



**Population in China:**  
 56,000 (1990)  
 72,200 (2000)  
 93,200 (2010)  
**Location:** Guizhou  
**Religion:** Animism  
**Christians:** None Known

## Overview of the Southwestern Huishui Miao

**Countries:** China

**Pronunciation:**  
 "Hway-shway-Meow"

**Other Names:**  
 Hmong; Southwestern Huishui

**Population Source:** 56,000 (1995 Wang Fushi – 1990 figure); 40,000 (1985 Wang Fushi – 1982 figure);

Out of a total Miao population of 7,398,035 (1990 census)

**Location:** *Guizhou:* Yashui, Sandu, Doudi, and Duansha districts in Huishui County; Baitang and Zhongguo in Changshun County

**Status:**  
 Officially included under Miao

**Language:** Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Western Hmongic, Huishui

**Dialects:** 0

**Religion:** Animism, Polytheism, Ancestor Worship, Shamanism

**Christians:** None known

**Scripture:** None

**Jesus film:** None

**Gospel Recordings:** None

**Christian Broadcasting:** None

**ROPAL code:** HMH00



Miao Messenger

**Location:** More than 70,000 Southwestern Huishui Miao live quiet lives in the mountains of southern China. They are concentrated in four districts of Huishui County, and in the Baitang and Zhongguo districts of Changshun County. Both counties are located directly south of Guiyang City, the capital of Guizhou Province.

**Identity:** Although they were officially placed under the Miao nationality — which contained 7.4 million people in the 1990 census — the Southwestern Huishui Miao are a distinct ethnolinguistic people.

**Language:** The *Ethnologue* states that the Southwestern Huishui Miao language is "inherently unintelligible with other Hmong [Miao] varieties."<sup>1</sup> It is one of four Huishui Miao languages in Guizhou and one of more than 30 Miao languages in all of China.<sup>2</sup>

**History:** The Miao have a folk tale explaining why their language has never possessed a written form. They tell of a time long ago when they lived alongside the

Chinese. The Chinese were too crafty for them, so they decided to move away and live by themselves. At that time the Miao knew only a few Chinese characters. When they came to a deep river they saw some water spiders walking about on the water. They asked, "If they can walk on water, why can't we?" So they tried to walk across the river but almost drowned, having swallowed much water. By the time they made it to the other side of the river they had swallowed all the characters they knew. That is why the Miao no longer have a written language.<sup>3</sup>

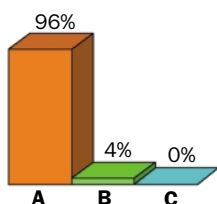
**Customs:** Sexual immorality is rampant among many of the Miao groups. Some practice what they call "free marriage." Young people are allowed to engage in sexual relationships with multiple partners before and after betrothal.<sup>4</sup> Families may build a separate room onto their homes so young

men can visit their daughters at night, while many villages have "flower houses" set aside where young people can meet in sexual orgies that often last for several days.<sup>5</sup> Sexual diseases were so rampant that Samuel Pollard wrote, "When one mentions the *Miao disease* everyone knows what one means... it is so typical."<sup>6</sup>

**Religion:** The majority of Southwestern Huishui Miao villages are animists, with altars and incense boxes located inside their homes. They do not worship idols, however. Marriages, funerals, and major festivals are presided over by Miao men who fill the traditional role of spirit priest.

**Christianity:** Few Southwestern Huishui Miao have ever been exposed to the Christian message and no ministries are known to be targeting them. There are no known believers among this group, and no Scriptures or recordings are available in their mother tongue. At the present time, only four of the more than 30 to 40 Miao languages in China have ever had any portion of the Bible translated into them.

### 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