

Dong



Quick Facts

Pop. in China: 3,500,000

Major Counties:

Liping: 275,000

Tianzhu: 235,000

Xinhuang: 180,000

Sanjiang: 170,000

Religion: Ethnic

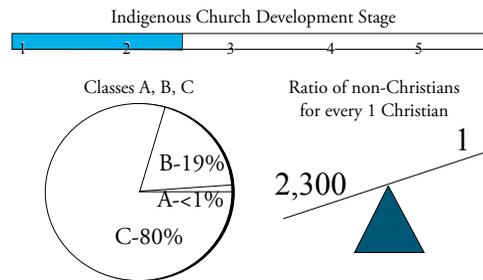
Believers: 0.04%

Scriptures: None

Ministry Tools: R

C Status: 2 **M Status:** 2

MS Subgroups: 30+



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 Dong are a Tai people, descending from the ancient Yue tribe. They are related to the Zhuang and the Mulao. They are divided culturally and linguistically between the north and south. The northern Dong are becoming assimilated by the Chinese moreso than in the south. There are at least 30 endogamous subgroups among them.

Lifestyle: The Dong have traditionally lived in villages located near streams, and consisting of 20-30 households. They created and maintained an advanced civilization for centuries, with impressive architecture, engineering, and agricultural development. They grow and harvest large quantities of fir and camelia trees, which are used for timber, oil and varnish. Other important cash crops are cotton, tobacco, and soybeans. They have the highest birthrate of any people in China.

Customs: Dong girls are taught to weave and embroider at a young age,

and by the age of 12 will began working on their wedding dresses. Marriage usually occurs around the age of 18, though the girl will continue living with her parents until the first child is born. Only then will she move permanently into the house of her husband, which is usually newly constructed from fir trees that were planted 18 years previously at the birth of the young couple.

Religion: The Dong practice their own ethnic religion, and have a large pantheon of gods and village spirits which they make annual offerings to. Ancestral altars are common place in most homes. They traditionally practiced black magic, which they call *Tu*, though this is gradually disappearing. Special reverence is given to a “saint-mother” spirit, for which altars and temples have been built in many villages. Young people are becoming increasingly secularized.

Christian Outreach: Though the Dong have shown openness to Christianity,

inadequate effort has been made to reach them on a large-scale basis. A few churches were planted over fifty years ago, but they have done little to reach out beyond their own communities. A small team of missionaries and strategy coordinators are seeking to re-ignite a passion for outreach among the younger generation in the Dong church.

How to Pray:

✞Praise God for the deployment of a “strategy-coordinator” for the Dong. Pray for favor with the existing churches and believers, and for an indigenous team of leaders to be raised up with passion and concern for reaching their people.

✞Their has been an incredibly lack of ministry tools and resources being developed for this people. Pray for the completion of the Bible in their language, and for the development of a script that all will accept.

✞Praise God for those Han believers who have contact with the Dong and who have developed a special burden for reaching them. In one village, a house fellowship has already begun. Pray for its rapid growth and multiplication!

**Every year 31,000
 Dong die
 without Christ.**