

DATONG 大同

Approximately 1.7 million people live in Datong City in the northern China province of Shanxi. Shanxi means 'West of the Mountains'. The Taihang Mountains form the province's eastern border, while the western extremity of Shanxi is formed by the Yellow River.

Datong's population is unevenly divided between males and females. In 1990, there were 85,000 more men living in the city than women. This is due partly to the influx of immigrant laborers (mostly men) who enter the city looking for work, and the Chinese practice of killing girls at birth or in the womb. For centuries the Chinese have considered it a disgrace when there is no male heir in a family. Since the implementation of the "one-child" policy in China, this desire to have a son has been exacerbated, as the couple only has one chance. Consequently, many families abort a pregnancy if they find out the baby is a girl, or murder the girl at birth. Also in 1990, 42,000 adult males and 81,000 females were illiterate, a significantly higher proportion than most Chinese cities. In addition to the Han Chinese, who comprise more than 99% of the population, there are over 6,600 Hui Muslims, 1,800 Manchu and 500 ethnic Mongols living in Datong City.

Although Datong today is considered an impoverished, gray and polluted coal-producing city, it has a very long and important history. In 220 AD the Chinese Empire was

Population:
1,277,310 (1990)
1,716,600 (2000)
2,306,900 (2010)

Province:
Shanxi

Major Ethnic Groups:

Han 99.2%
Hui 0.5%
Manchu 0.1%
Mongol 0.1%

Christians:
5,000 (0.3%)

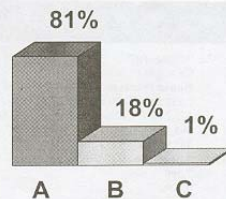
divided into three kingdoms. The Toba, a Turkic-speaking people perhaps related to today's Uyghurs, established the Northern Wei Dynasty which ruled all of northern China between 386-534 AD. The dynastic leaders decided to rule from Datong, strategic because of its close proximity to the Great Wall along Shanxi's border with Inner Mongolia.

The Northern Wei rulers made Buddhism the state religion, giving rise to the formation of many important Buddhist sites in China today. These ancient spiritual strongholds are good spots for prayer and intercession teams to travel to. They are also ideal for evangelism, as people come

from all over China to visit and pray at the statues.



Status of Evangelization (Awareness of Christ and the Gospel)



A = have never heard the Gospel or the name of Christ
B = were evangelized but have not yet become Christians
C = Adherents to any form of Christianity



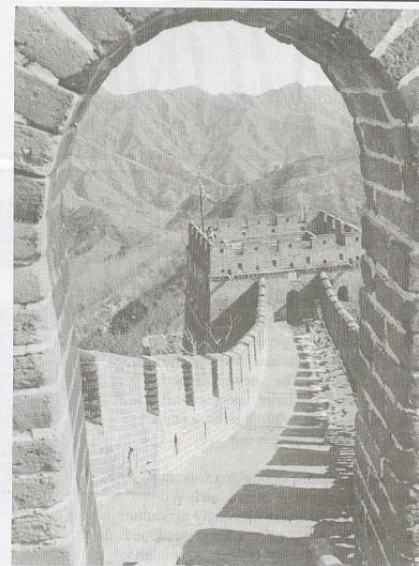
The Hanging Monastery is located 75 km (46 miles) southeast of Datong. A large statue of Buddha is carved into the sheer cliffs overlooking the Jinglong Canyon. The temple was reconstructed several times, with the present temple being about 500 years old. Other old sites in Datong City itself include Huayan Monastery, built in 1140, and the Shanhua Temple, dating from 1128.

The most important Buddhist sites near Datong are at the Yungang Caves, just north of the city. There are more than 50 separate caves, containing a total of more than 50,000 statues. The rulers of the Wei Dynasty often came to the Yungang Caves to pray to Buddha and to the gods for rain in their drought-cursed land.



The first Protestant missionaries to visit Shanxi Province were Alexander Williamson of the National Bible Society of Scotland and Jonathon Lees of the London Missionary Society. They arrived in 1869, but it was not until 1876 that J. J. Turner and F. H. James of the China Inland Mission permanently settled in the province. The C.I.M. dominated missions work in Shanxi. During the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, 159 foreign missionaries, including 46 children, were murdered in Shanxi Province, easily the most of any part of China. Most early missionary work focused on Taiyuan and southern Shanxi.

Datong has long been a neglected city, with a mere 0.3% of its population Christian today.



Datong is situated in a rugged area of northern Shanxi Province, just south of the Great Wall that separated China from the Mongols in ancient times.

Pray for Datong

1. Datong has received little Gospel witness throughout its long history. Pray this situation would soon change. Pray God would be honored and glorified among the city's inhabitants.
2. Pray against the spiritual stronghold of Buddhism that has prevailed in Datong for more than 1,500 years. Pray the Holy Spirit would place a desire in people's hearts to know Christ.
3. Pray Christians would see Datong through God's eyes of compassion, and be prompted to pray for and reach the city.

Overview of Datong

Pronunciation	: "Dah-tong"	Employed people	: 654,255 (51.3% of total population)
Old Spelling	: Tai-t'ung	Main Industries	: Industrial 46.5%; Agriculture 15.4%; Professional 12%
Location	: Shanxi Province, northern China	Educational	: University: 0.7%
Population	: 1,277,310 (1990 census)	Attainment	: High School: 42.5%
Males	: 680,916 (53.31%)	(highest level)	: Primary School: 29.1%
Females	: 596,394 (46.69%)	(attended)	: Never attended any level of school: 27.7%
Households	: 340,306	Population under 15	: 25.3%
Average household	: 3.75 people	Adult Literacy	: 87% (men 92%; women 82%)
Divorced people	: 4,254	Major Nationalities	: Han 1,267,643
% of population	: 0.33%		: Hui 6,627
Centurions (1990)	: 1 person aged 100 or more		: Manchu 1,864
Immigrants to City	: 23,393 per year		: Mongol 497
From same province	: 14,860 (63.5%)		: Korean 209
From other provinces	: 8,532 (36.5%)	Christians	: 5,000 (0.3%)
			: Others (19 groups): 470