



Miao Messenger

Location: Linguist Michael Johnson lists a figure of 220,000 speakers of Hmong Daw in China, of which more than 200,000 live in Wenshan Prefecture in Yunnan Province.¹ In addition, approximately 230,000 Hmong Daw live in Vietnam, 169,800 in Laos, 70,000 in the United States² (primarily in Minnesota and California), 60,000 in Thailand, and 10,000 in France. In China most Hmong Daw are located along the China-Vietnam border in Yunnan, in the western part of Guangxi, and in southwestern Guizhou.

Identity: The Hmong Daw (called “White Miao” by the Chinese) take their name from the traditional color of their women’s skirts. However, “In many locations in China the Hmong Daw have adopted the dialect and clothing styles of other Hmong groups, most notably the Light Hmong [Hmong Leng] but in more remote

areas... the dialect is still very strong and ‘pure.’”³

Language: Hmong Daw is linguistically close to Hmong Njua. Speakers from the two groups are usually able to understand each other. Hmong Daw is relatively standard across a widespread area. Those in Thailand can communicate with those in China with few difficulties.⁴

History: The Hmong Daw are scattered throughout southern China and Southeast Asia as a result of Chinese military attacks. The conventional method of these wars was to besiege the Hmong [Miao] from three sides, leaving only mountains to the west open to escape. “The defeated Miao retreated through the hills... relying on their matchless climbing skills. This explains a Miao inclination to describe the west as a desirable destination.”⁵ A traditional Hmong rhyme says, “Over the western mountains of

ten thousand cloud-capped crags and over the cliff, will be a paradise; over the peaks will be flourishing life.”⁶

Customs: Hmong Daw women are skilled embroiderers. Mothers teach their daughters these skills at an early age.

Religion: For centuries the Hmong Daw were animists, living in fear of the spirits around them. Few Hmong Daw in China had heard the gospel, although many churches were established among their relatives in Thailand and Laos. In 1993 an old Hmong Daw man heard his language being spoken while tuning his radio. Soon thousands of Hmong Daw were listening to the gospel broadcasts daily, learning about Christ and the path of salvation. After a few months, 18 villages in southern China turned en masse to Christ.⁷ Thousands of people reported receiving a “new heart.”⁸

Christianity: In 1919 missionary Gladstone Porteous wrote, “Quite recently the White Miao [Hmong Daw] have shown interest in the Gospel.... [They asked] for an evangelist to go with them, and help them to burn up their objects of demon worship and teach them the Gospel.”⁹ Radio broadcasts have proven to be a highly effective tool for evangelizing the Hmong Daw. In the mid-1950s hundreds of Hmong Daw in Laos came to Christ as a result of radio broadcasts.¹⁰ The recent “radio revival” has been fueled by the delivery of Bibles in their language.¹¹



Population in China:

- 220,000 (1998)
- 232,700 (2000)
- 300,200 (2010)

Location:

Yunnan, Guangxi, Guizhou

Religion: Animism

Christians: 20,000

Overview of the Hmong Daw

Countries: Vietnam, China, Laos, Thailand, USA, France, Canada, French Guiana, Australia

Pronunciation: “Hmong-Doh”

Other Names: White Miao, Bai Miao, Bai Hmong, White Meo, Meo Kao, White Lum, Peh Miao, Pe Miao, White Hmong¹²

Population Source:

220,000 (1998 M. Johnson); Out of a total Miao population of 7,398,035 (1990 census); 230,000 in Vietnam (1998 M. Johnson); 169,800 in Laos (1995 AMO); 70,000 in USA (1987 UBS); 60,000 in Thailand (1998 M. Johnson); 10,000 in France; Also in Canada, French Guiana, Australia

Location: SE Yunnan; NW Guangxi; SW Guizhou¹³

Status:

Officially included under Miao

Language: Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Western Hmongic, Farwestern Hmong

Dialects: 0

Religion: Animism, Christianity

Christians: 20,000

Scripture: Bible 1997; New Testament 1975; Portions 1922

Jesus film: Available

Gospel Recordings:

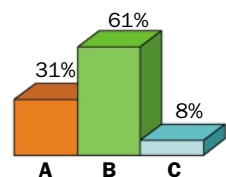
White Hmong #00491

Christian Broadcasting:

Available (FEBC)

ROPAL code: MW000

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