



Population in China:
 1,197 (1990)
 1,540 (2000)
 1,990 (2010)
Location: Heilongjiang
Religion: Tibetan Buddhism
Christians: None Known

Overview of the Khakas

Countries: Russia, China

Pronunciation: "Khar-kuss"

Other Names: Khakhas, Khakhass, Abakan Tatar, Yenisei Tatar, Heilongjiang Kirgiz, Fuyu Kirgiz, Fuyu Keerkezi, Xakas, Khakassian

Population Source:
 1,197 (1990 census);
 875 (1982 census);
 Out of a total Kirgiz population of 141,549 (1990 census);
 64,800 in Russia
 (1993 United Bible Societies)

Location: *Heilongjiang:* Fuyu County, north of Qiqihar

Status:
 Officially included under Kirgiz

Language:
 Altaic, Turkic, Northern Turkic

Dialects: 0

Religion: Tibetan Buddhism, Animism, Shamanism, No Religion

Christians: None known

Scripture: None

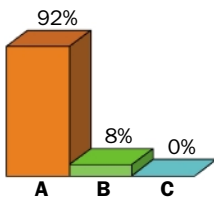
Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings: None

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: KJH00

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: The 1990 Chinese census listed 1,197 members of the Khakas people group before they were combined into the official Kirgiz nationality. In contrast to the Kirgiz who live in northwest China, the Khakas live in Fuyu County in Heilongjiang Province in China's northeast. The largest Khakas community in China is Qujiazi Village. In 1979 it contained 219 Khakas,

youngest speaker was 60 years old. The Khakas have been bilingual in Olot, Mongolian, or Chinese for several generations. Now all Khakas youth speak only Mandarin.⁵ For the time being the Khakas is the easternmost Turkic-speaking group in the world. In Russia, where there is a Khakas script, the language is not under immediate threat.



Dwayne Graybill

History: During the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) the Kirgiz fought with the Oirats. When the latter were defeated by the Eastern Mongols, most Kirgiz tribes moved to the Tianshan Range in Xinjiang where they still live today. A few Kirgiz remained in their homeland on the upper Yenisei River in today's Russia. Others lived just south of there, in the Altai Mountain range, as late as the eighteenth century. "When the Qing forces defeated the Jungars in the 1750s, they removed these Kirgiz [Khakas] to China's northeast. The first group moved there in 1758 and a second group followed them in 1761 from the Altai and Kang'ai mountain ranges. These two groups form the core of today's Kirgiz [Khakas] in Heilongjiang."⁶

327 Han Chinese, 84 Mongols, 21 Daur, and 2 Manchus.¹ The Khakas live along the eastern bank of the Nonni River. Another group of Khakas used to live in the Imim region of Inner Mongolia, but they were ethnically assimilated by other nationalities during the early part of the twentieth century. The vast majority of Khakas today (about 65,000) live in the Altai region of Russia.

Identity: Although the Chinese officially consider the Khakas to be a part of the Kirgiz nationality, their languages and culture "differ considerably."² In Russia the Khakas are a collection of the five nomadic Turkic-speaking tribes of Kacha, Kyzyl, Sagai, Beltir, and Koibal.³

Language: The Khakas language in China is nearly extinct. In 1982 there were only ten fluent speakers of Khakas remaining.⁴ The

Customs: Most Khakas no longer practise their own customs. They have adapted to Chinese culture and before long will probably cease to be a distinct people.

Religion: Unlike the Kirgiz, there are no Muslims among the Khakas. They were converted to Tibetan Buddhism by their Mongol neighbors. "Until the 1950s you could still find shamans, called *Gam* in the Khakas villages."⁷ Today the Khakas are rapidly becoming a secularized group. Few of the present generation of Khakas youth have any interest in religion.

Christianity: There has never been a single known believer among the Khakas in China. Their relatives in Russia are also an unreached people who follow animistic practices. Although they have a written script, the Scriptures have never been translated into Khakas.