



Miao Messenger

Location: A 1990 linguistic survey reported 35,000 speakers of the Northern Mashan Miao language.¹ By the end of the twentieth century their population was expected to exceed 50,000. The Northern Mashan Miao live in one small location at the juncture of three counties: the Daihua District of Changshun County, the Bianyang District of Luodian County, and the Dongshan District of Huishui County. All are located in the southern part of Guizhou Province.

Identity: Officially included under the Miao nationality, the Northern Mashan Miao language is part of the so-called *Chuanqiandian* language group. This term was derived from the historical names of the three provinces of Sichuan (*Chuan*), Guizhou (*Qian*), and Yunnan (*Dian*). Although different sources have listed

a variety of figures for the number of Miao groups in China — including “seventy,”² and “forty in Guizhou,”³ all agree that the Miao are a collection of groups rather than one cohesive ethnolinguistic identity.

Language: Reported to have as many as 13 tones, the Northern Mashan Miao language is unintelligible with all other varieties of Miao.⁴

History: According to Miao tradition there were originally six suns, but their intense heat dried up everything on the earth. Then the people decided to shoot down all the suns, except one. But they discovered this was impossible to do and, instead, shot at the suns’ reflections in the lake. The remaining sun became frightened and refused to

come out, plunging the world into continual darkness. The Miao used various methods to coax the sun out, but nothing worked. Then a rooster crowed, and suddenly the sun appeared. The Miao conclude that this is why the sun rises every morning when the rooster crows.⁵

Customs: One of the numerous Miao festivals is *Sister’s Day*. It is held every spring to enable young women to meet with young men from other villages. A series of games and dances is arranged, and glutinous rice dishes are prepared. Playing the *lusheng* (a bamboo instrument) is popular during these festivals. Young men who play skillfully are favored by the girls.

Religion: The Northern Mashan Miao offer sacrifices to a demon they believe dwells in the highest mountain. They also sacrifice to various other deities, believing their efforts can summon protective dragons to act on their behalf.

Christianity: The Northern Mashan Miao are an unreached people group who have never appeared on a list of unreached peoples. Most foreign agencies prefer to view all the Miao as one people, despite their multiplicity of languages and customs. There are no known churches or house fellowships among the Northern Mashan Miao, and no Scriptures or gospel audio recordings are available that they can comprehend. Their social and community structures are very exclusive, creating an additional barrier to the

introduction of the gospel among them.

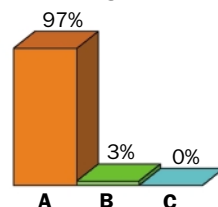


Population in China:
 35,000 (1990)
 45,150 (2000)
 58,200 (2010)
Location: Guizhou
Religion: Animism
Christians: None Known

Overview of the Northern Mashan Miao

Countries: China
Pronunciation: “Ma-shahn-Meow”
Other Names:
 Hmong; Northern Mashan
Population Source: 35,000 (1995 Wang Fushi – 1990 figure); 25,000 (1985 Wang Fushi – 1982 figure); Out of a total Miao population of 7,398,035 (1990 census)
Location: S Guizhou: Daihua District of Changshun County; the Bianyang District of Luodian County; Dongshan District of Huishui County
Status:
 Officially included under Miao
Language: Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Western Hmongic, Mashan
Dialects: 0
Religion: Animism, Polytheism
Christians: None known
Scripture: None
Jesus film: None
Gospel Recordings: None
Christian Broadcasting: None
ROPAL code: HMO00

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