

**Population in China:**

70,100,000 (1987)  
81,947,000 (2000)  
92,600,000 (2010)

**Location:** Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Shanghai, Jiangxi, Fujian, Anhui

**Religion:** No Religion  
**Christians:** 4,000,000

## Overview of the Wu Chinese

**Countries:** China

**Pronunciation:** "Woo"

**Other Names:**

Wu, Shanghai, Shanghainese

**Population Source:**

70,100,000 (1987 LAC);  
Out of a total Han population of 1,042,482,187 (1990 census)

**Location:** Zhejiang; S Jiangsu; Shanghai; Jiangxi; N Fujian; S Anhui

**Status:** Officially included under Han Chinese

**Language:** Chinese, Wu

**Dialects (14):** Piling, Suhujia, Tiaoxi, Hangzhou, Linshao, Yongjiang, Taizhou, Oujiang, Wuzhou, Chuzhou, Longqu, Tongjing, Taiguo, Shiling

**Religion:** No Religion, Buddhism, Christianity

**Christians:** 4,000,000

**Scripture:** Bible 1908; New Testament 1868; Portions 1847

**Jesus film:** Available

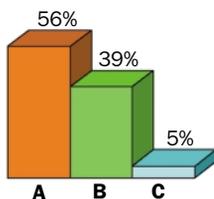
**Gospel Recordings:**

Chinese: Wu #04694  
Shanghai Chinese #00396

**Christian Broadcasting:** None

**ROPAL code:** WUU00

### 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 1987 China Language Atlas listed 70.1 million speakers of the Wu Chinese language.<sup>1</sup> Wu is spoken over a widespread area of 137,500 square kilometers (53,600 sq. mi.) in six provinces of eastern China. The majority are located in Zhejiang Province (43 million by the year 2000), southern Jiangsu Province (19.3 million), and the city of Shanghai (13.9 million). Smaller numbers are also located in Jiangxi, northern Fujian, and southern Anhui provinces.

**Identity:** The Wu Chinese language is more commonly referred to as the Shanghai dialect, but in fact Wu is spoken in a far greater area than just Shanghai. The Wu are counted as part of the Han nationality.

**Language:** Wu consists of 14 dialects, all of which are very different from Mandarin Chinese. Most Wu, however, are bilingual in Mandarin because it has been used in all media and education for the past 40 years.

**History:** *The Republic of China (1911–1949):* Secret societies and triads were active throughout the Chinese countryside at the turn of the twentieth century. China was effectively run by local warlords. Discontent at foreign control over many parts of China led to the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, when more than 200 foreigners, mostly missionaries, were killed. The Boxers were themselves a secret society which originated in Shandong Province and stirred up anti-foreign sentiment throughout the land. In October 1911 Sun Yatsen

set up the Republic of China and was promptly displaced as president by Yuan Shikai. Unrest in the countryside and economic chaos created a favorable environment for the Communist Party, headed by Mao Zedong. They won the hearts of China's oppressed peasants and waged a civil war against the Nationalists from 1927 to 1949. The Kuomintang army of the Nationalists were defeated and fled — along with the country's entire gold reserves — to Taiwan, from where they have claimed to be the rightful rulers of China until the present time.

**Customs:** In the 1990s the differences between China's poor and the wealthy reached epidemic proportions. In 1997 one magazine commented, "China has no shortage of workers who have reached the limit of their tolerance.... Widespread labour unrest doesn't just threaten economic reforms

— it threatens the Party's hold on power."<sup>2</sup>

**Religion:** Most Wu Chinese do not practice any religion, although in recent years there has been widespread interest in the magical practice of Qi Gong.

**Christianity:** There were Nestorian churches in the region between Nanjing and Shanghai as early as AD 1279. At one time the Nestorians had seven monasteries in and around the city of Zhenjiang,<sup>3</sup> now in Jiangsu Province. In the 1800s almost all missionaries to China commenced their work in Shanghai, which was the first port of entry for foreigners. This has resulted in the region having the highest concentration of Christians in all of China today. The Wu number at least 4 million believers, including 2.5 million in Zhejiang<sup>4</sup> and 247,000 in Shanghai.<sup>5</sup>



Paul Hattaway