

A 1982 study listed 'between 400,000 to 500,000' Chuanqing ('black-dressed people') in Guizhou Province of south China.¹ Most are concentrated in Zhijin and Nayong counties, with others in Dafang, Shuicheng, Guanling, Qingzhen, Puding and Luzhi counties.

The Chuanqing view themselves as a distinct people group. Although they speak a Chinese language and historically belong to the Han ethnicity, the government has placed them in a list of Undetermined Minorities in China.² In the 1950s their application for full status as a minority group was rejected. The decision was that the Chuanqing were 'originally members of the Han nationality', and that their characteristics were 'manifestations of the special features of Han in certain regions in an earlier period, not the characteristics of a separate nationality'.³

Although some people think the Chuanqing and Chuanlan are the same, and some even call them by the same name, *Tunbao* (which means 'stone castles' people), these two groups view themselves as distinct with separate

histories, customs and locations. There were numerous armed clashes between the Chuanqing and Chuanlan in the past. The Chuanqing were formerly known by a variety of names including *Pu Ren* ('garrison people').⁴ The Yi call them *Sher-tu* or *Sher-feizu*, meaning 'white-skinned Han' or 'snake-eating Han'. Other locals call them *Da Jiao Ban* ('big foot') and *Da Xiuzi* ('big sleeves').⁵

The Chuanqing (like the Chuanlan) are descended from Chinese soldiers who were sent into Guizhou in the 8th and 9th centuries to quell Miao rebellions. The Chuanqing came from Jiangxi Province and provided forced labour for the army. The Chuanqing

'clung to their own dialect for generations. The women dressed differently, arranging their hair in three sections. They celebrated separate festivals and followed different marriage customs.'⁶

The long history of religious observance among the Chuanqing is evidenced by the presence of several ancient temples in the Anshun area, including the Wen Miao Confucian Temple built in 1368, the Buddhist White Pagoda dating from the Ming Dynasty, and Tian Tai Shan Buddhist Temple built in 1616. Today approximately half of the Chuanqing people claim to be Buddhists, although the number of practising Buddhists is much lower. One of the most important Chuanqing festivals is called 'Crossing the River'. Its Buddhist origins tell a tale of when a woman was banished by the king of hell to the lowest



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depths of hell. Her children decided to rescue her. 'One spring day they walked together along the way their mother had taken, broke through 24 barriers, and finally found the King of Hell. When they saw their miserable mother in a river of blood, they denounced the King of Hell for his cruelty . . . retrieved their mother and spirited her across the river back to the human world.'⁷

There are a number of churches in the Anshun area—mostly Catholic—where Chuanqing believers worship. Catholic missionaries were active in the area in the past, resulting in more than 150,000 Catholics spread throughout Guizhou today.⁸



Population:
761,000 (2000)
981,600 (2010)
1,072,900 (2020)
Countries: China
Buddhism: Mahayana
Christians: 25,000

Overview of the Chuanqing

Other Names: Chuangqing, Lao Han, Pu, Pu Ren, Tun, Tunbao, Fang Teo Ren, Old Han, Shertu, Sher-feizu, Da Jiao Ban, Da Xiuzi

Population Sources:
400,000 to 500,000 in China (1982, *Minzu Shibie Wenxian Ziliao Huibian*)

Language: Sino-Tibetan, Chinese

Dialects: 0

Professing Buddhists: 55%

Practising Buddhists: 20%

Christians: 3.3%

Scripture: Chinese Bible

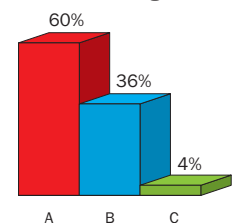
Jesus film: none

Gospel Recordings: Mandarin: Guiyanghai

Christian Broadcasting: none

ROPAL code: none

Status of Evangelization



A = Have never heard the gospel
B = Have heard the gospel but have not become Christians
C = Are adherents to some form of Christianity