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978-0-521-13367-8 - The Hakka Dialect: A Linguistic Study of Its Phonology Syntax and Lexicon

Mantaro J. Hashimoto

Excerpt

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.0 The Hakka and their language

The word "Hakka" (Mandarin k'o 'guest, visitor, stranger' plus chia 'man (an agent suffix)') is used in contrast to Puntei (Mandarin pên 'native' plus ti 'a place'), the native (of a place) or the aborigines, and literally means 'the guest people' or 'strangers'. Both terms are apparently of Cantonese origin. The Hakka people call themselves the Hak-nyin (Mandarin k'o 'quest' plus jên 'man'); and since they adopted the word for 'a guest' as their ethnic name, the common noun for 'a guest' in Hakka had to assume a not typically Chinese word order of Nyin-hak (Mandarin jên 'man' plus k'o 'guest'). The very fact that the Cantonese term for this ethnic group became prevalent symbolizes the social position of the Hakka people among the southern Chinese. Besides the overseas Hakkas of not less than a few million residing in Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Thailand, Indonesia and Indo-China, an estimated population of twenty to thirty million Hakkas spreads around at least seven provinces in China — Kwangtung, Fukien, Kiangsi, Taiwan, Kwangsi, Hunan and Szechwan. They are mostly farmers living in the highlands or countryside. They identify themselves as originally from the Central Plains of China — an identification of their proud ethnic origin that Hakka intellectuals sought with unusual zeal at the beginning of the modern period and which is largely supported by various historical as well as linguistic evidence. The hardships the newcomers had to endure among the southern "natives" kept the cultural as well as linguistic unity of this group very sound, and it is fairly conspicuous even nowadays that they readily identify themselves as Hakkas regardless of their present circumstances.

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The Hakkas call their language Hak-fa (Mandarin k'o 'guest' plus hua 'speech, language'), literally 'the guests' language'. Despite deep influences from surrounding tongues, notably Cantonese (the spirantization of the initial consonant of the Hakka word for 'guest', hak, which is from Ancient Chinese \*k'ac, is typically Cantonese<sup>1</sup> and equally noticeable but much less well investigated Fukien influences<sup>2</sup>, the language as a whole shows surprising agreement with the phonological categories of northern Chinese since the Ancient period. Despite their wide distribution in southern China, the main concentration of the Hakka population is in the north-eastern part of Kwangtung, particularly around the City of Moi-yan (Mandarin Meih-sien), their cultural as well as spiritual center, and the dialect of Moi-yan is regarded as standard Hakka.

The Hakka dialects constitute one of the five major dialect groups of modern Chinese, namely the Mandarin (or Northern) dialects as represented by Pekinese, the Wu dialects as represented by the Soochow dialect, the Min (or Fukien) dialects as represented by the Amoy dialect (but see below), the Hakka dialects, and the Yüeh dialects as represented by the so-called Cantonese. In the early 1930s, Aleksandr A. Dragunov, after completing a descriptive study of two Hunan dialects, Hsiang-t'ang and Hsiang-hsiang, proposed to add one more to these five major groups, namely the Hsiang group.<sup>3</sup> The Min group is further divided into two subgroups, Northern Min as represented by the Foochow dialect and Southern Min as represented by the Amoy dialect.<sup>4</sup> A dialect subgroup of Kiangsi, the Kan dialects, are much closer to Hakka than any other group, and the two are nowadays normally classified together as the Kan-Hakka group.

The Hakka dialects undoubtedly offer valuable materials for the

comparative and historical study of Chinese (particularly Ancient and Medieval Chinese) phonology, lexicology and grammar. Systematic comparison of Hakka with other dialect groups, however, has scarcely been attempted, and much remains to be done even for the characterization of the Hakka dialects.

1.1 The formation of Hakka group

According to Lo Hsiang-lin's study published in the early 1930s by the Hakka-Chinese Association in Singapore,<sup>5</sup> the Hakka people migrated to the south in the following five major waves because of various barbarian invasions, civil wars, or ethnic troubles with the "natives":

i) The first wave: from the beginning of the fourth century through the end of the ninth century (Eastern Chin through the Sui-T'ang Dynasties).

Because of the invasion of the "Five Northern Barbarians" into the Central Plains, which later established the Sixteen States there, the Hakka who had originally resided in the Central Plains around the former Ping Province, Ssŭ-li Province, Yü Province, etc. of the Eastern Han (modern Shansi, Shensi, Honan, etc.) moved southward to the southern parts of Honan and Hupeh, the Yangtze Basin in Anhwei and Kiangsi, and the Kan River Basin in Kiangsi (see Map 1).

ii) The second wave: from the end of the ninth century through the beginning of the twelfth century (end of T'ang Dynasty to the Sung Dynasty).

To avoid the civil disturbances of Huang Ch'ao and the barbarian rulers of the Five Dynasties, the Hakka residing around the southern

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part of Honan fled to Kiangsi, which triggered a further southward migration among the Hakka (who had formerly moved to Kiangsi) to southern Anhwei, south-eastern Kiangsi, south-western Szechwan, and as far south as north-eastern Kwangtung (see Map 1).

iii) The third wave: from the beginning of the twelfth century through the middle of the seventeenth century (end of Sung Dynasty to beginning of Ming Dynasty).

Together with the southward move of the Sung Dynasty because of the Tartar and Mongolian invasions, the Hakka migrated from Kiangsi and Fukien to the northern and eastern parts of Kwangtung (see Map 1).

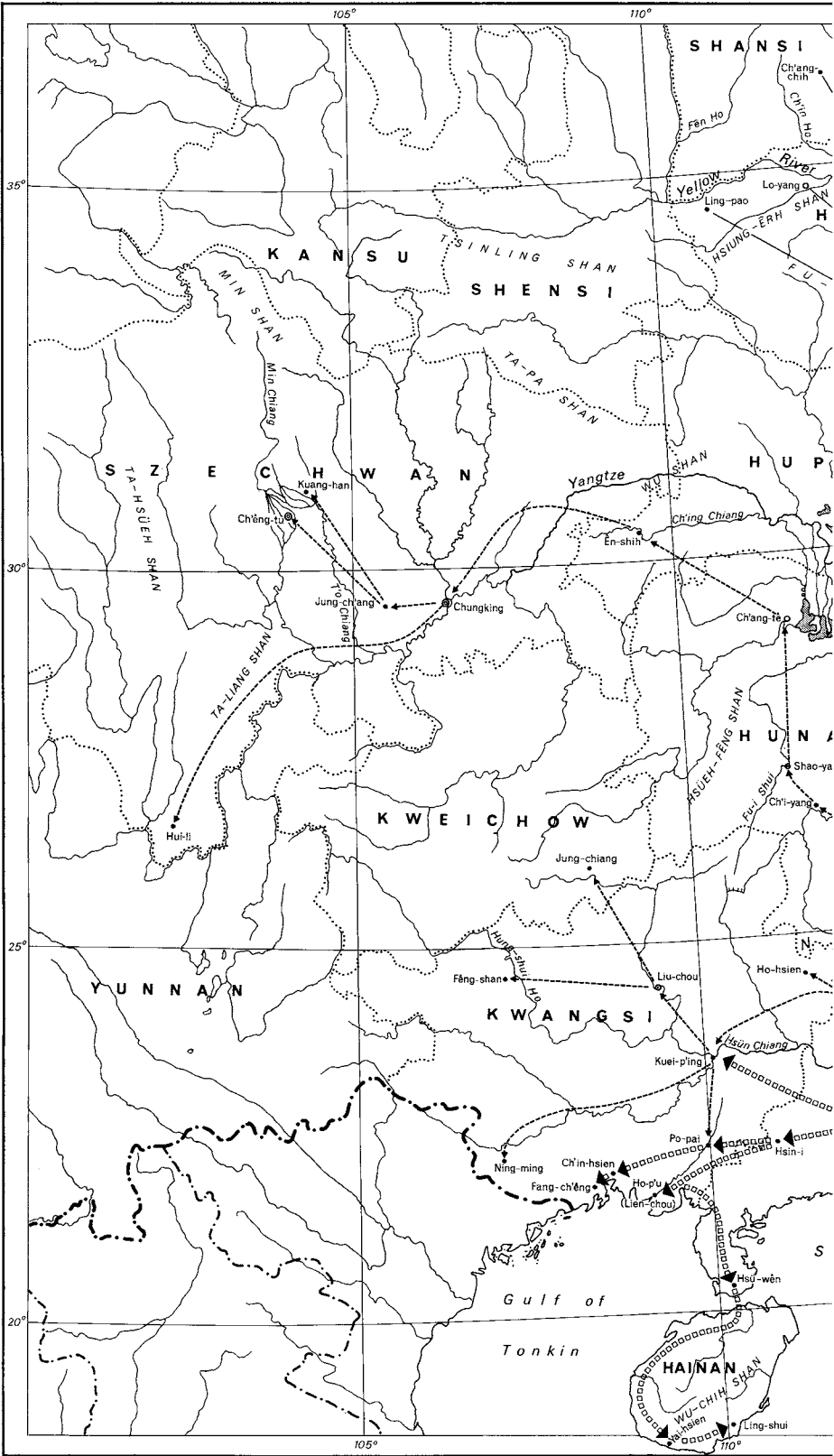
iv) The fourth wave: from the middle of the seventeenth century through the middle of the nineteenth century (end of Ming Dynasty to beginning of Ch'ing Dynasty).

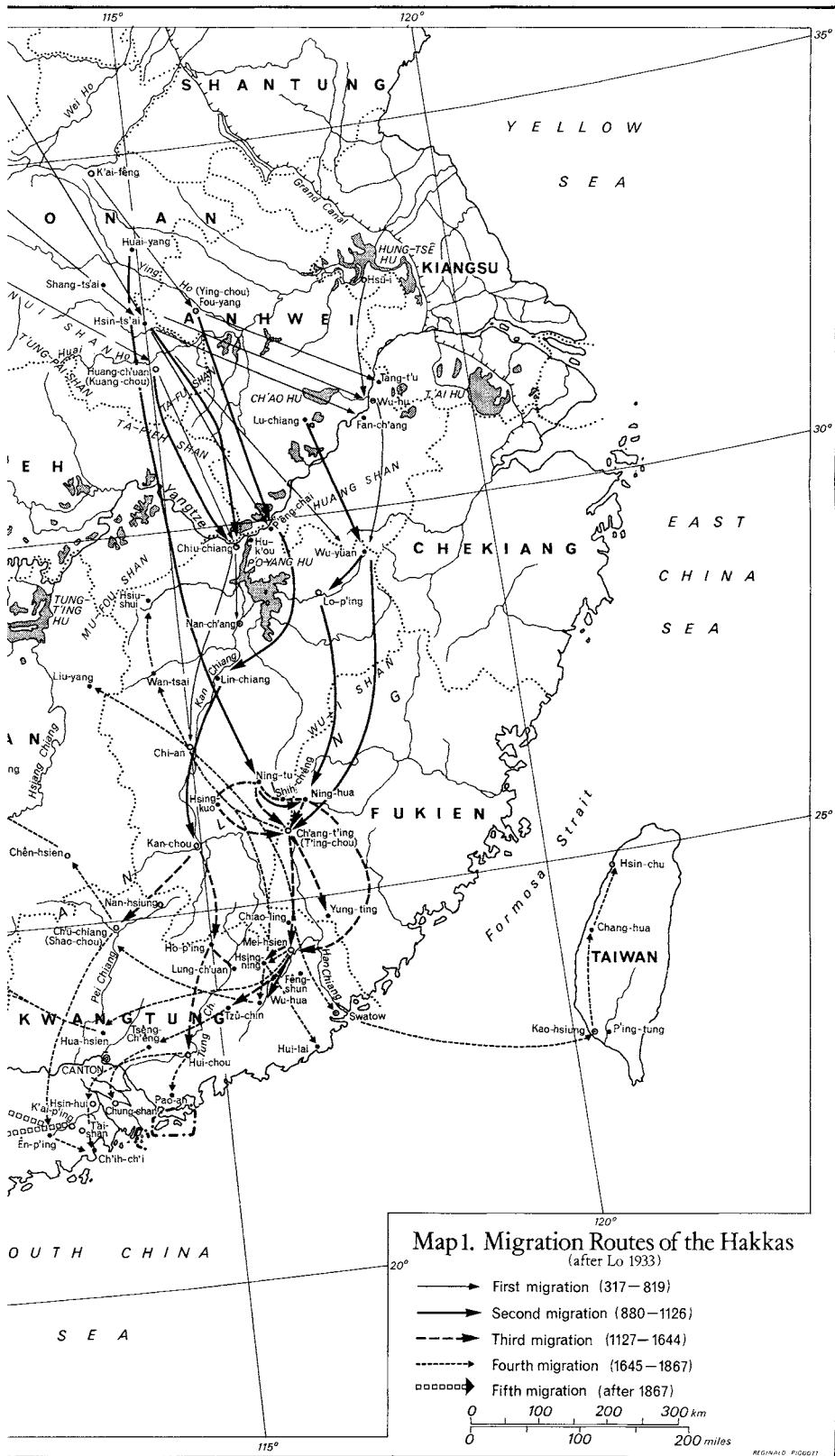
Because of the Manchurian invasion and the subsequent establishment of the Ch'ing Dynasty in the Central Plains, the Hakka of the Central Plains as well as those who had experienced the second and the third migration spread south towards the central and coastal part of Kwangtung, west towards Hunan, Kwangsi and Szechwan (a small group migrated up to the southern part of Kweichow and to Hui-li in Sikang), and east to Taiwan (see Map 1).

v) The fifth wave: after the middle of the nineteenth century.

Mainly because of troubles with the "natives" of Kwangtung and also due to the disturbances of the Hsi-lu Incident and Taiping Rebellion, the Hakka of central and eastern Kwangtung made the fifth move south towards Kao-chou, Lei-chou, Ch'in-chou, Lien-chou, and as far as Hainan Island (see Map 1).

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1.2 Distribution of the Hakkas

As a result of the migrations summarized above, the Hakka reportedly reside in southern China in the following places(See Map 2):

1) All-Hakka Districts:

a) Kwangtung

- 1. Mei-hsien 梅縣
- 2. Hsing-ning 興寧
- 3. Wu-hua 五華
- 4. P'ing-yüan 平遠
- 5. Chiao-ling 蕉嶺
- 6. Ta-p'u 大埔
- 7. Lien-p'ing 連平
- 8. Ho-p'ing 和平
- 9. Lung-ch'uan 龍川
- 10. Tzŭ-chin 紫金
- 11. Jên-hua 仁化
- 12. Shih-hsing 始興
- 13. Ying-tê 英德
- 14. Wêng-yüan 翁源
- 15. Ch'ih-hsi 赤溪

b) Fukien

- 16. Ning-hua 寧化

- 17. Ch'ang-t'ing 長汀
- 18. Shang-hang 上杭
- 19. Wu-p'ing 武平
- 20. Yung-ting 永定
- 21. Chiang-lê 將樂
- 22. Sha-hsien 沙縣
- 23. Nan-p'ing 南平

c) Kiangsi

- 24. Hsün-wu 尋鄒
- 25. An-yüan 安遠
- 26. Ting-nan 定南
- 27. Lung-nan 龍南
- 28. Ch'ien-nan 虔南
- 29. Hsin-fêng 信豐
- 30. Nan-k'ang 南康
- 31. Ta-yü 大庾
- 32. Ch'ung-i 崇義
- 33. Shang-yu 上猶

2) Partly-Hakka Districts:

a) Kwangtung

- 34. Nan-hsiung 南雄
- 35. Ch'ü-chiang 曲江
- 36. Lê-ch'ang 樂昌
- 37. Ju-yüan 乳源
- 38. Lien-hsien 連縣
- 39. Lien-shan 連山
- 40. Yang-shan 陽山



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- |     |              |    |
|-----|--------------|----|
| 41. | Hui-yang     | 惠陽 |
| 42. | Hai-fêng     | 海豐 |
| 43. | Lu-fêng      | 陸豐 |
| 44. | Po-lo        | 博羅 |
| 45. | Tsêng-ch'êng | 增城 |
| 46. | Lung-mên     | 龍門 |
| 47. | Pao-an       | 寶安 |
| 48. | Tung-kuan    | 東莞 |
| 49. | Hua-hsien    | 花縣 |
| 50. | Ch'ing-yüan  | 清遠 |
| 51. | Fo-kang      | 佛岡 |
| 52. | K'ai-p'ing   | 開平 |
| 53. | Chung-shan   | 中山 |
| 54. | P'an-yü      | 番禺 |
| 55. | Ts'ung-hua   | 從化 |
| 56. | Chieh-yang   | 揭陽 |
| 57. | Jao-p'ing    | 饒平 |
| 58. | Hsin-i       | 信宜 |
| 59. | Ch'ao-an     | 潮安 |
| 60. | Ho-yüan      | 河源 |
| 61. | Fêng-shun    | 豐順 |
| 62. | Hao-shan     | 鶴山 |
| 63. | Fêng-ch'uan  | 封川 |
| 64. | Hsü-wên      | 徐聞 |
| 65. | Yang-ch'un   | 陽春 |
| 66. | San-shui     | 三水 |
| 67. | Fang-ch'êng  | 防城 |
| 68. | Ho-p'u       | 合浦 |

- |            |             |    |
|------------|-------------|----|
| 69.        | Lin-kao     | 臨高 |
| 70.        | Ling-shui   | 陵水 |
| 71.        | Ch'in-hsien | 欽縣 |
| 72.        | Kuang-ning  | 廣寧 |
| 73.        | Hui-lai     | 惠來 |
| 74.        | Yen-hsien   | 儋縣 |
| 75.        | Ting-an     | 定安 |
| 76.        | Yai-hsien   | 崖縣 |
| 77.        | Hua-hsien   | 化縣 |
| 78.        | Ch'êng-mai  | 澄邁 |
| 79.        | Wan-ning    | 萬寧 |
| 80.        | Ch'ao-yang  | 潮陽 |
| 81.        | Hsin-fêng   | 新豐 |
| 82.        | Lo-ting     | 羅定 |
| 83.        | T'ai-shan   | 臺山 |
| b) Fukien  |             |    |
| 84.        | Ch'ing-liu  | 清流 |
| 85.        | Lien-ch'êng | 連城 |
| 86.        | Lung-yen    | 龍巖 |
| 87.        | Ming-hsi    | 明溪 |
| 88.        | P'ing-ho    | 平和 |
| 89.        | Chao-an     | 詔安 |
| 90.        | Ch'ung-an   | 崇安 |
| c) Kiangsi |             |    |
| 91.        | Kan-hsien   | 贛縣 |
| 92.        | Hsing-kuo   | 興國 |
| 93.        | Yü-tu       | 零都 |