

XIANTAO 仙桃

Residing on the banks of the Hanshui River in south-central Hubei Province are more than 1.8 million inhabitants of Xiantao City. The central city area itself may only have about 250,000 people, but Xiantao has jurisdiction over a number of sprawling suburbs and surrounding villages which pushes its population up. Because of improved roads, Xiantao is now only a 50-minute drive from the provincial capital, Wuhan.

Xiantao is one of many large cities in the thickly-populated areas of central and southern Hubei. In the past this area was known as China's rice bowl, because of its fertile land and abundant harvests. Not far from Xiantao, on the northern side of Chen Lake, is the city of Tianmen ('Heavenly Gate') which is home to two million inhabitants. These two cities are just one small part of Hubei Province. Although Hubei looks quite small compared to China's other provinces, it is roughly the same size of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Rhode Island combined. Hubei had a population of 58 million in 1996.

For thousands of years agriculture has been the lifeblood of communities in the Hubei heartland, and this remains the same for Xiantao today. Nearly 80% of the workers in this city are employed in rice cultivation or other forms of

Population:
1,371,150 (1990)
1,842,600 (2000)
2,476,300 (2010)

Province:
Hubei

Major Ethnic Groups:

Han 99.4%
Hui 0.4%
Tujia 0.1%
Mongol 0.1%

Christians:
7,000 (0.4%)

agricultural work. Because of this focus, many parents need their children to work on the land as soon as they are able. In the past most children in Xiantao did not attend any school, but today it is compulsory in China. Nevertheless, more than 20% of the adult population of Xiantao in 1990 had never received any formal education, not even at Primary level. Xiantao today has a high proportion of children compared to other Chinese cities. Thirty percent of the population are aged under 15.

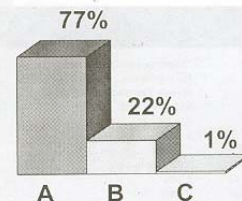
Xiantao consists of just two main peoples: the dominant Han Chinese and about 5,000



Potatoes are just one of many crops grown in Xiantao.



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

Hui Muslims. There are no other significant minority communities in the area.

Although the western part of Hubei Province is extremely mountainous and contains the wild and practically unpassable Mt. Shennongjia (which is reputed to contain China's version of the yeti as well as Giant Pandas), the land around Xiantao is relatively flat, part of a river basin.

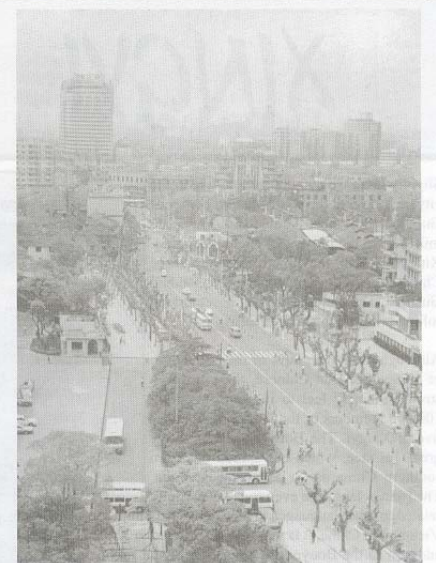
Of the traditional Chinese religions, Daoism (formerly spelt Taoism) is the most prominent in Hubei Province. There are numerous monasteries and temples in Hubei dedicated to Daoism. Wherever Daoism is, Buddhism is nearby and this is true here also. The people of Hubei also worship a host of gods, spirits and protective deities, including the god of War, the god of Prosperity, and demon spirits some people believe live inside large mountains.

Itinerant missionaries passed through Xiantao in the late 1800's and first half of the 20th century, but few are known to have ever lived in the city, which until recently was moderate in size. Today, possibly 7,000 Catholics and Protestants live in Xiantao, amounting to a meager 0.4% of the population.

The people of Xiantao need a Savior but how will they hear unless someone goes, and how will they go unless someone sends them?



Ancient Buddhist and Daoist temples, monasteries and pagodas are scattered throughout Hubei.



Xiantao has grown from a small farming community to a bustling city of 1.5 million people. More than 99% of the city's inhabitants do not know Jesus Christ.

Pray for Xiantao

- 1 Pray God will not be mocked in Xiantao. Pray His power and light will shine through people's lives as the Gospel is proclaimed and people put their trust in Christ.
- 2 Hubei Province has been a Daoist and Buddhist stronghold for 2,000 years. Pray it will become known as a place where millions of lives have been transformed from slavery to liberty.
- 3 Pray Xiantao would soon be impacted by fearless and bold ambassadors of the Gospel who are sent to the city by God.

Overview of Xiantao

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Pronunciation | :"Sheen-taow" | Employed people | : 811,274 (59.2% of total population) |
| Old Spelling | : Hsian-t'ao | Main Industries | : Agriculture 78.5%, Industrial 9.5%, Commerce 5.4% |
| Location | : Hubei Province, central China | Educational | : University: 0.1% |
| Population | : 1,371,150 (1990 census) | Attainment | : High School: 36.1% |
| Males | : 697,055 (50.83%) | (highest level) | : Primary School: 43.0% |
| Females | : 674,095 (49.17%) | attended | : Never attended any level of school: 20.7% |
| Households | : 321,352 | Population under 15 | : 30.5% |
| Average household | : 4.27 people | Adult Literacy | : 76% (men 90%; women 62%) |
| Divorced people | : 2,290 | Major Nationalities | : Han 1,365,825 |
| % of population | : 0.17% | | : Hui 4,917 |
| Centurions (1990) | : 0 people aged 100 or more | | : Tujia 179 |
| Immigrants to City | : 1,911 per year | | : Mongol 111 |
| From same province | : 1,472 (77.0%) | | : Manchu 51 |
| From other provinces | : 439 (23.0%) | | : Others (11 groups): 67 |
| | | Christians | : 7,000 (0.4%) |