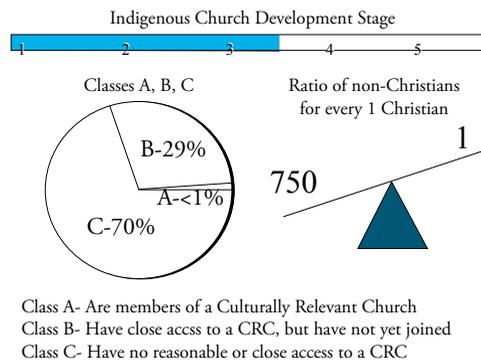


Marathi Caste Hin-



Quick Facts

Population: 75,000,000
 India: 75,000,000
 United States: 40,000
 Mauritius: 12,000
 United Kingdom: 10,000
Religion: Hinduism
Believers: 0.13%
Scriptures: NT, OT
Ministry Tools: JRGT
Church Status: 3
Mission Status: 2
MS Subgroups: 150+



Identity: Over 150 Hindu peoples use the Marathi language as their mother-tongue. They are concentrated in the central state of Maharashtra. The majority people, from which the language and the state derives its name, are the Mahrattas, which number 27,000,000.

Lifestyle: The Marathi peoples are the wealthiest per-capita of any ethnolinguistic cluster in India. The city of Mumbai itself generates 1/3 of the nation's GDP and is home to the stock exchange and the film-making industry. However, most Marathi speakers live in rural areas and in small villages, where life goes on much as it has for thousands of years. Those that do move to the cities often end up in slums, the largest of which (Dharavi) has over one million inhabitants.

Customs: The Mahratta and the Kunbi traditionally intermarry among one another. They are more lax in their observance of Hindu customs (such as

widow remmariage, eating pork, drinking alcohol, and accepting food cooked by "lower caste" groups). At the same time they are strongly anti-foreign and anti-Muslim, though their nationalism is more to their language and ethnicity than to India.

Religion: The Mahratta have the status of a warrior caste in Hindu society. As such they have been traditionally devoted to the god Khandoba, who is said to be a warrior incarnation of Shiva. Khandoba is represented by a warrior on a horse with his wife and a mistress, a sign of success and prosperity in Mahratta culture. As a people they have been defenders of Hinduism for centuries, though perhaps due to their military power they have taken the liberty to relax unfavorable social restrictions.

Christian Outreach: The Mahrattas and Kunbis are two of the least reached peoples in India. Though there has been progress among lower-caste Marathi

peoples, this growth has not transferred over to the larger groups. Reaching the Marathi middle class is key to reaching the whole sub-continent of India, as these groups dominate in politics, business, and the military.

How to Pray:

✞ Pray that the anti-Christian legislation being passed in Maharashtra will be reversed, and will not negatively affect the spread of the gospel.

✞ Pray that the Marathi Bible will appeal to the nationalism of the Mahratta and become accepted as part of their culture.

✞ Pray for the strategic impact of believers in Mumbai's finance and entertainment industries.

✞ Pray for the hundreds of thousands of Marathi victims of AIDS and for their families. Ask God to use this growing crises to bring many families to His salvation.

✞ Ask God to give wisdom and grace to lower-caste believers seeking to be a witness to the upper-caste communities. Pray also for revival to come to many urban churches which have lost their witness.

Every year 600,000 Marathi Hindus die without Christ.

Marathi Caste Hindus (cont.)

30 Least-Evangelized Marathi Hindu Peoples People, Population, % Evangelical, Caste Type

Mahratta	27,000,000	0.00%	FC	Thakkar	580,000	0.00%	BC
Kunbi	7,000,000	0.00%	BC	Koshti	570,000	0.00%	BC
Brahman	4,100,000	0.00%	FC	Dhobi	540,000	0.00%	SC
Mahar	3,600,000	0.00%	SC	Darzi	490,000	0.00%	BC
Mali	2,600,000	0.00%	ST	Khatik	465,000	0.00%	SC
Matang	1,800,000	0.00%	SC	Lohar	440,000	0.00%	SC
Chamar	1,500,000	0.06%	SC	Dhimar	430,000	0.00%	BC
Koli Mahadev	1,400,000	0.05%	ST	Koli Malhar	410,000	0.00%	ST
Teli	1,350,000	0.00%	BC	Bidur	380,000	0.00%	BC
Ahir	1,200,000	0.01%	BC	Andh	350,000	0.01%	ST
Dhangar	1,100,000	0.01%	SC	Tamboli	340,000	0.00%	BC
Sonar	880,000	0.00%	BC	Gowari	340,000	0.00%	BC
Nai	680,000	0.00%	BC	Kathodi	340,000	0.01%	ST
Vanjara	670,000	0.00%	BC	Gosain	330,000	0.00%	BC
Badhai	630,000	0.01%	BC	Agri	320,000	0.00%	BC
Kumhar	600,000	0.00%	SC	Dom	350,000	0.00%	SC

MAHRATTA

The Mahratta descend from a military class that served princes and kings of the Deccan Plateau. They are especially famous for their service under the warrior king Shivaji and the Peshwas, a group of Brahmin rulers that expanded the Mahratta empire over much of north India in the 18th century. The annexation of this empire by the British East India Company in 1818 helped to seal British domination over the sub-continent for over a century. There are 96 Mahratta clans with varying degrees of social rank. Clans with higher ranking are considered to be more “genetically pure” than lower clans, which may allow intermarriage outside their caste groups. The British considered the Mahratta a “martial race” and as such employed them in leadership positions throughout the empire. As a result, the Mahratta have significant national influence in areas of business, education, politics, the military, and the judiciary. Though it is often said that the Mahratta have more loyalty and commitment to building Maharashtra than they do to the nation of India, it should be noted that this is not necessarily the view of the Mahratta themselves. Rather, it is an outsider’s perspective that may be biased due to their national prominence.

KUNBI

The Kunbi are an agricultural caste found throughout central India. About one third are Marathi speakers. They have two main divisions called Charotari and Japti which, though they dine together, will not intermarry with one another. A significant number have improved their economic status by migrating to East Africa as traders. This has allowed many families to become land owners back in India and send their children to college, resulting in a gradual increase of professional and government service among the younger generation.

MAHAR

The Mahars are predominately a Marathi speaking caste. They live primarily in rural areas, seeking employment as day-laborers or other menial jobs such as sweeping or rickshaw pulling. They once held important posts in the Gond military, but with the decline of the Gond empire, their social and economic position was significantly reduced. They have incorporated certain characters from Islam and Christianity into their pantheon.