

E-DE

The 1989 census of Vietnam listed 194,710 people belonging to the E-De (pronounced "A-Day") minority group. By the end of the 20th century their population is expected to exceed 240,000.

The E-De, who are also known as the *Radey, De* and *Moi*, are concentrated in Dac Lac Province and in smaller numbers in Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa and Gia Lai provinces in south-central Vietnam. The main geographic center for the E-De is the town of Bannmethuot. Because of their assistance to the CIA during the Vietnam War, some E-De families were allowed to migrate to the United States as refugees.

Like many of Vietnam's minorities, the

E-De are a collection of related tribes and clans, rather than one cohesive ethno-linguistic identity.

For countless generations the E-De have lived in a matriarchal society, ruled by the women. They live in long houses that accommodate a matrilineal extended family containing several generations. The house is ruled by a *khoa sang*—the oldest and most respected woman. The *khoa sang* is responsible for settling conflicts, upholding the law, and taking care of the ancestral altar. E-De children take the family name of their mother, and all family inheritance is passed down to the oldest daughter. After marriage the husband is required to move into the home of his new wife's family. When they die, E-De men are buried

along with his wife and her sisters. E-De society continues to be completely controlled by women.

Since the 1930s a strong Christian church has emerged among the E-De, so that today approximately half of the people profess to follow Christ. The matriarchal structure has come into direct conflict with the teachings of the Bible, which state a man should be the head of his home. This religious transformation has also gradually unraveled the matriarchal structure.

Although today there are numerous family names among the E-De, they all consider themselves to have come from the *Nie* and *Mlo* family lines.

In the past there was a clear separation of classes among the E-De. The upper class consisted of tribal chiefs, land owners, shamans, fortune-tellers and judges. The lower class was made up of peasants, slaves and prisoners of war. The slaves of the E-De were not taken by force, but were often in that position because of unpaid debts. They were considered equals with the families who owned them, and were able to gain their liberty as soon as their debts were paid off. Even while in slavery, they were free to build their own houses.



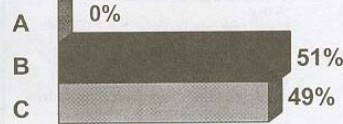
Population:
194,710 (1989)
241,800 (2000)
295,000 (2010)

Language:
Malayo-Polynesian

Religion:
Christianity

Christians:
117,000

Status of Evangelization (Awareness of Christ and the Gospel)



A = have never heard the Gospel or the name of Christ
B = were evangelized but have not yet become Christians
C = Adherents to any form of Christianity

The E-De possess a rich oral history. Stories, legends, poems and songs are handed down from generation to generation. The E-De *khans* (epics) are especially well known.

Before they were exposed to Christianity the E-De were zealous animists. They raised huge numbers of livestock, buffaloes, pigs, goats and poultry for the purpose of sacrificing to the many gods and deities that make up the E-De world view. The spirits *Ae Adie* and *Ae Du* were particularly venerated by the people.

Annual ceremonies are still held today in honor of the spirit of the rice, the spirit of the soil, water, and fire.

The E-De have always been a very spiritual people. When Christianity was first introduced to them by foreign missionaries in the 1930s, a mass people movement to Christ occurred. Thousands of E-De were liberated from bondage and from fear of the spirits they had so faithfully served for centuries.

Today the E-De church claims to number 117,000 believers. Many are nominal Christians who have been unable to completely shake off their previous animistic ways. Today they combine their faith in God with veneration of the spirits. Other E-De believers are very strong. The E-De church has a vision to win 200,000 people to Christ by the year 2000. They are reaching out not only to the E-De, but also to neighboring groups such as the Mngong, Gia Rai and Koho.

The New Testament has been available in E-De since 1964, and Scripture portions since 1937. More than 12,000 E-De New Testaments have been printed until 1998, of which 4,000 have been confiscated by the police. Because of their large size they are difficult to hide. The E-De may prove to be a key in seeing the evangelization of all of Vietnam's tribal groups.



Pray for the E-De

- 1 Thank the Lord for the strong Christian church among the E-De people. Pray thousands of nominal believers would forsake all to follow Christ with all their heart and soul.
- 2 Pray God would make the E-De a witness not only to those groups surrounding them, but even into the many unreached tribes in northern Vietnam.
- 3 Ask God to provide thousands of more Bibles to the E-De Christians, who are constantly being harassed by the authorities.

Overview of the E-De

Countries : Vietnam, USA, possibly Cambodia
Pronunciation : "A-Day"
Other Names : Rha-de, Anak E-de, De, De-gar, Moi, Ra-de, Radey, Radey, Rde, Edoh
Population Source : 194,710 (1989 census); also in USA; possibly in Cambodia
Location : Dac Lac, Phu Yen, Khanh Hoa, Gia Lai
Language : Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Western Malayo-Polynesian, Sundic, Malayic, Achinese-Chamic, Chamic, South Plateau
Dialects (7) : Bih, Ndhur, Adham, Blo, Kodrao, Krung, Rdekpa
Literacy : 50-75%

Subgroups (16) : Kpa, Mdhur, Adham, Blo, Ktul, Bih, Krung, Epan, Hwing, Dong Kay, Dong Mak, Dlic, Arul, Kdrao, Rue, Kah
Religion : Christianity, Animism
Christians : 117,000
Scripture : New Testament 1964; Portions 1937; NT, Psalms, OT stories and hymnals are available
Jesus film : none
Gospel Recordings : Radey #00314
Christian Radio : available (FEBC) 30 minutes per week
ROPAL code : RAD00