

Qixingmin

According to a 1982 Chinese ethnographic survey, 3,000 Qixingmin (pronounced 'chee-shing-min') people live in Shuicheng and Weining counties in western Guizhou Province and in Qiubei County in Yunnan Province (where they may be better known as *Boren*).¹ This ethnically diverse area contains many Yi and Miao sub-groups in addition to the majority Han Chinese population.

In the 1982 China census the Chinese authorities did not list the Qixingmin under any of the recognized nationalities but instead placed them in a list of *Undetermined Minorities*. In 1985 they were reclassified under the Bai nationality—people who live more than 300 miles away in the Dali Prefecture of

west-central Yunnan.² One source says that the identification of the Qixingmin ethnicity is a problematic one, primarily because they are known by three different ethnic names: *Qixingmin*, *Jing Ren* and *Bai Erzi*.³

Although the Qixingmin language, which may be called *Bo*, has never been studied in depth, it was mentioned in passing as a newly discovered language in a Chinese linguistic journal.⁴ Today most Qixingmin are adequately bilingual in Mandarin Chinese, and their mother tongue is in an endangered state.

The Qixingmin have lived in their present location for at least 400 years. During the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties the Qixingmin were better known as *Bai Erzi*. During the Qing Dynasty they lived in mixed communities with the Yizi, Bouyei, Miao and a group called the Baolu.

Despite their small numbers, the Qixingmin have a fierce reputation among their neighbours, who claim that the Qixingmin have hot tempers, that they are stubborn, and that they fight all the time. Visitors to a Qixingmin home are required to leave the house through a different door than the one by which they entered. The door is of great importance to the Qixingmin. Both the doors and the entrances to their villages are protected by regular cleansing ceremonies.

The Qixingmin's strong adherence to Mahayana Buddhism is one of the things that makes them a unique people in their area. They are a Buddhist enclave surrounded by numerous

animistic and Christian communities. Most Qixingmin use prayer beads to help them meditate, while some men become monks and join monasteries for extended periods of time, which is considered a great honour to their families.

The Qixingmin are an unreached people group with no known believers, despite the fact that many have been exposed to the gospel from Han, Miao and Yi believers living in the Weining and Shuicheng areas. The ethnic identity of the Qixingmin is integrally linked with Buddhism: to be a Qixingmin is to be Buddhist. The cost of going against their culture and the threat of probable expulsion from their communities for those who become Christians have proven to be obstacles too great for the Qixingmin to overcome. Most churches in the area no longer attempt to evangelize them.



International Mission Board



Population:
4,560 (2000)
5,890 (2010)
7,250 (2020)
Countries: China
Buddhism: Mahayana
Christians: none known

Overview of the Qixingmin

Other Names: Jing Ren, Bao Erzi, Bo, Boren

Population Sources:
3,000 in China (1982, *Minzu Shibie Wenxian Ziliao Huibian*)

Language: Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Unclassified

Dialects: 0

Professing Buddhists: 100%

Practising Buddhists: 85%

Christians: 0%

Scripture: none

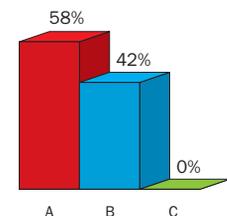
Jesus film: none

Gospel Recordings: none

Christian Broadcasting: none

ROPAL code: none

Status of Evangelization



A = Have never heard the gospel
B = Have heard the gospel but have not become Christians
C = Are adherents to some form of Christianity