



**Population in China:**

350,000 (1990)  
451,500 (2000)  
582,400 (2010)

**Location:** Guizhou, Hunan

**Religion:** Animism  
**Christians:** 1,000

## Overview of the Eastern Hmu

**Countries:** China

**Pronunciation:** "H-moo"

**Other Names:**

Hmong; Eastern Qiangdong, Eastern East Guizhou Miao, Eastern Qiangdong Miao, Hmu, Hei Miao, Black Miao

**Population Source:** 350,000 (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:** *E Guizhou:* Jinping, Jianhe, and Liping counties; *SW Hunan:* Huitong, Jingzhou, and Tongdao counties

**Status:** Officially included under Miao

**Language:** Hmong-Mien, Hmongic, Eastern Hmongic

**Dialects:** 0

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

**Christians:** 1,000

**Scripture:** Portions 1928

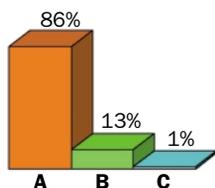
**Jesus film:** None

**Gospel Recordings:** None

**Christian Broadcasting:** None

**ROPAL code:** HMQ00

**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

**Location:** Approximately 450,000 Eastern Hmu speakers inhabit Jinping, Jianhe, and Liping counties in the far eastern corner of Guizhou Province, as well as Jingxian, Tongdao, and Huitong counties of neighboring Hunan Province. The Qingsui River, which flows through the region, contains a breed of giant salamanders, each weighing up to 39 kilograms (66 lb.).<sup>1</sup>

**Identity:** The Eastern Hmu, who are one of the many components of the great Miao minority, call themselves *Hmu*.

Missionaries in the past called them the *Black Miao*, but this name has never been used by the people themselves. Linguists label them the *Eastern Qiangdong Miao*.

**Language:** The Eastern group of Miao languages is very different in structure, vocabulary, and phonology from other Miao language groups. There is "very low intelligibility" among the three Hmu languages.<sup>2</sup> A linguist "met one situation in which speakers in one village had a remarkably different pronunciation of certain vowels and tones from another village in the same valley within one hour's walking distance."<sup>3</sup>

**History:** After the many Miao rebellions and wars during the Ming Dynasty, the survivors scattered across the country. Around that time, the group known today as the Eastern Hmu arrived in their present location.<sup>4</sup>

**Customs:** Many Miao groups in Guizhou, including the Eastern Hmu, have a legend describing the creation of the human race. They say a long time ago a rat and a small animal called the *jiao-ao* chewed away the roots of a pine tree. Worms laid twelve eggs in the branches of the fallen tree, but none of the eggs would hatch. At last, a swan was able to hatch the eggs. From ten of them came Thunder and nine different



Paul Hattaway

types of animals. The swan thought the two other eggs had died, and began to peck the eggs open. The eggs cried out, "Don't peck us! Wait another two days!" Two days later a boy named Ang emerged from one shell and his sister from the other.<sup>5</sup>

**Religion:** The Eastern Hmu have a 1,000 line poem that tells how the heavens and the earth were created by a heavenly king named Vang-vai and his son Zie-ne.<sup>6</sup> Today the Eastern Hmu know little about any Creator. Most are trapped in slavery to evil spirits.

**Christianity:** Of the few Christians among the Eastern Hmu, most are members of Catholic churches. The vast majority of this group, however, have never heard the gospel. Protestant work began in Guizhou in 1877, but it was not until 1896 that an effort was made to target the Hmu. The three Hmu language groups have proven more resistant to Christianity than Miao in other parts of China.<sup>7</sup> Today, despite their considerable population, there are no more than a handful of ministries conducting any Christian work among the Eastern Hmu. No Scriptures or gospel recordings exist that the Eastern Hmu can readily comprehend.<sup>8</sup>