and advised the Old Testament project with Nasaw Sampu, who served as the main translator. The Old Testament was completed in 2009, and the entire Bible was published by the Bible Society of Myanmar in Rangoon.

lis Flowery Lisu 花傈僂语 Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central 600,000 1921 1938 1968

The Flowery Lisu, or Western Lisu, live in the Bǎoshān 保山 and Déhóng 德宏 prefectures of Yúnnán Province. They were evangelized by James Outram Fraser (China Inland Mission) during 1910–1938. Fraser developed a script, the Fraser Script, into which the New Testament was translated. In 1921, the Gospel of Mark was also translated by Fraser of the China Inland Mission and published in the same year by the BFBS in Shànghǎi. The New Testament was completed by Fraser, Allyn Cooke, and Lisu assistant Moses Nguali in 1938, which was also when Fraser died from malaria. The New Testament was published in 1938 by the China Bible House in Shànghǎi. The entire Bible was completed in 1968 by Allyn Cooke, John Kuhn, and Allan Crane (Overseas Missionary Fellowship) and was published by the Bible Society of Burma. Two Christian organizations in Yúnnán set up a review committee, which revised the entire Bible by 2008. The Chinese Christian Council published the revised Bible and printed 50,000 copies in Nánjīng.

lpo Black Lisu 黑傈僂语 Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central 250,000 1912 1951 2016

The Black Lisu, also called Eastern Lisu or Lipo 里泼, mainly reside in Chǔxióng 楚雄 Prefecture of Yúnnán Province and Huidōng 会东 and Huǐlǐ 会理 counties of Sìchuān Province. The Black Lisu language has two dialects, which are not completely intelligible, called Western Lipo and Eastern

1 Bible Translation in China

Lipo. The Western Lipo branch of Black Lisu is concentrated in Yongren 永仁 and Dayao 大姚 counties of Eastern Chǔxióng 楚雄. The Chinese Government has classified Western Lipo within the Yí nationality. The Eastern Lipo dialect of Black Lisu is spoken by people living in Wǔdìng 武定, Yuánmó 元谋, and Lùquàn 禄劝 counties of Western Chǔxióng 楚雄 as well as in Huìdōng 会东 and Huìlǐ 会理 counties in Sichuān. The Eastern Lipo people are grouped within the Lisu nationality. The Gospel of Matthew was translated in 1912 by George Metcalf and Arthur Nicholls (both with the China Inland Mission) and published in the same year by the BFBS in Shànghǎi. The New Testament was completed before 1951 by George Metcalf (China Inland Mission) and was published in 1951 by the China Bible House in Hong Kong. In 1992, the Yúnnán Three-Self Church instituted a Lipo translation committee, including Elder Bi Hongzheng and 13 Lipo pastoral co-workers. The group integrated, revised the New Testament of 1951, and translated the Old Testament during 1992–2013. In the translation process, they engaged consultants of the United Bible Societies for help. The China Christian Council published the Bible in 2016.

yna	Alupu 干彝语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central	41,000	1912	2016
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Another name for the Alupu language is Laka or Dry Yí. The people who speak this language belong to the Yí Nationality and live in Wǔdìng 武定 County of Yúnnán Province. The Gospel of Mark was translated in 1912 by A. G. Nicholls (China Inland Mission) using the Pollard Script. In 2008, the Yúnnán Chinese Christian Council and Three-Self Patriotic Movement formed a translation group for the Alupu Old Testament, including Alupu pastor Fu Lianxing. The team completed the translation of the Old Testament eight years later. The manuscript in Pollard Script was published by the Yúnnán Chinese Christian Council and Three-Self Patriotic Movement in 2016 and 3,000 copies were printed. A dedication ceremony was held on March 13, 2016 in the Heinaji Church in Chuxiong.

ywq	Nasupu 黑彝语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central	250,000	1923	1948	2016
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Nasupu is the autonym of this group while Black Yí or 黑彝 is the Hànn Chinese exonym. These people live in Chǔxióng 楚雄 Prefecture of Yúnnán Province. The Gospel of Luke was translated in 1923 by G. Porteous (China Inland Mission) and published in the same year by the BFBS in Shànghǎi. The New Testament was translated into Nasu in 1948 also by G. Porteus (China Inland Mission) and his collaborators, and published in the same year by the China Bible House in Shànghǎi. The Yúnnán Chinese Christian Council instituted a translation committee for the Nasu Old Testament in the 1990s, including native Pastor Wen Fu. The committee completed the Old Testament before 2010 and then revised the New Testament of 1948. After a lengthy approval process, the entire Bible was published by the Chinese Christian Council in 2016 and printed at Amity Press in Nánjīng.

lhi	Lahu Shi 黄拉祜语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central	117,000	2009	2015
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The Lahu Shi 黄拉祜族 or Yellow Lahu live in China (population approximately 120,000), Myanmar (60,000), Thailand (15,000), and Laos (3,000). Their language differs from the Lahu Na (Black Lahu). The Lahu form one of the 56 nationalities in China. Arthur and Pamela Cooper of Wycliffe USA settled in Chiang Mai in 1993 to work with the Lahu Shi in Thailand. They adapted and finalized the existing (Lahu Na) orthograph, took responsibility for an existing, but disunited, Bible translation group and were able to reorganize it, and translated a gospel into Lahu Shi in 2009. A team, including Arthur and Pamela Cooper of Wycliffe USA, Upai Jasa of Wycliffe Thailand, and Lahu Si

VI. Appendix: Tibeto-Burman languages

translator Duangthip Nakiri, completed the New Testament in 2015. The manuscript was published by Wycliffe Thailand in the same year and dedicated on February 13, 2016. The New Testament is intelligible to the Lahu Shi people in China, where most of the people live.

nuf	Nusu 怒语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, Central	12,000	2010
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The Nusu 怒族 people constitute one of the 56 nationalities in China. Their language is also spoken in Myanmar by several hundred people. Ethnologue-17 reported the translation of a book of the Bible in Nusu in 2010. By 2019, the anonymous organization behind this project uploaded seven books of the New Testament on their project website.¹¹⁷

ygp	Kopu 白彝语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, North	50,000	1913 2015
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The Kopu is an ethnic group within the Yí nationality that comprises approximately 50,000 people. An alternate name of this group is White Yí, although there are several other Yí groups called by this name. The Kopu reside in Qǔjìng, Hónghé, and Chǔxióng prefectures. The Gospel of Mark was translated in 1913 by A. G. Nicholls (China Inland Mission) and A. Evans (United Methodist Mission) using the Pollard Script. It was published in the same year by the BFBS in Yokohama, Japan. Almost a century later, the Yúnnán Chinese Christian Council and Three-Self Patriotic Movement formed a committee for translating the New Testament into Kopu in 2009, inviting Kopu lead translator Li Wanxing, five other Kopu translators, and United Bible Societies' consultant Yu Suee Yan to be members of the team. They worked at Kūnmíng and completed the project in 2015. They used the Pollard Script, for which United Bible Societies provided literacy courses. The manuscript was printed at Amity Press in Nánjīng.

iii	Nuosu 凉山彝语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, North	2,000,000	2005
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The Nuosu people live mainly in Liangshan Prefecture in Sichuān Province. They constitute the most populous group within the Yí nationality. Their language use is vibrant. The New Testament was completed in 2005 by Hans Grass¹¹⁸ of Research Foundation Language and Religion and several Nuosu speakers including Munyo Vuhlur¹¹⁹. The manuscript was published in the same year by Verlag für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft in Nuremberg, Germany.

yig	Neasu 黔西彝语	Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, North	600,000	2018
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The Neasu language is spoken by about 600,000 people in Wēiníng 威宁 and Hèzhāng 赫章 counties of Guìzhōu Province. The Neasu and Nuosu languages are related, although unintelligible. Together with the Three-Self Church pastor Liú Huī 刘辉¹²⁰ from Wēiníng 威宁, Hans Grass of Research Foundation Language and Religion developed a Romanized script and translated, revised, and tested the entire New Testament in Neasu by 2006. The manuscript was published in 2018 by Verlag für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft in Nuremberg, with 3,000 copies printed in Hong Kong.

¹¹⁷ See <http://nusu.win/en/Home>.

¹¹⁸ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

¹¹⁹ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

¹²⁰ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

1 Bible Translation in China

ktp Kaduo Hani 卡多哈尼语 Tibeto-Burman, Lolo, South 20,000 1939

Kaduo is a dialect of the Hāní 哈尼 language spoken in Yuánjiāng 元江 county. Bertha Preisinger of the Vandsburger Mission (Germany) arrived at the mission station in Táohuāpíng 桃花坪 (of their partner organization Liebenzeller Mission), Húnán in 1912. In 1928, she was transferred to the mission station of Éshān 峨山 (China Inland Mission) and in 1932 to the mission station of Yuánjiāng 元江 (American Presbyterian Mission), both in Yúnnán. The American Presbyterian Mission station was transferred to the Vandsburger Mission in 1933. She began working with the Kaduo people, who belong to the Hāní 哈尼 nationality. She adapted the Pollard Script and translated the Gospel of Luke into Kaduo in 1939. The manuscript was published by the BFBS in Shànghǎi in 1939.

nxq Naxi 纳西语 Tibeto-Burman, Tangut-Qiángic 300,000 1932

Naxi is spoken in Northwest Yúnnán, in Yùlóng County. The Gospel of Mark was translated in 1932 by Elize Schar ten (Dutch Pentecostal Missionary Society), using the Fraser Script. It was published in the same year by the BFBS in Shànghǎi.

VII. Appendix: Austro-Asiatic languages

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book	NT	Bible
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blr	Blang 布朗	Austro-Asiatic, Palaungic	55,000	2015		
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Blang or Bulang 布朗 is an Austro-Asiatic language related to the Wa language spoken by 55,000 people. Most of them live in Měnghǎi 勐海 County of Xīshuāngbǎnnà 西双版纳 Prefecture, China. Ethnologue-19 reported the translation of a book of the Bible in Blang in 2015. No independent information on the translation project could be found.

wbm	Wa 佤 (Vo)	Austro-Asiatic, Palaungic	40,000			2016
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The Wa language distinguishes between the Parauk (750,000), Vo (40,000), and Awa (100,000) varieties. The Parauk variety is the one in which the New Testament was translated in 1938. The Vo variety in China is the one in which the whole Bible was completed in 2016. A team of Wa pastors including Bǎo Guāngqiáng 包光强 and the United Bible Societies' consultant Simon Wong 黄锡木 completed the translation of the Old Testament and the revision of the New Testament in 2016, when the Chinese Christian Council published the whole Wa Bible in Nánjīng. The Bible was printed by Amity Press in Nánjīng and dedicated on October 22, 2016.

VIII. Appendix: Formosan languages

ISO639-3	Language	Classification	Population	Book	NT	Bible
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ami	Amis 阿美语	East Formosan, Central	138,000	1957	1972	1997
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The Amis language is spoken in Eastern Táiwān along the coast between Huālián and Táidōng. The language is mainly spoken by elderly people. Traditionally, the Amis have a matrilineal social

VIII. Appendix: Formosan languages

organization, with women having most of the authority in the clan. To balance this out, men have superior positions within the local government. The Amis have a legend about a brother and sister who drifted on a tub-raft from the Caroline Islands to Táiwan. (The Caroline Islands, whose Chinese name is Jiālùolín Dǎo 加罗林岛, are part of the Republic of Kiribati in the central Pacific Ocean.) Fey and Apack (1993) who recorded this legend, suggested a non-Austronesian origin of the Amis and possibly of other people groups in Táiwan as well. U.S. missionary Edward Torjesen of the Evangelical Alliance Mission settled in Chénggōng 成功, Táidōng 台东 County in 1955 to work with the Amis people. He learned the language and developed a Bopomofo-based alphabet and translated the Epistle of James into Amis by 1957, which was published by the Bible Society of Táiwan as a trial version in 1957. Because the Bopomofo-based script did not render well certain Amis sounds, the church leaders were not very receptive of the publication. Edward Torjesen was joined by Arthur Stejskals (USA) and Virginia Fey (USA) of the Evangelical Alliance Mission in 1960. Virginia Fey learned the language so well that she became the translation expert on the team. The team developed a Romanized script that solved the problems of the Bopomofo script and completed the first Amis New Testament in 1972, which was published by the Bible Society of Táiwan in 1972. The Bible Society of Táiwan gradually took over responsibility for the Old Testament translation project. United Bible Societies' consultant Graham Ogden directed a team of Amis translators, who completed the entire Bible in 1997, which was published by the Bible Society of Táiwan in the same year.

bnn	Bunun 布农语	Bunun	38,000	1951	1973	2000
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The Bunun people are spread across Táiwan, and they are known for their multivocal singing. Because of their geographical dispersion, they developed the custom of communicating with one another through musical cries. A large portion of the population converted to Christianity after 1946. Hú Wénchí 胡文池 of the Presbyterian Church of Táiwan worked with the Bunun people during 1947–1971, with financial support from Presbyterian churches in England, Canada, and the United States. With his colleague Zhāng Yǔfā 张玉发, Hú Wénchí developed a Romanized script for Bunun and translated the Gospel of Matthew by 1951, which was published by the Bible House in Hong Kong. After publication of the Gospel, further progression was stalled by the Táiwan authorities, which in the 1950s, pursued an assimilatory policy of the aboriginal people and viewed any Romanized, non-Bopomofo-based, script as a threat to the national identity of Táiwan. A team of Hàn and Bunun pastors, including Hú Wénchí and Manias Is-tasipal, completed the translation of the Bunun New Testament in 1973 using the Bopomofo-based script. The manuscript was published as a Bunun-Chinese diglot by the Bible Society of Táiwan in Táiběi in 1973. In 1987, at the request of the Bunun Presbyterian Church, the Bible Society of Táiwan formed a translation committee for the Old Testament, including three Bunun pastors (Lǐ Míng rén 李明仁, Wǔ Zhūī 伍锥, and Shěn Délái 沈德来) as translators and seven Bunun pastors (Zhāng Yǔfā 张玉发, Huáng Shùn 黄顺, Zhōu Tiānhuà 周天化, Yán Yǒulì 颜有利, Tián Róngguì 田荣贵, Yú Zàiwàng 余再旺, and Sī Míngshān 司明山) as reviewers. This team of 10 pastors, which was advised by United Bible Societies' consultant Graham Ogden, completed an abridged version of the Old Testament by 2000 as well as a revision to the New Testament. The first Bunun Bible was published in a Romanized script by the Bible Society of Táiwan in 2000.

1 Bible Translation in China

dru Rukai 鲁凯语 Rukai 10,500 2001 2017

Rukai is believed to be the oldest Formosan language having split from Proto-Austronesian in 2,500 B.C. The Rukai were evangelized in the 1950s and 1960s, and about 80% of Rukai people are affiliated with a Christian church. Rukai churches requested a Bible translation project from the Bible Society of Táiwan in 1987. A translation committee, including Rukai pastors Adriu and Tanubake, was formed in 1988. Pastor Han Der-seng of the Young Nak Presbyterian Church in Korea became a crucial supporter of the translation project as a result of getting to know some Rukai people in Táiwan. The committee took 13 years to complete the New Testament, which was published by the Bible Society of Táiwan in 2001. The New Testament has been used in three of six dialect areas. The Bible Society of Táiwan and the Presbyterian Church of Táiwan formed an Old Testament translation committee of Rukai pastors in 2002. After the committee finished most of the Old Testament books, they appointed Paul McLean of the United Bible Societies as a consultant to the project in 2012. The review of the manuscript took another five years before the Bible Society of Táiwan published the entire Bible in the Drekey dialect of Rukai and printed 3,000 copies. The Bible was dedicated on July 11, 2017.

fos Siraya 西拉雅语 East Formosan, Southwest *Extinct* 1661

The Siraya language is an East Formosan language that had become extinct in the late nineteenth century. The language is currently revitalized by the modern Siraya people. In 1661, the Dutch missionary and linguist Daniel Gravius (Dutch Reformed Church) translated the Gospel of Matthew into Siraya and published it by juxtaposing Dutch text with it.

pwn Paiwan 排湾语 Paiwan 66,100 1959 1973 1993

In the past, the Paiwan people gained a reputation as headhunters. When the Dutch occupied Táiwan, more than 5,000 became Christians. They were all killed by the Chinese military leader Zhèng Chénggōng in 1661 when he defeated the Dutch forces. Today, there is a large number of Paiwan Christians, with more than 14,000 belonging to the Presbyterian Church alone. John Whitehorn 怀约翰 of the English Presbyterian Mission arrived in Táiwan in 1951 to work with the Paiwan people. He created a Bopomofo-based script for Paiwan (Bopomofo was created by the Republican Government in 1911), and, aided by Pari (or Yè Chéngbiān 叶盛编) and other native translators, he completed the Gospel of Mark in 1959. The manuscript was published by the Hong Kong Bible House using the Bopomofo script. Whitehorn and his team also completed the first New Testament in 1973, which was published by the Bible Society of Táiwan in 1973 using the Bopomofo-based script and a diglot with Mandarin Chinese. In 1984, the Bible Society of Táiwan formed a translation committee, including Cukar (Xǔ Sōng 许松) as the main translator and Lín Quánmào 林泉茂, Lín Jiànrè 林建二, Kǒng Shùnxìng 孔顺兴, Máo Dōngnán 毛东南, Xiè Qīnyù 谢钦玉, Lài Guāngxióng 赖光雄, Hé Míngdào 何明道, and Lǐ Dìngxióng 李定雄 as the reviewers. Together with United Bible Societies' consultants I-Jin Loh and Graham Ogden, they completed an abridged version of the Old Testament and a revision of the New Testament in 1993, transcribing the work into a Romanized script. This work was published by the Bible Society of Táiwan in 1993.

tao Yami 雅美语 Malayo-Polynesian, Philippine, Bashiic 3,380 1970 1994

Yami is a Malayo-Polynesian language and not a Formosan language. It is a language spoken on Orchid Island, 46 kilometers southeast of Táiwan, and is similar to languages found in the Northern Philippines. Grace Wakelin 卫克琳 of the Canadian Presbyterian Church arrived in Táiwan and

VIII. Appendix: Formosan languages

settled on Orchid Island 兰屿岛 in 1956. She began translating the Gospel of Mark in 1965 and completed it five years later in 1970 using a Bopomofo-based script. In the same year, she retired and returned to Canada. In 1985, the Bible Society of Táiwan arranged a special cooperation between Wycliffe Bible Translators and United Bible Societies and formed a translation committee, including Rosemary Thompson 汤思玫 of Wycliffe Canada, Virginia Larson 罗雅菁 of Wycliffe USA, Yami pastors Wáng Róngjī 王荣基 and Zhāng Hǎiyǔ 张海屿, and the United Bible Societies' consultant Graham Ogden. The Wycliffe translators checked the appropriateness of the vocabulary and the faithfulness to the original text, while Graham Ogden supervised compliance with translation principles. The committee completed the New Testament in 1994, which was published by the Bible Society of Táiwan.

tay	Atayal 泰雅语	Atayalic	84,300	1964	1974	2003
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The Atayal language 泰雅语, with its two dialects of Suliq and C'uli', is spoken by more than 84,000 people in central and northern Táiwan, along the Xuěshān 雪山 mountains. Clare McGill 穆克理 of the Canadian Presbyterian Church arrived in Táiwan in 1953 and after learning Mandarin Chinese, he settled in Dàtóng, a township 大同 in Yílán 宜蘭 County, to work with the Atayal people. He first toured the area as an itinerant preacher to learn about the different Atayal dialects. In 1956, McGill formed a Bible translation group, including Atayal pastors Chén Zhōnghuī 陈忠辉, Lín Míngfú 林明福, Gāo Jīnróng 高金荣, and Chén Guāngsōng 陈光松. At the insistence of the government and despite the absence of symbols for certain sounds, they created a Bopomofo-based script for use in Atayal and translated the Gospel of Mark in 1964. A team coordinated by Clare McGill and again including the Atayal pastors Chén Zhōnghuī 陈忠辉, Lín Míngfú 林明福, Gāo Jīnróng 高金荣 and Chén Guāngsōng 陈光松 completed the New Testament in 1974 using the Bopomofo-based script. The manuscript was published by the Bible Society of Táiwan in the same year. In 1989, after Clare McGill had returned to Canada, the Presbyterian Atayal Church requested the translation of the Old Testament, after which the Bible Society of Táiwan formed a committee with Atayal pastor Lín Chūnhuī 林春辉 as chief translator and pastors Lín Míngfú 林明福, Gāo Jīnróng 高金荣, Lǐ Fúquán 李福全, Chén Guāngsōng 陈光松, and Lín Chéng 林诚 as reviewers. Graham Ogden of the United Bible Societies served as a consultant to the committee. They completed an abridged version of the Old Testament as well as a revision of the New Testament in 2003. The text was recompiled in a Romanized script and published by the Bible Society of Táiwan in 2003.

trv	Seediq 赛德克语	Atayalic	20,000	1956	1963	2005
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The Seediq language is spoken by 20,000 Seediq 赛德克族 and Truku 太鲁阁族 people in Huālián 花莲县 and Nántóu 南投县 counties. Ralph and Ruth Covell 柯饶富 of the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society settled in Táiwan in 1951 and started a Bible translation project in the Seediq (Truku) language in 1953. They engaged two native translators, Tailong Litok and Howat Pisao. The policy of the Táiwan government in the 1950s was to transcribe aboriginal languages using the Bopomofo script (注音符号) to differentiate itself from the Communist government, which employed the Romanized script for the minorities on the continent. Covell and his team completed the Gospel of Mark in 1956, which was published as a monoglot by Bible House in Hong Kong and printed in Táiwan. Ralph and Ruth Covell, together with Lǐ Shǒuxìn 李守信 and Seediq translators Tailong Litok and Howat Pisao, completed the Seediq New Testament in 1963. The manuscript was jointly published by the Bible Societies of Hong Kong and of Táiwan in 1963. The Seediq (Taroko) Old Testament was gradually translated over a period of 40 years by a committee,

1 Bible Translation in China

which included pastors Tián Xīndé 田信德, Wú Wénhuá 吴文华, Yè Bǎojìn 叶保进, and Jīn Qīngshān 金清山. Ralph Covell, who had returned to the United States, advised the team as a consultant. The final manuscript was published by the Bible Society of Táiwān in 2005 and dedicated on October 1, 2005.

pyu	Puyuma 卑南语	Puyuma	8,490	1990
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The Puyuma language 卑南语 is spoken by about 8,500 people in Táidōng 台东 County on the east coast. The Puyuma people are divided into the Zhībēn 知本 and Nánwáng 南王 groups. The Puyuma people were evangelized by the Catholic Church and the Presbyterian Church of Táiwān. The Catholic priest John Zēng 曾建次, who was located near the city of Táidōng 台东, translated the Gospel of Mark into the Kapitól (知本) dialect of Puyuma, his native dialect. The Gospel was published in the Kanji script in 1990. Although Zēng taught literacy and Gospel classes, the general interest of the Puyuma people in their written language was limited. In the 2000s, a new edition of the Gospel of Mark transcribed in a Romanized script was circulated.

tsu	Tsou 邹语	Tsouic	2,130	2012
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The Tsou language is spoken by 2,100 people in Nántóu 南投 and Jiāyì 嘉义 counties. A team of Catholic priests from the Jiāyì diocese (天主教嘉义教区) in Western Táiwān translated and revised the New Testament over a period of 30 years and finally published it in 2012. Members of the team were German priest Anton Weber, Hungarian priest Dr. Jozsef Szakos, native Tsou priest Norbert Pu, Lisa Wang, and others. The linguist priest on the team was Jozsef Szakos, who had written a Tsou grammar book and co-compiled a Tsou-English dictionary.

Part II

Chapter 2

Ethno-religious Profile of the Hmu People

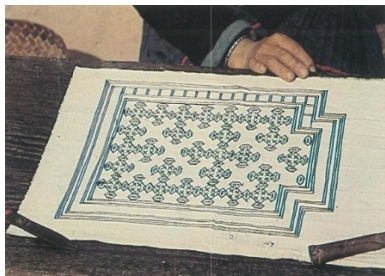
2.1 Introduction

Miáo 苗 refers to the name used by the Chinese during the Qin dynasty (221-206 B.C.) for non-Chinese groups residing in the Yangtze valley south of the Hàn areas. Notably, its etymology remains uncertain.

The Miáo in China use various names to identify themselves: “Xong” in Húnán Province; “Ahmao”, “Hmu”, “Damu” in Guìzhōu Province; and “Hmong” in Sìchuān and Yúnnán Province. In the 1950s, the Chinese Government grouped these tribes into the Miáo 苗 Nationality, one of the official 56 nationalities. Miáo tribes outside of China refer to themselves the name of “Hmong” and reject the term ‘Miáo’ as nonindigenous. About 1.3 million Hmu or Black Miáo people live in Southeast Guìzhōu and comprise the main group within the Miáo 苗 Nationality of 9.6 million members.

2.2 History

Native legends of the different Miáo tribes mention about an ancient migration from a “cold land in the north” (Savina 1924). Meanwhile some myths mention an ancient indigenous script that the ancestors of the Miáo lost during the process of forced migration. Remnants of this pictographic writing are said to be preserved in the sophisticated embroidery pattern of clothes and costumes. Miáo intellectuals have identified nearly forty pictographic words within the embroidery design.



Miáo Embroidery
(Lewis 1984: 104)

人、𠤎 (man)	𪛗 (dragon)	𪛗 (bird)	𪛗 𪛗 (butterfly)
𪛗 (water, river)	𪛗 (sieve, water mill)	𪛗 (rotor)	
× (fork)	𪛗、𪛗 (hook)	𪛗、𪛗 (clamp)	𪛗、𪛗 (claw)
N (curved)	𪛗 (pupa)	e (insect)	𪛗 (bud, fruit)
𪛗 (basket)	𪛗、𪛗 (road)	𪛗 (measuring tool)	
𪛗、𪛗 (frame) ⁷			

Embroidery writing
(Enwall 1994: 50)

Deviant versions of the myth suggest that the ancient script was eaten by the Miáo, which resulted in inner qualities such as ability to memorize the traditional songs. Some versions of this myth raise the expectation that the lost script would be resuscitated in the future. Pollard’s missionary script could capitalize on this expectation as the Ahmao in Western Guizhōu viewed it as fulfilling the function the ancient writing once had.

During the first millennium A.D., these groups were forced by the expansive Hàn population to migrate southward to what is currently known as the Húnán, Guizhōu, Sichuān, and Yúnnán provinces. After the 18th century A.D., some Miáo groups shifted out of China into other Southeast Asian countries, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar. In the aftermath of the Second Indochina War (1960-1975), about 100,000 ethnic Miáo fled to the United States, France, and Australia in the wake of their alliance with anti-communist forces which lost the war.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, the Miáo, primarily ancestors of the Hmu, mounted three rebellions in Guizhōu Province against the imperial government, all of which resulted in defeat.

- the First Miáo Rebellion (1735-1738),
- the Second Miáo Rebellion (1795-1806), and
- the Third Miáo Rebellion (1854-1873).

Robert Jenks relates the visceral motivations for the Miáo to revolt against the three types of grievances: the alienation of ancestral land by Hàn merchants, excessive government taxation, and maladministration on the part of officials. Messianic expectations in the Miáo folk religion might have accentuated the rebellious fervor as well. Jenks discusses the possibility that some Miáo rebels

2.3.1 Family and Work

may have been influenced by Hàn White Lotus sects (白蓮教). Notably, these movements worship Maitreya, the future Buddha of Buddhist eschatology.

Besides the Miáo, other ethnic minorities, Muslims, discontented Hàn, and religious folk sects joined the insurrections during which, by one account, almost five million people lost their lives. In addition, vast areas were depopulated. The knowledge of these events remains ensconced in the collective memory of the Hmu people. Consequently, the Hmu have assimilated to the surrounding Hàn culture to a greater extent than, for example, the Ahamo in Western Guìzhōu, who did not participate in the rebellion.

2.3 Society

2.3.1 Family and Work

The Hmu society is an order comprising of about 20 clans of patrilineal lineage, each of which has its own name (e.g. *Dliangx*, *Fangs*). Babies are given native names at birth and additional Chinese names at the local registration office. The Hmu are strictly exogamous and intermarriage within a clan is prohibited. Membership to a clan is inherited through the male line. While unmarried women are members of the clan of their fathers, they become associated with the clan of their husbands after marriage.

The Hmu people grow paddy rice in the valleys in alternation with wheat or rape. Rice, maize, millet, and buckwheat are planted on the high terraced hillsides. Traditional houses are made of wood, have two to four storeys, and are roofed with either straw or bark. Most homes have a hearth but lack a chimney, thereby causing the house to be smoky.

Each village chooses a chief who is knowledgeable about the traditional customs and who may or may not be a Party Official. Typically, members of the same clan reside in the same village and gather for important social events. Since the year 2000, many young Hmu people have migrated to industrial areas in Guangdong in order to earn a living, while the elderly stay back home.

2.3.2 Festivals

The Hmu people are known to celebrate a number of festivals, primarily during the autumn, winter, and spring seasons:

- *Lusheng Festivals* (芦笙节) are dating events organized by groups of villages in the month of January, during which young men and women perform song competitions.
- *Sister Festivals* (姊妹节) are events organized in the months of April and May, during which the Hmu women showcase their traditional decorative costumes.
- *Ancestor Festivals* (牯藏节) are held every 13 years wherein a shaman slaughters an ox to officiate the communion between the members of a clan and the deceased ancestors.
- *Dragon Festivals* (龙节) such as the *Dragon Boat Festival* or the *Dragon Lantern Festival* commemorate different folk myths: victory over a dragon that troubled the local community, or the invocation of protective forces of a benign dragon.

In Hmu society, songs serve the purpose of a medium of communication and self-expression. Groups of young men and women compete in multivocal songs at meetings, such as the Lusheng Festival. At such festivals, the Hmu people entertain relatives and visitors alike with copious amounts of liquor brewed from rice or maize.

2.4 Religion

2.4.1 Traditional Religion

The Hmu believe in a creation myth, according to which a butterfly emerged from a maple tree, married a bubble, and then became pregnant. The butterfly laid twelve eggs whose cocoons were looked after by a bird. The hatched eggs subsequently became a Hmu man, the mythical ancestor Jiang Yang, a snake, a dragon, a buffalo, a tiger, an elephant, a thunder god, ghosts, as well as abstract phenomena such as disasters.

2.4.2 Christianity

The Hmu folk religion is animism as opposed to polytheism. The term for *god* is *wangx waix* 'heavenly king', a relatively new term used in the New Testament of 1934. According to the beliefs espoused by the Hmu, the world is inhabited by good and evil spirits which they try to manipulate or seek protection from. Shamans reside in every village and mediate between lay individuals and the spiritual world. They often encode their esoteric knowledge in documents written in Chinese characters representing the Hmu sounds.

In their religion, every person has three souls that move to different places after the death. The first soul is buried in the grave with the dead body. The second soul stays in the village and supports the clan if old age is the cause of death. If the demise is caused by accident, the soul wanders around as an evil ghost, causing problems. Meanwhile the third soul returns to the ancestors if the person died under normal circumstances. The Shaman instructs the third soul to find its way to the place of the ancestors.

2.4.2 Christianity

The China Inland Missionary Samuel Clarke 克拉克 (1853-1946) commenced his missionary work among the Hmu people in 1895. Working with the native Hmu Christian Pān Xiùshān 潘秀山 in Guiyang during 1896, Clarke compiled a Miáo language primer, a catechism, some tracts, and several hymns. In the same year, a mission station was established in Pángǎi 旁海, 20 kilometers to the north of Kǎilǐ City 凯里市. Shortly after his appointment to Pángǎi in 1898, the China Inland Missionary William Fleming 明鑑光 (1867-1898) was murdered by Chinese who was opposed to the mission. The Hmu preacher Pān Xiùshān was also killed along with Fleming.

The Australian China Inland Missionary Maurice Hutton 胡致中 (1888-?) was appointed to Pángǎi in 1912. He invented the Chinese National Phonetic Script (注音字母) in 1920, a system inspired by Japanese kana and based on Chinese characters. Hutton published the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, a catechism, and a hymn book in 1928, and subsequently the entire New Testament in 1934. Hutton's main Miáo assistant was Wáng Xuéguāng 王学光. These books were printed in Zhīfú 芝罘, Shāndōng. However, no information is known about the number of printed Bible portions. Due to the turmoil of civil war between Nationalists and Communists and an epidemic of typhoid, the presence of missionaries in Pángǎi was discontinued for a long period of time. Hutton fled

the invading Communists in 1936, before returning to Australia in 1938 after completing 26 years of service. However, the mission station in Pánghǎi could not be maintained. Interest in Christianity declined in the 1950s. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1974), many copies of the New Testament were confiscated in house-to-house raids and eventually burnt.

Joakim Enwall compared the Ahmao in Western Guìzhōu and the Hmu in Southeast Guìzhōu for their varied reception of Christianity. For the year 1937, the number of baptized and literate Miáo is displayed in the following chart.

	Ahmao ¹	Hmu ²
Baptized Christians in 1937	18,300	134
Literacy in missionary script in 1937	34,500	100

Table 2.1: Number of Christians in Ahmao and Hmu in 1937

He attributes the difference to three factors. First, the Hmu people had been in contact with Hàn settlers since the 18th century, whereas the Ahmao populated a barren mountain area and did not have much exposure to the Hàn. This difference prompted the Hmu desiring relative assimilation and the Ahmao to aspire for relative autonomy. The Hmu were not receptive to Christianity like the adjacent Hàn, whereas the Ahmao welcomed Christianity, unlike their Hàn neighbors.

Second, the ancient Miáo myths of a lost script played a key role in the Ahmao society, but assumed less significance in the Hmu society. While the Ahmao embraced the Pollard script as the symbolic return of a lost treasure, the Hmu did not perceive the Hutton script in the same way. Third, the Hutton script is an extension of the *Bopomofo*, the phonetic script used for Mandarin Chinese prior to 1949, whereas the appearance of the Pollard script is different from other writing systems and can be viewed as an indigenous script.

¹ The Pollard script of the Ahmao people had become accepted and was used even by many non-Christians.

² Enwall estimates that about 50 people still knew Hutton's writing in 1990.

2.5.1 General information

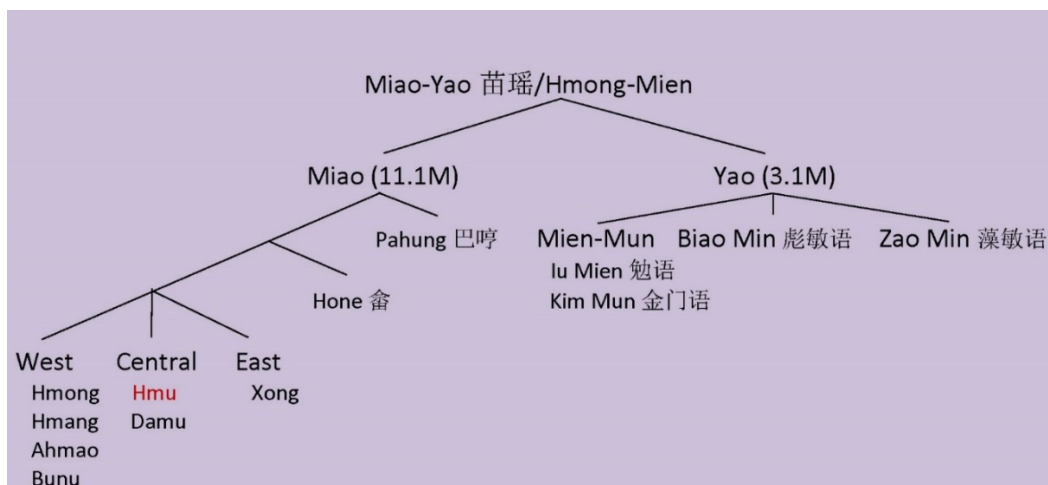
Since the 1990s, Hàn and foreign missionaries have settled in Southeast Guìzhōu. The number of Hmu Christians and village churches has increased again. Yet, many of the underlying attitudes that existed in the 1930s continue to prevail.

Hans Grass³ of Research Foundation Language and Religion (RFLR) and the Hmu speaker Lǐ Fù 李富⁴ retranslated the New Testament into Hmu in 2009 and revised it in 2018 by using the Romanized script.

2.5 Language

2.5.1 General information

The Hmu belong to the Miáo-Yáo language family, which consists of about 80 languages. Martha Ratliff classified the larger Miáo-Yáo languages as follows. They are partially renamed in the following diagram.

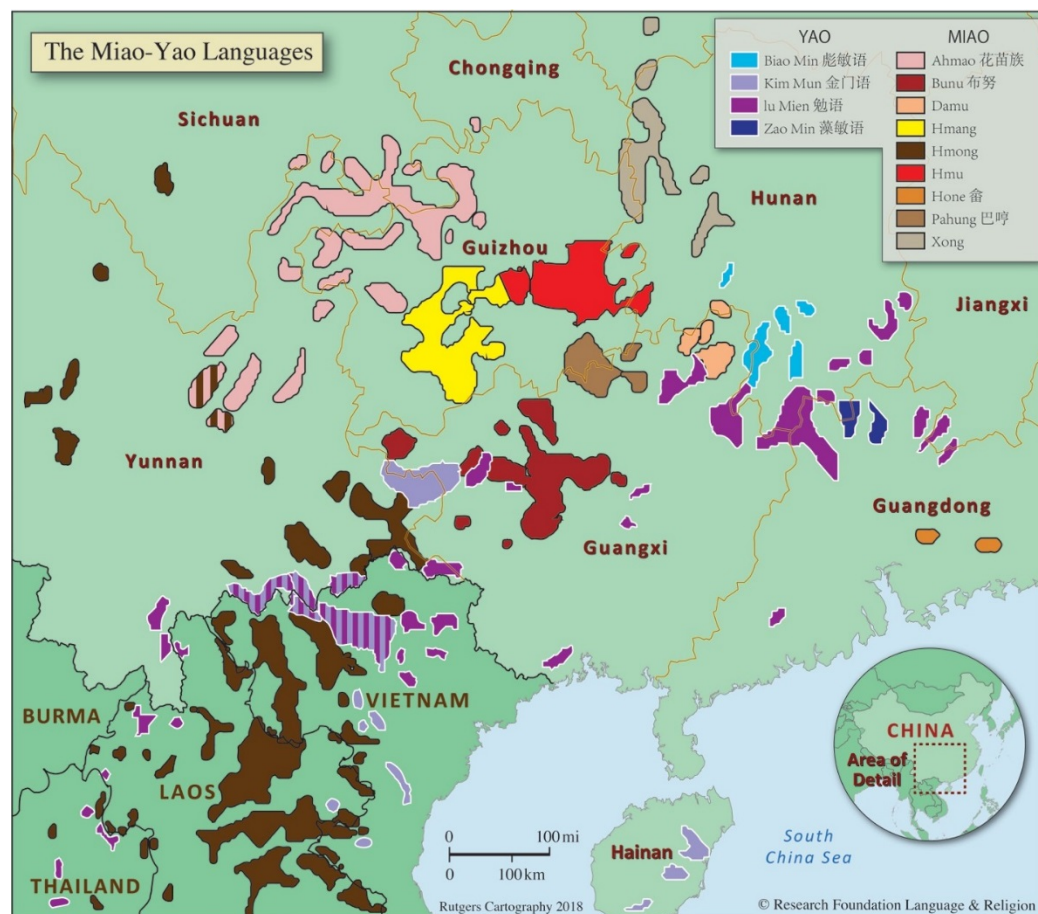


The terms Hmu and Qanao are identical. The Miáo people in Guìzhōu use Hmu in a pan-Miáo perspective, when comparing themselves to the Hmong in Yúnnán. In particular, they use Qanao in a regional perspective as a

³ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

⁴ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

superordinate clan name. The geographic distribution of the Miáo-Yáo languages is illustrated on the following map.



The Miáo-Yáo languages are isolating languages and predominantly monosyllabic. Despite their structural similarity with Chinese and Tai-Kadai languages, they are genetically independent. Miáo-Yáo languages exhibit between six and eight contrastive tones, between 40 and 60 classifiers, and between five and eight demonstrative pronouns.

2.5.2 Writing System

In 1913, the Běijīng Republican Government introduced the Bopomofo (注音符号), a system of 37 characters used for phonetic notation. The term *Bopomofo*

is derived from the first four syllables (ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄉ) in the conventional ordering of characters of that particular system. It was originally intended for dictionaries in order to show the standard Mandarin pronunciation. Maurice Hutton adopted the Bopomofo for transcribing the Hmu language and then extended it by three new symbols. The New Testament of 1934 has been edited in the extended Bopomofo. Joakim Enwall shows that the basis of Hutton's script is a place in Huángpíng 黄平 County rather than Pánghǎi where Hutton's mission station was located.

In the 1950s, the Běijīng Communist Government dispatched investigation teams into the minority areas. In 1956, the committee for the Miáo people chose the Yǎnghāo 养蒿 village, Guàdīng 挂丁 township, in Kǎilǐ 凯里 City as the standard speech of the Hmu dialect of Miáo. They devised a Romanized script for the speech in which numerous literacy campaigns were conducted, education materials were edited, and an indigenous literature was developed. The status of this script is semi-official. It falls short of being a generalized vehicle of bilingual education. Below we introduce the Hmu sound system and depict how each sound is encoded in the Romanized and Bopomofo scripts.

A. Consonants

There are 34 initials (consonants). The three-way contrast of voiced, unvoiced, aspirated fricatives and laterals is a typologically rare phenomenon among languages of the world.

Initials		Point of articulation											
		Labial			Alveolar			Alveopalatal			Velar		
		IPA	Latin	注音	IPA	Latin	注音	IPA	Latin	注音	IPA	Latin	注音
Stops	unvoiced	p	b	ㄅ	t	d	ㄊ				k	g	ㄎ
	aspirated	p ^h	p	ㄆ	t ^h	t	ㄊ				k ^h	k	ㄎ
Fricatives	voiced	v	w	ㄨ	z	r	ㄖ	ʃ	y	ㄚ	ɣ	v	ㄨ
	unvoiced	f	f	ㄈ	s	s	ㄙ	ç	x	ㄣ			ɣ
	aspirated	f ^h	hf	ㄈ	s ^h	hs	ㄙ	ç ^h	hx	ㄣ	x ^h	hv	ㄣ
Affricates	unvoiced				ts	z	ㄗ	tɕ	j	ㄗ			
	aspirated				ts ^h	c	ㄗ	tɕ ^h	q	ㄗ			
Nasals	voiced	m	m	ㄇ	n	n	ㄋ	ɲ	ni	ㄋ	ŋ	ng	ㄋ
	unvoiced	m ^h	hm	ㄇ	n ^h	hn	ㄋ	ɲ ^h	hni	ㄋ			
Laterals	voiced				l	l	ㄌ						
	unvoiced				ɬ	dl	ㄌ						
Laterals	unvoiced				ɬ	dl	ㄌ						
	aspirated				ɬ ^h	hl	ㄌ						

Hutton used the symbol ㄣ only for Chinese loanwords. He added three letters (ㄚ, ㄣ, ㄗ) to the Bopomofo.

B. Vowels

There are 23 finals in the Yǎnghāo speech, six monophthongs, nine diphthongs, and one triphthong. The finals -io-, -ua-, and -uang- do not have any counterpart in the speech chosen by Hutton.

IPA	Latin	注音	IPA	Latin	注音	IPA	Latin	注音	IPA	Latin	注音	IPA	Latin	注音
i	i	一	e	ee	ㄝ	a	a	ㄚ	o	o	ㄛ	u	u	ㄨ
			ei	ei	ㄝ									
			ɛ	ai	ㄝ									
ia	ia	一ㄚ										ua	ua	
												ue	uai	ㄨㄞ
io	io					ao	ao	ㄠ						
iu	iu	一ㄨ	əu	e	ㄨ									
ie	iee	一ㄝ												
iao	iao	一ㄠ				an	an	ㄢ						
ien	in	一ㄣ	ən	en	ㄣ	aŋ	ang	ㄤ	oŋ	ong	ㄨㄥ	uaŋ	uang	
ion	iong	一ㄨㄥ												

For half of the -aŋ- finals in Yǎnghāo, Hutton used the symbol ㄤ, for the other half he used ㄝ or 一ㄝ.

C. Tones

The eight contrastive tones of Hmu are associated with eight tone classes of Proto-Miáo. In the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet), tones are written with two-digit number superscripts, denoting the start and end of the tonal contour on a scale ranging from the pitch levels 1 (low) to 5 (high). In the Romanized Hmu script, these eight tones are written with a silent final letter (e.g. -b, -t). Meanwhile in the Bopomofo script, the tones are written with super- or subscripts marked as points. Hutton only distinguishes six tones.

Tones			
Miao Tone Class	IPA	Latin	注音
I	³³	b	ㄅˊ
II	⁵⁵	x	ㄅˊˊ
III	³⁵	d	ㄉˊ
IV	¹¹	l	ㄌˊˊ
V	⁴⁴	t	ㄊˊ
VI	¹³	s	ㄙˊ
VII	⁵³	k	ㄎˊ
VIII	³¹	f	ㄈˊ

In the Romanized script, each syllable is written in accordance with the formula, [Initial + Final + Tone]. For example, the syllable *niangb* ‘located’ comprises of the initial *ni-*, of the final *-ang-* and the tone *-b*.

Chapter 3

Ethno-religious Profile of the Kam People

3.1 Introduction

The 2010 National Census of China publishes the Kam population of different administration units as in the following chart that is ordered by region and percentage. There are nearly 1,000,000 speakers of the Southern dialect and about 400,000 speakers of the Northern dialect. However, the remaining portion of ethnic Kam only speaks Chinese.

<i>Administrative Unit</i>			<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Kam population</i>	<i>Percent age</i>
Guizhōu 贵州	Qíándōngnán 黔东南	Lípíng 黎平	458,533	324,867	70,85%
		Tiānzhù 天柱	348,302	235,241	67,54%
		Jǐnpíng 锦屏	190,429	94,537	49,64%
		Sānsuì 三穗	170,167	83,193	48,89%
		Cóngjiāng 从江	301,513	123,270	40,88%
		Róngjiāng 榕江	300,369	115,295	38,38%
		Jiànhé 剑河	189,085	65,170	34,47%
		Céngōng 岑巩	187,734	61,006	32,50%
		Zhènyuǎn 镇远	222,766	71,800	32,23%
		Kǎilǐ City 凯里	433,236	22,099	5,10%
		Shībǐng 施秉	137,171	3,464	2,53%
		Léishān 雷山	132,004	2,752	2,08%
	Tóng rén 铜仁	Dānzhài 丹寨	135,400	1,452	1,07%
		Yùpíng 玉屏	126,462	98,757	78,09%
		Wànshān 万山	54,674	40,130	73,40%
		Tóng rén 铜仁	308,583	104,051	33,72%
		Shíqiān 石阡	334,508	101,990	30,49%
		Jiāngkǒu 江口	189,288	17,011	8,99%
		Sōngtáo 松桃	547,488	14,025	2,56%

Administrative Unit			Total Population	Kam population	Percent age
Húnán 湖南	Huáihuà 怀化	Xīnhuǎng 新晃	241,690	193,678	80,13%
		Tōngdào 通道	206,327	156,719	75,96%
		Huítóng 会同	331,392	173,947	52,49%
		Zhǐjiāng 芷江	334,229	175,030	52,37%
		Jìngzhōu 靖州	245,444	63,962	26,06%
		Hóngjiāng 洪江	485,061	26,360	5,43%
		Hèchéng 鹤城	346,522	10,370	2,99%
	Shàoyáng 邵阳	Suíníng 绥宁	339,235	13,973	4,12%
		Chéngbù 城步	241,517	3,498	1,45%
		Xīnníng 新宁	557,120	283	0,05%
Guǎngxī 广西	Liǔzhōu 柳州	Sānjiāng 三江	304,149	170,248	55,98%
		Róngshuǐ 融水	425,608	48,020	11,28%
		Róng'ān 融安	283,029	8,303	2,93%
	Guilín 桂林	Lóngshèng 龙胜	160,796	42,718	26,57%
Húběi 湖北	Ēnshī 恩施	Xuān'ēn 宣恩	335,984	46,817	13,93%
		Ēnshī 恩施	755,725	17,187	2,27%
Totals:			10,361,540	2,731,223	26,35%

Table 3.1: Administrative distribution of Kam population

The Kam people form the lone constituent of the Dòng 侗 Nationality. They consist of two groups, Northern Kam and Southern Kam, whose speech has limited intelligibility between each other. Since both these dialects are spoken in disconnected areas, they have drifted apart from each other over the centuries.

In native songs, the Kam people remember their migration from Fújiàn and Guangdong province into Southeast Guìzhōu during ancient times, possibly as early as during the Hàn Dynasty 汉朝 (206 B.C.-220 A.D.). However, no evidence exists for this migration theory. The etymology of Kam remains uncertain. Kam might be derived from the native verb *gaemv* 'hide', in which case it would denote a group of people hidden in remote mountain areas. According to Pulleybank (1983: 430), the term *dòng*, written as 洞 and 峒 in documents of the Sòng dynasty 宋朝 (960-1279), is a Tai word borrowed into Chinese and designates a landscape, the *level ground between cliffs and beside a stream*. The term first designated an area and was then transferred to the people inhabiting that area.

3.2 History

From the Táng dynasty 唐朝 (618-907) onward, the Kam people were embroiled in several rebellions against invading Hàn settlers. These rebellions intensified during the Míng dynasty 明朝 (1368-1644) and are associated with historical and sometimes mythical hero figures that are still venerated in Kam society today (see Geary et al. 2003 for more information).

3.2.1 Kam Rebellions during the Míng dynasty

The first rebel leader was a woman named *Xing Ni* (洗夫人).¹ *Xing Ni* was a singer who led a rebellion against the affluent Hàn landlord *Lǐ Chángshùn* 李长顺 in the Lípíng 黎平 county. She humiliated *Lǐ Chángshùn* by means of a magical sword, without killing him. *Lǐ Chángshùn* returned with reinforcements and snatched the sword. *Xing Ni* escaped and returned with a magical fan, with which she retook the sword and decapitated *Lǐ*. The landlord's son called upon imperial troops under the pretext of quelling a Kam uprising. When the requested troops came to surround the rebellious village, *Xing Ni* struck a deal with the spirit of a nearby lake. She sacrificed herself to become a stone in exchange for the spirit's assistance in defeating the imperial army. The troops were indeed surmounted and *Xing Ni* petrified. For this reason, *Xing Ni* is revered by the Kam people until today.

Wú Miǎn 吴勉 (?-1385) was another Kam rebel during the Míng dynasty 明朝 (1368-1644). The oppressive taxation system of the imperial government, coupled with the invading Hàn settlers, drove the Kam to open rebellion. The young *Wú Miǎn* unleashed supernatural power upon hearing the news about the murder of his father by government forces.

From Guìzhōu, he shot supernatural arrows in the direction of the imperial throne in the capital of Nánjīng 南京. Since the shooting was badly timed, the arrows hit the throne in the absence of the emperor. On his part, the emperor was able to track the origin of the arrows, dispatched troops to Guìzhōu and combatted the rebels for seven years. *Wú Miǎn* was eventually captured and

¹ The Kam scholar Dèng Mǐnwén 邓敏文 (1990: 21) believes that *Xing Ni* was a historical figure who existed during the Táng dynasty (618-907). He and other Kam scholars identify the Kam goddess *Sax Suic* with *Xing Ni* which would provide a natural explanation for the worship of *Sax Suic* (see below).

executed in 1385. After Wú Miǎn's death, a burrow with golden treasures was discovered in the area close to his native village in Lípíng 黎平. When the emperor heard about the hole in the ground, he ordered an expedition in order to retrieve the treasures. After he and his soldiers went into the hole, its entrance was closed up and the hole ended up becoming their graves.² Wú Miǎn is revered in Southern Kam counties, except on a particular day of the year.

In the 1390s, the Northern Kam rebel *Lin Kuan* 林王 (?-1397) from the Jǐnpíng 锦屏 area led an insurrection against military outposts of the imperial government. Despite some military success, the Kam rebels were unable to withstand the constant influx of imperial reinforcements. Lin Kuan was captured and executed in 1397. The Northern Kam celebrate a *Lin Kuan Day* 林王节 in the sixth lunar month of every year.

3.2.2 Modern Era

From the 15th century onward, the Hàn culture began to transform the Kam society. Hàn settlers brought new agricultural techniques, the Confucian education system, as well as the Buddhist religion to Southeast Guìzhōu. The Kam people did slowly adapt to the changing environment, but skirmishes with government troops continued until as recently as the 19th century. The Kam participated in three Miáo rebellions in the 18th and 19th century (see section 2.2). *Jiāng Yǐngfāng* 姜映芳 (1833-1862), a Northern Kam man of Tiānzhù 天柱 whose father was murdered in prison, organized a rebel army. He joined forces with *Zhāng Xiùméi* 张秀眉 (1823-1872), a central figure of the Third Miáo rebellion (1854-1873). By 1862, the combined armies of Jiāng and Zhāng had occupied most of the Kam area in Guìzhōu and Húnán. The Qīng government collectively withdrew troops and conquered the rebel strongholds by means of superior gun power. Jiāng Yǐngfāng was captured and executed in September 1862.

In 1934, the Red Army passed on its Long March through Southeast Guìzhōu. According to Norman Geary, four hundred native Kam men of Tiānzhù 天柱 allied with the Republicans and were forced to retreat to Táiwān in 1949. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the native Kam culture was

² Needless to say that no mention of such a course of events is made in Chinese records. The emperor Hóngwǔ 洪武帝 (1328-1398), the first ruler of the Míng dynasty, died in Nánjīng and was buried at the Míng Xiàolíng Mausoleum 明孝陵.

3.3.1 Traditional Legal System

suppressed, as happened elsewhere in China. Kam operas and singing were prohibited as a result of this suppression. In the 1990s and 2000s, more than 150,000 Kam people left their villages in order to find work as migrant workers 民工 in factories of Guǎngdong and the Chinese east coast. Most of them are young people.

3.3 Society

3.3.1 Traditional Legal System

The Kam people had a legal system called *Kuant*³ in place until the early 20th century that organized social life at the village level, regional level, and pan-Kam level. It is important to note that Kuant is not a written code, but a ruling system of institutional gatherings (Geary et al. 2003). Originally, a Kuant served as a protective alliance between Kam villages which was later institutionalized as a regular gathering. The functions of Kuant gatherings are admonitory,⁴ protective,⁵ judicial⁶, and legislative.⁷ A famous legislative Kuan at the pan-Kam level was held in Róngjiāng 榕江 county in 1735-1736 when 99 village elders gathered to decide, the prohibition of inter-clan marriage (Zhào 1999: 105), among other issues.

3.3.2 Family and Work

As in the Miáo society, the Kam society is organized into dozens of clans of patrilineal lineage, called *douc*. Members of a *douc* descend from a remote common ancestor and might be scattered over a larger area. Each clan consists of numerous families. The concept of a family entails a broader connotation as

³ The term *kuant* might be an ancient Chinese loanword. In Mandarin, kuǎn 款 is a classifier for legal texts that can be translated by *paragraph* or *section*.

⁴ Admonitory Kuant gatherings are held at the village level to remind people about moral standards and communal tasks.

⁵ Protective Kuant gatherings were guided by the purpose of organizing resistance of several Kam villages against outside threats.

⁶ Judicial Kuant gatherings are organized at the level or regional level to judge and punish crimes.

⁷ Legislative Kuant gatherings are held at the regional or pan-Kam level to provide orientation on societal topics such as marriage.

compared to Western countries. The reference point of each family is the *ongs*, the paternal (grand...)grandfather. In a Kam family, there might be cousins of 2nd or 3rd degree. Membership to a clan is inherited through birth or acquired through marriage.

The Kam people cultivate glutinous and ordinary rice on paddy fields in the mountains. Glutinous rice fields are located at a higher altitude, whereas white rice fields at a lower altitude. The average peasant must walk between one and three kilometers to reach the family's paddy fields. Irrigation tubes made of bamboo supply the requisite water to the paddy fields. In addition to rice, the Kam people are also known to grow maize, millet and diverse vegetables, such as pumpkins, beans, cabbage, and onions. Meanwhile buffaloes, pigs, hens, and ducks are livestock kept at the homes of most people. Traditionally, women produce cloth from cotton by means of a loom. In most areas, the people wear dark blue color wherein they dye the cloth using indigo shrub, a plant primarily found in Asia.

3.3.3 Architectural Landmarks

There are a few architectural identity markers of the Kam people, the most prominent of them being Wind-and-Rain Bridges and Drum Towers. In these structures of high artistic value, the pillars, columns, and beams support each other by means of wood tenons but without using a single nail.

The first marker is *Wind-and-Rain bridges*; this name is attributed to the fact that they are roofed and offer shelter. Dozens of bridges are found in the Kam area. Perhaps the most famous bridge is located in Sānjiāng 三江 county. Dozens of *Drum Towers* stand in villages across the Kam area. Historically, their function was to serve as reference points in case of emergency, as places where the drum was beaten. Villagers now use these drum towers as social meeting points. *Veranda Houses*⁸ are basically houses with long roofs and a veranda on the upper floor. Veranda houses belonging to members of the same family are clustered together.

⁸ In Kam, they are called *Yanc Lanc Ganc* 栏杆房子.

3.3.4 Festivals

3.3.4 Festivals

The Kam people celebrate a number of festivals, some of which are locally restricted. The most important are listed below.

- *New Year Day* (新年节)⁹ : The Kam people celebrate a Kam New Year on the first day of the eleventh month of the lunar year as well as the Hàn New Year of the first day of the first month of the lunar year. The people of Kam also commemorate the victory of Xing Ni over the landlord Lǐ Chángshùn during the Hàn New Year.
- *Lusheng Festival* (芦笙节)¹⁰ : In this festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, which is a dating event, young Kam men and women perform in singing competitions.
- *Girl's Day* (姑娘节)¹¹ : Black-colored rice is consumed on the eighth day of the fourth month of the lunar calendar to commemorate Yang Bamei, who helped her brother escape prison with a portion of black rice.
- *Festival of Bull Intestines* (牛肠节)¹² : This festival was celebrated at irregular intervals until the 20th century in reverence of ancestors with whom the living people enter into communion by means of consuming bull intestines.
- *Firecracker Day* (花炮节) : On the second day of the second lunar month, firecrackers are set off. Young men attempt to snatch a metal hoop in a red envelope, which was shot in the air in order to bring it back to the point of origin. The winner receives a prize. The metal hoop symbolizes the heart of a young girl sent out to the one who was destined to be her lover.
- *Lin Kuan Day* (林王节) : In Northern Kam counties, people commemorate the execution of Lin Kuan in 1397.

⁹ The Kam name is *sigs nyinc meik*.

¹⁰ The Kam name is *sigs lenc*.

¹¹ The Kam name is *sigs lagx meik*. The Hmu celebrate a comparable festival, the Sister Festival (姊妹节) whose origins are opaque.

¹² This festival corresponds to the Ancestor Festival (牯藏节) of the Hmu people.

3.4 Religion

3.4.1 Traditional Religion

Bearing a distinct resemblance with Hmu cosmogony (see section 2.4.1), the first humans on earth in Kam creation mythology, *Songh Ngenh*¹³ (male) and *Songh Sangh*¹⁴ (female), gave birth to eight animals: one dragon, lightning, and two human children, *Xangl Liangc*¹⁵ (male) and *Xangl Muih*¹⁶ (female).

Xangl Liangc and Xangl Muih were drawn in an epic battle against lightning. Lightning unleashed torrential rains that submerged the whole earth. Xangl Liangc and Xangl Muih survived the flood in a big gourd. In the aftermath of the flood, lightning sent fireballs to the earth that resulted in a drought. One of these fireballs became the sun; another half fireball became the moon. After the lightning got defeated, Xangl Liangc and Xangl Muih were directed to marry and bear children. Xangl Muih bore a son without limbs and with a disfigured face. His parents chopped him into pieces and scattered them across different mountains. Soon thereafter, Xangl Liangc and Xangl Muih heard the voices of many babies. Some of these babies were Kam, some were Miáo, and others were Hàn.

Colin Mackerras describes the religion of Southwestern ethnic groups as Hàn-imported, as assuming weak societal functions, and as having weak clergies. The religion of the Dòng, the Miáo and, to a lesser extent, the Nuosu might be characterized in this way.

The Kam (Dòng) religion is the worship of goddesses, ancestors, celestial bodies, and nature. The goddesses seem to be derived from mythical ancestors. The Kam pantheon primarily consists of female deities. *Sax Suic* 萨岁,¹⁷ the most

¹³ The Kam name is transliterated in Chinese as Sòng Ēn 宋恩.

¹⁴ The Kam name is transliterated in Chinese as Sòng Sāng 宋桑.

¹⁵ The Kam name is transliterated in Chinese as Zhāng Liáng 张良.

¹⁶ The Kam name is transliterated in Chinese as Zhāng Mèi 张妹.

¹⁷ The goddess name is written in the Kam script as *Sax Suic* (with variant form *Sax Siis*) and transliterated as *Sàsui* 萨岁 or *Shàsui* 莎岁 in Chinese. One possible etymon might relate to the form *siis*, the Kam loanword for *zǐ* 子 'the First of the 12 Earthly Branches' in Chinese traditional astronomy. Another likely explanation is the noun *suic* 'snake'. The etymology of *Sax Suic* would

3.4.1 Traditional Religion

prominent among all worshiped goddesses, is the bestower of wealth and peace. Some Kam writers¹⁸ relate Sax Suic to the female rebel leader Xing Ni, a romanticized Kam scion of the Tang Dynasty (618-907). Xing Ni rebelled against an oppressive Hàn landlord. Most villages dedicate an altar to Sax Suic with a half-open umbrella stuck to it. Meanwhile other revered deities are the *Sax Biingl* 寨门女神, the village access goddess, who repels diseases and disasters whilst preserving harmony within the village; the *Sax Bias* 雷女神,¹⁹ the evil ‘thunder goddess’; *Sax Gaos Jiuc* 桥头女神,²⁰ the protective ‘bridge goddess’; *Sax Guaenl* 妖魂,²¹ the evil possession demon; and *Sax Biins* 龟女神,²² the mythical turtle goddess (the turtle is totem of the Kam people).

It is interesting to note that there is no term for the concept of Almighty God. The term *Wangx Menl*²³ ‘King of Heaven’ is used in the New Testament of 2006. This neologism is intelligible, albeit without standardized use. The Kam people revere snakes, dragons and turtles as brothers of Xangl Liangc and Xangl Muih. They worship ancestors, both clan ancestors, and family ancestors. In addition, they observe a *Tomb Sweeping Day* 清明节 now on the same day as the Hàn people, which falls during early April. Celestial bodies and elements of nature such as the sun, the moon, lightning, fire, mountains, and trees are also occasionally worshipped.

The Kam people practice shamanism and sorcery. Male shamans are invited to people’s homes in case of illness. The shaman generally repels or placates the demon which is responsible for a disease by offering a sacrifice. Sorcerers act on demand to avenge people who feel oppressed by someone. A falling knife performs the curse during a ceremony.

thus be ‘female snake ancestor’. Since snakes are revered as progenitors of the *Bǎiyuè* 百越 people, the remote ancestors of the Tai-Kadai peoples, this second etymon is probable.

¹⁸ For example Wáng Shèngxiān 王胜先 (1983) and Dèng Mǐnwén 邓敏文 (1990).

¹⁹ In Kam, *bias* means ‘thunder’.

²⁰ In Kam, *gaos* means ‘head’; *jiuc* means ‘bridge’.

²¹ In Kam, *guaenl* means ‘soul’.

²² In Kam, *biins* means ‘turtle’.

²³ Compare with *Wangx Waix* ‘King of Heaven’ in Hmu, which is a neologism as well.

3.4.2 Christianity

After 1895, the Christian and Missionary Alliance²⁴ established a Bible College in Wúzhōu 梧州, a city of Guǎngxī province, and made short-term mission trips to Guìzhōu and Yúnnán. In 1920, two American missionaries evangelized a native Kam in Róngjiāng 榕江, a certain Mr. Huang 黄先生, who became a Christian and received formal theological education. The American missionary A. F. Desterhaft 丁意文 settled in Fùlù 富禄 in 1931 and started to learn the Kam language before establishing a mission station. Subsequently Desterhaft was promoted to the office of superintendent during 1943-1948. Two Chinese missionaries of the Christian Missionary Alliance did plant a Kam church in Róngjiāng in 1938, about which not much detail is known.

The German missionary Gustav Juttka 郁德凯 (1899-1992) of the Liebenzell Mission²⁵ was stationed in Lípíng 黎平 county between 1928 and 1947. With the support of Hàn Chinese preachers, Juttka established a church in Lípíng in which hundreds of people converted to Christianity and many dozens were baptized. Most converts in this church were ethnic Hàn, but native Kam people attended it as well, particularly after 1942 when foreigners were prohibited from traveling to the countryside. Juttka's team was active in preaching the gospel to the Kam villages of the Lípíng and Sānjiāng 三江 districts. At different times, Juttka recruited Kam-speaking believers who helped communicate with the indigenous population. Juttka commenced the process of learning the Kam language and transcribed individual Kam expressions in Latin script, although he did not translate any Bible portion. Juttka visited more than one hundred Kam villages with his team, preached the Gospel at countless gatherings, and distributed large numbers of Chinese New Testaments and tracts. In the 1930s and 1940s, Southeast Guìzhōu was plagued by bands of disgruntled robbers. Despite his life-threatening encounters with bandits, Juttka wondrously escaped unscathed.

²⁴ The Christian and Missionary Alliance (宣道会) was established in Colorado Springs, USA, in 1897 through the merger of two independent organizations founded in 1887.

²⁵ On the initiative of Hudson Taylor 戴德生, the Liebenzell Mission (立本责信义会) was founded in 1899 as the German branch of the China Inland Mission. In 1902, its administrative seat was shifted from Hamburg to Bad Liebenzell. In 1906, it became independent of the China Inland Mission. Today, the Liebenzell Mission is one of the greatest German missions and runs mission stations in more than 26 countries worldwide.

3.4.2 Christianity

A few dozens of Kam people converted to the Christian faith, mainly in the Dìqīng 地青 area of Hóngzhōu 洪州 township and in Shuǐkǒu 水口 township. In 1947, Juttka was ordered to leave when the fight between Republicans and Communists was in full swing.

In 1947, William and Elaine Neill, missionaries of the Apostolic Church Missionary Movement²⁶ from Wellington in New Zealand, settled down in Lípíng 黎平 to replace Juttka. They were also instructed to leave, but managed to stay in the nearby county of Zhènyuǎn 镇远 until 1951.

During 2000-2009, Norman and Ruth Geary (吉志义和孔瑞贤) of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL)²⁷ undertook a literacy program in a preschool and primary school in Zǎidāng 宰荡, a remote village of Róngjiāng 榕江 county. People in this village are mainly monolingual speakers of Kam. For this project, a team of Kam teachers edited 500 Kam stories and other educational material in their native language. In 2002, the literacy program was extended to encompass five additional schools in Róngjiāng 榕江: Bākūāng 八匡, Dàlidòng 大利洞, Gāodòng 高洞, Guīliǔ 归柳, and Miáolán 苗兰. Jacob Finifrock, an American educator and member of SIL, coordinated teaching of English as L3 language for some part of the nine years.

During several trips to the Southern Kam area in 2001, an independent group of American Pentecostal missionaries converted young Kam people in Sānjiāng 三江 county. After training them, they sent one Kam missionary family to Lípíng 黎平 with the aim of planting churches.

Between 1996 and 2005, Hans Grass of *Research Foundation Language and Religion* and the Kam speakers Lǐ Fēng 李锋, Zhāng Xiǎoguāng 张晓光 and

²⁶ The Apostolic Church Missionary Movement 使徒会 is a Pentecostal movement that started in 1904-1905 in Wales and Northern England. Missionary work in China began in 1924. At some point, Scandinavian and New Zealand missionaries joined the team in China.

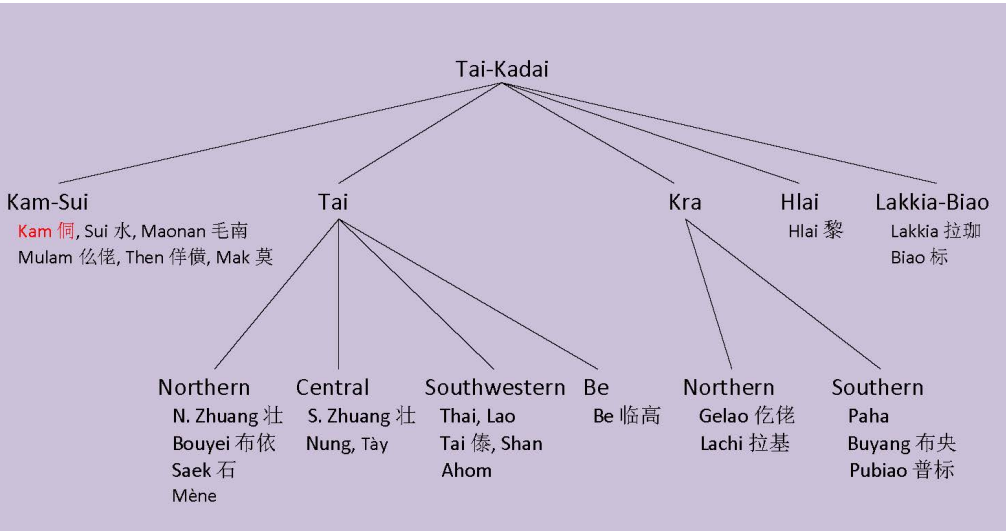
²⁷ *The Summer Institute of Linguistics* (语言暑期学院) and *The Wycliffe Bible Translators* (威克里夫圣经翻译者) were established by the Presbyterian minister William Cameroon Townsend in 1936 and 1942 as American-based organizations. Both twin organizations have a membership overlap of more than 90% and count 6,000 members worldwide. They divide the labor along the following lines. The Summer Institute of Linguistics is occupied with scientific matters, such as linguistic, anthropological and educational work, while the Wycliffe Bible Translators conduct Bible translation projects.

Wú Qiáng 吴强.²⁸ The manuscript was published in 2006 by *Verlag für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft* in Nuremberg. 5,000 copies of the New Testament were distributed in the Southern Kam area.

3.5 Language

3.5.1 General Information

The Kam belongs to the Tai-Kadai family, a small language family comprising of about 75 members. The most important languages of this family are classified as follows.



The Tai-Kadai people originated from South China 2,500 years ago and have migrated in waves to places across Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar.

²⁸ These four names are pseudonyms to protect the identity of the translators.



3.5.2 Rare Properties

The Kam language has a number of exceptional features in terms of grammar.

A. Three Hundred Ideophones

The Kam language exhibits about 300 *ideophones*, which is more than that of other languages of East Asia. Ideophones are sound-symbolic syllables that are

used after a verb or adjective in order to enhance its meaning. Some of these ideophones demonstrate interesting semiotic relationships with their host. Gerner (2004) presents a semiotic analysis of these ideophones, also referred to as *expressives*.

(1) Ideophones derived from nouns

- | | | | |
|----|--|-----|--|
| a. | jaenv aiv
crest rooster
'the rooster's crest' | a'. | pangp jaenv jaenv
important IDE~
'of important stature' (also for people) |
|----|--|-----|--|

(2) Ideophones derived from verbs

- | | |
|-----|---|
| a. | maoh dabs lis hok peet bail.
he carry so that goods tremble go
'He carries a load so that the goods inside tremble.' |
| a'. | mal naih lianh peet peet.
dish this spicy IDE~
'This dish is so spicy.' (It makes people tremble.) |
| b. | bienl xenh naih kiuk jenx lac.
rain now stop a bit OPINION
'The rain has almost stopped now.' |
| b'. | gemv kiuk kiuk
quiet IDE~
'dead calm' |
| c. | duc bal naih duc gungc.
CLASSIFIER fish this poisonous very
'This fish is very poisonous.' |
| c'. | qik dux dux
angry IDE~
'very angry' (of poisonous mood) |
| d. | jads lamh jads ugs
twist rope twist clothes
'knit a rope' 'knit clothes' |

- d'. jongv **jadl jadl**
 crooked IDE~
 'twisted and crooked'

(3) Ideophones resemble sound of host

	Host	Host and Ideophone
a.	dengv 'dark'	dengv duml duml 'pitch-black'
b.	gaenx 'tidy'	gaenx gadl gadl 'very tidy'
c.	meik 'new'	meik miaut miaut 'brand-new'
d.	guas 'hard'	guas guadl guadl 'rock hard'
e.	guanv 'stiff'	guanv guens guens 'starched' (clothes)
f.	kop 'slippery'	kop kongk kongk 'very slippery'
g.	yimk 'cool'	yimk yix yix 'pleasantly cool'
h.	lianh 'spicy'	lianh lieuc lieuc 'extremely spicy'
i.	luv 'clear'	luv lengh lengh 'crystal-clear' (of water)
j.	mas 'soft'	mas mobc mobc 'soft and loose'
k.	qak 'light'	qak qegt qegt 'very light'
l.	nyanp 'itchy'	nyanp nyit nyit 'very itchy'
m.	pap 'grey'	pap put put 'ash-grey'
n.	sik 'fine'	sik sebl sebl 'very fine'
o.	xegs 'scald'	xegs xeeh xeeh 'burning' (e.g. sun)

(4) Ideophones as interjection

- a. aox semx naih **anc** **iux iux**
 in room this messy IDE~
 'This room is really messy.' (Simulating outcry)
- a'. aox yanc xaop **dunl** **huh huh.**
 in home your warm IDE~
 'In your house it is so warm.' (Simulating purring)

(5) Onomatopoeic ideophones

	Host	Host and Ideophone
a.	gol 'laugh'	gol liil liil 'giggle' (Simulating sound of a giggle)
b.	gol 'laugh'	gol hah hah 'laugh' (Simulating sound of a normal laugh)
c.	gol 'laugh'	gol qat qat 'laugh' (Simulating sound of a roaring laugh)
d.	nees 'weep'	nees nguc nguc (Simulating sound of weeping)
e.	sonl 'snore'	sonl hodx hodx (Simulating sound of snoring)
f.	jil 'eat'	jil miadx miadx (Simulating sound of a clicking tongue)
g.	jil 'eat'	jil odx odx (Simulating sound of gulping food)
h.	ungt 'sound'	ungt kodx kodx (Sound of hungry tummy or borborygmus)
i.	banl 'shout'	banl ngak ngak (Simulating sound of crying baby)
j.	liac 'lick'	liac liebc liebc (Simulating sound of noisy licking by a dog)
k.	xouk 'peck'	xouk dobs dobs (Sound of woodpecker pecking)
l.	sint 'call'	sint ngueev nueev (Simulating sound of cawing by a raven)
m.	biagl 'whip'	biagl xids xids (Simulating sizzling sound of a whip)
n.	guenl 'cut'	guenl jebx jebx (Simulating cutting sound of scissors)
o.	beeuv 'crack'	beeuv piedp piedp (Simulating cracking sound of popcorn)
p.	dags 'knock'	dags dengl dengl (Simulating knocking sound of a loom)

B. Passive and Deontic Modality Marker

In the Kam language, *passive constructions* are formed with a passive particle (*douh*), which also functions as plain verb *touch* as well as the modal auxiliary verb *must* (Gerner 2003a).

(6) **Douh** as verb touch

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>a. maoh douh jemc ids yaoc yangx.
he touch wound my DP
'He has touched my wound.'</p> | <p>b. maoh douh miadx.
he touch knife
'He was cut by a knife.'</p> | <p>c. maoh douh bienl.
he touch rain
'He was drenched by rain.'</p> |
| <p>d. maoh douh sais.
he touch intestines
'He was satisfied.'</p> | <p>e. maoh douh nuic laox.
he touch leprosy
'He got leprosy.'</p> | |

(7) **Douh** as verb must

- a. maoh douh qamt weengc.
it must walk sideways
'It must walk sideways.'
- b. nyac douh suit xenl oul
you must dress body EXCL
'You must dress well.'

(8) **Douh** as verb passive particle

gueec yanc xaop douh maoh jeih dah.
buffalo home you PASS he count EXP
'Your family's buffalo were counted by him.'

C. Zoom-on-Possessee Construction

There is a productive construction wherein an adjective is placed between a possessor and possessee noun. The predication zooms in from the possessor onto the possessee. We call this *Zoom-on-possessee (ZoP)* construction, whose syntax is different from the regular possessive construction. Some of these constructions have a literal meaning, whereas others have a metaphorical signification. Gerner (2005) provides a detailed account of ZoP-constructions.

<u>Possessive construction</u>		<u>ZoP-construction</u>	
(9) a.	dal maoh ladc gungc. eyes he protruding very 'His eyes are very protruding.'	b.	maoh ladc dal. he protruding eyes 'He is protruding at his eyes.'
(10) a.	jiv maoh lail gungc. idea he good very 'His ideas are very good.'	b.	maoh lail jiv. he good idea 'He is good at having ideas.'
(11) a.	xenl bal bagx gungc. body fish white very 'The body of the fish is very white'	b.	bal bagx xenl. fish white body 'The fish went belly-up.'
(12) a.	soh kuaot dangl gungc. odour wine fragrant very 'The smell of the wine is very good.'	b.	kuaot dangl soh. wine fragrant odour 'The wine smells good.'

- | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---------------------------------|------|------|--------|----|-------------------------|------|------------|
| (13) a. | sais | maoh | yais | gungc. | b. | maoh | yais | sais. |
| | intestines | he | long | very | | he | long | intestines |
| | 'His intestines are very long.' | | | | | 'He is long suffering.' | | |
| (14) a. | ebI | maoh | mas | gungc. | b. | maoh | mas | ebI. |
| | mouth | he | soft | very | | he | soft | mouth |
| | 'His mouth is very soft.' | | | | | 'He is relenting.' | | |
| (15) a. | dal | maoh | yak | gungc. | b. | maoh | yak | dal. |
| | eyes | he | red | very | | he | red | eyes |
| | 'His eyes are very red.' | | | | | 'He is envious.' | | |

3.5.3 Writing System

In the 1950s, the Běijīng Communist Government sent out investigation teams into the minority areas. In 1957, the Kam investigation team chose the Southern Kam dialect as the basis for developing a script. The team selected the speech of Zhānglǔ 章鲁 village in Róngjiāng 榕江, primarily due to its vicinity to the county city. They developed a Romanized script, such as the script in the Qanao language. The Kam script is semi-official, and is yet to be adopted in its entirety by the Government. The New Testament that the Research Foundation published in 2006 uses the Romanized script. The Kam script has three parts, one each for initials, finals, tones.

A. Consonants

There are 29 consonants (initials) in Southern Kam, two of which are only used in Chinese loanwords and the remaining is used by older speakers. The high number of contrastive points of articulation for stops and nasals is relatively rare. In particular, there are six fully contrastive nasals.

Initials		Point of articulation															
		Labial				Labio-palatal		Alveolar		Alveolo-palatal		Velar		Velo-labial		Uvular	
		IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin
Stops	unvoiced	p	b			p ^j	bi	t	d			k	g	k ^w	gu		
	aspirated	p ^h	p			p ^{hj}	pi	t ^h	t			k ^h	k	k ^{hw}	ku		
Nasals		m	m			m ^j	mi	n	n	ɲ	ny	ŋ	ng	ŋ ^w	ngu		
Fricatives	voiced			v	w					ʒ	y	ʁ	r [#]				
	unvoiced			f	f			s	s	ç	x					χ	h
Laterals								l	l	l ^j	li						
Affricates	unvoiced							ts	z [*]	tɕ	j						
	aspirated							ts ^h	c [*]	tɕ ^h	q						

* Used in Chinese loanwords

Used by elderly speakers, will likely disappear

B. Vowels

In Zhānglǔ 章鲁 speech, there are 50 finals, 36 vowels with, and 14 vowels without coda. Among the 14 vowels without coda, there are six monophthongues and eight diphthongues. There are two allophones distinguished by vowel length ([u] versus [u:]).

IPA Latin	IPA Latin	IPA Latin	IPA Latin	IPA Latin	IPA Latin	IPA Latin
i i	e ee		a a		o o	u u
	ei ei		ai ai		oi oi	u: uu
iu iu	eu eeu	ou ou	ao ao	Finals		ui ui
ip ib		əp eb				up ub
it id		ət ed		ɛp ab	ɔp ob	ut ud
ik ig		ək eg		ɛt ad	ɔt od	uk ug
im im	em eem	əm em	am am	ək ag	ɔk og	um um
in in	en een	ən en	an an	ɛm aem	ɔm om	un un
ing ing	ɛŋ eeng	əŋ eng	aŋ ang	ɛn aen	ɔn on	uŋ ung

[u:] is used after palatalized consonants, the allophone [u] after other consonants.

C. Tones

In Kam there are nine contrastive tones that are depicted with illustrations in the following chart. In the Romanized script, these tones are written with a silent final letter (e.g. -p, -x).

IPA	Latin	ba-	ma-	na-	xa-	ya-
55	-l	bal 'fish'	mal 'vegetables'	nal 'rich'	xal 'cover'	yal 'cloth'
33	-h	bah 'chaff'	mah 'chew'		xah 'then'	yah 'also'
11	-c	bac 'swim'	mac 'tongue'	nac 'frontal bone'	xac 'examine'	yac 'two'
35	-p		map 'come'		xap 'write'	
53	-v	bav 'wing'	Tones			yav 'field'
13	-t			nat 'arrow'	xat 'spin'	yat 'handkerchief'
31	-x	bax 'locus'				yax 'evil'
453	-k				xak 'sunbathe'	yak 'red'
323	-s	bas 'aunt'	mas 'cloud'	nas 'face'		

D. Contrastive Examples

The Kam alphabet consists of 26 letters, which mark initials, finals, and tones. In the below table, each letter is introduced with contrastive examples of the basic Kam vocabulary.

In finals	[A a]
a	al 'song'; av 'price'; bal 'fish'; gax 'Hàn Chinese'
ai	aiv 'chicken'; bail 'go'; sais 'intestines'; xaip 'servant'
ao	aol 'take'; daol 'we (incl.)'; kuaot 'wine'
am	ams 'dare'; hamk 'ask'; lamh 'rope'; qamt 'walk'
aem	aemv 'carry on back'; biaeml 'hair'; gaeml 'Kam, Dòng'
an	anh 'pole'; banl 'man'; yanc 'home'
aen	aenp 'swallow'; biaeñl 'tooth'; guaenc 'smoke'
ang	angv 'jar'; guangs 'bowl'; xangc 'bed'
aeng	aengl 'monkey'; naengl 'nose'; yaengt 'healthy'
ab	abs 'bathe'; dabs 'load'; liabs 'grab'
ad	ads 'cut'; hadp 'salty'; nadl 'sore'; padt 'blood'
ag	ags 'special'; piagk 'pinch'; yags 'tear'

In initials	[B b]
b	ba engl ‘collapse’; bagx ‘white’; bax ‘locust’ be el ‘sell’; beeuv ‘leopard’; bens ‘fly’ bongc ‘tent’; bouc ‘pigeon’; bungv ‘dust’
bi	bia enl ‘tooth’; bial ‘rock’; bias ‘thunder’ bienl ‘rain’; bieeu v ‘run’; biungl ‘wolf’

In finals	[B b]
ab	abs ‘merge’; gab l ‘box’; hab p ‘gift’; sab x ‘mixed’
eb	ebc ‘cover’; jeb l ‘pick up’; leb c ‘tell’; xeb c ‘ten’
ib	jib x ‘pile up’; sib s ‘receive’
ob	obs ‘hot compress’; gob s ‘just now’
ub	ubs ‘clasp’; jub s ‘wax gourd’; sub s ‘meet’

In initials ²⁹	[C c]
c	cun x ‘inch’

As tone	[C c]
c	dab c ‘put aside’; deic ‘take’; lam c ‘forget’; meec ‘not’ mia c ‘hand’; nyenc ‘person’; nyinc ‘year’ sinc ‘money’; sing c ‘kindness’; yac ‘two’

In initials	[D d]
d	dal ‘eye’; daem l ‘pond’; daengl ‘each other’ dees ‘below’; deil ‘die’; dem l ‘meet’ din l ‘foot’; dol ‘door’; douh ‘by’; dul ‘pull up’

In finals	[D d]
ad	dad l ‘fell’; miad s ‘whitewash’; yad c ‘command’
ed	jed l ‘firewood’; kued p ‘steel’; sed l ‘tail’
id	ids ‘ill’; idx ‘bite’; lid x ‘tear open’; sidd ‘cut’; piidd ‘scrape; blame’
od	miod x ‘miss opportunity’; to dd ‘take off’; xod x ‘destroy’
ud	bud s ‘rub’; mud x ‘beard’; xud t ‘suck’

²⁹ In Chinese loanwords.

In finals	[E e]
ee	ees ‘stupid’; gueec ‘ox’; liees ‘sheep’; weex ‘do’
ei	eip ‘open’; deih ‘bag’; meik ‘new’; neix ‘mother’
eeu	eeul ‘stick to’; eeus ‘teach’; leeuv ‘sting’; seeup ‘horn’
em	ems ‘medicine’; jemc ‘hole’; lemc ‘wind’
eem	eems ‘decrease’; heemx ‘call’; leemv ‘stem’
en	env ‘mark’; bens ‘always’; menl ‘sky’
een	eenl ‘classifier’; deenh ‘a little’; weenh ‘ten thousand’
eng	dengv ‘dark’; lengh ‘approach’; xengc ‘contain’
eeng	eengv ‘again’; mieengc ‘ear of grain’; xeengp ‘unfamiliar’
aem	jaemc ‘hide’; gaems ‘suppress’; saemh ‘generation’
aen	aenp ‘swallow’; baenl ‘bamboo’; guaenl ‘soul’
aeng	daengv ‘create’; haengt ‘willing’; laengh ‘flee’
eb	eb1 ‘mouth’; yebc ‘seal’; kebp ‘centipede’
ed	edl ‘first’; ngedl ‘crowded’; wedt ‘send, issue’; xedl ‘star’
eg	egt ‘guest’; legc ‘strength’; pegt ‘clap’

In initials ³⁰	[F f]
f	fanh nganl ‘plan for action’; fangh beec ‘proconsul’ fat liit ‘law’; feih jih ‘airplane’

In initials	[G g]
g	gas ‘wait’; gaenx ‘together’; gaos ‘head’ geeus ‘crawl’; gol ‘laugh’; gungc ‘much’
gu	guanl ‘name’; guaov ‘knee’; guis ‘stream’
ng	ngeec ‘sprout’; ngeeux ‘strive for’; nguk ‘pig’
ngu	nguap ‘dog’; ngueec ‘saliva’; ngueex ‘roof tile’

³⁰ In Chinese loanwords.

In finals	[G g]
ang	nyang t 'grass'; pang p 'big'; sang h 'craftsman'
aeng	baeng v 'bank, shore'; maeng x 'happy'; saeng l 'root'
eng	xeng c 'contain'; yeng k yeng k 'one after another'
eeng	beeng c 'drum tower'; beeng l 'expel'
ing	ding v 'bottom, base'; qing k 'hear'; ying p 'spirit' biing c banx 'friend'; bagl biing v 'testimony'
ong	ong l 'classifier for trees'; long c 'belly'; nong x 'younger brother'
ung	ung s 'make sounds'; sung p 'word'; mung v 'thorn, sting'
ag	ag x dag x 'dregs'; mag x 'ink stick'; xag x 'slander'
eg	eg s 'yoke'; beg s 'one hundred'; mieg s 'female'
ig	dig s 'full'; jig x 'bamboo flute'; sig s 'festival' biig s 'harass'
og	hog c 'bless'; jog c 'bend the knee'; xog c 'ripe, familiar'
ug	ug s 'exit'; nug s 'outside'; xug s 'wash'

In initials	[H h]
h	hap 'threaten'; hadt 'reprimand'; haenh 'cherish' haic 'shoe'; heenk 'limit'; heeup 'hit' hoik 'quick'; hut 'poor'

As tone	[H h]
h	baeng h 'depend'; dah 'pass'; jui h 'cupboard'; lui h 'descend' nai h 'this'; nyaoh 'be at'; sen h 'stand'; soh 'breath' wan h 'change'; xai h 'sieve'

In initials	[I i]
bi	biag s 'forehead'; bian h 'spread'; bied l 'pen'; bii l 'jump'
pi	piat 'turn over'; pieek 'distribute'; pieeng p 'roast'
li	liag p 'cold'; liemc 'irrigate'; liop 'wake up'
mi	mieeh 'understand'; mieengc 'several'; miung x 'grasshopper' miiuh 'temple'; beeuv miiuc 'sprout'

In finals	[I i]
i	bix 'do not'; lix 'speech'; xic 'one or two hours' biiv 'close'; liih 'vow'; siik 'four'
im	jiml 'put up'; nyimp 'with'; yimk 'account' liimc 'sickle'; liimx 'put in order'
in	dinl 'foot'; bins 'yeast'; sinp 'thousand' biinv 'correct'; miinc 'cloth'; xiuv miinh 'mirror'
ing	bings singh 'holy'; dingv 'cheat' biingc 'even'; liingh 'bachelor'; liingx 'acknowledge'
ib	jibx 'pile up'; sibs 'receive'
id	ids 'grape'; midx 'knife'; yidx 'draw a cart' piidt 'scrape, reprimand'
ig	jigs 'Classifier of certain animals'; sigx 'entertain'; xigt 'size' biigs 'persecute'
iu	biul 'jump'; miuh 'temple'; jiuc 'Classifier of lengthy objects' siuk 'carve'; xiut 'lack'
ai	lail 'good'; maix 'wife'; waic 'scull, row'
ei	eis 'not'; beis 'pay back'; meix 'tree'; xeih 'disaster'
oi	oil 'many'; qoip 'insult'; soix 'sin, crime'; toip 'retreat'
ui	buic 'fat'; juis 'demon'; suiv 'sit'

In initials	[J j]
j	jaij 'elder brother'; jaenx 'near'; jangs 'be (copular)' jav 'that'; jeis 'buy'; jenc 'mountain'; jil 'eat, drink' jov 'saw'; juml 'gather'; jungl 'lift, carry'

In initials	[K k]
k	kaik 'fence'; kaemk 'fall prostrate'; kap 'ear' keep 'guard against'; kip 'plough'; konx 'clause of law' kop kongp 'free'; kuk 'tremble'
ku	kuadt 'wipe'; kuak 'goods'; kuanp 'sweet' kuaot 'wine'; kuenp 'road'; kuip 'hook'

As tone	[K k]
k	louk 'surpass'; pak 'corrupt'; qak 'ascend'; senk 'believe' tamk 'visit'; touk 'arrive'; wongk 'bucket' xangk 'think'; xunk 'germinate'; yak 'red'

In initials	[L l]
l	lags 'bone'; laih 'choose'; laos 'enter' lav 'burst open'; ledp 'all'; leel 'discourse particle' lis 'receive'; longx 'pass on'; luv 'hungry'
li	liac 'lick, lap'; liaenv 'untie'; liait 'sparrow' liaop 'push'; lionc 'surround'; liongc 'dragon' liuuh 'filter'; liuuk 'urge'

As tone	[L l]
l	beel 'sell'; buil 'fire'; dal 'eye'; gol 'salt' jeml 'gold'; jinl 'stone'; lol 'boat'; mal 'vegetables' senl 'township'; xal 'cover'

In initials	[M m]
m	mac 'tongue'; mags 'big'; maoc 'manure' meel 'bear'; meenh 'still, yet'; meix 'Classifier of clothes' muc 'example'; munc 'fog'; mungx 'Human classifier'
mi	miav 'spurn'; miaol 'mix'; miax 'knife' miedl 'twist'; mieenh mogc 'appearance' miiul 'Miáo people'; miungh 'miss, think of'

In finals	[M m]
am	amv 'patch'; samp 'three'; yaml 'wrong'
aem	liaemc 'measure'; taemk 'low'; yaeml 'deep'
em	semh 'look for'; semp 'heart'; semt 'sour'
eem	beeml 'rush'; heemt 'cheer for'
im	qimp 'add'; suic simx 'viper' liimc 'sickle'; liimx 'put in order'
om	omv 'curved, crooked'; womv 'shade'
um	sumx 'room'; wumc 'hold in arms'; juml 'gather'

In initials	[N n]
n	nadl ‘granule’; naeml ‘black’; naengl ‘still’ nagp ‘sleep’; nal ‘rich’; neel ‘grip, clutch’ neip ‘move’; nuic ‘worm’; nuil ‘snow’
ng	ngaic ‘delay’; nganh ‘goose’; ngeengs ‘retreat’ ngox ‘five’; ngih ‘thin’; nguv gaos ‘nod’
ngu	nguadp ‘flea’; nguedx ‘month’; ngueev ‘cicada’ dangl ngueengk ngueengk ‘delicious, savory’
ny	nyaenc ‘silver’; nyaengx ‘entrust’; nyal ‘river’ nyaoh ‘be at’; nyenl ‘smelly’; nyox ‘milk’

In finals	[N n]
an	banl ‘yell’; nanx ‘meat’; sanp ‘weave’
aen	maenl ‘day’; yaens ‘patient’; daenl ‘wear’
ang	yangh ‘shape’; mangv ‘side, aspect’; sangx ‘maintain health’
aeng	saengc ‘straight’; daengc ‘whole’; ; jaengl ‘long time’
en	lenc ‘behind’; xenp xangh ‘body’; dens ‘root’
een	beens ‘coffin’; weenp ‘commit’; xeenk ‘display’
eng	dengv ‘dark’; meik gengl gengl ‘brand new’
eeng	beengv ‘shoot’; lup leengh leengh ‘transparent’
in	bins ‘yeast’; sinc ‘money’; xenc sinp ‘god’ wangk biinh ‘convenient’; xait liinh ‘offend’;
ing	mingh ‘life’; xingc ‘wall’; yings ‘shadow’ biingv env ‘power’; biingh ‘ill’
on	donc ‘round’; konx ‘law clause’; xonc ‘preach, spread’
ong	ongp ‘without’; ongs ‘grandfather’; longs ‘dustpan’
un	uns ‘small’; sunx ‘escort, bring’; wunx “; ‘归’
ung	dung h ‘pillar’; sungp dungl ‘language’; jungl ‘lift, carry’

In finals	[O o]
o	oc ‘bat’; bov ‘gall’; sox ‘storehouse’; wox ‘know’
oi	oil ‘cook’; doiv ‘place’; toip ‘drive away’
ou	oux ‘food’; loux ‘lure’; sous ‘vinegar’
ao	aox ‘in’; maoh ‘she, he’; laox ‘big’; gaos ‘head’
om	omv ‘crooked’; womv ‘shade’
on	onl ‘scoop out’; gonv ‘crutch’; xonv ‘return’
ong	ongk ‘empty’; songk ‘release’; xongs ‘resemble’
ob	obs ‘darn clothing’; gobs ‘just now’
od	jiv jods ‘method’; liodx ‘capture’
og	ogs ‘rice crops’; sogp ‘narrow’; xogc ‘redeem’

In initials	[P p]
p	pak ‘spoiled’; pap ‘blind’; peep ‘extremity’ pegt ‘clap’; pik ‘fit’; pogp ‘pour liquid’ pugt ‘ash, dust’; puk ‘stamp with feet’; pungt ‘period’
pi	piaengk ‘broken’; piagk ‘pinch’; piap ‘feed’ piat ‘turn’; pieek ‘distribute’; piuup ‘vomit’

As tone	[P p]
p	keep ‘comb’; kuenp ‘road’; liagp ‘cold’ longp ‘wrong’; map ‘come’; nagp ‘sleep’ saip ‘give’; uip ‘float’; xap ‘write’

In initials	[Q q]
q	qaenp ‘heavy’; qamt ‘walk’; qat ‘light’; qeenk ‘urge’ qemp ‘needle’; qik ‘replace’; qimp ‘add’ qinp hak ‘whole world’; qop ‘dance’

In initials ³¹	[R r]
r	rabl ‘press’; rais ‘far’; ranc ‘home’ rangl ‘groan’; rav ‘field’

³¹ This velar fricative consonant is in process of disappearing. Only elderly people still use it.

In initials	[S s]
s	saemp 'early'; saenx 'roundworm'; sagx 'courtyard' sangp 'root'; saop 'reed'; saox 'husband' sap 'shoulder'; sint 'call'; sugx 'bind'

As tone	[S s]
s	dags 'nail'; daos 'burn'; dos 'put, give'; dous 'nest' jis 'resist'; labs lieds 'lightning'; mags 'big' mas 'cloud'; saens 'thorn'; uns 'small'

In initials	[T t]
t	tamk 'visit'; taot 'exchange'; tenp 'competition' todt 'take off'; toip 'retreat'; tonk 'explain' top 'high official'; touk 'arrive'

As tone	[T t]
t	egt 'guest'; hut 'poor'; kuaot 'wine'; laot 'alone' mant 'yellow'; sat 'kill'; udt 'hot'; wedt 'send, develop' wongt 'push'; yaot 'fear'

In initials	[U u]
gu	guav 'curse'; guegs 'shoot'; guil 'basket'
ku	kuedp soic 'idle, lazy'; kuonp miac 'finger ring'
ngu	ngueec 'saliva'; nguap 'dog'

In finals	[U u]
u	uc ‘throat’; luv ‘hungry’; nuv ‘see’; xul ‘pearl’
uu	liuuk ‘urge’; miuuh ‘wither’; piuup ‘spit’
ui	uip ‘float’; buil ‘fire’; dui ‘ladle out’; xui ‘blow’
eeu	eeus ‘teach’; leeuv ‘sting’; meeux ‘cat’
ou	douc ‘group’; loul ‘dig’; souc ‘worry’
iu	biiul ‘jump’; gius ‘twist, wind’; siuv ‘sharp, pointed’
um	sumx ‘room’; wumx ‘drink’
un	uns ‘small’; sunl ‘thorn’; xunp ‘answer’
ung	ungs ‘sound’; mungx ‘Human classifier’; sungp ‘word’
ub	ubs ‘clasp’; bubs ‘lung’; subs ‘meet’
ud	udt ‘hot’; buds ‘rub’; mudx ‘beard’
ug	ugs ‘clothes’; nugs ‘outside’; xugs ‘wash’

As tone	[V v]
v	aov ‘old’; av ‘price’; beengv ‘fire a gun’ daengv ‘create’; dengv ‘dark’; doiv ‘place’ gaemv ‘perish’; jeiv ‘steps’; lav ‘burst open’

In initials	[W w]
w	wagx ‘the people’; wah ‘say’; wank ‘take leave’ wav ‘dirty’; wedt ‘develop’; weent ‘spit’ wenc ‘tomb’; wongt ‘push’; wox ‘know’

In initials	[X x]
x	xaip ‘currier’; xak ‘dry in sun’; xangc ‘bed’ xeel ‘dregs’; xeengl ‘seize’; xih ‘only then’ xogl ‘fist’; xonc ‘pass on, spread’; xunp ‘answer’

As tone	[X x]
x	aemx ‘big piece’; jaenx ‘near’; lagx ‘son’; meix ‘tree’ mix ‘not yet’; naemx ‘water’; weex ‘do’ xagx ‘slander’; yax ‘evil’

In initials	[Y y]
y	yac 'two'; yadc 'command'; yaeml 'deep' yagc 'love dearly'; yags 'tear open'; yanc 'home' yeel 'frog'; yenl 'eagle'; yingp 'spirit'
ny	nyangt 'grass'; nyenc 'person'; nyimp 'with' nyaoh 'be at'; nyenl 'smelly'; nyuds babl 'wrinkles'

In initials ³²	[Z z]
z	koup zix 'by coincidence'; zeil 'most'; zuh houc 'governor' zongh yangh 'central'; sih zix 'lion'

³² In Chinese loanwords.

Chapter 4

Ethno-religious Profile of the Neasu People

4.1 Introduction

Unless specified otherwise, the information presented in this section has been retrieved from the fieldwork undertaken by Matthias Gerner during 1996-2006. The Neasu people reside in Guìzhōu province and speak a language related to the Nuosu language in Sìchuān province.

The difference between Nuosu and Neasu can be compared with the distance between Mandarin Chinese and Cantonese (or between English and Dutch). Two ethno-linguistic Yí (彝) ¹ groups, the Neasu and Nyisu, speaking two almost unintelligible languages, populate Bìjié 毕节 prefecture of Guìzhōu province. Despite some overlaps, the Neasu are concentrated in Western and Southern Bìjié: in Wēiníng 威宁, Hèzhāng 赫章, Nàyōng 纳雍 and Zhījīn 织金 counties (also in Shuǐchéng 水城 county of Liùpánshuǐ 六盘水 prefecture). On the other hand, the Nyisu live in North-Eastern Bìjié: in Dàfāng 大方, Qiánxī 黔西 and Jīnshā 金沙 counties. As ethnic groups,² the population of Neasu and Nyisu is about 600,000 and 500, 000, respectively.

¹ The Yí (彝) nationality is one China's official 56 nationalities.

² Some of these Neasu and Nyisu do not speak their ancestral language, but only the local Chinese dialect.



In the Western language nomenclature (ISO 639-3), the Yí people of North-eastern Yúnnán and Northwestern Guìzhōu are referred to as Wūsǎ Yí 乌撒彝³ and Wūmēng Yí 乌蒙彝⁴ with some ambiguity pertaining to their delimitation and origin. Wūsǎ 乌撒 and Wūmēng 乌蒙 are the names of former administrative

³ The ISO 639-3 code for this language is given as “yig”.

⁴ The ISO 639-3 code for this language is given as “ywu”.

4.2.1 Origins of the Yí Tribes

districts that are mentioned in the “History of the Yuán Dynasty”.⁵ The Chinese historiographer Mǎ Chángshòu 马长寿 identifies Wūsǎ and Wūmēng with the modern day cities of Wēining 威宁 in Guìzhōu and Zhāotōng 昭通 in Yúnnán.⁶ (Today Wūmēng is the name of a mountain range in the Zhāotōng region.) The exact extent of Wūsǎ and Wūmēng, however, is unknown. Small pockets of Nasu speakers continue to exist in the modern-day area of Zhāotōng, but their speech is largely unintelligible to both Neasu and Nyisu speakers. Consequently, associating Wūmēng Yí and Wūsǎ Yí with Neasu and Nyisu is an erroneous approach. Rather, Wūmēng Yí refers to scattered pockets of Yí people within the Zhāotōng prefecture (Yúnnán province) and Wūsǎ Yí to Yí people in Western Guìzhōu province.

4.2 History

4.2.1 Origins of the Yí Tribes

The exact time of when the ancestors of the Neasu and Nyisu people started to populate Western Guìzhōu is unknown but predates the edition of the “Book of the Southern Barbarians”⁷ which was published in 860-874. This book makes reference to the Cuàn 爨 kingdom (ca. 323-738), also distinguishing between the Wūmán 乌蛮 (Black Barbarians) and Báimán 白蛮 (White Barbarians). The Cuàn

⁵ The “History of Yuán” or 《Yuán Shǐ 元史》 is the official Chinese historiography of the Mongol dynasty (1271-1368) posthumously commissioned by the Míng court and compiled in 1370 under the direction of Sòng Lián 宋濂. “The History of Yuán” is part of the “Twenty-Four Histories” (二十四史), a collection of historiographies spanning across a period between 91 B.C. and 1739. The 《Yuán Shǐ 元史》 includes biographies (本纪) of 47 Mongol emperors and Khans; biographies (列傳) of 97 non-imperial people; 58 treaties (志) on geographic, socio-economic, historical and legal issues; 8 chronological tables. In the section “Geographic Treaties” 《Dìlǐzhì 地理志》, the districts Wūsǎ 乌撒 and Wūmēng 乌蒙 are mentioned (see Lǐ and Xuē 2009).

⁶ See Mǎ (1985: 65).

⁷ The “Book of the Southern Barbarians” or 《Mánshū 蛮书》 was the work of Fán Chuò 樊绰, a secretary of Cài Xí 蔡袭, the Chinese Governor of Tongkin during the Táng 唐 dynasty (Tongkin is a westernized form of *Đông Kinh* 东京, the former name of Hanoi in Vietnam). Fán Chuò published his work during 860-865 in which he compiles the ethnic groups of Yúnnán and neighboring areas of that time. The oldest preserved Chinese manuscript of 《Mánshū 蛮书》 is an edition written at the Wǔyīng Hall 武英殿 in the Forbidden City of Běijīng in 1774 (see Pelliot 1904: 132). Gordon Luce translated the 《Mánshū 蛮书》 into English in 1961 (see Luce 1961).

kingdom was centered in the southeast of Kunming and disintegrated in the 8th century in order to make place for the Nánzhào 南诏 kingdom (738-937). Subjugated to the Nánzhào kingdom, the Cuàn polity morphed into two wings: Western and Eastern Cuàn, the latter extending into Guizhōu province and covering the majority of contemporary Neasu and Nyisu areas. The “Book of the Southern Barbarians” associates the *Wūmán* with Eastern Cuàn and the *Báimán* with Western Cuàn (see Luce 1961:10). Since the *Wūmán* and *Báimán* were both known to be slave societies⁸ just as the latter Yí were, some scholars⁹ suggested the *Wūmán* and *Báimán* to be the ancestors of the Yí.

Another indication of an ancient origin of the Yí in Western Guizhōu comes from their native myths, the so-called *Yí Classics*.¹⁰ As per one transregional myth, there was a universal flood with one male survivor who became the progenitor of the human race. His name is variously recorded as *Apudumo* or *Zzemuvyvy*, *Zomu*, *Jumu*, *Zhomuyou*, *Zhongmuyou* (transliterated in Chinese as 仲牟由) etc. Together with three heavenly wives, he begot six sons:¹¹ Wǔ 武, Zhà 乍, Nuò 糯, Héng 恒, Bù 布, and Mò 默. They founded six clans who later moved into six cardinal directions: “Centre”, “North”, “West”, “South”, “East”, “South”, “and

⁸ The color term ‘black’ denotes the class of ethnic aristocrats and ‘white’ to the caste of ordinary free men.

⁹ While Mǎ Chángshòu 马长寿 (1985:69-73) is undecided, Steven Harrell believes that the Eastern Cuàn were Yí and the Western Cuàn might have included Yí as well as other groups such as the Bái 白 people (1995: 87).

¹⁰ Across four provinces of Southwest China, the Shamans of the Yí folk religion(s) had used similar pictographic scripts to transmit their knowledge from one generation to the other. Chinese scholars (notably Yáng Chéngzhì 杨成志, Mǎ Xuéliáng 马学良 and Dīng Wénjiāng 丁文江) started to take interest and to collect manuscripts from the Yí Shamans in the 1920s. Some of these manuscripts can be traced back to the 17th century and earlier. In the 1970s, the Chinese Government funded a translation project where elderly Shamans from Yúnnán, Sìchuān, Guizhōu and Guǎngxī provinces were invited to translate the collected manuscripts into Chinese. Similar projects continued at a provincial level until the late 1990s. The translated manuscripts can be classified under eight topics: (1) creation myths; (2) flood myths; (3) six ancestors myths; (4) myths on the origin of the script; (5) religious practices of Shamans; (6) texts for guiding the deceased soul to its ancestral place (指路经); (7) texts to describe the black/white color symbolism (see Wu 1998). One important subset of documents is the “Southwest Yí Chronicles” 《Xīnán Yízhì 西南彝志》 which was edited and published in Guizhōu during 1989-1994. The chronicles describe the geographical distribution of the different Yí tribes.

¹¹ Six direct sons or six descendants with intermediate generations.

4.2.1 Origins of the Yí Tribes

Southeast”. Chinese historians¹² have linked the migration of the six clans to the centrifugal forces of the Cuàn 爨 kingdom (ca. 323-738) at the end of its reign. Today, Chinese linguists¹³ classify the Yí languages into six subgroups¹⁴ based on this myth. David Bradley¹⁵ is also known to credit to the idea of the six clans and their migration pattern. According to the “Southwest Yí Chronicles” or 《Xīnán Yízhi 西南彝志》,¹⁶ two clans, the Bù and Mò, moved to Guìzhōu, fought wars and settled there. To the extent that the connection of the ancestors of the Neasu and Nyisu to the Cuàn kingdom remains valid, their settlement in Western Guìzhōu must be ancient and have probably occurred during the later Hàn dynasty (25-220).

In the paradigm of communist historiography,¹⁷ Chinese scholars¹⁸ believe that at the time of the formation of the six clans, the Yí society remained in a primitive stage and was yet to develop social classes. In line with the predictions made by Friedrich Engels (1884), slavery was introduced when the clans fought among themselves and also engaged in warfare with other tribes. The Wǔ clan in Yúnnán and the Mò clan in Guìzhōu were particularly involved in fighting and in making captives whom they enslaved (see Mǎ 1985: 12-13). The establishment of slaves required a reorganization of the “free people” in social classes, in a class of aristocrats as well as a class of ordinary “free” people; the original color

¹² See Luó and Chén (1984).

¹³ For example, see Chén (1985).

¹⁴ According to the communist policy principle, the Yí are understood as one nationality speaking one language. These linguistic differences are called “north Yí dialect”, “central Yí dialect”, “west Yí dialect”, “south Yí dialect”, “southeast Yí dialect” and “east Yí dialect”. The Neasu and Nyisu languages belong to or are the “east Yí dialect”.

¹⁵ See Bradley (2001: 201-202).

¹⁶ See previous note. The “Southwest Yí Chronicles” 《Xīnán Yízhi 西南彝志》 describe the geographical distribution of the different Yí tribes.

¹⁷ The communist view of history was laid out by Lewis Henry Morgan (1885[1877]) and Friedrich Engels (1884) and breaks down the history of a people into five evolutionary stages defined in relation to production: the primitive (first matrilineal then patrilineal), slave, feudal, capitalist and socialist modes of production. This theory was particularly adopted in the Soviet Union and in the People’s Republic of China. Mǎ Chángshòu’s work “The ancient history of the Yí” is organized into these five stages and serves as a good example of how the theory is put to work. See Harrell (1995:84-89) for an evaluation of Mǎ ’s historiography.

¹⁸ See for example Wu (1998: 19).

metaphor of 'Black Yí/Barbarians' and 'White Yí/Barbarians' applies to these social classes. Today, the use of this metaphor varies in Southwest China.

In Sichuān and to a lesser extent in Guìzhōu, the colors still reflect the former social classes, while in Yúnnán 'black' and 'white' have become traits of ethno-linguistic identity.¹⁹ Mǎ Chángshòu estimates²⁰ that the slave system and the social classes had been established across all the Yí areas by at least the Three Kingdoms 三国 (220-280) period. The slave system endured during the Nánzhào 南诏 (738-937) and Dàlǐ 大理 kingdoms (937-1253), but was gradually replaced by a feudal system.²¹ In particular, this transformation occurred during the Dàlǐ kingdom under the influence of Hàn settlers, who were already operating under a feudal system at that time. When the Mongols established rule in China, Kublai Khan officially abolished slavery²² by a decree in 1283, tipping the balance in favor of feudalism in Southwest China. The Mongols also subsidized a ruling system that recognized the existing social structure. They established a small elite of indigenous chieftains known as *Tǔsī* 土司 who were taken from the class of Black Yí. The Míng and Qīng governments left the social classes of the Yí intact and continued using the system of ethnic *Tǔsī*.

4.2.2 (Early) Modern Era

During the transition from the Míng dynasty (1368-1644) to the Qīng dynasty (1644-1911), the Yí in Guìzhōu assumed the role of imperial enabler (or disabler) for a short time.²³ Wú Sānguì 吴三桂 (1612-1678) was a general of the Míng court, who after the downfall of the Míng dynasty defected, surrendered to the Manchu

¹⁹ For example, the Kopho of Lùquàn 禄劝 county consider themselves to be entirely composed of White Yí, while the Nasu people of Lùquàn county consist of Black Yí and speak a language that is almost unintelligible with Kopho.

²⁰ See Mǎ (1985:39-49).

²¹ According to the classical definition of Ganshof (1944), feudalism describes the societal contract between a lord (主人) and a vassal (附庸) based on the idea of fief (领地). A fief is a heritable property or a right granted by the lord to the vassal in exchange for service, proceeds, or loyalty.

²² See Mǎ (1985:96-97).

²³ The Sichuān Yí of the 20th century played a similar systemic role as the Guìzhōu Yí of the 17th century when their chieftains decided to allow the Communist Red Army pass through Liángshān on its Long March to power in April 1935.

4.2.2 (Early) Modern Era

rulers and was commissioned by the Qīng court to quell pockets of Míng resistance all over China. Wú garrisoned Northeastern Yúnnán during 1662-1668, and fought the Yí Tǔsī in Western Guìzhōu, who had remained loyal to the Míng rulers, before expulsing them. The Yí Tǔsī and their numerous followers fled from Western Guìzhōu to Liángshān 凉山 (in Sìchuān) and Hónghé 红河 (in Yúnnán).²⁴ Their defeat contributed to the emergence of the Qīng dynasty.

The feudalization of society was most complete in Yúnnán where the (purported former) slave castes developed into independent ethno-linguistic groups.²⁵ In Sìchuān, slavery survived as the main organization principle²⁶ of the Nuosu society until 1956, when the communist government quashed a rebellion and assumed total control of the Nuosu society. The Yí society in Western Guìzhōu has been hybrid: slavery endured within a feudal society until the 20th century. The British missionary Samuel Pollard 柏格理 (1864-1915), who was stationed in Wēining (Guìzhōu), described the Neasu as a feudal society with slave castes.²⁷ At the top were the Tǔsī or Neasu landowners whom Pollard nicknamed “Earth Eyes” and who had to pay taxes to the Chinese government. Within the society, the Neasu Tǔsī treated the Black Neasu²⁸ as vassals to whom they let land and from whom they requested loyalty, military services, and availability. The Neasu landowners often engaged in skirmishes with other landowners. In such instances, the Black Neasu had to contribute their own men to the battle. The Black Neasu in turn assigned portions of their land to the White Neasu²⁹ in exchange for military service and proceeds. The White Neasu had to be available to the Black Neasu as fighters if a landlord would call on the Black Neasu as well as their subordinates for battle. All three layers of society, Neasu Tǔsī, Black Neasu and White Neasu, held slaves. One type of slaves lived in their own houses and was supposed to provide goods and services to their lords at all

²⁴ See the Wēining Nationality Chronicles, Wēining Mínwěi (1997:50-51).

²⁵ For example, the Aluphu of Lùquàn 禄劝 county, called *Dry Yí* 干彝 in Chinese, are descendants of slaves. They have evolved as an independent Yí group.

²⁶ See Mǎ (1985:106-108) and Harrell (1995: 88).

²⁷ See Samuel Pollard (1921: 137-145).

²⁸ Pollard nicknamed them “Black Bloods”.

²⁹ Pollard called them “White Bloods”.

times. Furthermore, there were household slaves who lived in the same house as their masters and had to serve them at all times.

The *Wēiníng Nationality Chronicles*³⁰ reported an incident that occurred in 1730. È'ěrtài 鄂尔泰, the Manchu governor of Southwest China, performed a land reform and dispossessed many Yí Tǔsī in Yúnnán and Guìzhōu. The Yí Tǔsī of Wūmēng (Zhāotōng) and Wūsǎ (Wēiníng) resisted, combined forces, and succeeded in smuggling weapons into the fortified city of Zhāotōng where imperial soldiers garrisoned. On a given day, they mounted a rebellion and were able to kill the Chinese military officer Liú Qǐyuán 刘起元. When a report of this rebellion reached the governor, an army of 10,000 soldiers was dispatched to Zhāotōng which put down the rebellion.

Slavery and fiefs were completely abolished during the communist era, but the Neasu and Nyisu remain conscious of the social classes. In their own language, they call the caste of former *landowners* or *Tǔsī* the *Anzumo*, *Black Yí* the *Nasu*, and *White Yí* the *Tusu*. Moreover, they remember two lower castes, the *Lagea* who are termed in Chinese as *Red Yí* 红彝 as well as the *Go* referred to as *Dry Yí* 干彝 in Chinese. The *Lagea* are the descendants of household slaves, while the *Go* are the descendants of the slaves residing in their own houses.³¹ The distribution of the five castes in the Neasu and Nyisu groups differs and is depicted in the table below (with Nuosu in Sìchuān as an additional reference point). The majority of the Neasu belong to the *Tusu* caste, whereas the majority of the Nyisu are associated with the *Nasu* caste. The *Lagea* and *Go* castes have no known descendants in Neasu, but only in the Nyisu group.

<i>Social Class</i>	<i>Neasu (Guìzhōu)</i>	<i>Nyisu (Guìzhōu)</i>	<i>Social Class</i>	<i>Nuosu (Sìchuān)</i>
Anzumo 土司	ca. 1%	ca. 1%	Nzymo 土司	ca. 1%
Nasu 黑彝	ca. 9%	ca. 59%	Nuoho 黑彝	ca. 19%
Tusu 白彝	ca. 90%	ca. 10%	Quhuo 白彝	ca. 60%
Lagea 红彝	ca. 0%	ca. 5%	Gaxy	ca. 20%
Go 干彝	ca. 0%	ca. 25%		

Table 4.1: Neasu, Nyisu and Nuosu social classes

³⁰ See Wēiníng Mínwěi (1997:51).

³¹ Before the 1950s, the 'Go' were known for their production of crafted bamboo utensils (Wēiníng Mínwěi 1997:30).

4.3.1 Family and Customs

The interethnic relations of the Neasu and Ahmao were strained for a long time. The Yí landowners (and Hàn settlers) exploited the Ahmao people and treated them badly. Many episodes in Samuel Pollard's diary and in his son's account³² elaborate on the rude treatment of the Ahmao people by Yí and Hàn landlords. Excessive taxation³³ was the means of interethnic suppression. In contrast to this gloomy scenario, it was the Ahmao who led the churches when both Ahmao and Neasu converted to the Christian faith and attended the same churches. The details of this reversal have been elucidated below.

4.3 Society

4.3.1 Family and Customs

Like other Yí groups, the Neasu people are organized in clans and castes. The clans are of patrilineal lineage; membership to a Neasu clan is inherited from the father. Male membership is inalienable, while female membership changes when a woman marries a man from another clan. Neasu clans tend to be exogamous but less than the Nuosu clans in Sìchuān. They favor marriage between *cross-cousins*.³⁴ Marriage is preferably arranged between a man and his female cross-cousin.³⁵ The marriage of cross-cousins is always exogamous in case the marriage of their parents was exogamous. On the other hand, Neasu clans

³² Walter Pollard commented: "For years they had been in the grip of their overlords, whose policy was oppression; so harshly had they been burdened that despair had become a characteristic of the race, and they had come to accept poverty and sorrow, disease and death, as their inevitable heritage" (Pollard 1928: 152).

³³ Walter Pollard wrote: "At that time the Miao were a very downtrodden race. Chinese and Nosu overlords, who owned vast tracts of Miao territory, ruled over them with a cruel hand. From every measure of rice or bushel of corn produced by the Miao a large percentage had to be taken and delivered to the landlords as tax. (...) The Miao were groaning under the oppression heaped upon them. They were tired of being as a clod of earth, to be trampled on and passed by, and were yearning for the day when the race would grow like a spreading tree and be a power in the land" (Pollard 1928: 129-130).

³⁴ See the Wěining Nationality Chronicles, Wěining Mínwěi (1997:63).

³⁵ The female cross-cousin of a man is the daughter of his father's sister or of his mother's brother. From the woman's perspective, he is the son of her mother's brother or of her father's sister.

prohibit marriage between *parallel cousins*.³⁶ These arrangements cannot completely avoid endogamous marriage within a clan, despite impeding it, because if a man marries the daughter of his mother's sister, and his mother and aunt happen to have married men of the same clan, their marriage is deemed endogamous. Nevertheless, the Neasu strongly prefer marriage across clans and do so for the purpose of establishing kinship networks.

Furthermore, the three Neasu castes, Neasu landowners, Black Neasu, White Neasu, are strictly endogamous although there have been recent relaxations due to the social changes taking place during the 21st century. Samuel Pollard reports the story³⁷ of an Anzumo (landowner) who started a love affair with a slave girl. He implored Pollard to allow him to become Christian because he thought that his conversion would make him impervious to the attacks of his own relatives which he endured due to the union with the slave girl. Since the man insisted on continuing ancestor worship as well, Pollard turned down his request. When his relatives later found the slave girl, they beat her and put her in a pit where she eventually died an awful death. Therefore, a landowner (Tǔsī) traditionally marries a landowner, a Black Neasu marries a Black Neasu, and a White Neasu marries a White Neasu.

Unlike the Nuosu in Sìchūān who cremate their dead, the Neasu practice inhumation. Before the Míng dynasty (1368-1644), the Neasu used to practice cremation as well but shifted to inhumation afterwards.³⁸ Upon a person's demise, a Shaman is called for reading ritual texts (指路经) in order to guide the soul of the dead person to the ancestor's place in the afterworld.

4.3.2 *Calendar*

The Neasu celebrate the Torch Festival (火把节) on the 24th of June every year like other Yí groups. The foundational myth behind this festival is similar to other Yí groups. For the Neasu in Wēiníng, the reason for lighting torches is to

³⁶ A man should not marry the daughter of his father's brother or of his mother's sister. See the Wēiníng Nationality Chronicles, Wēiníng Mínwěi (1997:63).

³⁷ See Pollard (1921: 137-138).

³⁸ See the Wēiníng Nationality Chronicles, Wēiníng Mínwěi (1997:67).

4.4.1 Traditional Religion

commemorate the day³⁹ when the ancestors overcame an invasion of locusts by burning them and thereby rescuing the harvest. As evidenced in other Yí groups, the Neasu calendar incorporate element of the Chinese zodiac (shēngxiào 生肖) which has wide circulation in East Asia. In particular, it uses the twelve zodiac animals to divide days, months and years, although the order differs from the Hàn calendar. The Neasu month-cycle commences with the Neasu New Year in November, which is the month of the Rat. The calendar is the same as in the Nuosu language that is listed below for reference.⁴⁰

Zodiac Term	Neasu		Nuosu	
(November) 'month / year of rat'	hxa	hngup / kaol	hxie	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠 / 𐎶
(December) 'month / year of ox'	nyue	hngup / kaol	nyi	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠 / 𐎶
(January) 'month / year of tiger'	nyeat	hngup / kaol	lat	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠 / 𐎶
(February) 'month / year of rabbit'	tap hlup	hngup / kaol	tep hlep	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠𐎠 / 𐎶
(March) 'month / year of dragon'	lu	hngup / kaol	lu	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠 / 𐎶
(April) 'month / year of snake'	shel	hngup / kaol	shy	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠 / 𐎶
(May) 'month / year of horse'	mu	hngup / kaol	mu	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠 / 𐎶
(June) 'month / year of sheep'	hxaop	hngup / kaol	yo	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠 / 𐎶
(July) 'month / year of monkey'	nvaol	hngup / kaol	nyut	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠 / 𐎶
(August) 'month / year of rooster'	wa	hngup / kaol	va	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠 / 𐎶
(September) 'month / year of dog'	qii	hngup / kaol	ke	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠 / 𐎶
(October) 'month / year of pig'	val	hngup / kaol	vot	hlep / kut 𐎧𐎠 / 𐎶

Table 4.2: Neasu and Nuosu calendar

4.4 Religion

4.4.1 Traditional Religion

The foundation of the Neasu religion is similar to that of the Nuosu religion and is laid down in the so-called 'Yí Classics'. The religion is polytheistic and animist, non-dogmatic, and practical. The Neasu people use the term *se*²¹ to denote

³⁹ See the Wēining Nationality Chronicles, Wēining Mínwěi (1997:73). By contrast, the Nuosu in Liángshān (Sìchuān) celebrate the Torch Festival to commemorate a legend, according to which the Yí ancestors fought pests sent by the god *Entiguzi* in order to destroy their crops. By holding up torches they defeated the pests as well as the god who sent them.

⁴⁰ See Gerner (2013: 59).

deities,⁴¹ *mi*³³*se*²¹ to refer to heavenly gods (hidden gods in heaven and weather phenomena), and *mi*¹³*se*²¹ for earthly gods (stones, rivers, trees). The Neasu people worship, placate, and offer sacrifices to these deities. In addition, they revere four types of *totems*⁴² in a rather implicit manner: a bamboo totem,⁴³ a crane totem,⁴⁴ a tiger totem⁴⁵ and a dragon totem.⁴⁶ The origin of these totems is based on fuzzy myths with variable circulation. The Neasu also worship the spirits of the ancestors. Like the Nuosu, the Neasu believe that a person has three spirits who return to three different addresses upon their demise: the individual spirit, the family spirit, and the clan spirit. Ancestral spirits who do not find their address come back and harass the living people. The main function of the Neasu priest, who is known as *bumo*,⁴⁷ is to ensure that the three spirits find their addresses in the afterworld and do not return. He sacrifices a hen or rooster and chants ritual texts at funerals in order to monitor the journey of the spirits.

The Neasu folk religion recognizes two offices, the offices of the *bumo* 'priest' and of the *suní* 'shaman'. In the paradigm of communist historiography, both offices are leftovers of the primitive stage⁴⁸ which is then subdivided into a matrilineal and patrilineal phase. The *suní* represents the early matrilineal stage,

⁴¹ Compare with the cognate Nuosu term *si*³³.

⁴² The English term 'totem' was borrowed from Ojibwe, a native American language. A totem refers to a sacred object or an abstract symbol that serves as an emblem for a people or a clan.

⁴³ One myth explains the special connection of the 'Go' or 'Dry Yí 干彝' with bamboo and why the 'Go' manufacture bamboo products. Bamboo is viewed as a hero of the 'Go' (See Wěining Nationality Chronicles 1997: 121).

⁴⁴ The crane is viewed as the king of birds with the ability of guiding the spirit of the dead in the thereafter to new address. In practice, the Bumo (the Neasu priest) sacrifices a hen or rooster as substitute for the crane to provide guidance to the dead (see Wěining Nationality Chronicles 1997: 121).

⁴⁵ In the mountains of Western Guizhōu, the tiger is feared as a natural enemy due to its ferocious attributes (see Wěining Nationality Chronicles 1997: 121).

⁴⁶ Similar to other ethnic groups in China and around the world, the dragon is considered to be an inflated and empowered snake whose might is feared (see Wěining Nationality Chronicles 1997: 121).

⁴⁷ In Sìchuān, the priest is called 'bimo' and in Yúnnán he is called 'bemo'. The term is composed of the Proto-Loloish verb *bi 'read' and the augmentative suffix *mo ('master', 'chief', 'mother').

⁴⁸ See Wěining Nationality Chronicles (1997: 124-125).

4.4.2 Christianity

the *bumo* the latter patrilineal stage. A *sunì* is often a woman and sometimes a man, whereas the office of a *bumo* must be represented by a man. The *sunì* possesses magical powers put at the disposal of the person who requests services. The *sunì* manipulates spirits in order to rescue a bad situation or to inflict harm. As is the case with the Nuosu folk religion, there are no restrictions in terms of caste, clan, or gender for the office of *sunì*. Everyone with an experience of interaction with spirits can assume the office of *sunì*. By contrast, a *bumo* is male, is often a White Neasu, and is educated in the traditional script (generally by his father who already is a *bumo*). The *bumo* performs rituals and interacts with spirits only by chanting existing ritual texts previously learnt by him.

4.4.2 Christianity

Today, a wide network of Neasu and Nyisu churches spans over Western Guizhōu which can be traced back to the endeavors of the China Inland Mission 内地会 (CIM), the Methodist Bible Christian Mission⁴⁹ 循道会 (BCM), and the Friedenshort Deaconess Mission 女执事会 (FDC) in the early 20th century. In 1888, the CIM missionary James Adams 党居仁 established a station in Ānshùn 安顺 and commenced missionary work⁵⁰ among the Miáo 苗 in the neighboring villages. In 1903, a group of roaming Ahmao natives from Wēining county arrived in Ānshùn and were subsequently evangelized by Adams (Ahmao is the selfname of the Miáo in Wēining county and of those in Ānshùn prefecture although they speak different dialects). They responded to his respectful treatment and began propagating the Christian faith among their fellows back in Wēining. After his assistants visited Wēining, Adams made plans for building a church in Gébù 葛布⁵¹ village in 1904, but hesitated due to the long distance from Ānshùn. He introduced some of the Ahmao believers to the BCM missionary Samuel Pollard

⁴⁹ The Bible Christian Church was founded by William O'Bryan (1778-1868) in Cornwall, England, in 1815. (See Tiedemann 2009: 129-130.) The Bible Christian Church split away from the Wesleyan Methodists before reuniting with the Methodist New Connexion and the United Methodist Free Church in 1907 in order to form the United Methodist Church. The first foreign mission of the Bible Christian Church was established in Canada in 1845. A mission station was opened in Yúnnán province with three centers: in Kūnmíng, in Dōngchuān, and in Zhāotōng. After Samuel Pollard joined the mission, a fourth center was established in Shíménkǎn, Guizhōu province, in 1904, which proved to be one of the most successful ministries in Southwest China.

⁵⁰ See Enwall (1994: 93) and Wàng (1985: 10).

⁵¹ Gébù 葛布 is a village in Fǔchùxiāng township 辅处乡 in Hèzhāng 赫章 county at the border to Wēining 威宁 county. Gébù and Ānshùn are at a distance of at least 230km.

who was stationed in Zhāotōng city, Yúnnán province, close to Wēining. However, Adams decided to proceed with his plan of building a church in Gébù and commissioned two Ahmao, Yáng Qìngān 杨庆安 and Chén Zǐmíng 陈子明, with the construction of the building that was eventually completed in 1905. Those Ahmao believers whom Adams referred to Samuel Pollard 柏格理 in Zhāotōng city found him there in July 1904. Once the contact was established, a constant stream of Ahmao people reached the mission station, eager to be instructed in the new faith. In 1905, Pollard purchased ten acres of land from a Neasu landowner in Shíménkǎn 石门坎⁵² and opened a new mission station there. He then instructed the Ahmao believers, planted churches, learnt the Ahmao language, created a phonemic script (the “Pollard Script”), and completed the New Testament in 1915, weeks before he died from typhoid fever.

Wàng Míngdào 王明道⁵³ reports that Samuel Pollard and James Adams agreed on dividing Western Guìzhōu into two spheres of influence, the western part being served by Pollard’s Bible Christian Mission, and the eastern part by Adam’s China Inland Mission. The Gébù church at the border of Wēining and Hèzhāng counties was supervised by the CIM but was relatively independent because of the long distance to Ānshùn. The members were active in planting churches all over Western Guìzhōu. Between 1905 and 1919, the majority of these converts were Ahmao people. After 1919, it was the Neasu people who became Christians in great numbers.

The Gébù church was at the center of a remarkable development. Since the beginning in 1905, regular baptisms were held after assuring that the neophytes were ready to renounce to previous practices such as ancestor worship. After overcoming the initial opposition of a Yí landlord, an elementary school was opened in 1906, with one Hàn teacher instructing more than 20 Miáo and Yí pupils. In 1909, four new churches grew out of the Gébù church, in Xīnglóngchǎng 兴隆

⁵² Shíménkǎn 石门坎 belongs to Wēining county in Guìzhōu and is at a short distance from Zhāotōng in Yúnnán.

⁵³ See Wàng (1985:14). Wàng Míngdào 王明道, the leader of the Gébù church, happens to bear the same name as Wàng Míngdào 王明道, the pastor of the Christian Tabernacle church in Běijīng 北京, one of the most influential Chinese Christian personalities of the 20th century (see Harvey, 2002). However, both personalities are unrelated. Wàng, the pastor of the Gébù church, reports events that he personally witnessed during the first three decades of the 20th century. His church history was published in 1985 as an article following his death.

4.4.2 Christianity

厂 township (Wēining), Dàsōngshù 大松树 township (Wēining), Qiūwān 鳊湾 township (Wēining), and Lúfáng 炉房 township (Hèzhāng). A year later in 1910, the village and the church in Gébù were destroyed by fire. The church was rebuilt - this time not with wooden material but with stone bricks – under the auspices of James Adams and using funds of the China Inland Mission.

The church regained strength by 1912 and evangelized the ethnic groups of neighboring counties: Hèzhāng 赫章, Nàyōng 纳雍, Bìjié 毕节, Dàfāng 大方 and Shuǐchéng 水城. Initially, the response of the Neasu (and Nyisu) was limited, but altogether ten new churches were planted and the number of believers surpassed 1,000. In 1914, complaints about Chén Zǐmíng 陈子明, the principal elder of the Gébù church since its inception, were voiced with regard to his inappropriate leadership style. James Adams therefore appointed Zhāng Bǎoluó 张保罗, a native Ahmao from Gébù, as the responsible elder, but Zhāng died just after one year in service. In the same year of 1915, James Adams was struck by lightning and died. After a difficult transition, the CIM missionary Issac Page 裴忠谦 shifted to Gébù in 1916 as the responsible missionary of the church.

In 1918, Page coordinated a campaign of evangelization among the Neasu in Hèzhāng which proved to be more successful than the previous campaign of 1912. In the Republican period (1911-1949), the feudal system broke up, leading to a sense of insecurity among the ethnic societies. This climate contributed to the successful evangelization among the Neasu. Several Neasu churches were established in different districts of Hèzhāng. In 1919, Isaac Page left for retirement in England and was succeeded by the English CIM missionary John Yorkston 岳克敦. After settling down in Hèzhāng and in order to better attend the needs of the Ahmao and Neasu believers,⁵⁴ Yorkston and his associates separated the Neasu believers and formed a new church in 1920, known as the Jiégòu 结构⁵⁵ church. A new building for the Jiégòu church was erected in 1921. This church emerged as the center of outreach to the Neasu people in the region. Starting from 1923, the China Inland Mission encouraged the churches of

⁵⁴ According to a report of the Jiégòu Church Editorial Group (1985:22), 40 percent, 50 percent, and 10 percent of the Gébù Church comprised of Ahmao, Neasu, and Hàn people, respectively.

⁵⁵ Jiégòu 结构 is a township in Hèzhāng county.

Western Guìzhōu to become financially and spiritually independent⁵⁶ from European support. As the political situation in Southwest China became unstable, many foreign missionaries (including John Yorkston in Gébù) left their mission station by 1927. During the same year, the CIM held a provincial conference where Wàng Míngdào 王明道⁵⁷ was instituted as the responsible elder of the Gébù church, and Ān Wénliáng 安文良 as the elder in charge of the Jiégòu church. In 1930, the Gébù and Jiégòu churches combined forces before planting three new Ahmao and Neasu churches in Wēiníng, one Neasu church in Hèzhāng, and one Neasu church in Yíliáng 彝良 county (Yúnnán).

Within a span of few years, the churches in Western Guìzhōu became mature, self-supporting, and self-multiplying. The network of churches planted over forty years is summarized in the following table (Wàng 1985: 20-21).

Year	Church	Responsible Elder
1905	Hèzhāng Gébù 赫章葛布	Chén Zímíng 陈子明
1909	Wēiníng Xīnglóngchǎng 威宁兴隆厂	Zhāng Mǎkě 张马可
	Wēiníng Dàsōngshù 威宁大松树	Lǐ Yàsā 李亚撒
	Wēiníng Yúqīuwān 威宁鱼鳅湾	Wáng Yǐxījié 王以西结
	Hèzhāng 5 th District, Xīnlúfáng 赫章五区新炉房	Luó Dànyǐlǐ 罗但以理
1912	Hèzhāng 4 th District, Héshān Village 赫章四区合山寨	Mǎ Yàshè 马亚设
1913	Hèzhāng 2 nd District, Bāobāo Village 赫章二区包包寨	
	Hèzhāng 2 nd District, Yějī Village 赫章二区野鸡寨	
	Shuǐchéng Yántóushàng Village 水城岩头上寨	
	Shuǐchéng Càigāndān Village 水城菜甘丹寨	
	Shuǐchéng Yějī Village 水城野鸡寨	
	Nàyōng Gébù 纳雍葛布	
1917	Hèzhāng 4 th District, Mǎsāigōushuǐyíng 赫章四区麻腮沟水营	Luó Dànyǐlǐ 罗但以理
1918	Wēiníng Jiàodǐngshān 威宁轿顶山	Zhāng Wénxī 张文熙

Table 4.3: Churches planted in Western Guìzhōu 1905-1946

⁵⁶ This idea became later enshrined in Máo Zédōng's religious policy evidenced by the concept of the Three-Self Church: 'self-preaching', 'self-governance', and 'self-financing'.

⁵⁷ Wàng Míngdào 王明道 is the author of the church history on which part of this section is based (Wàng 1985).

4.4.2 Christianity

Year	Church	Responsible Elder
1920	Hèzhāng Jiégòu 赫章结构 ⁵⁸	
	Hèzhāng Démùpíng 赫章德慕坪	Zhū Yichéng 朱义成
	Hèzhāng Gōngjī Village 赫章公鸡寨	Luó Suǒluóbābó 罗所罗巴伯
	Wēiníng 10 th District, Yídú 威宁十区以独	
	Wēiníng 11 th District, Mǎlāchòng 威宁十一区马拉冲	
1922	Hèzhāng 4 th District, Yánzú Village 赫章四区岩足寨	Wáng Guóchén 王国臣
	Hèzhāng 5 th District, Āizipō 赫章五区矮子坡	Zhāng Xīmén 张西门
	Hèzhāng 6 th District, Huáshíbǎn 赫章六区滑石板	Yáng Mǎkě 杨马可
1923	Hèzhāng 4 th District, Yántóushàng 赫章四区岩头上	Wáng Yuēhàn 王约翰
	Yíliáng Máopō 彝良茅坡	Mǎ Yuēshūyà 马约书亚
1927	Hèzhāng 4 th District, Liújiāwūjī 赫章四区刘家屋基	Wáng Shízhòng 王时中
1930	Wēiníng 3 rd District, Guāngmíngshān 威宁三区光明山	
	Wēiníng 3 rd District, Bùzǐshān 威宁三区不子山	
	Wēiníng 3 rd District, Bàodōu 威宁三区抱都	
	Hèzhāng 4 th District, Wādūōgōu 赫章四区洼多沟	
	Yíliáng Qūlǎoyīngshān 彝良屈老鹰山	
1946	Hèzhāng 5 th District, Shuǐtángzǐ 赫章五区水塘子	Zhū Míngxīn 朱明新

Table 4.3: Churches planted in Western Guizhōu 1905-1946 (continued)

After 1949, most churches were integrated into the network of Three-Self Churches, many of which continue to exist even to this day. In numerous villages, believers also attend informal gatherings in private homes.

About 90 kilometers further east, the German *Friedenshort Deaconess Mission* 女执事会⁵⁹ opened mission stations in the cities of Dàfāng 大方 and Bìjié 毕节. During the 36 years of their ministry (1915-1951), 19 deaconesses from Germany and Switzerland participated in the ministry. Among them were Margarete Welzel 苏宽仁, Wanda Jener 晏玉英 and Dora Heierli 海贞利. After

⁵⁸ The Jiégòu Church Editorial Group (1985:22) reports 1910 as the year when the Jiégòu church was established, but then corrects the date to 1920 on the same page.

⁵⁹ The German name of the mission is 'Friedenshort Diakonissenmission'. In 1900, Eva von Tiele Winckler founder of the Deaconess Motherhouse Frienderhort at Miechowitz, Upper Silesia, Germany (now Miechowice, Poland) got to know Hudson Taylor in Switzerland. Convinced about the urgency of the Great Commission, she decided to send missionaries to China in association with the China Inland Mission. The approach of this mission was to combine evangelization with charity services such as orphanages and hospitals. The Mission established fields in Hong Kong, Bìjié 毕节, Dàfāng 大方 (Guizhōu), and Zhènxióngh 镇雄 (Yúnnán). See Tiedemann (2009:164).

four deaconesses arrived in the city of Dàfāng in 1915, they purchased land, built a chapel, and opened other facilities such as an orphanage, an elementary school, and a hospital. Soon afterwards they were invited to the local prison,⁶⁰ dispensed medicine, and preached the Gospel to the prison population. These services helped overcome the initial distrust in the population.⁶¹ From the very beginning, the deaconesses organized Bible classes and evangelized the Ahmao, the Nyisu (whom they called Yíjiā 彝家) and the Hàn. They started to baptize⁶² converts in 1916, although spiritual progress was slow at the initial stages. Two deaconesses, Maria Vorkörper and Luise Täuber, died of disease in Dàfāng in 1928-1929.⁶³ In 1925, a small group of deaconesses moved from Dàfāng to the greater city of Bìjié in order to begin a second ministry there. They established a chapel around 1926.

The general situation turned unstable in the late 1920s when rival fractions of the nationalist army and robber armies fought for supremacy. When the China Inland Mission urged (British) missionaries in 1927 to withdraw from their mission stations, the deaconesses decided to stay back, but had to go through trials of war. Heavy shooting erupted in Bìjié after the city official evacuated his residence and a robber army filled the vacuum. Scores of soldiers, robbers, and local residents died in these shootings, while the deaconesses set up a military hospital to take care of the wounded.⁶⁴ Many locals sought refuge in the cellar of the chapel. Dramatic scenes unfolded in the hospital when a chief robber and a military officer both lied close to one another. The deaconesses negotiated a ceasefire that rescued the mission station from massacre. The situation was normalized when the robbers withdrew. Shortly thereafter, the deaconesses organized successful campaigns of evangelization among the Nyisu and Ahmao populations. After 1928, they founded five churches with more than 800

⁶⁰ See Welzel (1959: 43-45).

⁶¹ According to Welzel (1959:16) and Zhāng Chéngyáo 张承尧 (1985:28), rumors were spread among the ordinary people. One rumor focused on their green eyes with magic forces that would help them see treasures in the ground and steal them away (“洋婆子绿眼睛，透视地下三尺深，是来我国取宝的”）.

⁶² A missionary from the nearby China Inland Mission station in Qiánxī 黔西 conducted the baptism (Welzel 1959:22).

⁶³ See Welzel (1959:33-37).

⁶⁴ See Welzel (1959:66).

4.4.2 Christianity

converts.⁶⁵ In 1936, the deaconesses were impelled to escape the advancing communist troops who looted the mission station. The local Christians fled to caves in the mountains from where they watched the devastation of the facilities. The deaconesses escaped via Kūnmíng 昆明 into Hong Kong. Since the communist army pushed westwards, they soon left Western Guizhōu, which allowed the deaconesses to return to their mission stations in 1937. They brought along a tent for 150 people⁶⁶ which they had acquired in Hong Kong.

After training a team of local evangelists, the preachers toured the surrounding areas with the tent and spread the gospel to thousands of people.⁶⁷ Missionary work continued throughout the 1940s until 1951 when they had to leave China after the Communists took control of the country. The deaconesses did not keep systematic record of all the neophytes and baptisms. It is estimated that there were a minimum of 2,000 people who were converted during the 36 years of ministry.⁶⁸ The churches they left were then transformed into Three-Self-Churches.

Samuel Pollard translated the New Testament in Ahmao before 1917, but a translation of the scriptures in Neasu (or Nyisu) was not undertaken until recently. Together with the Three-Self Church pastor Liú Huī 刘辉⁶⁹ from Wēiníng 威宁, Hans Grass⁷⁰ of Research Foundation Language and Religion developed a Romanized script and translated, revised, and tested the entire New Testament in Neasu between 1997 and 2017. The manuscript was published in 2018 by Verlag für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft in Nuremberg, with 3,000 copies printed in Hong Kong.

⁶⁵ See Zhāng (1985: 31).

⁶⁶ See Welzel (1959:94).

⁶⁷ See Welzel (1959: 96).

⁶⁸ Margarete Welzel mentions 131 baptisms before 1925 (1959: 24); 282 men and women were baptized in 1935 alone. According to Chinese sources, 800 people converted to the Christian faith shortly after 1928 (Zhāng Chéngyáo 1985:28). Welzel reports that thousands of people *heard* the Gospel during one of the evangelization campaigns that were held in the tent after 1937 (1959:96).

⁶⁹ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

⁷⁰ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

4.5 Language

The Neasu language belongs to the Burmese-Lolo group within the Tibeto-Burman language family, as shown on the map of Burmese-Lolo languages.

4.5.1 Rare properties

Neasu exhibits several rare features in the sound system, morphology, and syntax which we describe in this section. We present the language data in the script used for the New Testament, which is introduced in the below section.

A. Eleven Retroflex Consonants

Neasu uses retroflex consonants for eleven modes of articulation. These consonants contrast with alveolar consonants for each of these modes.

Retroflex	Examples	Alveolar	Examples
ndv [ɳɖ]	ndval ‘drop’	nd [nd]	ndup ‘beat’
ddv [ɳɖ]	ddva ‘destroy’	dd [d]	dda ‘rise’
dv [t]	dvut ‘tell’	d [t]	dul ‘incite’
tv [tʰ]	tvul ‘white’	t [tʰ]	tut ‘arrange’
nr [ɳɖʒ]	nra ‘measure’	nz [ndz]	nza ‘a drop’
rr [ɖʒ]	rrut ‘be willing’	zz [dz]	zzup ‘grain’
zh [tʂ]	zhu ‘feed’	z [ts]	zut ‘good’
ch [tʂʰ]	chul ‘sweet’	c [tsʰ]	cu ‘salt’
nv [ɳ]	nvut ‘affair’	n [n]	nul ‘hear’
r [ʒ]	rat ‘forgive’	ss [z]	ssal ‘go down’
sh [ʂ]	sha ‘Hàn’	s [s]	sal ‘air’

Table 4.4: Eleven retroflex-alveolar minimal pairs in Neasu

B. Determiners

The Neasu determiner system⁷¹ uses three demonstrative pronouns, two definite articles, and one topic marker.

	PROXIMAL	MEDIAL	DISTAL
Demonstratives	tat	nat	ggat
Definite articles	tao		ggaot
Topic marker		nao	

Table 4.5: Demonstratives, articles and topic marking in Neasu

The topic marker and the definite articles developed from the demonstrative pronouns in an ancestor language of Neasu. These three demonstratives merged with the old now obsolete classifier **mo* to form definite articles. The initial consonant [m] of the classifier was lost in a sound change called *aphaeresis*. The merger was completed by the loss of the vowel in the demonstratives (called *apocope*) as well as by lowering the tone (*lenition*).

Demonstrative	Classifier	Aphaeresis	Apocope and Tone Lenition
tʰa ⁵⁵	mo ³³	→ tʰa ⁵⁵ + o ³³	→ tʰɔ ⁵⁵
na ⁵⁵	mo ³³	→ na ³³ + o ³³	→ nɔ ⁵⁵
ga ⁵⁵	mo ³³	→ ga ⁵⁵ + o ³³	→ gɔ ⁵⁵

Table 4.6: Phonological changes of the Neasu determiners

The merged demonstratives were reanalyzed as definite articles, but preserved the deictic meaning of distance (proximal, medial and distal). An overview of the semantic changes is presented below.

⁷¹ The data presented here were published previously in Gerner (2003b, 2012b).

Modern Demonstratives		Old Demonstratives		Modern Definite Articles
hnu cao tat yao person DEM.PROX CL 'this person'	→	*hnu cao tat mo person DEM.PROX CL 'this person'	→	hnu cao tao person ART.PROX 'the person here'
hnu cao nat yao person DEM.MED CL 'that person there'	→	*hnu cao nat mo person DEM.MED CL 'that person there'	→	hnu cao nao person TOP 'Person (Topic)'
hnu cao ggat yao person DEM.DIST CL 'that person far away'	→	*hnu cao ggat mo person DEM.DIST CL 'that person far away'	→	hnu cao ggaot person ART.DIST 'the person far away'

Table 4.7: Grammaticalization of Neasu determiners

The merged demonstratives occur in noun phrases mentioned in discourse for the third time (a cross-linguistic property of definite articles), while the unmerged demonstratives were used in noun phrases mentioned for the second time (a cross-linguistic property of demonstrative). The medial definite article was further reanalyzed as topic marker.

C. Meta-sequential prefix

Neasu uses a meta-sequential prefix (*ao*)⁷² that can be attached to six adverbs and conjunctions to form new conjunctions. The prefixed conjunctions differ syntactically from the unprefixed conjunctions in the complexity of their binding domain (BD). Notably, the binding domain of an adverb or conjunction refers to the number of clauses on which a coherent interpretation⁷³ depends. When the unprefixed forms have a mono-clausal binding domain, their prefixed counterparts have a bi-clausal binding domain. On the other hand, when the unprefixed conjunctions have a bi-clausal binding domain, the prefixed conjunctions depend on larger discourse portions, i.e. on binding domains which comprise of several clauses. The function of these prefixed conjunctions is to stratify the larger discourse.

⁷² This peculiar prefix was first reported at a syntactic conference, see Gerner (2012a).

⁷³ For a definition of *binding domain* in Generative Grammar, see Gerner (2012a).

Adverb (BD: one clause)	Phrasal conjunction (BD: one clause)	Clausal conjunction (BD: two clauses)	Discourse conjunction (BD: several clauses)
<i>jiit</i> 'all'		→ ao jiit 'moreover'	
	<i>nu</i> 'or'	→ ao nu 'or'	
	<i>nyi</i> 'and'	→ ao nyi 'and'	
		<i>set</i> 'unless'	→ ao set 'therefore'
		<i>ze</i> 'then'	→ ao ze 'finally'
		<i>ddet</i> 'but'	→ ao ddet 'however'

Table 4.8: Prefix class of *ao-* in *Neasu*

Grundy (2000: 206) calls the function of a form 'meta-sequential' if it indicates the place of the utterance in the wider discourse. In *now*, *I have done it*, the form *now* marks a new topic within a wider discourse and is a meta-sequential marker. Since prefixation of the *Neasu* form *ao-* exacerbates the complexity of the binding domain, we call it a meta-sequential prefix. Several illustrations are mentioned below.

- (1) a. *jiit* 'all': Xip heat jiit ddeat ddao nap leat.
BD: one clause 3.PL all exit 2.SG go
'They **all** went out towards you.'
- b. **ao jiit** 'moreover': Ngop heat jiit zzu, ao jiit nryp ndaop ggol.
BD: two clauses 1.PL all eat moreover wine drink DP
'We all had a meal; **moreover** drank wine.'
- (2) a. *nu* 'or': Xip heat ggat yi nu lup lea rrao ddeat ddao.
BD: one clause 3.PL DEM.DIST home or city CL be at exit
'They left that house **or** that city.'
- b. **ao nu** 'or': xip keap seat ddut hxit, ao nu eap zheat ddut hxit,
BD: two clauses 3.SG how word say or what word say
xip wo mat se.
3.SG GET NEG know
'He does not know how to put it **or** what to say.'

- (3) a. **set** 'unless': Nap geat heap caop tap zzea ngu lyip si
 BD: two clauses 2.SG go to ax NUM.1 CL borrow come tree
 tveat bao, **set** ngop mot nap wo zzu ddop ye.
 put down unless 1SG to 2.SG GET eat can EXCL
 'Go, take an ax and **unless** you fell the tree, you cannot eat me.'
- b. **ao set** 'therefore': Xip gie mup xiil hop nduet. **Ao set** gie
 BD: several clauses 3.SG OBJ make die SEND think **therefore** OBJ
 xip map bbiit ddeat map hxit.
 3.SG NEG give say NEG can
 'He wanted to kill the frog. **Therefore**, he could not say anything about (his intention of) giving her (to the frog).'
- (4) a. **ze** 'then': na liit gao wop keap **ze** |al chyp rrea
 BD: two clauses name LOC GET arrive **then** |hand stretch livestock
 kiet gat sy.
 on put touch
 'Nali arrived and inspected then the livestock.'
- b. **ao ze** 'finally': (last sentence in story) **Ao ze** qil bbu ssil ggao kaop ngea
 BD: several clauses **finally** tiger leopard all
 wu dvut hxil, si bao ssal lyip ze
 under stand tree collapse descend come then
 yiip bel diil xiil hol.
 whole, all smash die SEND
 'In the end, all the tigers and leopards stood under the tree which collapsed and smashed them.'
- (5) a. **ddet** 'but': Xip neat sul ngea, **ddet** xip sha mba hxit.
 BD: two clauses 3.SG Neasu COP **but** 3.SG Chinese language speak
 'He is Neasu, but he can speak Chinese.'

- b. **ao ddet** 'however': Xip heat geat leat mep met yaop hxaop gie fu
 BD: several clauses 3.PL going to go each REFL sheep OBJ kill
 hop. **Ao ddet** sset mu lep shel gao mat njop.
 SEND however camel LOC NEG pass
 'They went and killed their own sheep (and were thinking
 that camels would pass by). **However**, no camel passed
 by.'

4.5.2 Writing System

Many Chinese minority languages have Romanized writing systems that were commissioned by the Chinese government in the 1950s. However, the Neasu language was excluded from this program, because the more prestigious Nuosu language in Sìchuān was the beneficiary instead. Hans Grass⁷⁴ of RFLR created a Romanized script for the Neasu language between 1997 and 2006, which was used to translate the New Testament. We present a sketch below.

A. Consonants

Neasu exhibits 49 consonant phonemes that are presented below in the Romanized script and in the International Phonetic Alphabet.

⁷⁴ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

Consonants		Point of articulation											
		Labial		Alveolar		Retroflex		Alveolo-palatal		Velar		Glottal	
		IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin
Stops	prenasalized	mb	mb	nd	nd	ɳd	ndv			ng	mg		
	voiced	b	bb	d	dd	ɖ	ddv			g	gg		
	unvoiced	p	b	t	d	ʈ	dv			k	g		
	aspirated	p ^h	p	t ^h	t	ʈ ^h	tv			k ^h	k		
Fricatives	voiced	v	v	z	ss	ʐ	r	ʒ	y	ɣ	w		
	unvoiced	f	f	s	s	ʂ	sh	ɕ	x	x	h	h	hx
Affricates	prenasalized			ndz	nz	ndʑ	nr	ndʒ	nj				
	voiced			dz	zz	dʑ	rr	dʒ	jj				
	unvoiced			ts	z	tʂ	zh	tɕ	j				
	aspirated			ts ^h	c	tʂ ^h	ch	tɕ ^h	q				
Nasals	voiced	m	m	n	n	ɳ	nv	ɳ̹	ny	ŋ	ng		
	unvoiced			ɳ̥	hn					ɳ̥	hng		
Laterals	voiced			l	l			ɭ	ly				
	unvoiced			ɭ̥	hl								

Table 4.9: Neasu consonants

Remarkable features of the consonant system are the four fully contrastive phonation types, prenasalized, voiced, unvoiced, aspirated, and the set of eleven retroflex consonants (pointed out above). Contrastive sets of words are presented below for each phonation type and point of articulation.

mb	bb	b	p
	bbep 'fall'	bet 'hide'	pet 'rotten'
mba 'word'	bbat 'small'	ba ba 'bread'	pap 'side'
mbu 'clothes'	bbu 'toward'	bu 'struggle'	put 'people'
nd	dd	d	t
nde 'upside'	dde 'knock'	del 'fog'	tep 'run'
	dda 'up'	da 'chest'	tap 'one'
ndup 'hit'	ddu 'hole'	dul 'incite'	tut 'design'

ndv	ddv	dv	tv	
ndvi hlaot ‘win’	ddvi ‘tasteless’	gu dvi ‘punish’	tvil ‘change’	
ndval ‘tumble’	ddva ‘destroy’	dva ‘strike’	tvut ‘tell’	
	ddvu yii ‘honey’	dvut ‘say’	tvul ‘white’	
mg	gg	g	k	
mgii ‘fake’	ggiil ‘rebellious’		mii kiil ‘night’	
mgal ‘call’	ggat ‘let’	gal ‘branch’	ka ‘basket’	
mgup ‘heal’	ggup ‘sing’	gup ‘persecute’	kul ‘shout’	
f	v			
fep ‘dry’	vep ‘buy’			
fal ‘rock’	va ‘pig’			
fu ‘kil’	vut ‘sell’			
ss	s	r	sh	
			shi ‘attach’	
ssep ‘pillar’	set ‘know’			
ssal ‘descend’	sal ‘air’	rat ‘forgive’	sha ‘Hàn’	
ssu ‘son’	su ‘book’		shu ‘bitter’	
y	x	w	h	hx
yi ‘also’	xip ‘he’			hxit ‘say’
yiip ‘water’	xiil ‘die’		hiil ‘new’	
yal ‘crime’		wa ‘hen’	shut hal ‘decorate’	
yo ‘itchy’		wop ‘get’	hop ‘bring’	
yaop ‘oneself’		waol bu ‘belly’		hxaop ‘see’
nz	zz	z	c	
nzel ‘worthy’	zzep ‘root’	ze ‘then’	cel ‘oil’	
xue nza ‘blood drop’	nya zza ‘trample’	zap ‘move’	ca ‘finish’	
ap nzup ‘governor’	zzup ‘crops’	zut ‘good’	cu ‘salt’	

nr	rr	zh	ch		
ddvep nri 'rich'	rril 'broken'	zhi 'pull out'	chil 'cool'		
nra 'weigh'	seat rra 'resemble'	zha 'calculate'	cha zzu 'should'		
nrup mop 'pearl'	rrut 'be willing'	zhu 'feed'	chul 'sweet'		
nj	jj	j	q		
	ni jji 'law'	ji 'form'	qil 'hand over'		
njiip 'skin'	jjiiip 'melt'	jiit 'all'	qiil 'foot'		
	ao jjal 'clean'		rru qa 'curse'		
njo 'love'	jjo 'listen'	jol mu 'quickly'	qo 'sound'		
m	n	nv	ny	ng	
mel 'name'	ne 'lack'	nvit ga 'lose'	nyi 'and'		
map 'not'	na 'see'			nga 'bird'	
mu 'horse'	nul 'listen'	nvut 'matter'		ngu 'five'	
n	hn	ng	hng		
na 'see'		nga 'bird'			
nul 'hear'	hnu 'head'	ngu 'five'	hngul 'must'		
n	l	hn	hl	ny	ly
	li 'drop'			nyi 'and'	lyi 'come'
	lii lii 'slowly'		hliil 'boat'		lyii 'heavy'
ne 'lack'	let 'by'		hlelep 'slaughter'		
na 'see'	lal 'hand'		hlal 'youth'		
nul 'hear'	lup 'city'	hnu 'head'	hlul 'tongue'		

B. Vowels

Neasu exhibits ten simple vowels (two front vowels, two central vowels, and four back vowels) along with one diphthongue. They are represented in the Neasu script and IPA below.

Vowels	Front				Central				Back			
	Unrounded		Rounded		Unrounded		Rounded		Unrounded		Rounded	
	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin
Close	i	ii	y	ue	ɨ	y					u	u
Close-released	ɪ	i										
Close-mid	e	e							ɤ	ea	o	o
Open-mid											ɔ	ao
Open							a	a				
Diphtongue	ɛ	ie										

Table 4.10: Neasu vowels

With the exception of Chinese loanwords, the Neasu syllable codas only consist of vowels, a syllable structure that is similar in all Loloish languages. Below we contrast front, central, and back vowels in minimal pairs and quintuples.

i	ii	ie	e	ue
bil 'scoop out'	biil 'can'	biel 'very'	bet 'hide'	
di 'lamp'	diip 'real'	diel 'clothe'	del 'to plant'	due 'bump into'
	kii 'bite'	kie 'remember'		
qil 'hand over'	qiil 'foot'	tap qiep 'little bit'		quep 'throat'
yi 'also'	yiip 'water'		ye 'big'	yuep 'read'
li 'drop'	lii lii 'slow'		let (Interrogative)	luep 'beg'
y	a			
zzyp 'leave over'	nya zza 'trample'			
zyl 'send'	za 'inside'			
cy 'medicine'	ca 'finish'			
rryl 'each other'	kup rra 'things'			
zhy 'mingle'	zha 'calculate'			
chyp 'stretch'	cha 'should'			
sy 'holy'				
shyt 'taste'	sha 'Hàn'			

ea	u	o	ao
	bu (classifier)	bol 'pile up'	bao 'again'
dea (dry measure)	eat du 'bury'	yiip dot 'rise up'	mii daol 'fire'
ggeap 'unfamiliar'	ggu 'to plant'		ggao 'write'
ceap 'ten'	cu 'salt'	cop 'hot'	caop 'person'
chea 'cheat'	chup 'relatives'	chop 'alarm'	chaot 'unite'
ngea (copula)	ngu 'five'	ngop 'I' (1.SG)	ngao 'fish'
sea 'three'	su 'book'	sop 'happy'	i saop 'just now'
sheal 'seize'	shul 'look for'	shop 'gather'	shaol 'hate'
yeap 'bless'		yo 'itchy'	yaop 'oneself'

C. Tones

There are four fully contrastive tonemes, [55], [33], [21] and [13] in the Neasu language. Minimal triples and quadruples are depicted below.

Tones	Tone Syllable	-(no letter) [33]	-t [55]	-p [21]	-l [13]
	bbi	bbii 'worm'	bbiit 'give'	bbiip 'owe'	
	tvu	tvu 'leaf'	tvut 'side'	tvup 'handle'	tvul 'white'
	gea	gea 'scales'	geat 'going to'	geap 'harvest'	geal 'dare'
	ku	ku 'willing'	kut 'grey'		kul 'shout'
	chu	chu 'car'	chut 'rotten'	chup 'relatives'	chul 'sweet'
	qii	qii 'dog'	qiit 'wife'		qiil 'foot'
	ma		mat 'dream'	map 'not'	mal 'soldier'
	hngu	hngu 'soul'	hngut 'seed'	hngup 'month'	hngul 'must'
	hxi		hxit 'say'	hxip 'house'	hxil 'eight'
	lao	lao 'stone'		laop 'light'	laol 'hinder'

Table 4.11: Neasu tones

D. Traditional Writing System

It is noteworthy that the Romanized script introduced above is only used in the New Testament of 2018 and did not form part of the official literacy campaign in

the 1950s. The Neasu Shamans possess a traditional script in which they transmitted religious and secretive texts over centuries.

Sample page of phonemic index of grapheme dictionary⁷⁵

tɕɪ	94	dʒu	103	tɕɪ	114	ɲdzɔ		ʒi	130
tɕe	94	dʒz	103	tɕe	115	ɲdzɪ	124	ʒɣ	131
tɕa	95	ɲdz		tɕa	115	ɲdzɣ	124	ʒɪ	132
tɕo	95	ɲdzɪ	104	tɕo	116	ɲdzɪ	124	ʒa	132
tɕu	95	ɲdze	104	tɕu	116	ɲdzɔ	124	ʒo	133
tɕu	96	ɲdzɔ	104	tɕu	117	ɲdzɔ	125	ʒu	133
tɕu	96	ɲdzɔ	105	tɕ'		ɲdzɔ	125	ʒu	134
tɕz	97	ɲdzɔ	105	tɕ'i	117	ɲdzɔ	125	K	
tɕ'		ɲdzɔ	105	tɕ'ɣ	118	ɲdzɔ	126	Kɪ	134
tɕ'i	97	ɲdzɔ	106	tɕ'ye	118	ɲ		ke	135
tɕ'e	97	ɲdzɔ	107	tɕ'i	119	ɲi	126	ka	135
tɕ'a	98	ɕ		tɕ'a	119	ɲɣ	126	ko	136
tɕ'o	98	ɕɪ	107	tɕ'o	119	ɲɪ	127	ku	136
tɕ'u	99	ɕe	108	tɕ'u	120	ɲa	128	ku	137
tɕ'u	99	ɕa	108	tɕ'u	120	ɲo	128	ku	138
tɕ'u	100	ɕo	109	tɕ'u	121	ɲu	128	kuɛ	138
tɕ'z	100	ɕu	109	dz		ɲu	128	k'	
dz		ɕu	110	dzɪ	121	ɕ		k'ɪ	139
dzɪ	101	ɕu	111	dzɣ	122	ɕi	129	k'e	139
dze	101	ɕz	111	dzɪ	122	ɕɣ	129	k'a	140
dza	102	tɕ		dza	122	ɕɪ	130	k'o	140
dzo	102	tɕi	112	dzo	123	ɕe	130	k'u	141
dzu	102	tɕɣ	113	dzu	123	ɕu	130	k'u	141
dzu	102	tɕ'ye	114	dzu	123	ʒ		k'u	142

⁷⁵ See Guizhōu Nationalities Press 贵州民族出版社 (1991:3).

However, this script is not promoted for the purpose of mass literacy either, although the provincial government did sponsor a translation center⁷⁶ of manuscripts of Yí Shamans in Bijié.

Sample page of character index of grapheme dictionary⁷⁷

世	75	生	73	世	110	星	70	与	142
山	134	生	78	世	37	星	91	与	62
山	26	生	95	世	161	星	127	与	89
山	28	生	130	世	117	星	129	与	20
山	35	生	121	世	121	星	110	与	4
山	35	生	123	世	50	星	153	与	24
山	47	生	127	世	132	星	27	与	24
山	77	生	40	世	137	星	76	与	110
山	146	生	128	世	146	星	148	与	154
山	18	生	150	世	158	星	116	与	156
山	99	生	51	世	164	星	133	与	21
山	47	生	73	世	37	星		与	82
山	128	五画		世	16	星		与	135
山	128	生	18	世	63	星		与	145
山	149	生	56	世	117	星		与	
四画		生	24	世	165	星		与	
世	22	生	29	六画以上		星		与	
世	49	生	38	世	22	星		与	
世	32	生	74	世	38	星		与	
世	29	生	76	世	47	星		与	
世	36	生	94	世	121	星		与	
世	40	生	110	世	123	星		与	
世	46	生	111	世	159	星		与	
世	63	生	116	世	159	星		与	

⁷⁶ Guizhōu Bijié Yí Translation Committee 贵州毕节地区彝文翻译组。

⁷⁷ See Guizhōu Nationalities Press 贵州民族出版社 (1991:11)。

Since the traditional script was never standardized, the set of characters in circulation by Neasu Shamans is open with over one thousand items. The Bijie translation center has compiled a character dictionary⁷⁸ from the available manuscripts, in which nearly 1908 handwritten graphemes have been catalogued and their meanings translated.

Sample page of dictionary of grapheme dictionary⁷⁹

𠂇 mu ① m ② mu ③ ④ 麻: [𠂇𠂇] (𠂇𠂇): 芒麻。 𠂈 mu ① mo ④ mu ② mu ③ [𠂈𠂈], 木姜 (植物名)。 𠂉 mu ① ② ③ mo ④ (球形物体): 𠂉𠂉, 乳房。 [𠂉𠂉], 足球。[𠂉𠂉] 𠂉𠂉, 地球。 异: [𠂉𠂉𠂉𠂉] 𠂊 mu ① ② ③ mo ④ [𠂊𠂊], 石头。 异: [𠂊𠂊𠂊𠂊𠂊𠂊𠂊𠂊] 𠂊𠂊𠂊𠂊𠂊] 𠂋 mu ① ② ③ mo ④ (果实): 𠂋𠂋, 粮食。𠂋𠂋, 果子。 mu 𠂌 mu ① ② ④ m ③ 嫂: 𠂌𠂌, 嫂嫂。	𠂍 mu ① mu ④ mu ② ③ [𠂍𠂍] 亦作: [𠂍𠂍] 什么。 异: [𠂍𠂍𠂍𠂍𠂍𠂍𠂍] 𠂎 mu ① ④ m ② [𠂎𠂎], 大城。𠂎𠂎 𠂎𠂎, 点措落姆, 古城名。 指今云南大理城。 异: [𠂎𠂎𠂎𠂎𠂎𠂎] 𠂏 mu ① ③ ④ m ② 马: 𠂏𠂏, 白马。 异: [𠂏𠂏𠂏𠂏𠂏𠂏] 𠂐 mu ① ④ mo ③ [𠂐𠂐], 祭牲。 𠂑 mu ① ③ ④ mo ② 吹: 𠂑𠂑𠂑𠂑, 横吹笛子。 𠂑𠂑𠂑, 吹火。 𠂒 mu ① ④ m ② mu ③ [𠂒𠂒], 大哥。 𠂓 mu ① mu ④ m ② mu ③
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⁷⁸ Guizhōu Nationalities Press 贵州民族出版社 (1991)。《简明彝汉字典 (贵州本)》[Concise Yi-Hàn Character Dictionary (Guizhōu Edition)]。Guiyang 贵阳: 贵州民族出版社 [Guizhōu Nationalities Press]。

⁷⁹ See Guizhōu Nationalities Press 贵州民族出版社 (1991:24)。

The syllabic and resembles the official script of the Nuosu people in Sìchuān (see section 5.5.3.D), albeit with one notable difference: the characters are rotated 90 degrees counterclockwise. The dictionary also contains a phonemic index and a character index.

Chapter 5

Ethno-religious Profile of the Nuosu People

5.1 Introduction

The information presented in this section originates partly from (Gerner 2013; 2015). The Nuosu in Liángshān 凉山 prefecture of Sìchūān province constitute the largest homogenous group of the Yí (彝) nationality with about 2.5 Million members. The Nuosu are close relatives of the Neasu in Guìzhōu (chapter 4), but their speeches are unintelligible. No grouping uses Yí as a self-name. Perhaps 15% of the Yí population address themselves as Lolo or Lalo. The remaining tribes employ heterogenous names, such as Nuosu, Nisu, Nasu, Ni, Azhe, Kopho, Mutsi, Phula, Hlehle and so forth.

Great unanimity prevails among ethnographic writers that the genesis of the Yí groupings trace back more than 2000 years to an ancient group called Ni people. Early Chinese records referred to Southwestern peoples as *Wūmán* 乌蛮 (Black Barbarians) and *Báimán* 白蛮 (White Barbarians). Notably, these names may point to the basic color labels that apply to virtually every minority in Southwest China, including other groups such as the Miáo, Tai, Lahu, Lisu, and not only the Yí. After the 12th century, Chinese sources gradually employed the name *Lúo* 猺 containing the pejorative animal radical. The name subsequently evolved into its reduplicated form *Lolo*. This name had been the designation used by Chinese and Westerners for several centuries until 1949 when, it was substituted by the name Yí 彝 with the arrival of the People's Republic of China. In the language classification literature, *Lolo* survived within the group designation *Loloish languages*.

5.2 History

The ancestors of the Nuosu have lived in the Liángshān 凉山 area since at least the Sòng dynasty (960-1279). The Nuosu caste society surfaced after the Mongols extended their subsidiary ruling system based on indigenous chieftains (*tǔsī*) all across China in the 13th century.

The emergence of the caste system directly pertains to the installment of indigenous chieftains by the imperial administration. The *nzyimo* constituted a relatively small group of indigenous landowners who were chosen by the central government from several spots in Liángshān. While the *nuoho* caste constitutes a much larger class of ethnic aristocrats, it is not acknowledged by the central government. Further, the *quho* caste consists of ordinary people.

The Red Army passed on its Long March through the Liángshān area in April 1935; the relatively smooth traversal enabled the Nuosu to gain credit with the Central Government after the People's Republic was founded in 1949. In the aftermath, Liángshān was established as Yí autonomous prefecture and Xīchāng was announced as its capital. The caste society was also abolished. In 1957-59, at the time of the Great Leap Forward, a rebellion of disillusioned Yí leaders broke out and was subsequently defeated.

During the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976, ethnic culture was systematically suppressed, something that happened all over China, before experiencing revival in the 1980s. In 1978, the Government standardized and issued an official Nuosu syllabary of 1119 characters in which bilingual Nuosu-Hàn education was sponsored. Against the backdrop of Maó Zédōng's 毛泽东 great investigation into Chinese minority peoples in the 1950s, Nuosu was one of the few groups whose writing system was officially recognized.

5.3 Society

5.3.1 Castes and Clans

Nuosu society is organized along two coordinates: the clan and caste orders. Nuosu society is a clan order of patrilineal lineage (Harrell 2001).

5.3.2 Social Offices

Every Nuosu belongs to one clan associated with one caste. Each caste consists of several clans. The number of clans inhabiting a given area is limited and known to the residents of that specific region. Solidarity among clan members is a social imperative. Nuosu clans are exogamous and marriage between clans serves the purpose of establishing kinship networks. Male and female membership to a clan is inherited from the father, and through marriage, respectively.

Nuosu clans are associated with one of three castes: *nzyomo*, *nuoho* or *quho*. The *nzyomo* caste consists of less than one percent of the Liángshān population; they are the descendants of former aristocrats who were recognized by the imperial government. Similarly, the *nuoho* caste consists of the descendants of former aristocrats who were not recognized by the imperial government. Meanwhile the *quho* caste comprises of independent farmers. The clans within a caste are exogamous but each caste is strictly endogamous. A *nzyomo* marries a *nzyomo*, a *nuoho* marries a *nuoho* and a *quho* marries a *quho*. Following the takeover in 1949, economic facets of the caste system were abolished but knowledge of the castes survives until today.

Besides these three strata, there is a fourth caste, the *ga xy* houseslaves, which are not associated with any clan. They are the descendants of people who were captured as slaves from the Hàn area, or of aliens that ventured into Nuosu territory without adequate local protection. Through this four-way caste system, the Nuosu have attained a prominent position among ethnic groups in China. As a matter of fact, communist writers before and after the Cultural Revolution used Nuosu society as an illustration for the Marxist theory of social evolution in which societies pass from the primitive to the feudal stage.

5.3.2 Social Offices

In addition to clans and casts, the Nuosu society acknowledges several social offices that are not connected to the descent of the holder: *surgga* 'wealthy person', *ndeggu* 'mediator', *ssakuo* 'warrior', *gemo* 'craftman', *bimo* 'priest', and *sunyi* 'shaman' (Harrell 2001). The *surgga* denotes an individual whose material possessions in land, livestock, and slaves accord him a recognized status as an entrepreneur. Meanwhile the *ngeddu* is a person with a special track record in mediating social conflicts. In traditional society, the *ssakuo* signifies a warrior who

has proven as a victorious hero on the battlefield. The *gemo* on the other hand, is a craftsman, either a blacksmith, or a gold or silversmith.

5.3.3 Torch Festival

Across the Liángshān area, the Nuosu celebrate the Torch Festival in the month of July. According to a mythical legend, the Yí ancestors combated pests sent by the god *Entiguzi* in order to destroy their crops. By holding up torches, they were able to defeat the pests and the god who sent them. Every year in the Month of the Dog and on the day chosen by the *bimo*, torches are lit to commemorate the victory.

5.4 Religion

5.4.1 Traditional Religion

The Nuosu religion is a folk religion based on polytheistic and animist beliefs. The Nuosu recognize the name of several gods and use the generic term *si* or *si sse* for unknown deities.

The term *Momu Apo* 'Father of Heaven' designates the creator of the universe. *Zhege'alu* is another powerful god who came into existence after the Great Flood and eventually went out of existence before the arrival of the present time. Some of the gods are evil, similar to evil spirits that move about. In addition to gods, the Nuosu both venerate and fear the spirits of their ancestors. This is because ancestors are believed to have three spirits that ultimately return to their separate homes after death; the individual spirit, the family spirit, and the clan spirit. Ancestral spirits who are unable to do so are believed to come back and harass the living people. In this regard, the role of the *bimo*, the Nuosu priest, is to read ritual texts aloud at funerals that guide the deceased soul safely back to the ancestral place in the after-world.

Ancestor worship is practiced on special occasions with offerings of wine, meat, pigs' heads, and eggs, among others. Witchcraft and black magic, mainly in the form of incantations, are an integral element of religious practices. They manifest their impact by affecting both physical objects and people, curing illnesses, casting out demons, fortune telling, divining using the innards of sheep, pigs, chicken, and so forth.

5.4.2 Disciples' Congregation 门徒会

The *bimo* 'priest' and *sunyi* 'shaman' are ministers of the Nuosu folk religion. The *bimo* performs all kind of rituals, especially death rituals, through the reading or chanting of texts. *Bimo* are male, are almost always *quho*, and are considered to be the guardians of the Nuosu traditional script. The office of *bimo* is acquired through a long process of apprenticeship.

Meanwhile the *sunyi* is a shaman whose experience is not acquired through ritual texts, but via interaction with the spiritual world. The office of *sunyi* is not contingent upon caste, clan or gender. The *sunyi* enters trance and becomes possessed by spirits when they are called upon to perform rituals such as exorcising or curing diseases.

5.4.2 Disciples' Congregation 门徒会

The Disciples' Congregation 门徒会¹ is an eschatological movement that was established in 1989. Its founder Jì Sānbǎo 季三宝 (1939-1997) was a native of Xī'ān 西安² in Shaanxi province. In the 1980s, he approached a Three-Self Church when suffering from personal illness. Upon getting cured, he started to tour villages with a mission of healing others. He and his wife Xǔ Míngcháo 许明潮 adopted religious names, Sānshú 三赎³ and Xǔshú 许赎.⁴ Sānshú claimed to be the reincarnation of Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity. Meanwhile Xǔshú was declared to be the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. Sānshú had predicted that the world would come to an end in 2000, before he was killed in a car accident in 1997. He was succeeded by new leaders, Yù Shìqiáng 蔚世强 (1997-2001) and Chén Shìróng 陈世荣 (2001-today).

Sānshú surrounded himself with 12 disciples who oversaw a network of thousands of secretive assemblies. By 1995, there had been reportedly more

¹ Another name is 'Religion of the Christ of Three Redemptions' (三赎基督教) .

² The city name Xī'ān 西安 is homophonous to the term Xī'ān 锡安, used in the Chinese Union Version to transliterate Zion in Jerusalem (see 2 Sam 5:7).

³ Sānshú 三赎 means 'Three Redemptions'. Sānshú alone has the power of redeeming sins passed on to him from members of the movement. The significance of the number 'three' in 'three redemptions' remains unknown, but might refer to the leader's secular name.

⁴ Xǔshú 许赎 means 'promise and redemption'.

than 700,000 adepts in 12 provinces of the P.R. of China, mainly in rural areas. After 1994, the Disciples' Congregation 门徒会 made adherents among the Nuosu in Liángshān. According to one account, there were about 100,000 Nuosu followers by the year 2000, 5% of the Nuosu population. The number decreased again in the following years as the Nuosu took cognizance of the fact that this movement was not mainstream Christianity. As a result, Nuosu leaders of important disciples' congregations turned to protestant-style churches that developed in Liángshān after 2000. They then drew thousands of their supervised Nuosu away from the disciples' movement.

The publication of the New Testament in 2005 contributed further to its precipitous decline. An anonymous analyst attributes the successful spread of the Disciples' movement among the Nuosu to their sense of insecurity in the age of modernity on the one hand, and to the definite beliefs in sin, judgment, salvation, hell, and heaven⁵ articulated by the Disciples' Congregation on the other hand.

5.4.3 Christianity

The first European travelling through the Liángshān area was the Venetian traveler Marco Polo 马可·波罗 (1254-1324). During his trip to China (1271-1295), he was welcomed by Kublai Khan, the first emperor of the Yuán Dynasty 元朝 (1271-1368). Possibly employed as an imperial official, he travelled several times to the southern provinces.

In his book *Description of the World*,⁶ written in Latin after his return to Venice in 1295, Marco Polo describes one journey from Chéngdū 成都 (Sichuān) to Yúnnán where he passed through Liángshān, possibly close to the year 1280. He does not directly mention the ancestors of the Nuosu.

⁵ The following doctrines are derived from interviews conducted by an anonymous analyst with leaders of the Disciples' Congregation. *Sin* refers to any disobedience to Sānshú or his appointed leaders, in particular any breach to the prohibition of eating more than a quarter pound of rice per day. Every follower whose sins are forgiven by Sānshú, who respects the regulations of the Disciples' Congregation, and who has bought the symbolic key of Heaven, *is saved*. The salvation of ordinary people is determined on a day of *judgment*. *Hell* is the place where a person burns in sulfur for eternity. *Heaven* is the sphere where the saved souls will be dressed in white clothes, partake of the bread of life, live in praise and worship, and serve Sānshú as well as his leaders.

⁶ See <http://archive.org/details/descriptionofwor01polo>.

5.4.3 Christianity

In the 1860s, François Louis Crabouillet (1837-1904), Catholic missionary of the *Missions Étrangères de Paris*, was appointed to Liángshān. He published an ethnographic description of the Nuosu in 1872 and evangelized the Nuosu for almost 30 years. Vicomte D'Ollone, a major in the French army, reported in his travels to Southwest China (1906-1909) that there were several Catholic mission posts in Liángshān, in Huǐlǐ 会理, Déchāng 德昌 and Xīchāng 西昌. The duration of the existence of these Catholic mission stations remains unknown.

Noted English diplomat Edward Colborne Baber (1843-1890) travelled to Liángshān in 1878. George Nicoll 李格尔 and Charles Leaman 李满 of the China Inland Mission 内地会 also made explorative trips from Chóngqīng 重庆 into the Liángshān area in 1878. Alexander Hosie 谢立山, another diplomat stationed with the British consular service in Chóngqīng 重庆, made three expeditions through the area, in 1882, 1883 and 1884, respectively.

Visitors to the Liángshān area had to arrange for guarantors 保头, which was the usual procedure for outsiders to visit the area. In 1909, the British Donald Burk was killed by the Nuosu and those with him that were sold as slaves, since he was not accompanied by a local guarantor. Samuel Pollard 柏格理 (1864-1915), a missionary to the Ahmao people in Western Guǐzhōu, explored the Liángshān area during a period of six weeks in 1903. He was the first European to cross into Liángshān over the Golden Sand River 金沙河.

In the 1940s, several protestant mission societies commenced their work in Liángshān. The *Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society*⁷ appointed Ralph Covell 柯饶富 (1923-2013) and Lee Lovegren 任福根 to Xīchāng 西昌 in Liángshān in 1947/1948 with the aim to translate the Bible. They joined two English Baptist missionaries as well as five co-workers of the *China Inland Mission* who were already on the site. Both Covell and Lovegren learnt Nuosu with local teachers and established a missionary outpost at Lúgū Lake 泸沽湖. During 1949 and 1950, the general situation for foreigners deteriorated and missionary workers started to get harassed. Lovegren was imprisoned on account of spy charges in February 1951, and a mother of four children in their

⁷ The *Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society* (CBFMS) was formed in Chicago, Illinois, in 1943. It was renamed as *Conservative Baptist International* in 1994, and then *World Venture* in 2005.

group passed away in June 1951. Covell was deported to Hong Kong where he arrived in July 1951.

From 1951 to 1966, Covell settled in Táiwān where he translated the New Testament and portions of the Old Testament into the Seediq language.⁸ From 1966 to 1990, Covell served as the professor of missiology at the Conservative Baptist Seminary in Denver, Colorado.

No significant effort could be undertaken to evangelize the Nuosu between 1951 and 1990. During the 1990s, a missionary of *New Tribes Mission* privately translated the four Gospels into Nuosu. However, he had to depart from Liángshān without publishing his work. From 1996 to 2005, members of RFLR translated the New Testament into Nuosu. The New Testament was completed in 2005 by Hans Grass⁹ of Research Foundation Language and Religion and several Nuosu speakers including Munyo Vuhur¹⁰. The first edition was published in 2005 by Verlag für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft in Nuremberg, Germany, and was followed by a revised version in 2009.

5.5 Language

5.5.1 General information

The data presented in this section originates from Gerner (2013). Nuosu belongs to the Burmese-Lolo group within the Tibeto-Burman language family, as illustrated on the following map of Burmese-Lolo languages.

⁸ The Seediq 赛德克 language is a Northern Formosan (Austronesian) language spoken by 20,000 people in Nántóu 南投 and Huālián 花蓮 counties of Táiwān.

⁹ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

¹⁰ The name is a pseudonym to protect the identity of the translator.

5.5.1 General information



Liángshān Nuosu has five dialects: *Shynra*, *Suondi*, *Adur*, *Yynuo*, and *Lindimu*. *Shynra* has the highest number of speakers with more than one million speakers and is the standard dialect sponsored by the Government.

<i>County/municipality</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Shynra</i>	<i>Suondi</i>	<i>Adur</i>	<i>Yynuo</i>	<i>Lindimu</i>
Xīchāng 西昌	818,033	71,400	10,200	---	---	---
Mùlǐ 木里藏族自治县	195,938	51,000	---	---	---	---
Yányuán 盐源县	469,674	212,500	---	---	---	---
Déchāng 德昌县	286,574	13,600	51,000	---	---	---
Huǐlǐ 会理县	676,360	---	105,400	---	---	---
Huìdōng 会东县	566,111	---	79,900	---	---	---
Níngnán 宁南县	260,844	---	54,400	---	---	---
Pǔgē 普格县	221,630	---	68,000	93,500	---	---
Bùtuō 布拖县	220,991	---	---	205,700	---	---
Jīnyáng 金阳县	214,332	---	83,300	71,400	11,900	---
Zhāojié 昭觉县	349,996	117,300	96,900	30,600	86,700	---
Xǐdé 喜德县	207,478	173,400	---	---	---	---
Mǐǎnníng 冕宁县	474,624	142,800	---	---	---	---
Yuèxī 越西县	363,674	239,700	---	---	5,100	---
Gānlùò 甘洛县	266,847	15,300	---	---	86,700	69,700
Měigū 美姑县	261,215	---	---	---	251,600	---
Léibō 雷波县	361,953	---	---	40,800	119,000	---
<i>Total for Liángshān:</i>	6,216,281	1,037,000	549,100	442,000	561,000	69,700

Table 5.1: The distribution of the five Nuosu dialects

5.5.2 Rare properties

Nuosu exhibits several rare features in its grammar, in its morphology, its syntax and its pragmatic system.

A. Sound Symbolic Size Prefixes

A sound symbolism is associated with Nuosu. For a closed set of gradual antonym pairs, prefixing *i-* to an adjectival root yields the diminutive member, whereas prefixing *a-* to the same root gives the augmentative member of that pair.

Table 5.2: Diminutive and augmentative prefixes in Nuosu

Nuosu exhibits an African-style logophor with two suppletive forms. These two logophors monitor the source whose speech is reported.

- Definite articles are derived from classifiers with the nominalizer *-su*.

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- d. ʃiː ɛ ɲiː ʃiː
bbu shy jix-su
snake ART=CL-DET
'the snake'

D. Exhaustion particles

The Nuosu predicate is marked by aspectual verb suffixes. Bare verbs are both allowed and frequent. In this context, one Nuosu aspect suffix is cross-linguistically exceptional. The *exhaustion* particle targets three kinds of structure: the clause-initial NP upon which it acts as a universal quantifier ('all'), the VP that it modifies as completive marker ('completely'), and the AP upon which it contributes the meaning of superlative ('most').

- (3) a. 𐌂𐌆𐌇𐌃𐌅𐌁𐌉𐌋𐌊𐌏𐌔𐌕𐌖𐌗𐌘𐌙𐌚。
co hxit yuop su jjy gex tep yy hxep sat.
people NUM.8 ART=CL-DET together book see, read EXH
'The eight people are all reading books.'
- b. 𐌂𐌆𐌇𐌃𐌅𐌁𐌉𐌋𐌊𐌏𐌔𐌕𐌖𐌗𐌘𐌙𐌚𐌛𐌜𐌝𐌞𐌟𐌠𐌡𐌢𐌣𐌤𐌥𐌦𐌧𐌨𐌩𐌪𐌫𐌬𐌭𐌮𐌯𐌰𐌱𐌲𐌳𐌴𐌵𐌶𐌷𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌻𐌼𐌽𐌾𐌿𐍀𐍁𐍂𐍃𐍄𐍅𐍆𐍇𐍈𐍉𐍊𐍋𐍌𐍍𐍎𐍏𐍐𐍑𐍒𐍓𐍔𐍕𐍖𐍗𐍘𐍙𐍚𐍛𐍜𐍝𐍞𐍟𐍠𐍡𐍢𐍣𐍤𐍥𐍦𐍧𐍨𐍩𐍪𐍫𐍬𐍭𐍮𐍯𐍰𐍱𐍲𐍳𐍴𐍵𐍶𐍷𐍸𐍹𐍺𐍻𐍼𐍽𐍾𐍿𐎀𐎁𐎂𐎃𐎄𐎅𐎆𐎇𐎈𐎉𐎊𐎋𐎌𐎍𐎎𐎏𐎐𐎑𐎒𐎓𐎔𐎕𐎖𐎗𐎘𐎙𐎚𐎛𐎜𐎝𐎞𐎟𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩𐎪𐎫𐎬𐎭𐎮𐎯𐎰𐎱𐎲𐎳𐎴𐎵𐎶𐎷𐎸𐎹𐎺𐎻𐎼𐎽𐎾𐎿𐏀𐏁𐏂𐏃𐏄𐏅𐏆𐏇𐏈𐏉𐏊𐏋𐏌𐏍𐏎𐏏𐏐𐏑𐏒𐏓𐏔𐏕𐏖𐏗𐏘𐏙𐏚𐏛𐏜𐏝𐏞𐏟𐏠𐏡𐏢𐏣𐏤𐏥𐏦𐏧𐏨𐏩𐏪𐏫𐏬𐏭𐏮𐏯𐏰𐏱𐏲𐏳𐏴𐏵𐏶𐏷𐏸𐏹𐏺𐏻𐏼𐏽𐏾𐏿𐐀𐐁𐐂𐐃𐐄𐐅𐐆𐐇𐐈𐐉𐐊𐐋𐐌𐐍𐐎𐐏𐐐𐐑𐐒𐐓𐐔𐐕𐐖𐐗𐐘𐐙𐐚𐐛𐐜𐐝𐐞𐐟𐐠𐐡𐐢𐐣𐐤𐐥𐐦𐐧𐐨𐐩𐐪𐐫𐐬𐐭𐐮𐐯𐐰𐐱𐐲𐐳𐐴𐐵𐐶𐐷𐐸𐐹𐐺𐐻𐐼𐐽𐐾𐐿𐑀𐑁𐑂𐑃𐑄𐑅𐑆𐑇𐑈𐑉𐑊𐑋𐑌𐑍𐑎𐑏𐑐𐑑𐑒𐑓𐑔𐑕𐑖𐑗𐑘𐑙𐑚𐑛𐑜𐑝𐑞𐑟𐑠𐑡𐑢𐑣𐑤𐑥𐑦𐑧𐑨𐑩𐑪𐑫𐑬𐑭𐑮𐑯𐑰𐑱𐑲𐑳𐑴𐑵𐑶𐑷𐑸𐑹𐑺𐑻𐑼𐑽𐑾𐑿𐒀𐒁𐒂𐒃𐒄𐒅𐒆𐒇𐒈𐒉𐒊𐒋𐒌𐒍𐒎𐒏𐒐𐒑𐒒𐒓𐒔𐒕𐒖𐒗𐒘𐒙𐒚𐒛𐒜𐒝𐒞𐒟𐒠𐒡𐒢𐒣𐒤𐒥𐒦𐒧𐒨𐒩𐒪𐒫𐒬𐒭𐒮𐒯𐒰𐒱𐒲𐒳𐒴𐒵𐒶𐒷𐒸𐒹𐒺𐒻𐒼𐒽𐒾𐒿𐓀𐓁𐓂𐓃𐓄𐓅𐓆𐓇𐓈𐓉𐓊𐓋𐓌𐓍𐓎𐓏𐓐𐓑𐓒𐓓𐓔𐓕𐓖𐓗𐓘𐓙𐓚𐓛𐓜𐓝𐓞𐓟𐓠𐓡𐓢𐓣𐓤𐓥𐓦𐓧𐓨𐓩𐓪𐓫𐓬𐓭𐓮𐓯𐓰𐓱𐓲𐓳𐓴𐓵𐓶𐓷𐓸𐓹𐓺𐓻𐓼𐓽𐓾𐓿𐔀𐔁𐔂𐔃𐔄𐔅𐔆𐔇𐔈𐔉𐔊𐔋𐔌𐔍𐔎𐔏𐔐𐔑𐔒𐔓𐔔𐔕𐔖𐔗𐔘𐔙𐔚𐔛𐔜𐔝𐔞𐔟𐔠𐔡𐔢𐔣𐔤𐔥𐔦𐔧𐔨𐔩𐔪𐔫𐔬𐔭𐔮𐔯𐔰𐔱𐔲𐔳𐔴𐔵𐔶𐔷𐔸𐔹𐔺𐔻𐔼𐔽𐔾𐔿𐕀𐕁𐕂𐕃𐕄𐕅𐕆𐕇𐕈𐕉𐕊𐕋𐕌𐕍𐕎𐕏𐕐𐕑𐕒𐕓𐕔𐕕𐕖𐕗𐕘𐕙𐕚𐕛𐕜𐕝𐕞𐕟𐕠𐕡𐕢𐕣𐕤𐕥𐕦𐕧𐕨𐕩𐕪𐕫𐕬𐕭𐕮𐕯𐕰𐕱𐕲𐕳𐕴𐕵𐕶𐕷𐕸𐕹𐕺𐕻𐕼𐕽𐕾𐕿𐖀𐖁𐖂𐖃𐖄𐖅𐖆𐖇𐖈𐖉𐖊𐖋𐖌𐖍𐖎𐖏𐖐𐖑𐖒𐖓𐖔𐖕𐖖𐖗𐖘𐖙𐖚𐖛𐖜𐖝𐖞𐖟𐖠𐖡𐖢𐖣𐖤𐖥𐖦𐖧𐖨𐖩𐖪𐖫𐖬𐖭𐖮𐖯𐖰𐖱𐖲𐖳𐖴𐖵𐖶𐖷𐖸𐖹𐖺𐖻𐖼𐖽𐖾𐖿𐗀𐗁𐗂𐗃𐗄𐗅𐗆𐗇𐗈𐗉𐗊𐗋𐗌𐗍𐗎𐗏𐗐𐗑𐗒𐗓𐗔𐗕𐗖𐗗𐗘𐗙𐗚𐗛𐗜𐗝𐗞𐗟𐗠𐗡𐗢𐗣𐗤𐗥𐗦𐗧𐗨𐗩𐗪𐗫𐗬𐗭𐗮𐗯𐗰𐗱𐗲𐗳𐗴𐗵𐗶𐗷𐗸𐗹𐗺𐗻𐗼𐗽𐗾𐗿𐘀𐘁𐘂𐘃𐘄𐘅𐘆𐘇𐘈𐘉𐘊𐘋𐘌𐘍𐘎𐘏𐘐𐘑𐘒𐘓𐘔𐘕𐘖𐘗𐘘𐘙𐘚𐘛𐘜𐘝𐘞𐘟𐘠𐘡𐘢𐘣𐘤𐘥𐘦𐘧𐘨𐘩𐘪𐘫𐘬𐘭𐘮𐘯𐘰𐘱𐘲𐘳𐘴𐘵𐘶𐘷𐘸𐘹𐘺𐘻𐘼𐘽𐘾𐘿𐙀𐙁𐙂𐙃𐙄𐙅𐙆𐙇𐙈𐙉𐙊𐙋𐙌𐙍𐙎𐙏𐙐𐙑𐙒𐙓𐙔𐙕𐙖𐙗𐙘𐙙𐙚𐙛𐙜𐙝𐙞𐙟𐙠𐙡𐙢𐙣𐙤𐙥𐙦𐙧𐙨𐙩𐙪𐙫𐙬𐙭𐙮𐙯𐙰𐙱𐙲𐙳𐙴𐙵𐙶𐙷𐙸𐙹𐙺𐙻𐙼𐙽𐙾𐙿𐚀𐚁𐚂𐚃𐚄𐚅𐚆𐚇𐚈𐚉𐚊𐚋𐚌𐚍𐚎𐚏𐚐𐚑𐚒𐚓𐚔𐚕𐚖𐚗𐚘𐚙𐚚𐚛𐚜𐚝𐚞𐚟𐚠𐚡𐚢𐚣𐚤𐚥𐚦𐚧𐚨𐚩𐚪𐚫𐚬𐚭𐚮𐚯𐚰𐚱𐚲𐚳𐚴𐚵𐚶𐚷𐚸𐚹𐚺𐚻𐚼𐚽𐚾𐚿𐛀𐛁𐛂𐛃𐛄𐛅𐛆𐛇𐛈𐛉𐛊𐛋𐛌𐛍𐛎𐛏𐛐𐛑𐛒𐛓𐛔𐛕𐛖𐛗𐛘𐛙𐛚𐛛𐛜𐛝𐛞𐛟𐛠𐛡𐛢𐛣𐛤𐛥𐛦𐛧𐛨𐛩

E. Differential Word Order

For simple clauses, Nuosu exhibits an aspect-conditioned word order split: SOV order in ‘on-going’ (≈ imperfective) clauses and OSV in ‘resultative’ (≈ perfective) clauses.

(4) SOV order in ‘Ongoing clauses’

a. ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་རྩེ་ལ་སྤོང་བཞུགས་པོ་ཡོད་པུ་

at nyop mu rryr la hxex njuo.
Anyuo Mudge wait PROG

‘Anyo is waiting for Mudge.’

OSV order in ‘Resultative clauses’

b. ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་མཁྱེན་པོ་ཡོད་པུ་

at nyop mu ga wep mo ox.
Anyuo Muga GET see DP

‘Anyo was seen by Muga.’

F. Maintaining and Contrastive Topic

Nuosu exhibits two topic particles: *ne* communicates maintaining topic and *li* contrastive topic. Both particles are associated with the sentence-initial NP.

(5) a. ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་མཁྱེན་པོ་ཡོད་པུ་

vut nyop **ne** mu jie ap syp bur zzur.
female name TOP male name NEG know seem

‘As for Vunyo, she appears not to know Mujie.’

b. འདི་གི་མཁྱེན་པོ་ཡོད་པུ་

a yit **li** rrop jji mu ddop hxip.
female name TOP natural ADVL word say

‘(Differently from what you might think) Ayi spoke naturally.’

5.5.3 Writing system

The data presented here originates from (Gerner 2013). Nuosu exhibits 43 consonant phonemes that are presented below in both the Romanized script (Nuosu Pinyin) and the International Phonetic Alphabet.

A. Consonants

Initials		Point of articulation											
		Labial		Alveolar		Retroflex		Alveolo-palatal		Velar		Glottal	
		IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin
Stops	prenasalized	mb/mɓ	nb	nd/ndɓ	nd					ŋg	mg		
	voiced	b/ɓ	bb	d/dɓ	dd					g	gg		
	unvoiced	p	b	t	d					k	g		
	aspirated	p ^h	p	t ^h	t					k ^h	k		
Fricatives	voiced	v	v	z	ss	ʒ	r	ʒ	y	ɣ	w		
	unvoiced	f	f	s	s	ʃ	sh	ç	x	x	h	h	hx
Affricates	prenasalized			ndz	nz	ndʒ	nr	ndʒ	nj				
	voiced			dz	zz	dʒ	rr	dʒ	jj				
	unvoiced			ts	z	tʂ	zh	tʂ	j				
	aspirated			ts ^h	c	tʂ ^h	ch	tʂ ^h	q				
Nasals	voiced	m	m	n	n			ɳ	ny	ŋ	ng		
	unvoiced	ɱ	hm	ɳ	hn								
Laterals	voiced			l	l								
	unvoiced			ɭ	hl								

Table 5.3: Nuosu consonants

Remarkable features of the consonant system are the four types of fully contrastive phonation: prenasalized, voiced, unvoiced, and aspirated. A rare sound is the labial trill [ɓ], which represents an allophone of [b]. Contrastive sets of words are presented below for each phonation type and point of articulation.

nb	bb	b	p
nbi 'distribute'	bbi 'spread'	bi 'read'	pi 'cut open'
nbie 'shoot'	bbie 'penis'	bie 'kick'	pie 'malaria'
nba 'bundle'	bba 'carry on back'	ba 'exchange'	pat 'hatch out'
nbo 'roll'	bbo 'go, leave'	bo 'rent'	po 'escape'
nbu 'curse'	bbu 'exist'	bu 'porcupine'	pu 'price'
nbur 'full'	bbur 'write'	bur 'return; again'	pur 'turn over'

nd	dd	d	t
ndi 'contain'	ddi 'bad, rotten'	di 'single, alone'	ti 'mean, signify'
ndie 'skillful'	ddie 'make'	die 'layer'	tie 'nominalizer'
ndat 'enough'	ddat 'accept'	da 'put'	ta 'earthen jar'
ndo 'drink'	ddop 'word'	dop 'point at'	to 'cut swiftly'
ndu 'dig'	ddu 'home'	dut 'step on'	tut 'family'
ndur 'shake grain'	ddur 'exit'	dur 'thousand'	tur 'chop up'

mg	gg	g	k
mgie 'tell lies'	ggie 'break' (intr.)	gie 'guess'	kie 'chop'
mga 'pass'	gga 'road'	ga 'drop, shake'	ka 'want'
mguo 'embroider'	gguo 'rake'	guo 'fierce'	kuo 'brave'
mge 'buckwheat'	gge 'hear'	ge 'foolish'	ke 'dog'
mgu 'love, like'	ggu 'nine'	gu 'call'	ku 'steal'
mgur 'pick up'	ggur 'frightened'	gur 'frighten'	kur 'year, age'

f	v	w
fat 'set free'	va 'chicken'	wat 'saddle'
pu fox 'mislead'	vo 'snow'	wo 'bear'
fut 'six'	vu 'go crazy'	
fur 'pour'	vur 'enter'	
fy 'ugly'	vy 'buy'	

ss	s	r	sh
ssa kuo 'hero'	sat 'mark, sign'	ra 'make noise'	sha 'splash'
	suo 'three'	ruop 'pull trigger'	shuo 'scrape'
sso 'study'	sot 'breath'	ro 'frugal'	sho 'harvest'
ssut 'mix'	su (nominalizer)	rup 'unlucky'	shut 'remember'
ssy 'lifetime'	sy 'blood'	ry 'early'	shy 'gold'
ssyr 'press down'	syr 'sweep'	ryr ggur ggur 'firm'	shyr 'yell'

y	x	w	h
yit 'needle'	xi 'arrive'		hit 'harm'
yuo (classifier)	xuo 'slip, slide'	wuo 'pull up'	huo 'pour'
yo 'sheep'	xop 'leak out'	wo 'group'	ho 'pen, fold'
		we 'strength'	he 'good'
yy 'water'	xy 'foot'		

x	h	hx	
xit 'bite'	hit 'harm'	hxit 'eight'	
xie 'catch fish'		hxie mat 'heart'	
xuo 'slip, slide'	huop lyt 'apricot'	hxuo 'mix, add'	
xop 'leak out'	hot 'bow'	hxo 'grow, raise'	
nz	zz	z	c
nzi 'hammer nails'	zzi 'bridge'	zi 'leave over' (tr.)	ci 'fall'
nzie 'chop'	zzie 'drench'	zie 'compensate'	cie 'deer'
nza 'sing (of bird)'	zza 'crops, food'	za pux 'earth wall'	ca 'hot'
nze 'pretty'	zze 'eat'	zep 'tighten'	ce 'salt'
nzup 'armful of'	zzu 'jab, poke'	zut 'stir up'	cu 'fat'
nzur 'hate'	zzur 'reside, live'	zur bop 'origin'	cur 'build'
nzy 'rule'	zzy 'ride (horse)'	zy 'plant'	cy 'wash'
nzyr 'hot'	zzyr muo 'peace'	zyr 'accumulate'	cyr 'pinch'
nr	rr	zh	ch
nra 'measure, test'	rrax ggje 'aligned'	zha 'feed'	cha 'discuss'
nro 'stuff in'	rro 'accomodate'	zhot 'despise'	chop 'breakfast'
nrep 'withdraw'	rre 'row'	zhep 'bowl'	che 'rice'
nrut 'rust'	rrup 'chopsticks'	zhu 'praise'	chu 'thorn'
nrur 'lock'	rrur 'lie about'	zhur 'whet'	mu chur 'autumn'
nry 'wine'	rry 'tooth'	zhy 'command'	chy 'bequeath'
nryr 'pierce'	rryr 'worn out'	zhyr 'pull up'	chyr 'tear'
nj	jj	j	q
nji 'fast'	jjj 'fly'	ji (classifier)	qi 'want'
njie 'vomit'	jjie 'burn' (intr.)	jie 'burn' (tr.)	qie 'jump'
njuo 'wander'	jjuo 'collapse'	juo 'press flat'	quo 'navel'
njo 'make level'	jjjo 'have, exist'	jo 'turn'	qo 'contain'
nju 'crawl'	jjut 'waist'	ju 'manage'	qu 'silver'
njurx zuo 'expell'	jjur (classifier)	jur 'marrow'	qur 'shave'
njy 'skin'	jjy 'melt'	jy 'bladder, gall'	qy 'sweet'

m	n	ny	ng
mit 'hungry'	nit 'your'	nyi 'sit'	
mie 'nimble'	hxa nie 'tongue'	nyiet 'late'	ngie 'turn over'
mat (illocut. part.)	na 'ill; ache'		nga 'I'
muo (classifier)	nuo 'hide'	nyuo bby 'tears'	nguo 'chest'
mo 'see'	not 'flesh'	nyot 'paste, stick'	ngo 'cry'
	ne 'you'		nge 'be'
mup 'hemp'	nut 'sunken'	nyu 'crawl'	

m	hm	n	hn
mix 'even'	hmi 'name'	ni 'sprout'	ax hni 'red'
miep 'front'	hmie 'poke, flick'	niep sha 'Liángshān'	xyx hnie 'shoe'
ma (classifier)	hmat 'teach'	nax li 'chronic ill'	hna 'ask'
iet muop 'dream'		ax nuo 'hide'	
mot 'soldier'	hmo 'blow'	nop 'you' (pl.)	hnop 'drive'
mu 'do, make'	hmu 'mushroom'	ix nu 'soft'	a hnut 'deep'
	hmur 'explode'	nur ji 'soybean pod'	

n	l	hn	hl
ni 'scent'	li 'go upwards'	hnip 'smell'	hlit 'dry in sun'
niep ga 'pumpkin'	lie 'scald'	hniet rra 'vegetable'	hlie 'spleen'
na shy 'typhus'	la 'come'	hna 'listen'	hla 'soul'
nuo su 'Nuosu'	luo 'instance'		hluo 'rinse'
no 'equal'	lo 'boat'	hnox 'until'	hlo 'entertain'
ne 'stop'	le 'ox'	nep ndit 'lack'	hlepe 'month'
nu 'leprosy'	lu 'dragon'	hnut kip 'deep soil'	hlu 'stir fry'
	lur kur 'city'		hlur 'fester'

Nuosu exhibits eight vocalic phonemes: two front vowels, two central vowels, and four back vowels. They have been depicted in Nuosu Pinyin and IPA below.

B. Vowels

Finals	Front				Central				Back			
	Unrounded		Rounded		Unrounded		Rounded		Unrounded		Rounded	
	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin	IPA	Latin
Close	i	i			ɨ	y			u	e	u	u
Close-mid											o	o
Open-mid	ɛ	ie									ɔ	uo
Open							a	a				

Table 5.4: Nuosu vowels

i	ie	y	e
i (logophor)	ie 'duck'		e 'yes' (agreement)
ddip 'be called'	ddie 'serve as'		dde (nominalizer)
gi 'official'	gie 'strange'		get 'groom hair'
vi mop 'ax'	vie hlur 'worried'	vy 'millet'	
sit 'kill'	sie 'touch, pat'	syp 'know'	
		shyp 'seven'	shep 'search'
zzip 'compete'	zzie 'engrave'	zzyt mu 'world'	zze 'wear out'
		zhyp 'urge'	zhet 'correct'
nit 'shift blame'	niep nie 'breast milk'		nep 'germs'
lip 'elephant'	lie 'pop up'	ly 'request'	lep 'swing'
u	o	uo	a
	op 'goose'	uox ba 'frog'	ap (negator)
bu (classifier)	bop 'show'	buo 'colour-match'	bat zhu 'small cup'
ddu (nominalizer)	ddox mu 'knife'	dduo zip 'ladder'	ddap 'or'
gut 'support'	go (classifier)	guo 'too much'	gat 'dress'
vu 'intestines'	vot 'pig'		vat 'dollar'
sup 'resemble'	sot 'calculate'	suo 'quietly'	sat 'all; finish'
shu 'make'	shot 'shameful'	shuo 'brush by'	shax tur 'bullet'
zzup zzup 'circle'			zzat 'stare at'
zhut nyot 'curl up'	zhop 'coax'	zhuop zy 'table'	zhat 'embroider'
jjut 'medium'	jjop 'cut'	jjuo 'chop'	
mup 'hemp'	mo 'plow'	muo (classifier)	ma 'bamboo'
nu 'leprosy'	not 'flesh'	nuo 'peep'	na ddi 'epidemic'
lut 'enough'	lot 'hand'	luop (expressive)	lat 'tea'

C. Tones

There are three tonemes, [55], [33], [21], in addition to a tone sandhi [44] whose phonological status is weak. This sandhi tone is primarily attested in disyllabic words. It is interesting to note that very few monosyllabic words carry this tone.

Tones	-t [55]	-(no letter) [33]	-p [21]	-x [44]
	xit 'bite'	xi 'thread'	xip 'such a'	xix 'what'
	lot 'hand'	lo 'ravine'	lop 'surround'	lox 'after'
	jjut 'waist'	jju 'oats'	jjup 'mark, track'	jjux (nominalizer)
	bbot 'group'	bbo (classifier)	bbop 'possess'	bbox zze 'man'
	hliit 'flash'	hli 'heap things up'	hlip 'unbent'	hlix ndo 'lose'
	shyt 'put to bed'	shy 'twist'	shyp 'lead'	shyx ba 'golden'
	chet 'distribute'	che 'be kidnapped'	chep 'spread legs'	chex zi 'rice silk'
	nyit 'make room'	nyi 'exist'	nyip 'dax'	nyix dde 'seat'
	hxot 'apply'	hxo 'steam'	hxop 'dye'	hxox ssu 'sparse'
	yot 'incorrect'	yo 'sheep'	yop 'rock, shake'	yox mu 'fly, insect'

Table 5.5: Nuosu tones

D. Traditional Writing System

The different Yí groups share a long history of religious and secretive texts involving a syllabic script. The priests, who were the experts of the Yí writing, incorporated the use of similar character sets throughout the Yí residence area. Meanwhile the oldest traces of the Yí script go back to stone and pottery inscriptions, which, in turn, date back to the 8th century B.C.

Each grapheme of the Yí system corresponds to one syllable. After 1000 A.D., the priests conducted a writing reform by rotating the vertical orientation of characters into a horizontal one. For the most populous branch of Yí, the Nuosu of Liángshān prefecture, the Chinese Government standardized a set of 1119 characters in 1978. Specifically for this set, the orientation of graphemes was reverted to a vertical pattern similar to the one that was used in ancient times. The Nuosu system is used as a teaching medium in primary schools along with some secondary schools of Liángshān prefecture. Official documents are drafted in both Chinese and Nuosu. The International Standardization Organization (ISO) reserved space for the Nuosu character set in Unicode in 1995. With the Unicode

support of Windows 2000, typewriting is possible through the use of special input software.

Nuosu syllables stand in one-to-one correspondence with graphemes of the script. There are 44 *initial* segments (43 consonants plus empty initial segment), ten *final* segments (eight plain vowels and two creaky vowels) and four *suprasegments* (three tonemes and one tone sandhi) of Nuosu. The theoretical number of logical syllables the script should provide graphemes for is 1,760. In wake of the fact that certain combinations of initials and finals are not attested in any dialect of Nuosu, the designers of the Government-sponsored Nuosu script standardized only 1,119 graphemes in 1978. An even smaller number of graphemes are in actual use in the standard Shynra dialect, about 1,005.

Logical Syllables:	1,760 (= 44 Initials × 10 Finals × 4 Suprasegments)
Graphemes in Nuosu Script:	1,119
Graphemes in actual use:	1,005

In the foldable Nuosu syllabary, the graphemes of the script that are not in actual use have been marked with gray shade.

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Part of the Bible was translated into **Middle Chinese** as early as 650 A.D. placing Chinese at par with other European languages in terms of ancient Bible translations. By 2019, portions of the Bible were translated into 70 languages, a share of 12 percent of the approximately 600 languages spoken in China.

This monograph is made up of two parts, first, a state-of-the-art report of the **Bible translation histories in 70 languages** spoken in China and second, a collection of ethno-religious sketches of four ethnic groups residing in Southwest China: the **Hmu** (Miáo 苗 nationality), **Kam** (Dòng 侗 nationality), **Neasu** (Yí 彝 nationality) and **Nuosu** (Yí 彝 nationality) peoples.

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