



**Population in China:**

448,500 (1987)  
583,700 (2000)  
719,200 (2010)

**Location:**

Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan  
**Religion:** Tibetan Buddhism  
**Christians:** 100

## Overview of the Hbrogpa Amdo

**Countries:** China

**Pronunciation:**  
“Druk-pah-Ahm-doe”

**Other Names:** Brogpa, Amde, Anduo, Ngambo

**Population Source:**  
538,500 (1987 LAC);<sup>1</sup>  
Out of a total Tibetan population of 4,593,330 (1990 census)

**Location:** E Qinghai; N Sichuan; SW Gansu<sup>2</sup>

**Status:**  
Officially included under Tibetan

**Language:** Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Bodic, Bodish, Tibetan, Northern Tibetan

**Dialects:** 15

**Religion:** Tibetan Buddhism, Bon

**Christians:** 100

**Scripture:** Tibetan Bible 1948; New Testament 1885; Portions 1862

**Jesus film:** Available

**Gospel Recordings:**  
Amdo #00182  
Zang, Anduo

**Christian Broadcasting:** None

**ROPAL code:** ADX01



Paul Hattaway

**History:** Horrendous clashes with the Chinese have resulted in massive loss of Amdo Tibetan life. The Dalai Lama listed 49,049 deaths from battles within the Amdo regions before 1983, in addition to 121,982 deaths from starvation.<sup>7</sup>

**Customs:** Most Amdo are seminomadic herders of sheep, yaks, and goats. They move to new pastures whenever their animals have made good use of the land.

**Religion:** Although the vast majority of Amdo are Tibetan Buddhists, in recent years there has been a revival of interest in the pre-Buddhist religion of Bon.<sup>8</sup>

**Christianity:** Several mission agencies worked in the Amdo area prior to 1949. At least five small churches consisting of

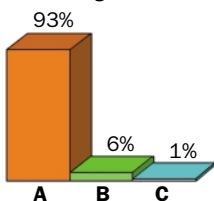
**Location:** More than 550,000 speakers of the Hbrogpa Amdo language live in a vast, sparsely populated area. The majority are located in eastern Qinghai Province, as far north as the Qinghai-Gansu border. Significant numbers also live in southwest Gansu Province and in adjacent parts of northern Sichuan. The Hbrogpa region ranges from Qinghai Lake in the north — which at 4,000 square kilometers (1,560 sq. mi.) is the largest lake in China — to the town of Songpan in Sichuan in the south. Songpan, encircled by a wall built in 1379, once housed 10,000 families.<sup>3</sup> The Amdo region was incorporated into the Chinese empire in the early 1700s.

**Identity:** Hbrogpa, which means “nomad” or “herder” in Tibetan, is the largest of four main Amdo languages. These in turn have been counted as part of the Tibetan nationality in China. “Within these groups are many subgroups, each speaking its own language and living in different areas.”<sup>4</sup>

**Language:** Amdo is very different from other varieties of Tibetan. Within Amdo there are four mutually unintelligible languages, of which Hbrogpa is the largest.<sup>5</sup> Various sources mention 15 unnamed dialects within Hbrogpa.<sup>6</sup>

Amdo Tibetans remain today.<sup>9</sup> One report optimistically estimates as many as 10,000 Tibetan believers near Hezuo.<sup>10</sup> Approximately 200 Tibetan believers attend a church in Lintan County in southern Gansu, but they are Jone Tibetans, not Amdo.<sup>11</sup> Cecil Pohill of the China Inland Mission started a mission station in Xining in 1888. Later he “opened up Songpan as a center for Tibetan work.”<sup>12</sup> In 1922 it was reported, “The confidence of the people has to a great extent been achieved, and not a few have an intelligent knowledge of the way of salvation.”<sup>13</sup> In 1986, “A few Christian households in Gansu Province gathered to worship during a Chinese New Year’s celebration. Their neighbors, seeking to wipe out Christianity, told them to disperse. The Christians were unwilling to stop their meeting and were severely beaten by the crowd. The next morning the persecutors found their sheep, cows and horses were dying. Their family members also began to die one by one. Realizing that the wrath of God had fallen upon them, they pleaded with those who believed in Jesus to pray. The Lord heard the believers’ prayers, and the sick and dying were healed. As a result, over a hundred Amdo Tibetans turned to the Lord!”<sup>14</sup>

**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