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Location: Approximately 930,000 speakers of Shaozhou Tuhua — or “Shaozhou native speech” — live in northern Guangdong Province, and possibly in the adjacent areas of Hunan and Jiangxi. The Shaozhou are spread across eight counties of northern Guangdong: Lianxian, Liannan, Lechang, Ruyuan, Qujiang, Shaoguan, Renhua, and Nanxiong.

Identity: The northern Guangdong area has been a crossroads for migrating peoples through the centuries. This has forced a wide range of influences upon the Shaozhou Chinese, resulting in their language being distinct from other Han groups.

Language: This century, Shaozhou speakers “have been swamped by Hakka speakers as the latter continue to migrate into the area.”¹ There are many variants of Shaozhou, “each

differing significantly from the others.... Other varieties of native dialects are also found in Jianghua, Jiangyong and Daoxian in the neighboring province of Hunan. Further studies are required to determine whether these dialects are related to Shaozhou Tuhua.”²

History: *The Taiping Rebellion (1851–1864):* The Taiping Rebellion started in 1851 when the Manchu government tried to ban a movement in the south of China headed by Hong Xiuquan. Hong believed he was the brother of Jesus Christ and gathered a large number of followers with claims that he was on a mission from God to build a “Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace.” They smashed Buddhist and Daoist temples and abolished slavery and foot-binding. By 1853 they had captured the south of China and had grown to an army of

600,000 men and 500,000 women. The army were only allowed to adhere to the Taiping version of Christianity and were not allowed to smoke, drink, or gamble. In 1864 a multinational army attacked the Taiping base at Nanjing, completely slaughtering the rebels and abruptly ending the movement.

Customs: The Shaozhou Chinese are a part of the huge Han nationality. The Han generally consider themselves culturally superior to the minority groups of China. One government publication arrogantly points out, “The Han... are more developed than the minorities in the political, economic and cultural spheres.”³

Religion: In 1900 many Chinese, outraged by foreign domination of its ports, caused the antiforeign Boxer Rebellion to break out. Missionaries and their Chinese converts were especially targeted. In Shanxi alone, 159 missionaries were massacred.⁴

Christianity: In addition to the hundreds of foreign missionaries killed by the Boxers, some 32,000 Chinese Christians were butchered.⁵ A *London Times* reporter in Beijing described the carnage: “As darkness came on, the most awful cries were heard in the city, most demonical and unforgettable, the cries of the Boxers — ‘Sha kwei-tzu’ (kill the devils) — mingled with the shrieks of the victims and the groans of the dying. For Boxers were sweeping through the city, massacring the native

Christians and burning them alive in their homes.”⁶



Population in China:
 800,000 (1987)
 935,200 (2000)
 1,056,800 (2010)
Location: Guangdong
Religion: Daoism
Christians: 8,000

Overview of the Shaozhou Chinese

- Countries:** China
- Pronunciation:** “Shaow-joe”
- Other Names:** Shaozhou Tuhua, Shaozhou
- Population Source:** 800,000 (1987 LAC); Out of a total Han population of 1,042,482,187 (1990 census)
- Location:** *N Guangdong:* Lianxian, Liannan, Lechang, Ruyuan, Qujiang, Shaoguan, Renhua, and Nanxiong counties; Possibly also in *Jiangxi* and *Hunan* provinces
- Status:** Officially included under Han Chinese
- Language:** Chinese, Shaozhou Tuhua
- Dialects:** 0
- Religion:** Daoism, No Religion, Ancestor Worship, Buddhism
- Christians:** 8,000
- Scripture:** None
- Jesus film:** None
- Gospel Recordings:** None
- Christian Broadcasting:** None
- ROPAL code:** None

