



Michael Johnson

Location: Linguist Michael Johnson, an expert on the Miao languages, listed a 1998 population of 50,000 Horned Miao living in southern China.¹ They are located on a thin strip of land that stretches from Zhenxiang County in northeastern Yunnan Province all the way southeast to Guiyang Municipality, the capital of Guizhou Province. The main concentration of Horned Miao inhabit the Shuangshau, Xiangshui, and Pojiao districts of Dafang County in Guizhou.

Identity: The Horned Miao have been officially counted as part of the large Miao nationality in China, but they have a distinct ethnolinguistic identity. The Chinese call them *Jiaojiao Miao* in Mandarin, or *Koko Miao* in the local Chinese dialect. We have called them *Horned Miao* because of their women's practice of

wearing large wooden horns on their head.² The Miao in Bijie call them *Hmong Soud* which means "lively" or "bustling." This name is a reflection of the energetic way the Horned Miao celebrate festivals.³ The Horned Miao are not the same as the Hmong Vron (Long Horn Miao), who live in northwest Guizhou.

Language: The Horned Miao speak a language belonging to the Chuanqiandian (Western) Miao family. "Horned Miao shares a large number of phonological and phonetic features with Gha-Mu [Small Flowery Miao] including the loss of all syllable-final nasal consonants... and various phonetic (pronunciation) features... Horned Miao also shows a number of similarities with the Sinicized Hmong [Hmong Shuad] group.... The majority of Horned Miao now

live on the borders of the Sinicized Hmong [Hmong Shuad] region."⁴

History: The Horned Miao call themselves Hmong Khuat Shuad Ndrang which means "guest of the Chinese plain Hmong." Johnson notes, "This autonym is somewhat ironic in that the local Hmong claim they lived in the small plain just north of Bijie before the Chinese did, and were the driven out to the surrounding hilly regions by Chinese settlers."⁵

Customs: The Horned Miao women have a striking appearance. "Their hair, along with false hair, is wrapped around a large horn-shaped wooden comb. In the past this comb was smaller and the tips only just protruded out from the hair. In more recent times, and especially amongst older people, the comb is extremely wide, almost the size of buffalo horns. During festival times the young women wear as many as thirty skirts and several long jackets."⁶

Religion: The majority of Horned Miao share the animistic and polytheistic practices of their Hmong neighbors. They are a superstitious people, believing a finely balanced harmony must be kept between them and the spirit world.

Christianity: Despite living near the heavily Christianized A-Hmao and Gha-Mu groups, linguistic and cultural barriers have prevented the Horned Miao from hearing the gospel. In the past there was no Christian work among them, resulting in few today having

heard of Christ. There are no known Horned Miao believers or churches.



Population in China:
60,000 (1998)
63,480 (2000)
81,900 (2010)
Location: Guizhou, Yunnan
Religion: Animism
Christians: None Known

Overview of the Horned Miao

- Countries:** China
- Pronunciation:** "Jeeow-jeeow-Meow"
- Other Names:** Horn Miao, Jiaojiao Miao, Bai Miao, White Miao, Hmong Soud, Koko Miao
- Population Source:** 60,000 (1998 M. Johnson); Out of a total Miao population of 7,398,035 (1990 census)
- Location:** *Guizhou:* Dafang, Zhijian, Qingzhen, Bijie counties; *Guiyang Municipality;* *NE Yunnan:* Zhenxiang County
- Status:** Officially included under Miao
- Language:** Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Western Hmongic, Farwestern Hmong, Horned Miao
- Dialects:** 2
- Religion:** Animism, Polytheism, Ancestor Worship
- Christians:** None known
- Scripture:** None
- Jesus film:** None
- Gospel Recordings:** None
- Christian Broadcasting:** None
- ROPAL code:** HH000

