

be dry, often extremely so; the annual rainfall increases from north to south, with rainfall in Canton (74" annually) nearly triple that in Peking.

Population

According to recent estimates, China's population is at least 850 million, 94% of whom are ethnic Chinese or Hans. The minority population is composed of a variety of peoples living mostly in southeast China near the borders with Indochina, in Tibet and in the northwest near the borders with the USSR and with Mongolia.

The great territories of Outer China-Tibet, Sinkiang and Inner Mongolia, with a population density rarely exceeding an average of ten people to the square mile, and in places wholly uninhabited, are a sharp contrast to the densely settled and developed lands of North-East China (formerly Manchuria) and the eighteen provinces of China south of the Great Wall. The major centres of population and economic activity are Southern Liaoning province in the north-east, the great North China Plain stretching from Peking to Shanghai, the Yangtze River Valley, the Szechwan Basin in the west of China and certain low-lying areas along the south-east coast. The most densely settled rural areas in these parts of China often exceed a thousand to a square mile.

Major Cities, Ports and Industrial Centres

The capital of China is Peking, with a population of over 6 million. Shanghai, with a population of roughly 10 million, is the largest city and the principal port. Other major ports are Tientsin, near Peking, Tsingtao and Dairen in the north, and Swatow and Canton in the south. Major industrial cities are Shanghai, Peking and Tientsin. The main industrial region is in the north-eastern provinces of China, where the biggest iron and steel mills and heavy industry are located. The industrial centres in this area are Shenyang, Harbin and Dairen.