

Xianyang 咸阳

Xianyang ("Salty Sun") is a satellite city of Xian, the ancient capital of China and world famous as the starting point of the Silk Road that went all the way to Europe and Jerusalem.

More than 99% of the 920,000 residents of Xianyang are Han Chinese. The largest communities of ethnic minorities within the city are the 4,100 Hui Muslims, 740 Manchus and 530 Tibetans.

Xianyang could almost be considered an outer suburb of Xian, but the Chinese authorities view it as a distinct city. Xianyang is located just 25 km (15 miles) west of downtown Xian, and is in fact closer to Xian's

International Airport than Xian itself. Xianyang is located on the northern bank of the Wei River, and is bordered on the north by the Wuling Plateau.

Xianyang has been continually inhabited for at least three thousand years, ever since King Wu of the Western Zhou Dynasty (11th century - 770 BC) established his kingdom in the region. By the time Emperor Qin Shihuang was buried along with 2,000 Terracotta soldiers two thousand years ago, Xianyang was a thriving town, prospering from the trade that came up and down the Silk Road from faraway nations.

The first emperor of the Qin Dynasty lived from

Population:

736,869 (1990)
918,908 (2000)
1,145,900 (2010)

Province:

Shaanxi

Major Ethnic Groups:

Han 99.2%
Hui 0.6%
Manchu 0.1%
Tibetan 0.1%

Christians:

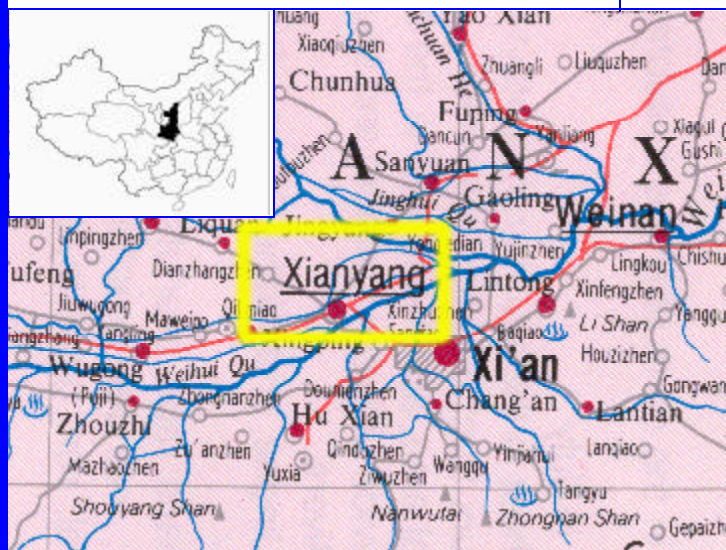
19,000 (2.0%)

259 to 210 BC. He was enthroned at the age of 13. He launched a unification campaign at the age of 22, instituting provincial and prefectural borders throughout the Chinese empire that still mirror today's boundaries remarkably closely. He standardized the written script, legal system and currency. He was also the first emperor to start construction of the Great Wall. Despite these accomplishments, he is also remembered as a ruthless tyrant who killed thousands of suspected political enemies. In order to continue his reign after his death (at the age of 49), the emperor ordered the construction of the Terracotta army

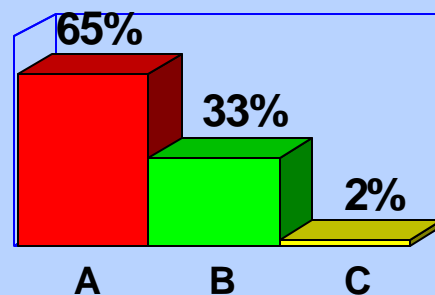
to guard his tomb.

During Qin's reign, Xianyang served as an important political and military center. This ancient Xianyang is now located a few miles east of today's Xianyang City. Some of the most remarkable relics relating to Christian history have been found in and around the city.

In 1625 Jesuit missionaries in Beijing were informed that a large slab referring to the Christian religion had been discovered in Zhouzhi, to the west of Xianyang. Father Nicholas Trigault was dispatched to inspect the stone, which measured 7 feet 9 inches high, 2 feet 9 inches wide, and ten inches thick. The Jesuits were shocked to find the Nestorian Stone



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 = Adherants to any form of Christianity



documented the history of the arrival of Christianity in China, starting in 635 AD when an Assyrian named Alopen arrived in the capital, bringing the holy Scriptures with him. The Nestorian Stone listed a number of monks who assisted in bringing the 'Luminous Religion' to China. At the time nothing was known about the start of the Nestorian missionary effort, and the confirmed arrival date of Christianity in China was some 500 years earlier than thought. The Nestorian Stone is now housed in the Xian Museum.

In 2001 the British Siniologist and theologian Martin Palmer made another startling discovery when he came across the remnants of the first known Christian church in China, located in the middle of a collection of Daoist temples not far from where the Nestorian Stone had been discovered. As he approached the site a Buddhist nun told him it was "the most famous Christian site in all of China," even though nobody except the few monks and nuns in the area were aware it existed! Palmer has dated the chapel to the 7th century.

Despite the Xianyang area's remarkable Christian history, not many people in Xianyang know Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour today. Most have never heard the Gospel and few that have can see any need for it in their daily lives.

Pray for Xianyang

- 1** Pray the people of Xianyang would have a strong Christian future to match their ancient Christian past.
- 2** Ask the Lord to glorify the Name of Jesus among all people in Xianyang.
- 3** Pray Christians in Xianyang would be strong in faith and evangelistic zeal.

Overview of Xianyang (based on 1990 census)

Pronunciation : "Shee-ahn-yung"
Old Spelling : Sienyang
Location : central Shaanxi Province, north China
Population : 736,869 (1990 census)
Males : 381,686 (51.80%)
Females : 355,183 (48.20%)
Households : 173,303
Average Household : 4.3 people
Divorced People : 2,687
% divorced of Population: 0.36
Centurions (1990) : 5 people aged 100 or more
Immigrants to City : 69,008
From same province: 47,953 (69.6%)
From other provinces: 21,004 (30.4%)

Employed People : 408,625 (55.5% of total population)
Main Industries : Agriculture 48.7%, Industrial 26.8%
Education : University: 7.6%
(highest level attended): High School: 53.7%
 Primary school: 28.3%
 Never attended any school: 10.4%
Population under 15: 195,237 (26.5%)
Adult Illiteracy : 10.8% (men 5.6%; women 16.4%)
Major Nationalities : Han 730,799
 Hui 4,116
 Manchu 736
 Tibetan 531
 Others 687 (23 groups)
Christians (2003) : 19,000 (2.0%)