



Miao Messenger

Location: Approximately 1.6 million Northern Hmu are concentrated in eastern Guizhou Province and areas of northern Guangxi. The main center for the Northern Hmu is the city of Kaili.

Others are located in southeast Guizhou. Scattered pockets are also found in southwest Guizhou and in Longlin County in northwest Guangxi.

Identity: The Northern Hmu are a linguistic distinction within the large, official Miao nationality in China. Their autonym is *Hmu*. “Miao” is a Chinese name. There are three Hmu language groups, of which Northern Hmu is the largest.

Language: Northern Hmu is a part of the Eastern branch of the Hmongic linguistic family. It contains at least seven dialects, some of which may also qualify as distinct languages. An

orthography was introduced by the government in the 1950s, but it has never gained widespread acceptance among the people.

History: The Chinese have despised the Hmu for centuries. The Chinese called the Hmu “men-dogs,” believing they had tails. Stories were circulated that when the Hmu were born, their feet were cauterized to make it impossible for them to get tired.¹

Customs: Perhaps the greatest Hmu festival is the annual Dragon Boat Festival. Legend has it that at one time an evil dragon lived in a palace in the depths of the Qingshui River. Occasionally he would rise up to cause destruction among Hmu communities. An old man swam to the bottom of the river and set fire to the dragon’s palace.

Religion: When a Hmu dies, a shaman “opens the road” by giving directions to enable the soul of the deceased to reach heaven after a long journey. He says, “When you come to the snow mountain, don’t fear the cold. When you come to the door of heaven, an old man guards it and will not let you in. Tell him who you are and all about yourself, and he will allow you to enter.”²

Christianity: The gospel has never taken root among the Northern Hmu. F. B. Webb commenced Protestant mission work at Panghai in 1896.³ In 1898, CIM missionary W. S. Fleming and the first Hmu convert, Pan Xiushan, were murdered.

Thirty-two Hmu “Christian inquirers” were “seized and beheaded without trial or defense.”⁴ This caused great harm to the advance of Christianity. M. H. Hutton described the cool reception he received at a Hmu village 14 years later: “Some of the men began to curse my men for leading us to their village. They said they did not want the foreigner nor his Gospel, for some years ago, they said, all those who had anything to do with the Gospel Hall were killed.”⁵ Hutton later reported that “work is steady, with families coming to Christ several at a time.”⁶ By 1934 he had completed his translation of the Black Miao (Hmu) New Testament. Today only about 50 believers near Kaili “know Hutton’s Black Miao writing.... Hymns are still sung from the 1928 hymn book.”⁷



Population in China:
 1,250,000 (1990)
 1,612,500 (2000)
 2,080,100 (2010)
Location: Guizhou, Guangxi
Religion: Animism
Christians: 2,000

Overview of the Northern Hmu

Countries: China

Pronunciation: “H-moo”

Other Names: Hmong; Northern Qiangdong, Hei Miao, Black Miao, Chientung Miao, Hmu, Northern Qiangdong Miao

Population Source: 1,250,000 (1995 Wang Fushi – 1990 figure); 900,000 (1985 Wang Fushi – 1982 figure); Out of a total Miao population of 7,398,035 (1990 census)

Location: SE Guizhou: Songtao, Kaili, Majiang, Danzhai, Leishan, Taijiang, Huangping, Jianhe, Zhenyuan, Sansui, Fuquan, Zhenning, Xingren, Zhenfeng, Guanling, and Ziyun counties; NW Guangxi: Longlin County

Status: Officially included under Miao

Language: Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Eastern Hmongic

Dialects (7): Taikung, Kaili, Lushan, Taijiang, Chengfeng, Jungchiang, Yanghao

Religion: Animism, Polytheism, Christianity

Christians: 2,000

Scripture: New Testament 1934; Portions 1928

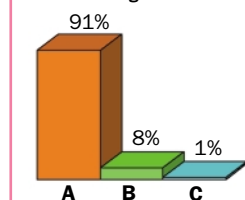
Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings: Black Miao #04664

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: HEA00

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