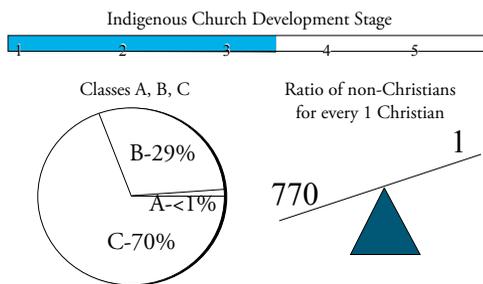


# Bai



## Quick Facts

**Pop. in China:** 2,300,000  
**Location:** Yunnan Province  
**Lang. Group:** Burmese-Lolo  
**Religion:** Buddhism  
**Believers:** 0.13%  
**Scriptures:** None  
**Ministry Tools:** G  
**Church Status:** 3  
**Mission Status:** 2  
**Mission Organizations:** 4  
**Churches:** 30  
**MS Subgroups:** 4



Class A- Are members of a Culturally Relevant Church  
 Class B- Have close access to a CRC, but have not yet joined  
 Class C- Have no reasonable or close access to a CRC

**Identity:** The Bai are a Tibeto-Burman people which have inhabited the Dali region of Yunnan province for 3,000 years. After the fall of the Dali kingdom to the Mongols in the 13th century, the Bai have progressively assimilated to Chinese culture.

**Lifestyle:** Before the triumph of Communism in China, the Bai were organized as a feudal society, in which 80% of the population were landless peasants. The Communists introduced cooperative farming in an effort to bring about social equality. Fertile soil and a mild climate enable the Bai to grow two crops a year, including rice, beans, sugar-cane, tobacco, wheat and cotton. The Bai are famous for their rich supply of white marble (from which their name derives, Bai means white in Chinese), some of which was used to build the Taj-Mahal.

**Customs:** Every June 25th the Bai celebrate the Torch festival to usher

in a successful harvest season. Torches are lit everywhere, and banners hung on doorways with pronouncements of health and good fortune. Villagers also carry torches through the fields to protect them from harmful insects.

**Religion:** The Bai are Mahayana Buddhists, unlike most other Buddhist peoples in China which are Theravada. Though the Bai mix their Buddhist traditions with Daoism, they will still call themselves Buddhists when asked. Only about 20% of the Bai actively practice their Buddhist faith, due in part to the Communist persecution of Buddhist monks. Buddhist monasteries owned vast tracts of land before the coming of the Communists who saw their influence over the Bai as destructive, and objected to the high cost of sacrifices and offerings for the average Bai family.

**Christian Outreach:** The gospel was first preached to the Bai over one hundred years ago. Although, thousands re-

sponded and many churches were established, the church movement ceased to grow after the departure of the last missionaries and has become ingrown. The Bible was unfortunately never translated in their language which hindered the growth of strong national leaders.

## How to Pray:

✞ Pray for the new missionaries now working among the Bai that God would give them grace to equip a new generation of leaders who will take the gospel to every Bai community and family.

✞ Most Bai believers are in mountainous rural areas, and remain isolated from other Bai communities. Pray for God's blessing on them, both numerically and financially, so they might be able to send out hundreds of evangelists and church planters with local resources.

✞ One of the first priorities of missionaries is to develop discipleship resources, especially for the 40% of the Bai population which is illiterate. Pray for their success in translating the Bible into all four Bai dialects.

✞ Pray for a revival of indigenous Christ-centered worship in the Bai language and cultural tradition.

**Every year 20,000 Bai die without Christ.**