



**Population in China:**  
 200,000 (1990)  
 258,000 (2000)  
 332,800 (2010)  
**Location:** Yunnan, Guangxi,  
 Hainan Island  
**Religion:** Daoism  
**Christians:** 300

## Overview of the Kim Mun

**Countries:** China, Laos, Vietnam, Myanmar, Switzerland, USA

**Pronunciation:** "Gehm-Moon"

**Other Names:** Gem Mun, Juim Mun, Man, Lanten, Lowland Yao, Jim Mun, Shanzi Yao, Lantien, Kem Mun, Jinmen, Hainan Miao, Miao of Hainan Island, Landian

**Population Source:** 200,000 (1995 Wang Fushi – 1990 figure); Out of a total Yao population of 2,134,013 (1990 census); 8,500 in Laos (1999 AMO); Also in Vietnam, Myanmar, Switzerland, USA

**Location:** SE Yunnan; Hainan Island; Guangxi

**Status:** Officially included under Yao, except those on Hainan Island who are officially included under Miao

**Language:** Hmong-Mien, Mienic, Kim Mun

**Dialects:** 0

**Religion:** Daoism, Polytheism, Ancestor Worship, Christianity

**Christians:** 300

**Scripture:** None

**Jesus film:** None

**Gospel Recordings:**

Lanten #03122; Yao: Lantien; Miao: Tongjia

**Christian Broadcasting:** None

**ROPAL code:** MJ100



Dwayne Graybill

**Location:** More than 250,000 speakers of the Kim Mun language live in China.<sup>1</sup> The majority are located in the Jinping area of southeastern Yunnan Province, in addition to parts of Guangxi. Approximately 50,000 people living on Hainan Island are officially included as part of the Miao nationality, but they speak the same language as the Kim Mun on the Mainland who are included as part of the Yao nationality. More than 8,500 Kim Mun live in two subgroups within northern Laos, and an unspecified number live in Vietnam. In Laos the Kim Mun population is decreasing because of rampant drug addiction.

**Identity:** Most of the Kim Mun in China are also known as *Lantien* and are counted as part of the Yao nationality. Those on Hainan Island, however, have been included as part of the Miao (apparently at their own insistence), although linguists agree that they speak Kim Mun.<sup>2</sup> The name *Lantien* is a Chinese term meaning "those who make dye." *Kim Mun* means "the people in the forest." To complicate matters further, some Kim Mun are also referred to as the *Shanzi Yao* by the Chinese, meaning "mountaineer Yao."

**Language:** Despite the distances between some of their locations, the Kim Mun language is quite uniform. Speakers from

widespread regions can understand each other without too much difficulty.<sup>3</sup>

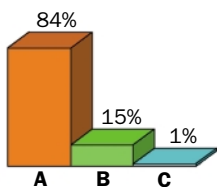
**History:** For centuries the Kim Mun were oppressed by greedy landlords. They migrated in large numbers south and west in search of their own land. "Legend has it that the forefathers of these two branches of Yao [Kim Mun and Lu Mien] were brothers who separated during migration, thus forming two groups."<sup>4</sup>

**Customs:** The Kim Mun are famous for their many ingenious customs and inventions,<sup>5</sup> including the tradition of making paper from roots and leaves.<sup>6</sup> Until recently, a young Kim Mun man taking a wife had to pay a price. "Betrothal was actually a negotiation of the bride price, which was divided into five different grades, depending on such natural qualities as the girl's beauty and health. The girl's parents would not let the man take their daughter away until the price had been paid in full. The five different grades ranged from 72 to 12 ounces of silver."<sup>7</sup> During courtship, Kim Mun youth sing romantic songs to each other. "If a girl falls in love with a boy, she bites his arm as a token of her love for him."<sup>8</sup>

**Religion:** The Kim Mun believe that when bad people die they go to a terrible place, their perception of hell — a thick, dark forest with no villages or clearings. It is believed that good people will go to one of several levels of heaven, depending on how much care their eldest son gives the spirit of his dead parent. Men without sons, therefore, do whatever it takes to procure a son, since their soul will be lost without one. The Kim Mun worship their ancestors by sacrificing pigs three times each year to honor them.

**Christianity:** The Kim Mun are an unreached people, although there are tiny pockets of believers scattered throughout southern China, including several confirmed believers in Mengla. The Kim Mun have no Bible in their language, and few ministries are reaching out to 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