



Location: More than 35,000 Lacid people inhabit villages along the border between China's Yunnan Province and Myanmar's Kachin State, primarily within Myitkyina District. A small number live in northern Shan State. The Lacid homeland was part of the former Lawhkaung Frontier Division, which was established in 1959 to manage sensitive relations between Myanmar and their giant neighbors. At the time, all Lacid people thought they lived in Myanmar, but after the border was redrawn in the 1950s and 1960s, hundreds of Lacid families suddenly found themselves living within China. The Lacid are currently experiencing a major ecological catastrophe, with gold mining killing off the N'mai River and other waterways due to toxic discharges. Locals now refuse to eat fish caught in the area after a massive spike in cancer cases.¹

Identity: Although this group has long been called "Lashi" by other people, the name they use for both their tribe and their language is Lacid. Consisting of two subgroups (Galaung and Madein),² the Lacid are considered one of five major branches of Kachin people. Although culturally they are content to be viewed as part of the

Kachin, their languages belong to different linguistic branches. According to an early missionary, the Lacid are "a group that arose by intermarriage between the Zaiwa and the Maran clans."³

Language: The Lacid vernacular, which has four tones, is closely related to Zaiwa.⁴ It enjoys vigorous use in their communities, while some also speak Kachin Jingpo, which serves as the *lingua franca* (common speech) of the area. Lacid was an unwritten language until earlier this century, when Christians created a Roman orthography so they could translate the Bible into their language.

History: Many of the Lacid in China claim descent from a battalion of soldiers that was pushed across the border into China by advancing British troops in 1885.⁵ The 2,500 Lacid people who remain within China today are known as *Chashan Ren* in Mandarin, meaning "tea mountain people." This name signifies their primary occupation of tea cultivation. The Lacid are one of six tribes combined to form the official Jingpo minority nationality in China.

Customs: Most Lacid families reportedly "own several copper

guns. Living in dense forests, they use their weapons to defend themselves against wild animals and to hunt. They also fire shots into the air to announce a death or to celebrate a wedding. Until recently, the Lacid made their own gunpowder—a mix of fertilized soil, charcoal, sulfur, and plantain juice."⁶ The Lacid love to come together for the Manaw and other festivals. The *gigaw* dance is popular at their celebrations before they disperse back to their daily routines when, often "after work, the men go hunting while women engage in traditional weaving."⁷

Religion: In the past, shamans dominated Lacid society, reducing families to dire poverty. The Lacid used to believe that "demons have the power to bite them, but if they brought appropriate offerings, this punishment could be forestalled. Often, to exorcize a disease such as malaria, treacherous shamans demanded a family's livestock be sacrificed one by one, effectively plunging the family into debt for generations."⁸ The spiritual landscape began to change among the Lacid when they heard the Gospel in the early 20th century. At the time of the 1931 census, 1,063 (8.4%) of the 12,661 Lacid people in Myanmar were Christians. Today, an overwhelming majority of Lacid people on both sides of the border are followers of Christ.

Christianity: Although there are numerous churches among the Lacid, in the past many believers reportedly had a superficial faith. In the 1980s, a group of young Lacid Christians in China listed 15 causes for why they were poor, including "sickness, cruel and greedy shamans, vendettas, floods, wind and frost on crops, laziness, wife's pregnancy, marriage, death of the chief laborer, house building, fire, loss of cattle, being shorthanded, and causing another person's girlfriend to become pregnant."⁹ With the *Jesus* film and full Bible available in the Lacid language since 2010, many church members have gained a solid foundation in the faith.



Population in Myanmar:
35,800 (2026)

Location:
Kachin State,
Shan State

Language Family:
Tibeto-Burman

Main Religion:
Christianity (90.0%)

Christians:
32,200 (90.0%)

OVERVIEW

Population:
35,800 in Myanmar
(2026 Asia Harvest)
30,000 (2000 D. Bradley)
12,661 (1931 census)

Other Countries:
2,500 in China

Other Names:
Ac'ye, Chashanhua, La Chit,
Lacheik, Lachi, Lachid, Lachik,
Lachikwaw, Lacik, Lashi, Lashi-
Maru, Lasi, Lechi, Leqi, Letsi,
Maru, Ngac'ang

Location:
Kachin State: Myitkyina,
Momauk, Chipwi and Mansi
townships in Myitkyina District;
Shan State: Muse and Namkham
townships in Muse District

Language: Lacid [Isi]

Dialects: 2

Scripture:
Bible 2010
New Testament 2016
Portions 2019

Jesus film: Lacid

Global Recordings:
Lacid #5180

People ID: 18541

