



Paul Hattaway

Location: The majority of the 150,000 Hui'an Chinese live on China's east coast, near the town of Chongwu in Hui'an County. Others are located farther along the Fujian coastline of the Taiwan Strait. One visitor reported, "In the town of Hui'an itself, which is some way inland, one can certainly see these women, but they are more widely scattered. We therefore headed for the Xiaozuo and Dazuo Peninsulas, as here they can be seen in greater concentrations and, as these places are more remote, there is less deviation from the traditional style of dress."¹ Hui'an Chinese are found in larger numbers outside of China. Hui'an Associations exist in the nations of Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Myanmar, and Canada.

Identity: Although the Hui'an Chinese officially belong to the Han nationality, many aspects of their culture are unique among the peoples of China. "Visitors coming to Hui'an for the first time often mistake these women for members of a minority nationality. There is some justification for this. Recently, a scholar inferred from their butterfly ornaments and unique customs that they must be a branch of the ancient Yue tribe, the butterfly being the tribe insignia of the Yue. It also seems likely that the customs of tattooing and wrapping their teeth in gold are inherited from the Yue people."²

Language: The Hui'an speak the Quanzhang dialect of Min Nan (Hokkien) Chinese. One visitor from northern China expressed frustration at not being able to

communicate with the Hui'an, who he said spoke "a local Fujian dialect incomprehensible to me."³

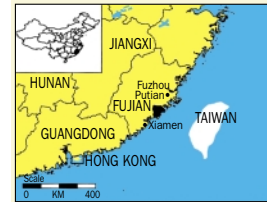
History: The Hui'an region was historically inhabited by thousands of merchants from around the world. The elaborate dress of the Hui'an women dates back to the Song Dynasty (960–1279), "when one Li Wenhui, a court official, made a proposal of marriage to a village girl. Notwithstanding her objections, the ceremony went ahead, with the girl bound hand and foot. When the time came for her own daughter to wed, she dressed her in clothes symbolic of her own unhappy marriage. The short loose blouse revealing the midriff represents her dishevelment, the embroidered squares resemble patches and the bands of pattern on sleeve and trouser equate to the rope which bound her."⁴

Customs: For centuries the Hui'an have considered baby girls inferior to boys. They customarily killed girls by drowning them at birth. The Hui'an have a reputation as cunning businessmen. A local expression states the Hui'an will "rob you and then tie you up."

Religion: The majority of Hui'an Chinese are Daoists. Ancestor worship also plays an important role in their lives and beliefs.

Christianity: There are several Catholic, Three-Self, and house churches among the Hui'an Chinese.⁵ Although Fujian has one of the largest Christian populations in China, the Hui'an have generally proven

more resistant to the gospel than the several other Chinese groups throughout the province.



Population in China:
 150,000 (1997)
 155,800 (2000)
 176,100 (2010)
Location: Fujian
Religion: Daoism
Christians: 2,000

Overview of the Hui'an Chinese

Countries: China, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Myanmar, Canada

Pronunciation: "Hway-ahn"

Other Names: Hui'an

Population Source: 150,000 (1997 AMO); Out of a total Han population of 1,042,482,187 (1990 census); 400,000 in Singapore and Malaysia; Also in Philippines, Myanmar, and Canada

Location: *E Fujian:* in and around Chongwu in Hui'an County

Status: Officially included under Han Chinese

Language: Chinese, Min Dong

Dialects: 0

Religion: Daoism, Buddhism, No Religion, Christianity

Christians: 2,000

Scripture: None

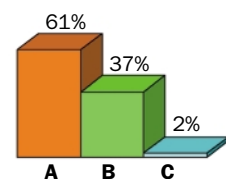
Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings: None

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: None

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