

**Population in China:**  
 1,000 (1997)  
 1,040 (2000)  
 1,170 (2010)  
**Location:** Fujian  
**Religion:** Daoism  
**Christians:** 30

## Overview of the Xunpu Chinese

**Countries:** China  
**Pronunciation:** "Shun-poo"  
**Other Names:** Xunpu, Xunbu  
**Population Source:**  
 1,000 (1997 AMO);  
 Out of a total Han population of  
 1,042,482,187 (1990 census)  
**Location:** *E Fujian:* Xunpu Village  
 near Quanzhou City  
**Status:** Officially included under  
 Han Chinese  
**Language:** Chinese, Min-Nan  
**Dialects:** 0  
**Religion:** Daoism,  
 Ancestor Worship, No Religion,  
 Christianity  
**Christians:** 30  
**Scripture:** None  
**Jesus film:** None  
**Gospel Recordings:** None  
**Christian Broadcasting:** None  
**ROPAL code:** None

**Location:** Located just eight kilometers (five mi.) south of the large city of Quanzhou on the coast of Fujian Province, about 1,000 people live in the "tiny fishing village of Xunpu,"<sup>1</sup> situated near the Jinjiang River that runs through Quanzhou before emptying itself into the East China Sea.

**Identity:** Although officially considered part of the Han nationality, the inhabitants of Xunpu are the descendants of foreign immigrants. As one historian explains, "The

**History:** In the past Quanzhou was known as *Zaitun*. Founded in 711, it grew to become the world's second largest port during the Song and Yuan dynasties (960–1368) and continued to be important until its harbor silted up during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). "Over the centuries, it attracted merchants, envoys and missionaries from faraway Persia, Arabia, India and Europe."<sup>3</sup> Another historian records, "A large number of Moslem, Nestorian, Catholic, Manichean and Hindu inscriptions are found in the area.... The inscriptions are in Arabic, Syriac and Tamil."<sup>4</sup>

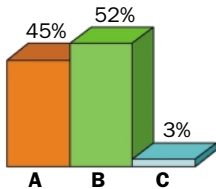


Paul Hattaway

**Customs:** The most eye-catching feature of the Xunpu women is the way they dress their hair. "It is twisted up into a bun or chignon, often fastened with strands of red wool, and set off by a garland or two of dozens of chrysanthemum, jasmine or magnolia buds."<sup>5</sup> Xunpu village is celebrated for its oysters. The outer walls of many of their homes are insulated with empty oyster shells collected from the nearby beach.

**Religion:** Today most Xunpu inhabitants adhere to traditional Chinese religions such as Daoism and

### 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

nearby village of Yuanlu, which is a flower-growing center... was a private garden belonging to a superintendent of maritime trade at the time of the Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368). This person was an Arab by origin, whose name is rendered as Bu Shougeng. The interesting thing is that the surname of most of Yuanlu's residents is Bu, so there is a distinct possibility that they might be descended from this Yuan dynasty official."<sup>2</sup> Today the inhabitants of Xunpu consider themselves a distinct people. They wear spectacular, colorful costumes, keep their own traditions, and are called *Xunpu Ren* by other residents of the area.

**Language:** Today the people of Xunpu speak the standard Min Nan Chinese language of the surrounding communities.

ancestor worship. There are many strong Han Christian churches in nearby Quanzhou.

**Christianity:** Although there are now only a few believers among the Xunpu, the Quanzhou area has a long and rich Christian history. The first Christian community was started by Franciscan monks in the early 1300s.<sup>6</sup> In 1982 all the people of the nearby village of Shenghu, numbering 250, "were converted following an unusual case of exorcism."<sup>7</sup> Churches in Quanzhou City have experienced steady growth over a twenty-year period. One house church which numbered 100 to 200 people in 1975 had grown to 1,000 members by 1986.<sup>8</sup>