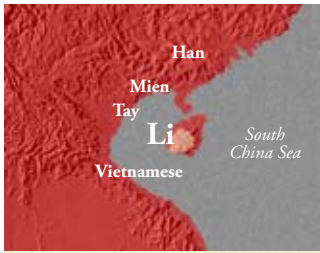


Li



Quick Facts

Pop. in China: 1,500,000

Subgroups:

Ha: 650,000

Qi: 300,000

Jiamao: 80,000

Bendi: 70,000

Religion: Ethnic

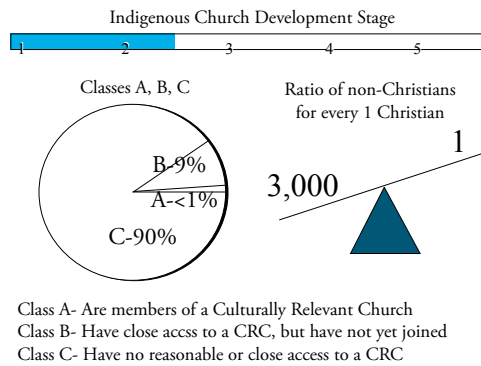
Believers: 0.03%

Scriptures: None

Ministry Tools: G

C Status: 2 **M Status:** 1

MS Subgroups: 5



Identity: The Li are a Tai people that branched off from the ancient Yue tribe and migrated to Hainan island over 3,000 years ago. They have five subgroups with corresponding dialects that are different enough to be considered separate languages.

Lifestyle: Hainan island is a tropical paradise and China's major producer of coconuts, coffee, rubber, pineapples, mangos and bananas. The land is fertile and has abundant rainfall, though it is also subject to seasonal typhoons. In the past, tropical diseases such as malaria were rampant and could decimate an entire village. Today, these epidemics have been largely subdued, and the Li population has been growing rapidly as a result. Hainan's climate enables the Li to harvest three crops of rice a year, and grow corn and potatoes all year round.

Customs: During their traditional wedding ceremony, the bride's family

are required to kiss two birds and a pig. After the wedding ceremony, the bride will return to her parents home, and remain there until she has become pregnant. Throughout her life, the bride's eldest brother will remain her protector and legal guardian.

Religion: Li religion centered on spirit-appeasement by a professional shaman who would represent the village before the benevolent god Ha Li when disaster or trouble came their way. Problems such as storms, sickness, and famine would be blamed on the evil spirits that dwelled in nearby mountains, rivers, or caves, requiring animal sacrifice to drive them away. Today, these beliefs and practices are mostly followed by the elderly, and those living in mountain villages, after four decades of atheistic communist education. Most young Li are now secularized and non-religious.

Christian Outreach: Evangelical work among the Li began in 1885, resulting

in a few fellowships being established among the Ha and Jiamao subgroups. Unfortunately the Bible was never translated in their language and over the years the Li churches began to drift into unorthodox practices and teachings, ceasing to grow evangelistically.

How to Pray:

☞ Hainan island has experienced revival and rapid growth among its Han Chinese population. Pray that this revival would also touch the Li people, and for a missionary vision to be given to the newly awakened Hainan church that would result in hundreds of church planters being sent out to the more remote Li villages.

☞ Pray for the complete translation of the Bible into all five Li languages, and for the transformation of existing Li church leaders that they may worship him in Spirit and in Truth.

☞ Pray for specialized outreach to Li young people who have been educated as atheists, and taught to despise all religious beliefs and practices. Pray for resources and seminars to be developed that will logically demonstrate the empirical reality of God and the necessity of His redeeming work through His Son.

**Every year
13,000 Li die
without Christ.**