

TONGXIN 同心

The city of Tongxin, situated in the southern part of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region in a barren desert of northern China, is home to approximately 300,000 people. A figure for Tongxin City itself is not available. The 1990 census figure of 274,170 refers to Tongxin County, therefore the number of people living within the township would be a little lower than that.

Tongxin, and the whole of southern Ningxia, sees little rainfall. The blistering hot summers are followed by freezing winters. There is almost a complete lack of vegetation in the countryside, which is covered by dirt, rocks, sand, with the occasional shrub or bush. Despite the arid conditions, more than 90% of the inhabitants of Tongxin list agriculture as their occupation.

Tongxin is situated on the road between Zhongning and Guyang in Ningxia. Ningxia was first carved out as a separate administrative unit in China in 1928, and remained a province until 1954, when it was integrated into Gansu Province. In 1958 Ningxia gained status as a Hui Autonomous Region. This means the Hui are given a somewhat symbolic right to run their own area, although if anything occurs that is contrary to China's interests, Beijing quickly steps in to reassert its authority. Several

Population:
274,170 (1990)
309,800 (2000)
350,100 (2010)

Province:
Ningxia

Major Ethnic Groups:

Hui 80.4%
Han 19.4%
Manchu 0.1%
Tu 0.1%

Christians:
none known (0%)

years ago a little-known Hui uprising by Muslim peasants was smashed by Beijing with the use of thousands of troops and tanks.

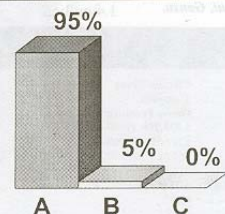
Except for a small number of other minority people, Tongxin is exclusively inhabited by Han Chinese and Hui Muslims. The Hui predominate, with more than 80% of the population belonging to the Muslim nationality. More than 53,000 Han Chinese also call Tongxin their home.

The main landmark of Tongxin is the Grand Mosque, situated on the site of the old Tongxin City. The structure was built during the reign of Emperor Wan Li during

the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). In 1791, during the 56th year of the reign of Emperor Qian Long of the Qing Dynasty, renovations were made to the mosque. More repairs were done in 1907 during the 33rd year of Emperor Guangxu. The Grand Mosque is one of the largest and oldest Islamic structures in Ningxia. It contains a Hall of Worship, Chamber of Rites and a residential hall for Imams (Muslim



Status of Evangelization (Awareness of Christ and the Gospel)



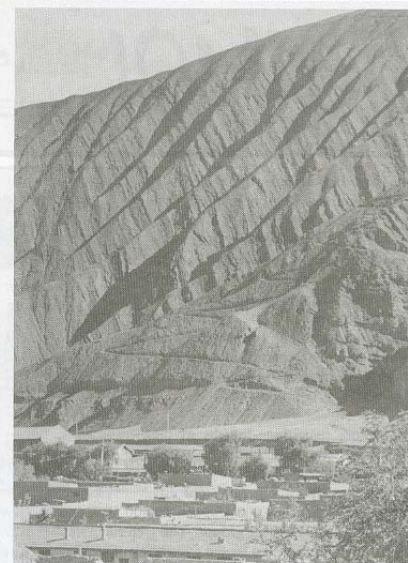
A = have never heard the Gospel or the name of Christ
B = were evangelized but have not yet become Christians
C = Adherents to any form of Christianity

priests). The large Hall of Worship is supported by twenty huge columns and paved with wooden planks.

Because of their adamant Islamic beliefs, many Hui believe China's one-child policy is against the teachings of the Qu'ran and refuse to abide by it. Risking large fines and other penalties for having a second, third, or fourth child, the Hui in Tongxin are somewhat protected by the political leaders of the city, almost all of whom are Hui themselves who prefer to turn a blind eye. This is reflected in the 1990 census, which revealed an average of more than five people living in each household in Tongxin, considerably higher than almost any other area in China. More than 41% of Tongxin's population are aged under 15, a rate around double that of most other cities in China.

Also because of their Islamic beliefs, there are very few divorced people living in Tongxin. A mere 439 people out of the entire population was reported as divorcees in 1990. The Hui do not like to send their young people to Chinese universities or schools, where they may be "polluted" by Chinese concepts. As a result, 66% of women in Tongxin are illiterate, and 28% of men.

Tongxin must rank as one of the most unreached cities in all of China. There are no known Christians or churches in the area at all. Known as a Muslim stronghold, the spiritual climate in the region reflects the physical—barren, desolate and harsh. In 1994 a Hong Kong-based Christian ministry sent short-term teams to Tongxin. They secretly distributed thousands of Chinese-language Gospel literature and cassettes throughout the city. On one hand, it may have at least exposed some Hui to Christ's message for the first time in their lives. On the other hand, this form of ministry roused the contempt of the Muslim leaders and may make any future Christian efforts more difficult.



This mountain near Tongxin shows the barren, desert landscape of the region. An Islamic stronghold, Tongxin is one of the few cities in China with no record of past missionary activity and no known Christians.

Pray for Tongxin

- 1 Pray God would have mercy on the inhabitants of Tongxin. Pray He would send workers with a burden to share the Gospel with people in the city.
- 2 Ask God to end the physical and spiritual drought that has affected southern Ningxia for years. Pray people would soon have the chance to hear of Jesus Christ's sacrifice for their sins.
- 3 Pray the Gospel tracts and cassettes distributed in 1994 would cause some to search for Truth and find Christ.

Overview of Tongxin

Pronunciation : "Tong-shin"
Old Spelling : T'ung-hsin
Location : Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, northern China
Population : 274,170 (1990 census)
Males : 139,779 (50.98%)
Females : 134,391 (49.02%)
Households : 54,205
Average household : 5.05 people
Divorced people : 439
% of population : 0.16%
Centurions (1990) : 0 people aged 100 or more
Immigrants to City : 695 per year
From same province : 463 (66.6%)
From other provinces : 232 (33.4%)

Employed people : 240,696 (48.2% of total population)
Main Industries : Agriculture 91.7%; Professional 3.5%; Education 2.5%
Educational : University: 0.1%
Attainment : High School: 15.5%
(highest level : Primary School: 40.4%
attended)
Never attended any level of school: 44.0%
Population under 15 : 41.6%
Adult Literacy : 53% (men 72%; women 34%)
Major Nationalities : Han 220,464
Han 53,649
Manchu 29
Tu 17
Mongol 4
Others (4 groups): 7
Christians : none known (0.0%)