



**Population in China:**

1,000,000 (1996)  
 1,116,000 (2000)  
 1,439,600 (2010)

**Location:**

Guangxi, Hunan, Guangdong

**Religion:** Daoism

**Christians:** 400

## Overview of the Pingdi

**Countries:** China

**Pronunciation:** "Ping-dee"

**Other Names:** Pingdi Yao, Pingding, Piongtuojo, Piongtoujeu

**Population Source:**

1,000,000 (1996 B. Grimes)

**Location:** *Guangxi:* Lipu Town; *Hunan:* *Guangdong*

**Status:** About half are officially included under Yao and half under Han Chinese.

**Language:** Chinese, Pingdi

**Dialects:** 0

**Religion:** Daoism, Animism, Ancestor Worship, Christianity

**Christians:** 400

**Scripture:** None

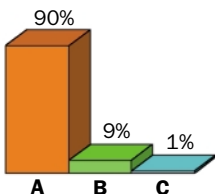
**Jesus film:** None

**Gospel Recordings:** None

**Christian Broadcasting:** None

**ROPAL code:** None

### Status of Evangelization



**A** = Have never heard the gospel  
**B** = Were evangelized but did not become Christians  
**C** = Are adherents to any form of Christianity

**Location:** More than one million speakers of the Pingdi language live in the mountainous area where Hunan, Guangxi, and Guangdong provinces meet.<sup>1</sup> The geographical center of the Pingdi is Lipu Township in northern Guangxi. The Pingdi live at the summits of high, remote mountains, which are divided by numerous streams and river valleys. "It is recorded in history that this distressful people, subject to endless bullying and humiliation, unable to settle down on the plains, had to bury themselves in the remotest mountains."<sup>2</sup>

**Identity:** In the 1990 national census, about half of the Pingdi were included under the Yao nationality, while the other half were included under Han Chinese. It appears the Pingdi speakers are a complicated mixture of Yao people who became Sinicized and, on the other hand, Han Chinese people who became "minoritized."<sup>3</sup> Although those Pingdi who have been counted as Yao speak a Chinese language, one study of the Yao states that even though "they have many branches, with different names, languages, customs, and economy, they preserve their common psychological quality which holds their ethnic group together."<sup>4</sup>

**Language:** The Pingdi, after centuries of intermingling between local Yao and Chinese people, produced their own language which is considered a form of Chinese. It still retains many words and features that reveal the genesis of a Yao language. Pingdi — which has seven tones — is also

said to exhibit phonological characteristics of Daic (Tai) languages.<sup>5</sup>

**History:** The numerous Yao groups in China have splintered into their present divisions after centuries of forced migration. One historian notes, "The Yao were a very large component in the *Man* or Southern Barbarian tribes, pushed southwestwards over millennia by the Chinese. In fact the term *Man* is sometimes still used to refer to the Yao."<sup>6</sup>

**Customs:** The Pingdi area is rarely visited by outsiders. As a result, they have minimal interaction with other people groups. The majority of Pingdi are simple farmers engaged in rice cultivation.

**Religion:** Many Yao groups have a legend of a great flood. "Because the flood overflowed up to the sky for seven days and seven nights, on earth there were no people left except for

Fuxi and his younger sister. Begging a Chinese tree to be their go-between, they became husband and wife. They gave birth to a lump of flesh, which they cut into 360 pieces and scattered around. Those pieces scattered in the green mountains changed into the Yao, the others became the Chinese people."<sup>7</sup>

**Christianity:** In the ancient past the Yao had a legend of a Creator god. The Yao claim, "Ages ago... before we crossed the sea, we worshipped someone called Tin Zay, who lives in heaven and is a holy god."<sup>8</sup> For centuries the Pingdi have lived and died without any knowledge of Christ and without a strong church in their midst. Although there is a Yao New Testament available in the Lu Mien language, the Pingdi speak a different language from Lu Mien. There are no Scriptures, recordings, or *Jesus* film available in the Pingdi language.



Paul Hattaway