



**Population in China:**

1,300 (1996)  
1,450 (2000)  
1,870 (2010)

**Location:** Yunnan

**Religion:** Ancestor Worship

**Christians:** None Known

## Overview of the Kong Ge

**Countries:**

China, possibly Myanmar

**Pronunciation:** “Kong-Ger”

**Other Names:**

Kong Geh, Kon Keu, Kui Ge

**Population Source:**

1,300 (1996 Asia for Christ);  
3,000 (1995 Luo Yunzhi);  
400 (1991 R. Morse);  
Also possibly in Myanmar

**Location:** SW Yunnan: Jinghong County in Xishuangbanna Prefecture

**Status:**

Officially included under Bulang

**Language:** Austro-Asiatic, Mon-Khmer, Northern Mon-Khmer

**Dialects:** 0

**Religion:**

Ancestor Worship, Animism

**Christians:** None known

**Scripture:** None

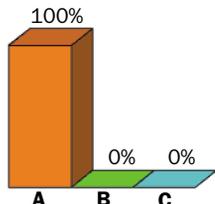
**Jesus film:** None

**Gospel Recordings:** None

**Christian Broadcasting:** None

**ROPAL code:** None

**Status of Evangelization**



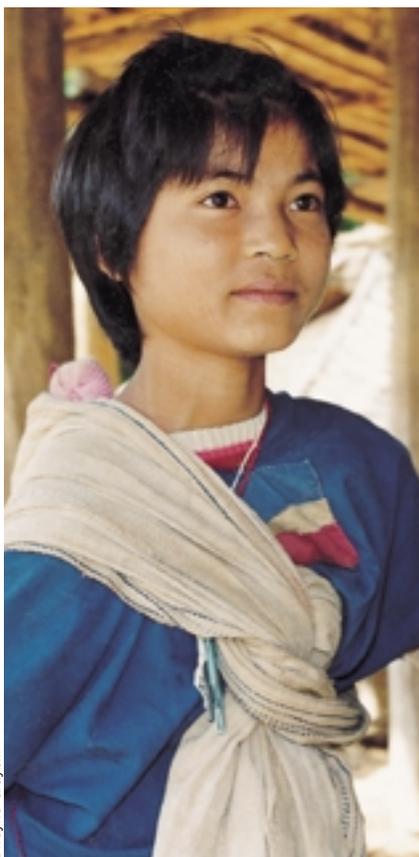
**A** = Have never heard the gospel  
**B** = Were evangelized but did not become Christians  
**C** = Are adherents to any form of Christianity

**Location:** The Kong Ge inhabit five remote villages north of Jinghong City in the southwestern part of Yunnan Province. Two different sources list populations for the Kong Ge of 400<sup>1</sup> and 3,000.<sup>2</sup> Dwayne Graybill, who visited the Kong Ge in 1996, says the Kong Ge themselves say they number 1,300 people, with 400 living in their largest village, Na Hui Pak.<sup>3</sup> The Kong Ge claim to also have relatives living in Myanmar.

**Identity:** The Chinese include the Kong Ge as part of the Bulang nationality, a point that does not sit well with the Kong Ge. The Kong Ge refuse to intermarry with the Bulang and separated from them many generations ago. “So far, scholars are divided about their identity.... Their dark complexion and thick lips gave me the impression that I was among a tribe in Africa.”<sup>4</sup>

**Language:** The Kong Ge language is part of the Northern Mon-Khmer linguistic branch. It is related to, yet distinct from, Bulang. The Kong Ge people love to sing. “When they go to work they sing about work, and when they attend a wedding they sing about marriage.”<sup>5</sup> Only Kong Ge children aged 15 or under — who have been educated in Mandarin — are able to speak the national language.

**History:** The ancestors of today’s Kong Ge in Xishuangbanna claim to have migrated from an area near Simao 300 to 400 years ago. At that time they were part of the Bulang minority. Their legend tells how two Kong Ge families came to the area where they now live. One of the wives had a baby, so they decided to remain. The first Kong



Dwayne Graybill

Ge village was called *Man Ba Boo*. The people were so successful at growing cotton that many outsiders joined their village.

**Customs:** The Kong Ge are hardworking agriculturists, harvesting rice, corn, rubber, and cotton. Although some youngsters have married Han in recent years, most Kong Ge prefer to marry only within their tribe. It is especially forbidden to intermarry with the Bulang whom they despise. After marriage the bride always goes to live in her husband’s village. Every year the Kong Ge

celebrate the Spring Festival. They build a huge bonfire and celebrate the start of the new year.

**Religion:** Before the Communist Revolution in China the Kong Ge believed in *Zao Zi*, a protective spirit. The Kong Ge sacrificed a cow before planting their rice to ensure that the spirits would allow the rice to grow. Every Kong Ge family worships their ancestors. Ancestral worship ceremonies are held after the planting season to ask for a good crop.

**Christianity:** The Kong Ge’s small, isolated communities and their linguistic uniqueness have prevented them from hearing the gospel. In 1996 one researcher asked a 57-year-old Kong Ge man if he had heard of Jesus. The man thought for a while and looked puzzled. Finally, determined not to appear ignorant, he asked what nationality this Jesus was.<sup>6</sup> This man is indicative of all Kong Ge. They have absolutely no awareness of the existence of the gospel, and there has never been a single known Christian believer among their tribe.