

**Location:** A 1995 Chinese study listed a 1990 figure of 300,000 A-Hmao people in southern China.<sup>1</sup> They live in the mountains of northwest Guizhou Province and adjacent areas of northeast Yunnan. A group of A-Hmao live in Wuding and Luquan counties in northern Yunnan Province, having migrated there in the 1830s.<sup>2</sup> A small number also live in the Panzhuhua area in southern Sichuan.

**Identity:**<sup>3</sup> The A-Hmao are one of “close to a hundred distinctive subgroups of Miao in China alone, each speaking a slightly different dialect and maintaining its own traditional customs.”<sup>4</sup> These people call themselves A-Hmao. The Chinese and foreigners have traditionally called them *Da Hua Miao* (Big Flowery Miao). The “Big Flowery Miao” (A-Hmao) speak a completely different language from the “Small Flowery Miao” (Gha-Mu) who also live in Guizhou.

**Language:** The Chinese officially label A-Hmao the Diandongbei (Northeast Yunnan) dialect of Miao. It is one of the “30–40 different Miao languages in China.”<sup>5</sup>

**History:** For centuries the A-Hmao lived in dire slavery to the Nosu Yi. The Nosu bullied the A-Hmao by seizing their land, taking slaves, and imposing unfair taxes on them. Nosu landowners customarily used the back of an A-Hmao slave to mount their horses. As recently as 80 years ago, the A-Hmao still practiced cannibalism. Samuel Pollard recorded in his diary, “After a fight, the warriors

who are killed on either side are opened and their hearts removed... these are cooked and eaten.”<sup>6</sup>

**Customs:** Before their mass conversion to Christianity, the A-Hmao were ensnared by a complex system of evil spirits they called *bidlang*. The people’s immorality was “so bad that they could hardly be worse.... There are no decent women among the Big Flowery Miao [A-Hmao].”<sup>7</sup>

**Religion:** When missionary Samuel Pollard first arrived in 1904, he found the A-Hmao trapped in slavery to the Nosu and overwhelmed with poverty. Together with Francis Dymond he converted them to Christianity, invented an alphabet for their language, and taught them to read and write.<sup>8</sup> Although a severe famine in 1918 left many A-Hmao believers “disenchanted with Christianity,”<sup>9</sup> Pollard baptized 10,000 A-Hmao believers, and before the mission was expelled from China, 80,000 had turned to Christ. Some estimate that as many as 80% of the A-Hmao today are Christians.<sup>10</sup>



Michael Johnson

**Christianity:** After the departure of the missionaries, the A-Hmao church stayed steadfast to Christ, despite sinister plots during the Cultural Revolution aimed at destroying their faith.<sup>11</sup> During the 1940s the church experienced “a very serious process of retrogression and decay, which if not soon arrested will... bring us back to our starting point again.”<sup>12</sup> The A-Hmao New Testament was printed in 1917; 50,000 copies were reprinted and sold out between 1983 and 1988.<sup>13</sup> In 1974 many A-Hmao believers were massacred by Chinese troops when they secretly met for prayer in a cave at Xinglongchang.<sup>14</sup> Instead of destroying the church, the massacre caused a doubling in the number of Christians over a short time.<sup>15</sup>



**Population in China:**  
300,000 (1990)  
387,000 (2000)  
499,200 (2010)

**Location:** Guizhou, Yunnan, Sichuan

**Religion:** Christianity  
**Christians:** 200,000

## Overview of the A-Hmao

**Countries:** China

**Pronunciation:** “Ahc-Maow”

**Other Names:** Big Flowery Miao, Hmong: Northeastern Dian, Hwa Miao, Hua Miao, Diandongbei Miao, Variegated Miao, Great Flowery Miao, Northeast Yunnan Miao, Ta Hua Miao, Flowery Miao, Dahua Bei, Da Hua Miao

**Population Source:**  
300,000 (1995 Wang Fushi – 1990 figure);  
200,000 (1985 Wang Fushi – 1982 figure);  
Out of a total Miao population of 7,398,035 (1990 census)

**Location:** Guizhou: Weining, Shuicheng, Pu’an, Zhenning,

Ziyun, and Hezhang counties; Yunnan: Wuding, Luquan, Fumin, Xundian, Anning and Lufeng; S Sichuan: Panzhuhua area

**Status:**

Officially included under Miao  
**Language:** Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Western Hmong, Farwestern Hmong

**Dialects:** 0

**Religion:** Christianity, Animism, No Religion

**Christians:** 200,000

**Scripture:** New Testament 1917; Portions 1905

**Jesus film:** None

**Gospel Recordings:** Flowery Hmong #00104

**Christian Broadcasting:** None

**ROPAL code:** HMD00

