

Population in China:
 25,918,000 (1984)
 31,309,000 (2000)
 35,379,000 (2010)
Location: Guangdong, Fujian, Jiangxi, Guangxi, Hong Kong, Hunan, Sichuan
Religion: No Religion
Christians: 150,000

Overview of the Hakka

Countries: China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore¹

Pronunciation: “Hah-kah”

Other Names: Hokka, Kechia, Ke, Kejia, Xinmin, Majia

Population Source: 25,725,000 (1992 B. Grimes – 1984 figure);² Out of a total Han population of 1,042,482,187 (1990 census); 2,000,000 in Taiwan (1991); 985,635 in Malaysia; 640,000 in Indonesia (1982); 69,000 in Singapore³

Location: Guangdong; Fujian; Jiangxi; Guangxi; Hong Kong; Hunan; Sichuan

Status: Officially included under Han Chinese

Language: Chinese, Hakka

Dialects (11): Jiaying, Xinghua, Xinhui, Shaonan, Yuezhong, Huizhou, Yuebei, Tingzhou, Ninglong, Yugui, Tonggu

Religion: No Religion, Animism, Shamanism, Christianity

Christians: 150,000

Scripture: Bible 1916; New Testament 1883; Portions 1860

Jesus film: Available

Gospel Recordings:

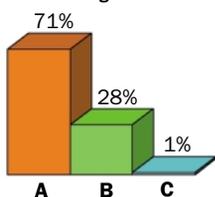
Hakka #00340

Christian Broadcasting:

Available (TWR)

ROPAL code: HAK00

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: More than 30 million Hakka are located in over 200 cities and counties spread throughout seven provinces and administrative areas of China. An additional two million Hakka live in Taiwan. The Hakka are concentrated in Guangdong, Jiangxi, Guangxi, Fujian, Hong Kong, and Hunan provinces. There are also small numbers in Sichuan and Hunan provinces.⁴ In addition, Hakka communities are scattered throughout many nations around the world.

Identity: The Hakka, although proud of their cultural differences, have never claimed to be non-Chinese. Many famous Chinese have been Hakka, including Deng Xiaoping, Lee Kwan Yew, and Hong Xiuquan (the leader of the Taiping Rebellion).

Language: Despite living in geographically scattered communities, the Hakka language is marked with high intelligibility and uniformity between widespread areas. The Hakka are proud of their language and say they would “rather surrender the ancestral land, but never the ancestral speech.”⁵

History: There is much speculation concerning the historical roots of the Hakka. Some claim that they were the first Chinese people to arrive in China. Others claim that the Hakka are the descendants of the Xiongnu tribe. This much is agreed upon: At various stages between the fourth and thirteenth centuries AD, large numbers of people were forced to flee their homes in the war-torn Yellow River valley to seek refuge

in southern China. These war refugees came to be known as *Kejia* — a Hakka word meaning “strangers” or “guests.”⁶ When the savage Mongol hordes swept across China in the thirteenth century, many Hakka fled to the south to escape the carnage.⁷

Customs: As part of the careful preservation of their language, when a non-Hakka woman marries into a Hakka family she is required to learn the Hakka language. In the past, many Hakka mothers killed their female babies. “Sooner than sell their daughters into slavery or concubinage, Hakka mothers prefer to kill them soon after birth.”⁸ The Hakka never practiced foot-binding like other Chinese.

Religion: Since the advent of Communism most Hakka could accurately be described as nonreligious. Aspects of animism and shamanism are found among some of the more remote Hakka locations.

Christianity: Rev. T. H. Hamburg and Rudolf Lechler were the first missionaries sent out by the Basel Mission. They arrived in China in 1846 to commence work among the Hakka. They experienced great success, and by 1922 the Hakka Christians numbered 30,000.⁹ Today, most of the estimated 150,000 Hakka Christians in China are located in southern Guangdong.¹⁰ In the 1800s the Taiping leader Chung Wang, a Hakka, pleaded for missionaries to have patience with his people. “You have had the Gospel for upwards of 1,800 years; we only, as it were, eight days. Your knowledge of it ought to be correct and extensive, ours must necessarily be limited and imperfect. You must therefore bear with us for the present, and we will gradually improve.... We are determined to uproot idolatry, and plant Christianity in its place.”¹¹



Paul Hattaway