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**Location:** More than two million speakers of Pinghua Chinese inhabit the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in southern China. They live primarily along the major traffic routes between Lingchuan (north of Guilin) and Nanning in the south, especially those following the railway line. “A northern subgroup (Guibei) can be found extending from Guilin, through Yangshuo and Pingle, to Fuchuan, Zhongshan and Hexian.”<sup>1</sup>

**Identity:** Although the Pinghua Chinese are counted as part of the Han nationality, their language is clearly distinct from all other varieties of Chinese.

**Language:** Pinghua is divided into two dialects: *Guibei* (Northern) and *Guinan* (Southern). These two dialects “show

significant disparities, though there are a few common features.”<sup>2</sup> The Northern dialect consists of only five tones, while the Southern dialect contains eight. One early visitor noted, “The dialect that results from this mixture of races is called *Pengwa*. A large proportion of the people... evidently do not speak Cantonese or Mandarin, or at any rate do not speak it freely.”<sup>3</sup>

**History:** *The Song Dynasty (960–1279):* Zhao Kuangyin conquered more than a dozen regional kingdoms and assumed power in 959. The Song period is usually divided into the Northern Song (960–1126) ruled from Kaifeng City in Henan Province; and the Southern Song (1127–1279) which had Hangzhou in present-day Zhejiang as its capital. The

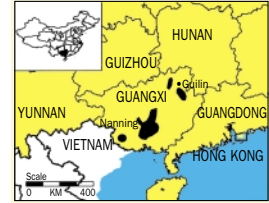
northern state had fallen to Tibetan and Mongol kingdoms, who set up their own rule in the north, known as the Western Xia (1038–1227) and Jin (1115–1234) dynasties. The Song rulers were forced to relocate to Hangzhou. During this time, the world first learned about the mysteries and grandeur of China after explorers such as Marco Polo visited there.

**Customs:** Historical records suggest chopsticks were not always used by the Chinese. In ancient times the Chinese used utensils similar to knives and forks, but after a prolonged period of famine, food was eaten in small pieces, and the use of chopsticks developed.

**Religion:** The Chinese *Book of History* mentions that at the dawn of Chinese history in the days of Yao and Shuen, 2,200 BC, a terrible inundation was recorded that had once desolated the land. “In their vast extent the waters embrace the mountains and over-top the hills, threatening heaven with their floods.”<sup>4</sup> The Chinese have now reduced these accounts to merely a bad flood of the Yellow River.

**Christianity:** Guangxi, which means “vast west,” has traditionally been one of the parts of China most neglected by missionaries. In the 1920s workers lamented that there were “areas inhabited by [minority] tribes where no Christian worker would be familiar with the languages spoken and where the country has not as yet been explored.”<sup>5</sup> Today no more than 0.3% of Guangxi’s 45 million inhabitants claim to

be Christians. Protestants in Guangxi number between 50,000<sup>6</sup> and 90,000,<sup>7</sup> in addition to 30,000 Catholics.<sup>8</sup>



**Population in China:**  
 2,000,000 (1987)  
 2,338,000 (2000)  
 2,642,000 (2010)  
**Location:** Guangxi  
**Religion:** No Religion  
**Christians:** 8,000

## Overview of the Pinghua Chinese

**Countries:** China  
**Pronunciation:** “Ping-hwa”  
**Other Names:** Pinghua, Ping, Pinghwa, Penghua, Penhwa, Pengwa  
**Population Source:** More than 2,000,000 (1987 LAC); Out of a total Han population of 1,042,482,187 (1990 census)  
**Location:** *Guangxi:* Between Lingchuan and Nanning  
**Status:** Officially included under Han Chinese  
**Language:** Chinese, Pinghua  
**Dialects (2):** Guibei, Guinan  
**Religion:** No Religion, Buddhism, Christianity, Daoism  
**Christians:** 8,000  
**Scripture:** None  
**Jesus film:** None  
**Gospel Recordings:** None  
**Christian Broadcasting:** None  
**ROPAL code:** None

