



Population in China:
 10,000 (1994)
 11,700 (2000)
 15,100 (2010)
Location: Sichuan
Religion: No Religion
Christians: None Known

Overview of the Ming

Countries: China

Pronunciation: "Ming"

Other Names: Mingzu

Population: 10,000 (1994 AMO);
 Out of a total Qiang population of
 198,252 (1990 census)

Location: *Sichuan:* Maoxian
 Qiang Autonomous County and
 Wenchuan County

Status: Probably officially
 included under Qiang

Language: Sino-Tibetan,
 Tibeto-Burman, Unclassified

Dialects: 0

Religion:
 No Religion, Animism, Polytheism

Christians: None known

Scripture: None

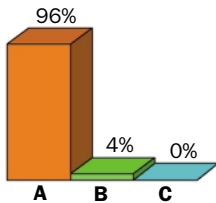
Jesus film: None

Gospel Recordings: None

Christian Broadcasting: None

ROPAL code: None

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



Paul Hattaway

Location: The 11,700 Ming people are a mixed race who live in and around the towns of Maoxian and Wenchuan counties in Sichuan Province. Maoxian County is the administrative seat of the Qiang Autonomous County — about eight hours by road from Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan Province. Maoxian is one of the most beautiful locations in all of China, with the fast-flowing Min River cutting its way through massive cliffs that rise directly from the river banks.

Identity: The Ming people are an ethnic Han Chinese-Qiang mix. They formed their own communities after being ostracized by the other peoples in the region. The Ming wear distinct costumes marked by a white turban. They call themselves *Ming Zu*, meaning "Ming nationality." Scottish missionary Thomas F. Torrance notes, "In Weizhou [now called Wenchuan] most of the people are either Qiang or a mixed race, though there are some outsiders of Tibetan, Jiarong, Xifan, Nosu, Wazi, and Bolotsze... as well."¹

Language: The Ming spoken language, like the race itself, is a mixture of Qiang and Chinese. All Ming are able to speak the local dialect of Mandarin and rely on Chinese for everyday communications. The

Ming language has also been influenced by numerous Qiang and Tibetan loanwords.

History: A mixed race has existed in the Qiang region for at least a thousand years. During the zenith of the Tibetan empire (AD 600–900), many Qiang were assimilated by the Tibetans and by Han Chinese. According to one scholar, "Only a small number were not assimilated."² In the past there was prejudice against the members of this mixed race, who were not socially accepted by either the Qiang or the Han Chinese. They were forced to form their own communities and villages and to adopt a separate identity.

Customs: The Ming observe all traditional Chinese festivals, including the

Chinese New Year and Spring Festival celebrations. Being the crossroads for several ethnic groups, Maoxian County hosts a large number of Tibetan and Qiang festivals and special occasions.

Religion: Although some Ming are animists, the majority can accurately be described as nonreligious. There are Daoist and Buddhist temples in Maoxian County, but many of the customs and beliefs that formed the identity of the people in the region have been set aside since the Communists took over China. The young generation of Qiang have been educated in atheistic schools and made to ridicule their parents' religious beliefs, which are mocked as "superstition."

Christianity: Catholic mission work in the late 1800s and Protestant work in the early 1900s established several churches among the Qiang in the geographically isolated Maoxian area, but no evidence of those labors remains today. There are currently no known churches or believers among the Ming. At least three teams of foreigners have been arrested in recent years for attempting to distribute gospel literature in Maoxian County. The local authorities strongly oppose such outreach.