



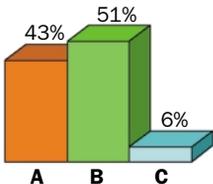
Population in China:

40,000 (1990)
 51,600 (2000)
 66,500 (2010)
Location: Guangxi
Religion: Daoism
Christians: 3,000

Overview of the Maonan

Countries: China
Pronunciation: "Maow-nun"
Other Names: Ai Nan, Anan
Population Source:
 71,968 (1990 census);¹
 38,135 (1982 census);
 22,382 (1964 census)
Location: *N Guangxi:* Huanjiang Maonan Autonomous County
Status:
 An official minority of China
Language: Daic, Kam-Sui
Literacy: 69%
Dialects: 0
Religion: Daoism, Ancestor Worship, No Religion, Christianity
Christians: 3,000
Scripture: None
Jesus film: None
Gospel Recordings: None
Christian Broadcasting: None
ROPAL code: MMD00

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



Paul Hattaway

Location: Approximately 70% of the 51,000 Maonan live in the Xianan District of Huanjiang Maonan Autonomous County in the northernmost part of Guangxi. Maonan communities are also located in nearby Hechi, Nandan, Yishan, and Du'an counties.² Picturesque karstic rock formations are found throughout the Huanjiang area. Many Maonan men are employed as stone masons.

Identity: The Maonan are one of China's 55 officially recognized minority groups. Their numbers grew from about 38,000 in 1982 to 72,000 in the 1990 census. Most of the population growth was not biological, but resulted from the government's inclusion of the Yanghuang people group into the Maonan nationality in 1990. The Maonan call themselves *Anan*, which means "local people" in their language.³

Language: The Maonan language is a part of the Dong-Shui branch of the Tai linguistic family and is similar to the Shui language spoken in Guizhou Province. Approximately half of the Maonan are able to speak their language, which has eight tones. The remainder speak either Chinese or Northern Zhuang, or both.

History: The Maonan did not appear in historical records as a separate people

until the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). They were ruled by cruel landlords, who often took away the daughters of Maonan families in payment for debts.

Customs: Up to 80% of the Maonan are surnamed Tan. They claim their ancestors lived in Hunan before migrating to their present location. Others are named Lu, Meng, Wei, and Yan, whose ancestral homes are said to have been in Shandong and Fujian provinces.⁴ The Maonan live together in small villages according to their family names. The Maonan say they have three treasures — sweet yams, beef cattle, and bamboo hats. They have raised yams and cattle for at

least 500 years. The northern Guangxi area is famous for its unique food. American missionary Eleanor Chestnut, who died in Guangxi in 1905, jokingly told her supporters back home this prescription she was given by her local doctor: "You must catch some little rats whose eyes are not yet open, pound them to a jelly, and add lime and peanut oil. Warranted to cure any kind of an ulcer."⁵

Religion: Most Maonan are Daoists. Each year the Maonan celebrate the Temple Festival. It is held to commemorate the Maonan patriarch, San Jie. He is believed to have taught the Maonan how to breed oxen for plowing, thereby enabling them to grow more food and to escape famine. A temple has been built to remember him, and each Maonan village annually slaughters a cow in his honor.

Christianity: The Maonan have been exposed to the gospel more than most of the other people groups in northern Guangxi. There are approximately 3,000 Maonan believers today.⁶ Mission work was begun in Huanjiang in 1897. During the Cultural Revolution the Maonan church was destroyed, but in 1992 "a new church building was completed... with a big red cross on top that can be seen from far away."⁷