



**Population in China:**

1,200 (1997)  
1,300 (2000)  
1,680 (2010)

**Location:** Guizhou

**Religion:** Animism

**Christians:** None Known

## Overview of the Xi

**Countries:** China

**Pronunciation:** "Shee"

**Other Names:** Xi Jia, Si Jia, Ximahe Miao, Xijia Miao, Gu Miao

**Population Source:**

1,200 (1997 AMO);  
1,000 (1995 Wang Fushi – 1990 figure)

**Location:** *Guizhou:* 21 villages in Majiatun and Dapaomu districts near Kaili City; Others in Huangping, Majiang, and Guiding counties

**Status:** Officially included under She since 1997; Counted under Miao between 1985–1997; Previously included in a list of *Undetermined Minorities*

**Language:** Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Western Hmongic, Luo-bohe

**Dialects:** 0

**Religion:** Animism, No Religion, Ancestor Worship

**Christians:** None known

**Scripture:** None

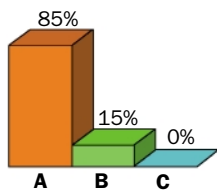
**Jesus film:** None

**Gospel Recordings:** None

**Christian Broadcasting:** None

**ROPAL code:** None

**Status of Evangelization**



**A** = Have never heard the gospel  
**B** = Were evangelized but did not become Christians  
**C** = Are adherents to any form of Christianity

**Location:** Approximately 1,300 members of the Xi tribe are located in central Guizhou Province, including approximately 1,000 Xi who live in 21 villages surrounding Kaili City.<sup>1</sup> Other Xi settlements in the area include Pingzhai Village of Longchang Township; and Xiangma, Loumiao, and Fuzhuang villages of Lushan Township. In addition, the Xi live in mixed communities with the Miao and Ge in Kaili, Huangping, Guiding, and Majiang counties. The Xi are related to the Luo-bohe Miao who are scattered throughout parts of Fuquan, Guiding, Longli, and Kaiyang counties.

taught to speak it. Older Xi women are unable to speak Mandarin, but most are able to speak the local Chinese dialect. The Chinese classify Xi as part of the Luo-bohe Miao language, which "includes the so-called Xijia language."<sup>4</sup> A 1982 study claimed there were 40,000 Luo-bohe speakers.<sup>5</sup> Xi has four tones and has been described as "very different from all Miao languages."<sup>6</sup> The Xi of the large Shibao Village cannot communicate with the neighboring Ge village, even though they have lived a short walk from them for generations. The Xi do not have their own orthography.



Paul Hattaway

**History:** The Xi claim to have originated in Gansu or Shaanxi many centuries ago. They fought with the Miao and Ge against the Qing Dynasty armies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

**Customs:** Xi women regularly wore their beautiful traditional dress, until a few years ago. Now they wear it only on special occasions. All Xi people come together to celebrate festivals. Xi are allowed to take Ge, Miao, or Han spouses, but if they marry another Xi it must be someone from a different village than their own.

**Religion:** The Xi are animists. They particularly worship the spirits of trees and the forest — and even worship a spirit they believe inhabits the wood used in the construction of their homes.

**Identity:** The Xi applied for official recognition as a minority in the 1950s, but were rejected.<sup>2</sup> In 1982 they were included in a list of *Undetermined Minorities*; in 1985 they were incorporated into the Miao nationality. The Xi history, language, and customs are completely different from that of surrounding Miao groups. The most closely related people to the Xi are the Ga Mong, a group living in the area who were also included as part of the Miao until 1997. At that time the government reclassified both groups under the She nationality. This new status was done for political reasons and is not ethnohistorically accurate.<sup>3</sup>

**Christianity:** The Xi have never had a church in their midst. Chinese Christians visited the Xi in early 1998, and while the Xi did politely listen to the evangelists, they were unwilling to accept Christ. They complained that they had been previously abused by members of the indigenous Chinese *Er Liang Mifan* (200 Grams of Rice) cult. The people in this group eat only 200 grams of rice per day. The Xi could not discern the difference between their Christian visitors and the cult, which has created a significant obstacle to future advancement of the gospel among the Xi.