



# 客家

My China Roots & CBA Jamaica

**An overview of Hakka  
Migration History: *Where are  
you from?***

*July, 2016*

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## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Five Key Hakka Migration Waves .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Mapping the Waves.....	3
First Wave: 4 <sup>th</sup> Century, “the Five Barbarians,” Jin Dynasty.....	4
Second Wave: 10 <sup>th</sup> Century, Fall of the Tang Dynasty.....	6
Third Wave: Late 12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> Century, Fall Northern & Southern Song Dynasties .....	7
Fourth Wave: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Half 17 <sup>th</sup> Century, Ming-Qing Cataclysm .....	8
Fifth Wave: 19 <sup>th</sup> – Early 20 <sup>th</sup> Century.....	9
<b>Case Study: Hakka Migration to Jamaica .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Introduction .....	11
Context for Early Migration: The Coolie Trade.....	11
First Tranche: 1854, a British Experiment and a Panama Disaster .....	12
Second Tranche: 1860s-1880s, Intra-Caribbean Chinese Migrations .....	12
Third Tranche: 1884, Final Batch of Coolies Forms Base for Chain Migration .....	13
Fourth Tranche: Late 19 <sup>th</sup> –Early 20 <sup>th</sup> Centuries, Chain Migration .....	14

# An Overview of Hakka Migration History: *Where Are You From?*

## Introduction

For centuries, the Hakka identity of yourself and your ancestors has been intrinsically linked to movement and migration. What was it that made so many of your ancestors uproot their families and risk everything by moving to an unknown place, with unknown customs and unknown people?

Of course, there was never just one simple reason. Issues such as socio-political upheaval, successions of crop failures, or overpopulation may well have pushed your ancestors out of their homes. At the same time, a combination of commercial opportunities and established social networks elsewhere would have needed to provide a “pull-element.” Moreover, in the case of late 19<sup>th</sup> century overseas migration, such push and pull dynamics were facilitated by Europe’s industrial revolution and the steam boats that it had brought forth. Nothing ever happens in isolation.

This report gives some brief historic background to the key Hakka migration waves, first within mainland China, and then outside China, with a case study on migration to Jamaica.



How would *your* ancestral story be intertwined with the course of history outlined below?

## Five Key Hakka Migration Waves

### ***Mapping the Waves***

While the Hakka concept as we know it today has only been widely used for several hundred years,<sup>1</sup> your Hakka roots go back more than 1,500 years.

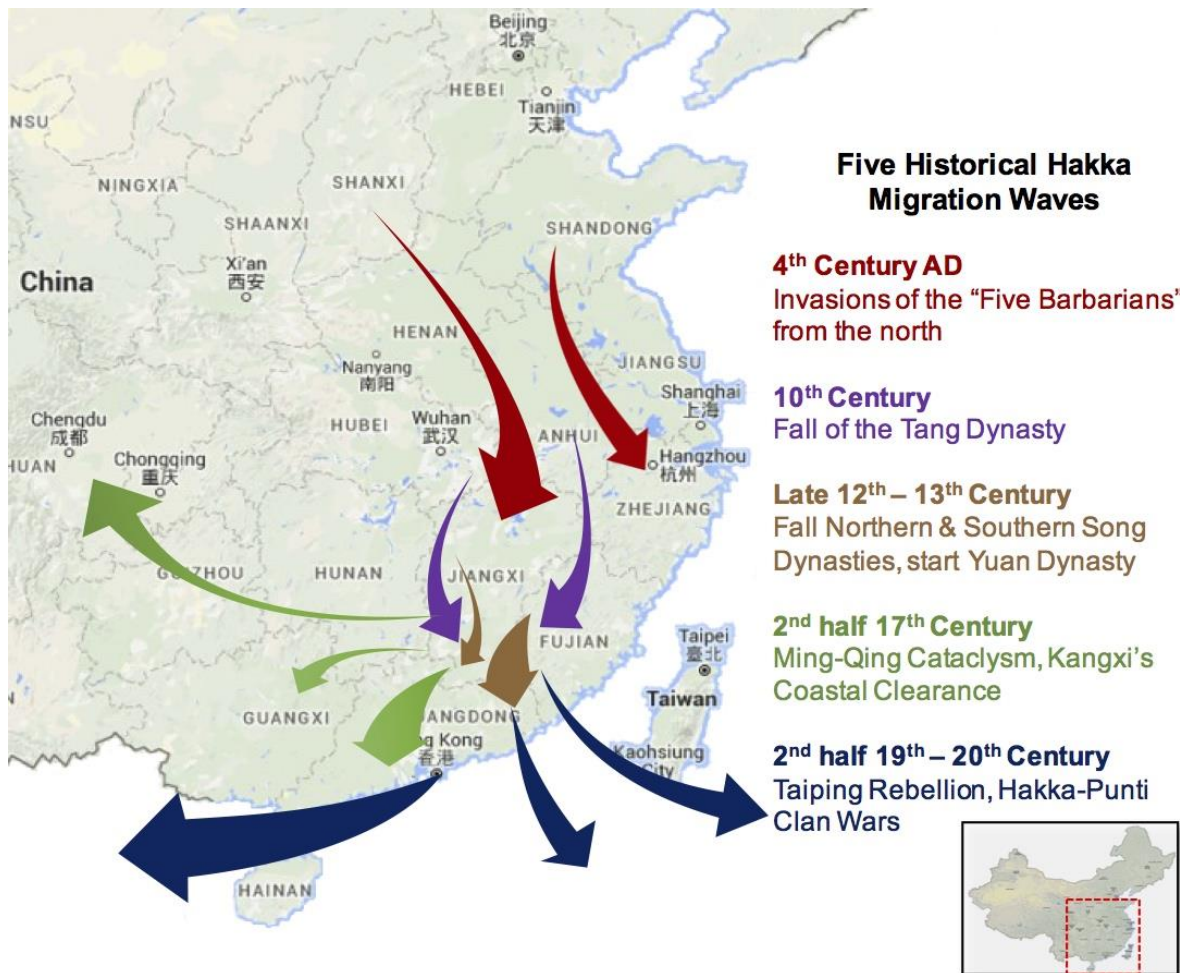
Starting in the fourth century, during China’s Jin Dynasty, the ancestors of the Hakka have gone through five key, large scale migration waves. Moving to new, common places together over a protracted period of some 1.5 millennia, these migrants and their descendants gradually started developing and preserving their own language and customs. Only around the 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century, this particular group would become more widely known as “guest people” or “Hakka”.

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<sup>1</sup> One of the first times the word “Hakka” (or more precisely: the two characters “客家”) was mentioned in an official government document while referring to a specific group of individuals with their own language and customs, was in the 1687 edition of the County Gazetteer of Yong’an in Fujian province.

## An Overview of Hakka Migration History: *Where Are You From?*

This map shows the five historical waves of Hakka migration. As described in more detail below, for each migration wave there was some form of social unrest at play, often coinciding with the violent transition from one dynasty to the next.



### ***First Wave: 4<sup>th</sup> Century, “the Five Barbarians,” Jin Dynasty***

At the start of the fourth century, things looked bleak for China. The weakened Jin Dynasty had lost its economic, political, and military power: A mentally disabled Emperor sat on the throne, while a power struggle within his family had turned into the “War of the Eight Princes”. In the meantime, hostile nomadic tribes in the north were pounding at the borders of the Empire.

Traditionally interacting with the Chinese by trading their horses and animal products for Chinese agricultural goods and silk, the nomadic tribes had been forced to pay taxes to the Jin court, which had been a source of growing resentment. From 304 until 316, five northern, foreign tribes, collectively known as the “Wuhu”, conducted “the

#### ***Meanwhile, around the start of the 4<sup>th</sup> century...***

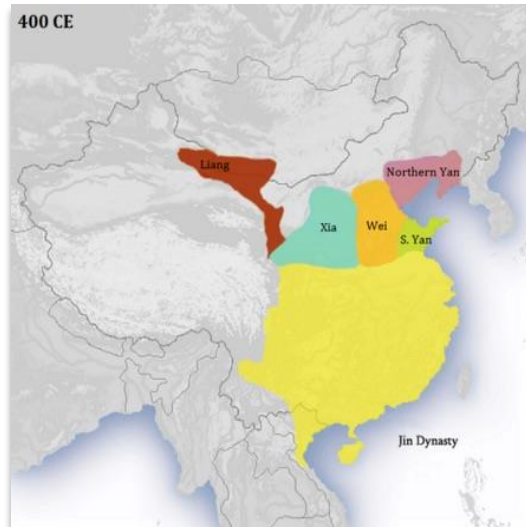
- Roman Emperor Constantine the Great converts to Christianity and moves the Roman capital to Constantinople (today’s Istanbul)
- The stirrup is invented in China, making its way to Europe only centuries later.

## An Overview of Hakka Migration History: *Where Are You From?*

Uprising of the Five Barbarians<sup>2</sup>: a series of invasions that led to five independent kingdoms in northern China.<sup>2</sup>



*Jin dynasty in 280AD*



*Jin dynasty in 400AD, with "barbaric", Wuhu states in the north*

Humiliation of the Jin Empire was complete when the Wuhu armies captured the Jin capital of Luoyang. Upon entering the city, the Wuhu rebels engaged in a massacre, razing the city and causing more than 30,000 deaths. The Emperor was captured, and his crown prince and clansmen killed.

The chaos and devastation of the north led to a mass migration of Han Chinese towards the south, where conditions were relatively stable. This situation of mass migration continued throughout the entire fourth century. Many of the refugees were from prominent, wealthy families, and as they moved southward, they spread Han-Chinese culture across the south. Crossing the Yangzi river, they settled in southern Henan, Zhejiang, some parts of Fujian, and especially in Jiangxi province.



*The Xiongnu (one of the Wuhu/Five Barbarians)*

The first steps in the grand evolutionary process towards your Hakka identity had been taken.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The five "barbaric" groups were the Xiongnu, Xianbei, Jie, Qiang and the Di. Collectively, these groups were known as the "Wuhu".

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that there are also historians who regard the Jin Dynasty migration wave as the *second* wave of Hakka migration history. In their view, the first wave would have occurred during the conquests of

## An Overview of Hakka Migration History: *Where Are You From?*

### **Second Wave: 10<sup>th</sup> Century, Fall of the Tang Dynasty**

#### ***A weakened Tang makes way for chaos and disorder***

The Tang Dynasty lasted from 618 until 907 and is generally regarded as one of the true high points in Chinese civilization. It is considered the greatest age for Chinese poetry, and many innovations such as woodblock printing came about during this era. Its political and cultural influence reached across Inner Asia through the lucrative trade routes along the Silk Road, towards the east into neighboring Korea and Japan, and Vietnam to its south.

#### ***Meanwhile, in the 10<sup>th</sup> century...***

- The Classic Period of Maya civilization ends.
- The Byzantine (or Eastern Roman) Empire at the height of its military and economic strength.
- Vikings settle in northern France.

However, the second half of the ninth century saw a severely weakened Tang Dynasty with lazy emperors, scheming eunuchs and corrupt scholar officials at the Court, and natural disasters and rebellions raging across a crumbling empire. The fall of the Tang in 907 was followed by half a century of social chaos and political upheaval: micro-dynasties and kingdoms came and went as warlords, kings and self-imposed emperors ruled the day.

Throughout the tenth century, the proto-Hakka migrated south. This time, they descended to southern Anhui, southwestern Jiangxi, southern and western Fujian, and the northern border of Guangdong province.

#### ***A Cradle of Hakka Civilization: Tingzhou***

A very large part of the migrants settled in an area called Tingzhou, in western Fujian (see map). As a result, centuries later, Tingzhou prefecture became known as a “cradle of Hakka civilization”.

It is quite likely that your own ancestors, at one point or another, lived in the wider area of Tingzhou.

Tingzhou was located on the banks of the Ting river, a major artery running between interior Jiangxi Province and coastal Fujian. The river had made Tingzhou a central hub for wave after wave of Hakka-predecessor-migrants. Also important in the context of later Hakka migration waves, the Ting river flowed south to Meizhou in Guangdong province, another historical Hakka stronghold.

Surrounded by interlocking steep mountain ranges, Tingzhou overall was difficult to access and thus to some extent isolated from the outside world. As a consequence, Tingzhou enjoyed a reputation for being a lawless region, a popular place not just for economic migrants, but also for political refugees and bandits.



*Tingzhou today*

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Qin Shihuang (260 BC – 210 BC), the legendary Emperor who unified China and was responsible for constructing parts of the Great Wall and the Xi'an Terracotta Warriors.

**Third Wave: Late 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> Century, Fall Northern & Southern Song Dynasties**

**Northern enemy no. 1: The Jurchens & the Fall of the Northern Song**

The Third Hakka Migration Wave started less than two centuries after the Second Wave, and took place during and after the Song Dynasty (960-1279). The Song Dynasty was overall a time of economic flourishing, characterized by an expanded, well-organized civil bureaucracy, the popularization of paper currency, and inventions such as moveable printing types, gunpowder, and the compass.

However, China's cultivated riches were tainted by rags when in 1127, the foreign Jurchen armies invaded, sacked the capital of Kaifeng, abducted the Emperor and plundered the Imperial Palace. Like the first two waves, unrest had come from the north, pushing migration towards the south. The Emperor's half-brother escaped and established the Southern Song Dynasty with its capital city of Hangzhou in Zhejiang province.

**Northern enemy no. 2: The Mongolians & the Fall of the Southern Song**

Starting only some 80 years later, and continuing throughout most of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Mongols systematically invaded China using clever diplomacy and innovative military tactics. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese men died in combat and countless civilians were conscripted for Mongol invasions of Korea, Japan, Burma, and Vietnam. In 1271, Kublai Khan, grandson of the great Mongolian conqueror Genghis Khan, proclaimed the Yuan Dynasty.

Whereas the Jurchen armies "only" managed to conquer China's north, the Mongolians eventually managed to occupy all of China, thus giving a new push to the Third Wave of historical Hakka migration.

**Meizhou**

Countless proto-Hakka followed the Royal Song Household even further south, in the direction of eastern and northern Guangdong Province. The area of Meizhou became a key place attracting new Hakka arrivals. Like Tingzhou, Meizhou became an essential hub in Hakka migration history, and is still known as the "Hometown for the overseas Hakka" today.

**Meanwhile, halfway into the 12<sup>th</sup> century...**

- Europe goes through the High Middle Ages
- Richard the Lionheart is born, to become King of England during the life and times of Robin Hood.
- The Khmer Empire builds Angkor Wat in today's Cambodia.



*Jurchen warriors*

**Meanwhile, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century...**

- Crusaders try to make their way to free the Holy Land in their 4<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> papal-military campaigns.
- Eyeglasses are invented in Italy.
- Births of Dante Alighieri, St. Thomas Aquinas, Marco Polo.
- Sacking of Baghdad by the Mongols ends the Islamic Golden Age.



*A Mongolian warrior*

## An Overview of Hakka Migration History: *Where Are You From?*

Could it be that you still have distant family in the wider Meizhou region?

### ***Fourth Wave: 2<sup>nd</sup> Half 17<sup>th</sup> Century, Ming-Qing Cataclysm***

#### ***The Qing Dynasty, China once again under foreign (Manchu) rule***

Interestingly, 517 years after the Jurchens invaded the Northern Song Empire, their descendants returned to occupy China. By this time however, the Jurchens had started referring to themselves as “Manchus,” and this time, they managed to conquer all of China.

In 1644, after the last Ming Dynasty Emperor had hung himself on a tree next to the Forbidden City in Beijing, the Manchu leaders took over the capital in the north and proclaimed the start of the Qing Dynasty.

However, the process of conquering southern China took another 18 violent years of battling Ming loyalists and imperial pretenders. The most famous and powerful Ming royalist was a man by the name of Zheng Chenggong, also known as Koxinga.

#### ***Kangxi’s Coastal Clearance Order of 1662***

In 1661, Koxinga led his army to Taiwan, where he established a base in order to reinforce his Anti-Qing campaign and re-direct it to the mainland coast.

That same year, the fourth Qing Dynasty Emperor, Kangxi, ascended the throne. As a response to Koxinga’s move to Taiwan, Kangxi took drastic measures and ordered a complete evacuation of China’s coast.

From southern Guangdong all the way to central-northern Shandong, people were forced to leave their land and homes and move at least 25-30km land inward. Reluctant inhabitants were forcefully removed from the houses of their ancestors, families were separated and villages were burnt. Many thousands died on the journey or were killed by Qing soldiers in the ensuing chaos.

#### ***Lifting of the Order leads to the Fourth Hakka Migration Wave***

When Kangxi finally lifted his evacuation order in 1669, only a fraction of former residents returned home. In order to incentivize the coastal re-population, the Qing government offered land tax exemptions and free cattle or crop seeds to those willing to settle in the deserted areas.

The incentives triggered a large-scale influx of Hakka families. Over the next 150 years, the population of, for instance, today’s Shenzhen area was to increase six-fold: from around 4000 in 1670, to 24,000 in 1818.



*Zheng Chenggong  
or Koxinga*



*Kangxi Emperor*

#### ***Meanwhile, in the 1670s...***

- The Hudson’s Bay Company is founded in Canada.
- Spain recognises Jamaica as English territory.
- The Dutch cede today’s New York to England, while keeping Surinam.
- Louis the 14<sup>th</sup>, the Sun King rules France.
- Isaac Newton formulates his fundamental laws of motion and gravitation.



## An Overview of Hakka Migration History: *Where Are You From?*

The Hakka Migration Wave that started in the 17<sup>th</sup> century went beyond moving to the coast though. Many Hakka families from northern Guangdong and southwestern Jiangxi also moved to the central regions of Guangdong, as well as Taiwan, and the provinces of Sichuan, Guangxi, and Hunan.

### ***The Hakka have arrived***

It was around this time that the term “Hakka” became more widely used and commonly accepted for a specific group of people with their own language and customs, as opposed to referring to “guest people” or “non-locals” in general.



### ***Fifth Wave: 19<sup>th</sup> – Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century***

#### ***Leaving the motherland***

Three wars in southern China were particularly important in setting off the Fifth Wave of Hakka Migration, which was directed overseas for the first time. The first one, the First Opium War, had a facilitating impact by making it easier to emigrate. The other two, the Taiping Rebellion and the Hakka-Punti Clan Wars, provided a more traditional “push factor,” with outcomes that negatively impacted the situation for Hakka in China general.

#### ***The First Opium War leads to China’s Century of Humiliation***

It all started with a British fondness for tea. By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Britain was importing so much Chinese tea that it had built up an enormous trade deficit. Desperate to remedy the trade imbalance, the British started selling opium, grown in India and traded through the overseas Chinese in southeast Asia.

#### ***Meanwhile, in the 1840s-1870s...***

- Fraser Canyon & California Gold Rushes.
- Construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway and US Transcontinental Railroad.
- American Civil War.
- Canadian Confederation formed
- Toronto’s population grows from 30,000 in 1851 to 56,000 in 1871.
- Dickens publishes “A Christmas Carol”, Marx & Engels “The Communist Manifesto”, Darwin “The Origins of Species.”

As the British East India Company saw its opium trade profits increase with 2000%, China saw its opium addict population increase 50-fold from 1820 till 1835. Socially and economically, the impact on China was disastrous.

In June 1840, after the Qing Court had halted all opium imports, the British responded by sending a military force of 15 barracks ships, 4 steam-powered gunboats and 25 smaller boats with 4000 marines to the coast of Guangdong. The First Opium War had started.



*Signing the Nanjing Treaty*

The war was easily won by the British and in 1842, China signed the Treaty of Nanjing: the first in a long line of “unequal treaties” forced upon China during a “Century of Humiliation.”

## An Overview of Hakka Migration History: *Where Are You From?*

Whereas China previously limited international trade and forbade ordinary Chinese to go overseas, the British now ordered China to open five strategic ports to foreign consuls, traders, and missionaries. Important in the context of Hakka migration was also that China was forced to allow its citizens to travel and work abroad.

### **1851-1864: The Taiping Rebellion**

In 1851, Hong Xiuquan, a Hakka Chinese Christian fundamentalist started a peasant uprising that turned into one of the deadliest armed conflicts in history, leaving 20-30 million dead.

Hong Xiuquan sought to restore order and pride, and set out to build a "Heavenly Kingdom". The Taiping rebels fought against the increased and humiliating foreign influence that had followed the First Opium War and the Nanjing Treaty. The mostly Hakka rebels also railed against corruption, feudalism and traditional concepts such as Confucianism and Buddhism, while advocating equality for women and common ownership of land and resources. While the rebellion started in southern China, it quickly turned north towards the Qing Court's center of power.



*Hong Xiuquan (above)  
and his Taiping Rebellion (below)*

Only after 13 destructive years and with help from the French and British forces, the Qing armies brought an end to the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. As the key leaders of the Taiping Rebellion had all been Hakka, countless innocent Hakka families across China, and especially in the South, were randomly executed.



### **1855-1867: The Punti-Hakka Clan Wars**

Initially, in the decades following the lifting of Kangxi's Coastal Clearance Order (see above, under the Fourth Hakka Migration Wave), the returning locals, also known as "Punti", coexisted peacefully with the newly arriving Hakka. However, gradually, tensions between the two groups started to emerge.

As land was scarce and the fertile plains were claimed by Punti, the Hakka had no choice but to take to the inferior land on the hills and around waterways. This unfair distribution planted seeds of tension that would get worse over the years. When in time, an increasing number of Hakka started excelling academically and were admitted to lower and middle ranks of government, Hakka success and growth further exacerbated the underlying Punti-Hakka tensions.



## An Overview of Hakka Migration History: *Where Are You From?*

During the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, a combination of overpopulation, land shortage, increasing rural poverty, natural disasters, and unemployment in Guangdong brought the tensions to a head. The Punti-Hakka Clan Wars erupted, leaving around one million dead and many more fleeing for their lives. Being significantly outnumbered by the Punti, the Hakka suffered the majority of casualties. Many Hakka captives were sold as coolies to Cuba and South America, or to the brothels in Macau. Others fled to Guangxi province, and countless Hakka emigrated abroad via Hong Kong.



*The port of Hong Kong, 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This would have been the last view of China for countless Hakka emigrants, sailing away, off to a new world.*

These early Hakka emigrants from the mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century paved the way for generations to come, likely including your own ancestors!

### **Case Study: Hakka Migration to Jamaica**

#### ***Introduction***

The section below gives an overview of four key tranches of Hakka migration to Jamaica. These four tranches took place between 1854 and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and constitute part of the “Fifth Wave” mentioned above. While the majority of Chinese Jamaican immigrants did not arrive as indentured laborers (or “coolies”), it was because of the coolie trade that the first groups of Chinese arrived. In turn, it was because of these “early arrivers” that a social infrastructure was established that made it possible for larger numbers of migrants to follow.<sup>4</sup>

#### ***Context for Early Migration: The Coolie Trade***

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, European powers started abolishing their “traditional” slave trade with western and central Africa. In order to fill the sudden gap in labor supply in their colonies, European powers stepped up trade in contract laborers. With China’s forced opening up following the Nanjing Treaty, the country became a major supplier of contract laborers, also referred to as “coolies.”

Coolies differed from slaves in that they signed contracts and earned guaranteed wages. On the other hand, the conditions in which coolies lived and worked were often comparable to those of slaves. Also, in many cases, laborers signed contracts after having been drugged, misled, scammed, or even abducted.

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<sup>4</sup> For a general assessment of Hakka identity in the global and transnational contexts, see for instance: Leo, Jessieca. *Global Hakka: Hakka Identity in the Remaking*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2015.

## An Overview of Hakka Migration History: *Where Are You From?*

The coolie trade truly took off in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, with most workers from China being transported to Peru to work in the silver mines and the *guano* industry, or to Cuba to work in the sugar cane fields. Chinese coolies also went to Dutch Surinam and to British colonies such as Jamaica, British Guiana, Belize, and Trinidad and Tobago.

### ***First Tranche: 1854, a British Experiment and a Panamanian Disaster***

The first group of Chinese ever to go to Jamaica arrived in two batches, both in 1854.

The first batch to arrive set off from Hong Kong in April that year: 310 indentured Chinese laborers on board the *Epsom* in what the British called an “experiment of voluntary coolie migration.” The *Epsom* arrived in Jamaica on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July. However, while the British had already lined up work for the coolies on the Jamaican sugar plantations, many of them arrived malnourished or sick, some had died on the voyage, and the experiment largely failed.

The second batch of Chinese immigrants arrived several months later, on the first of November. Interestingly, this group did not come directly from China, but via Panama. Early in 1854, the US-run Panama Railroad Company had commissioned 709 Chinese coolies to work on the railroad, but during the voyage to Panama around 100 died from fever and poor hygiene conditions. Within months of arriving in Panama in March 1854, some 300 died from diseases and harsh working conditions. Perhaps most tragically, yet another 125 laborers committed mass suicide when facing a shortage of opium. To avoid further scandal, 195 of those remaining were shipped off to Jamaica, in exchange for native Jamaican workers to replace them. Census data suggest that few survived or had children.

### ***Second Tranche: 1860s-1880s, Intra-Caribbean Chinese Migrations***

Between 1864 and 1870, another 200 Chinese workers arrived in Jamaica. These laborers came from other parts of the Caribbean, mostly from Trinidad and British Guiana. Their arrival was largely

#### ***Some statistics...***

The peak of Chinese indentured labor to the Caribbean occurred between 1853 and 1866, and largely ended in 1884:

- About 13,500 sailed to British Guiana between 1853 and 1879.
- About 3,000 Chinese coolies sailed to Trinidad between 1853 and 1866.
- About 2,500 sailed to Surinam between 1853 and 1873.
- About 1,000 sailed to Jamaica between 1854 and 1884.
- Over 100,000 sailed to Cuba in that general period.



*Coolies of the Panama Railroad Company*



## An Overview of Hakka Migration History: *Where Are You From?*

in response to increasing demand for cheap labor following American investment in Jamaican crops.<sup>5</sup>

This flow of migrants from elsewhere in the Caribbean continued into the 1880s and roughly doubled the Chinese population in Jamaica, and a few families can trace their lineage to this group. However, in spite of the increase, absolute numbers of Chinese immigrants in Jamaica remained relatively low.

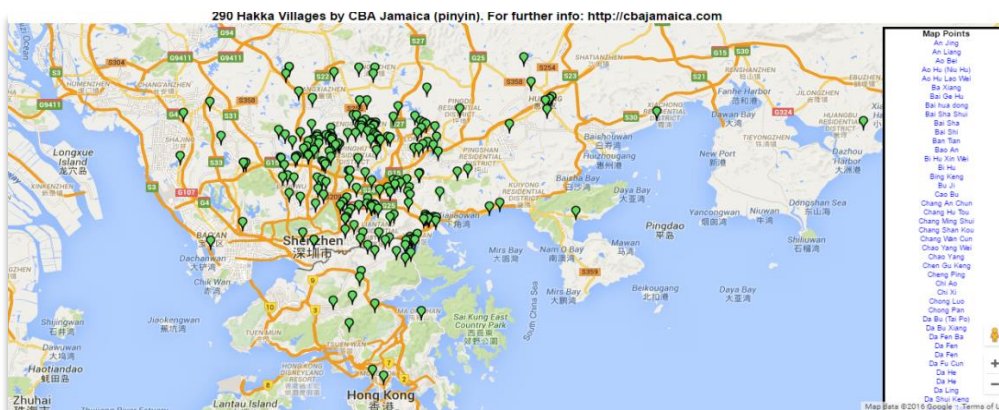
### ***Third Tranche: 1884, Final Batch of Coolies Forms the Base for Chain Migration***

In May, 1884, 680 Chinese boarded the *Diamond*. Their trip from Hong Kong via Macau, Singapore, the Suez Canal, Bermuda, Halifax, and Cuba lasted two months, during which the *Diamond* was so badly damaged in a hurricane that they had to be transferred to the *Prinz Alexander*.

Other than the approximately 20 people from the area of “Siyi” in Guangdong (i.e. Taishan, Kaiping, Enping and Xinhui counties), the rest of the indentured laborers -who this time also included women and children- were almost entirely Hakka, and all from the same area, namely in and around today’s Shenzhen, i.e. Dongguan, Huiyang and Bao’an in Guangdong province.



The arrivals from this third tranche were to constitute the nucleus of the Chinese community in Jamaica for the century to come. They established the base that facilitated the fourth and largest migration tranche.<sup>6</sup>



*The majority of ancestral villages of Jamaica’s ethnic Chinese population today; all in the historic counties of Dongguan, Huiyang, and Bao’an (Chinese Benevolent Association of Jamaica).*

<sup>5</sup> Lee Tom Yin, “Chinese in Jamaica” 1957

<sup>6</sup> Further suggested reading on this topic: Li Anshan. “Survival, Adaptation and Integration: Origins and Evolution of the Chinese Community in Jamaica (1854 -1962)” in *Overseas Chinese History Studies* 1 (March 2005): 38-55.

### ***Fourth Tranche: Late 19<sup>th</sup>–Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, Chain Migration***

#### ***Setting up shop***

After the third tranche completed their indentureships and settled in Jamaica, a pattern of chain migration evolved. Those in Jamaica told their clan members and fellow villagers back home about the commercial opportunities, and helped them with the practicalities of the overseas journey. Most importantly, they helped the newcomers with accommodation, employment, and a social network upon arrival. In 1891 the Chinese Benevolent Society, the precursor of the Chinese Benevolent Association, was formed to formally take on that role. This self-sustaining mechanism of serial or chain migration continued for several decades / generations to come.

Following emancipation, many of the freed slaves had started owning and cultivating their own piece of land. Instead of following that example, the Chinese chose to go into local commerce, focusing on the retail food trade. They built a tight Hakka network of small retail shops, catering to the needs of the peasantry in the countryside and the small wage-earners in the towns.

While the Chinese had originally been consigned to rural districts, they gradually moved their retail businesses to the city. Around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, 61% of the Chinese population was living in Kingston, with only 8% remaining in the original plantation districts. Soon thereafter however, the Chinese Hakka population spread out to almost every small village to establish and run grocery shops.

#### ***Boundless Hakka spirit!***

From a base of 2,111 in 1911, the Chinese population grew to 3,366 by 1925. By 1925, they held almost 30% of the trade licenses in retail grocery, with nearly one out of two Chinese was engaged in this sector of the local economy.

By 1931, some Jamaican locals were publicly complaining about a “Chinese Invasion,” and as a result, the government added further immigration restrictions (including an English language test, a fee upon entry, and a medical examination). However, due to the well-established Hakka chain migration networks, the local Chinese population continued to grow: by 1943, the Jamaican census counted 6,879 “fully ethnic Chinese”; when including people of mixed African and Chinese descent, the number was 12,394.<sup>7</sup>

Since the 1960’s, many have moved on to the United States or to Canada. Others stayed in Jamaica, and have been joined by yet another tranche of Chinese (starting in the 1980’s), this time Mandarin-speaking, from all over Guangdong. However, wherever the Jamaican Chinese and their descendants may be today, the boundless Hakka spirit keeps them all connected, right up to the 2016 Toronto Hakka Conference!

#### ***Legal restrictions on Chinese immigration***

By 1905, the success of the Hakka retail sector had started to lead to frustrations among some of local Jamaican population. As a result, the Jamaican Government restricted new Chinese from entering the island, unless an immigrant:

- Was registered with Jamaican authorities before entry.
- Had a guarantor-shop owner warranting the immigrant’s reliability.
- Provided the Jamaican authorities with an existing address upon arrival.

Nevertheless, anti-Chinese sentiment was not able to stem the influx of Hakka, and the fourth tranche of Chinese migration to Jamaica continued unabated.



<sup>7</sup> Lai, Walton Look, and Tan, Chee-Beng, eds. *The Chinese in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Boston, NL: Brill, 2010.



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### 1. We trace your ancestry

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### 2. We put your roots in context

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What type of food did your great-grand-

parents eat and what was their wedding like? How did big events of world history impact life in their hometowns? Richly illustrated with pictures, our products are personal, insightful, and tailored to the whole family.

### 3. We help you visit your ancestral village

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**Adam**

“ *A real, tangible connection to the past that runs in my own bloodline! From the beginning I was impressed with the professionalism, scope of knowledge and sensitivity displayed by My China Roots, which culminated in the discovery of our clan line going back over two thousand years!* ”

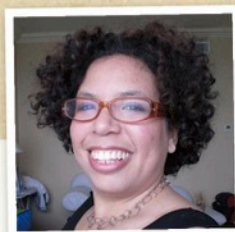


**Nio, S.G**

“ *Is it even worth searching? Seven generations ago, my ancestors left Fujian and sailed south. I was sceptical at first, and indeed, our village's jiapu was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. However, My China Roots ended up finding our jiapu, in Singapore...!* ”

**Nicholas**

“ *I can now truly appreciate my heritage and the struggles my forefathers went through for the good life I am living. Although I was not able to visit the village in person, I was still able to experience it through My China Roots' researchers. A highlight of their research trip was meeting my grandfather's cousin live on Skype. My China Roots helped with translation during our calls, something that an ordinary genealogist would not be able to do.* ”



**Lesley**

“ *My roots are somehow real now, they are part of me. From the moment the research started, I found myself on a wonderful, personal journey that unfolded along with the search for my grandfather. Because of the cultural and historical knowledge of our My China Roots guide, we found more answers than we would have ever found with a standard guide.* ”



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🌐 [www.mychinaroots.com](http://www.mychinaroots.com)

✉ [info@mychinaroots.com](mailto:info@mychinaroots.com)

☎ +86 10 8447 7053

📍 Ditan Park No. 73, Dongcheng District,  
Beijing, China, 100011

北京市东城区地坛公园内 73 号, 100011

Our fees are decided on a case by case basis and depend on your goals, the information already at hand, and other specifics of your project. Email us with your information, and we will send you a tailored quotation, without obligations!