



Population in China:
 11,068 (1987)
 15,200 (2000)
 19,600 (2010)
Location: Guangxi
Religion: Animism
Christians: None Known

Overview of the Lakkia

- Countries:** China
- Pronunciation:** "Lah-kee-uh"
- Other Names:** Lakjia, Lakja, Tai Laka, Lakia, Lajia, Chashan Yao, Tea Mountain Yao, Laka
- Population Source:** 11,068 (1987 D. Bradley); Out of a total Yao population of 2,134,013 (1990 census)
- Location:** *Guangxi:* Jinxiu Yao Autonomous County
- Status:** Officially included under Yao
- Language:** Daic, Kam-Sui
- Dialects:** 0
- Religion:** Animism, Polytheism, Ancestor Worship
- Christians:** None known
- Scripture:** None
- Jesus film:** None
- Gospel Recordings:** None
- Christian Broadcasting:** None
- ROPAL code:** LBC00

Location: A 1987 source lists a figure of 11,068 Lakkia people in China.¹ The number of speakers of the Lakkia language is less than the total population. Different linguists have listed figures of 8,000,² 8,900,³ and 9,000⁴ speakers. The Lakkia are located along both banks of the Jinxiu River, in the Dayaoshan (Big Yao Mountains) in Guangxi. They live in a concentrated area and are not found in any other part of China.⁵

Miao (Hmong-Mien) language family.⁷ Lakkia has 45% lexical similarity with Dong and 44% with Northern Zhuang.⁸

History: Acknowledged to be the original inhabitants of the Dayaoshan Mountains, they are said to have arrived in the area from Guangdong, passing through Wuzhou in Guangxi before entering their present location via Teng and Pingnan counties.⁹ It is possible the Lakkia were originally a Tai

group who, after centuries of living alongside the Yao, became assimilated to the Yao culture but still retained their original language.

Customs: Lakkia houses are long and deep and are approached through three or four successive gates. Inside the front gate are cattle and pigs. The living quarters are located in the rear of the house. Lakkia courting customs are simple. "At a suspension tower... boys stand at one corner and girls at another, singing to each other.... Through singing one looks for one's dream girl or ideal man and love songs are sung by way of courtship. When a boy and a girl come to like each other in the course of



Dwayne Graybill

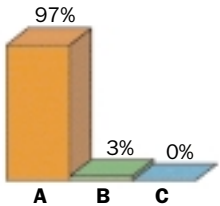
Identity: The Lakkia have been officially included as part of the Yao nationality in China. Although they are culturally similar to some Yao groups, the Lakkia speak a language from the Dong-Shui linguistic branch. *Lakkia* is the self-name of this people group. The Chinese call them *Chashan Yao*, meaning "Yao of the tea mountains." Formerly they were called *Changmao Yao* meaning "long-haired Yao" because they used to wear their long hair in buns. The Lakkia should not be confused with the Laka of northern Yunnan,⁶ the identically named Lakkia of Vietnam, or the Laqua in Yunnan who have also been known to call themselves Lakkia.

singing, they exchange bracelets or waist belts as a token of their love. The boy's family will then send a match-maker to the girl's and the two will get married on an auspicious day."¹⁰

Religion: Most Lakkia could be considered animists, with fewer traces of Daoism in their beliefs than in those of the four other Yao groups in the Dayaoshan Mountains.

Christianity: There are no known believers among the Lakkia. The area was mentioned in a 1922 report: "Just north of Pingnamyun there is a large area known as the Yao Mountain district still uncharted, where a local dialect prevails of which little is known."¹¹ In 1998, Gospel recordings in the Xinping language were produced for the first time.

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

Language: The Lakkia language is unique among the various Yao groups in China because it is not even a part of the Yao or