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Location: Chinese scholars in the 1990s discovered that Baheng speakers in southern Guizhou and northern Guangxi divided into two distinct language groups.¹ The larger group was labeled *Baheng*, *Sanjiang*, while this smaller group (4,000 people) was named *Baheng, Liping* after the county which they primarily inhabit in Guizhou Province. Liping is home to several minorities, including the Mjuniang and the Dong.²

Identity: The Liping Baheng have been counted by the Chinese authorities as one of more than ten Bunu groups. *Bunu* is a generic term, simply meaning “us people.” The various groups of Bunu do not consider themselves related to each other and are dispersed over a vast geographical area. The Bunu were not

granted status as its own *minzu* (nationality) in China but were included as part of the Yao nationality.

Language: Baheng forms its own branch of the Miao (Hmongic) language family. The Liping Baheng language contains many influences from Dong, which is a Tai based language. It is likely that the language of the Baheng in Liping diverged from the Baheng elsewhere as the result of many centuries of prolonged contact with the Dong.

History: The Baheng consider themselves descended from eight ancient clans. Their name in Chinese, *Ba Xing* (Eight Clans), reflects this.

Customs: The women like to wear much jewelry, including large earrings and

necklaces. In the past, a new husband was required to live in his in-law’s house for 12 years. After six years, however, he was able to take his wife and build his own home if her family gave their consent. This custom has not been strictly observed in recent years, although most men still move to their wife’s village after the wedding.

Religion: Ancestor worship is the primary religion among the Baheng and is the driving force behind many customs and prohibitions in their society. The Baheng believe that only sons can conduct ancestral rites. Boys are therefore highly sought after, especially since the implementation of

China’s strict family-planning laws. In recent years, a growing number of Baheng women have aborted baby girls, since not having a son means that the souls of the parents may be lost in hell forever. The Baheng also observe many ancient animistic rituals relating to their practise of agriculture. They pray for the soul of the rice after planting, to ensure a successful crop. They have also been known to place drawings of corn, rice, or vegetables next to an altar in a bid to seek the blessings of the spirits.

Christianity: The Liping Baheng are a colorful, friendly people, but few have ever had the opportunity to hear that Christ died for them. They remain a completely unreached people group without a single known Christian in

their midst. Unfortunately, no Scriptures or gospel recordings exist in a language the Baheng can easily understand.



Population in China:
 4,000 (1990)
 5,160 (2000)
 6,650 (2010)
Location: Guizhou
Religion: Ancestor Worship
Christians: None Known

Overview of the Liping Baheng

Countries: China
Pronunciation: “Lee-ping-Ba-heng”
Other Names: Pa Hng, Baxing Yao, Eight Clan Yao
Population Source: 4,000 (1995 Wang Fushi – 1990 census); Out of a total Yao population of 2,134,013 (1990 census)
Location: SE Guizhou: Liping County
Status: Officially included under Yao
Language: Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Bahengic
Dialects: 0
Religion: Ancestor Worship, Animism, Polytheism
Christians: None known
Scripture: None
Jesus film: None
Gospel Recordings: None
Christian Broadcasting: None
ROPAL code: None

