

Location: The Southern Hmu — one of the groups labeled *Black Miao* by early missionaries — numbered 500,000 people in 1990. They inhabit parts of the Qiandongnan Prefecture in eastern Guizhou Province and adjacent parts of the Guangxi Autonomous Region. The Southern Hmu live in one of the poorest and most remote regions of China. Many villages are located more than a mile above sea level. Temperature variation over a vertical mile is equal to temperature variation over a land distance of up to 2,500 kilometers (1,560 mi.) horizontally. One Hmu woman commented, “We buy our land not with money like you, we buy it with our tears.”¹

Identity: The Hmu are part of the official Miao nationality. *Miao* is a Chinese term and is not used by the various groups that are termed “Miao.” *Hmu* is the name this group calls itself. For countless centuries most Southern Hmu have lived alongside the Dong minority. In some places the distinction between the Hmu and Dong has become blurred. The two groups often wear identical ethnic dress and celebrate the same festivals.

Language: Southern Hmu is the second largest of the three Hmu languages in China. In northern Guangxi it has been heavily influenced by the Dong and Zhuang languages.

History: Records suggest the ancestors of the Hmu already had a well-developed culture in the Yellow

River valley region of Central China more than 2,000 years ago. Chi You, their leader, founded their religion, invented a detailed code of criminal law, and initiated the use of arms.²

Customs: Many Southern Hmu are unable to attend school because their communities need every family member to work in the fields. In other areas the cost of schooling is beyond what most families can afford.

Religion: During the annual Hmu Worship of the Door Festival the door is closed at sunset, and a young female pig is sacrificed. The pig’s blood is drained into a hole under the door jamb. The family then observes a long period of silence. Eventually the family members retire for the night, except the father and oldest son. They stay up until just before daybreak, solemnly reciting the phrase, “We worship thee, O door. Keep away sickness, keep away disease, keep away slander and all that is injurious.”³

Christianity: The Catholic church commenced work in Guizhou in the



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1600s. In 1870, 300 Hmu from a diaspora group were baptized at Zhengfeng in Guizhou Province.⁴ In 1927, Carlo — the first *Vicaire Apostolique* at Anlong — baptized 150 Hmu believers.⁵ Protestant work among the Southern Hmu was slow to develop. In 1950 Ivan Allbut wrote, “In a tribe conservatively estimated to include 500,000 people, there are about 100 who have confessed the Lord in baptism.... They have the Black Miao [Hmu] New Testament in their language, but are still waiting for missionaries to teach them how to use it.”⁶



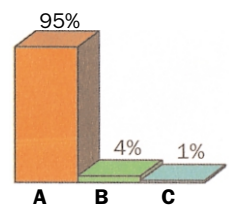
Population in China:
 500,000 (1990)
 645,000 (2000)
 832,000 (2010)
Location: Guizhou, Guangxi
Religion: Animism
Christians: 400

Overview of the Southern Hmu

Countries: China
Pronunciation: “H-moo”
Other Names: Hmong; Southern Qiandong, Southern East Guizhou Miao, Hmu, Black Miao, Hei Miao, Southern Qiandong Miao
Population Source: 500,000 (1995 Wang Fushi – 1990 figure); 300,000 (1985 Wang Fushi – 1982 figure); Out of a total Miao population of 7,398,035 (1990 census)
Location: S Guizhou: Rongjiang, Congjiang, Danzhai, and Sandu counties;

N Guangxi: Rongshui and Sanjiang counties
Status: Officially included under Miao
Language: Hmong; Mien, Hmongic, Eastern Hmongic
Dialects: 0
Religion: Animism, Polytheism, Ancestor Worship
Christians: 400
Scripture: None
Jesus film: None
Gospel Recordings: None
Christian Broadcasting: None
ROPAL code: HMS00

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