

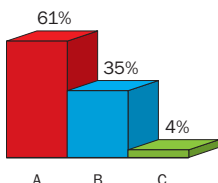


Population:
 53,423,000 (2000)
 60,368,000 (2010)
 65,982,000 (2020)
Countries: China
Buddhism: Mahayana
Christians: 2,000,000

Overview of the Jin Chinese

Other Names: Jin, Jinyu
Population Sources:
 45,700,000 in China (1987, *Language Atlas of China*)
Language: Sino-Tibetan, Chinese
Dialects: 10 (Bingzhou, Fenzhou, Xingxi, Shandong, Wutai, Dabao, Zhanghu, Cizhang, Huoji, Zhiyan)
Professing Buddhists: 20%
Practising Buddhists: 10%
Christians: 3.7%
Scripture: Chinese Bible
Jesus film: none
Gospel Recordings: none
Christian Broadcasting: none
ROPAL code: CJY

Status of Evangelization



A = Have never heard the gospel
 B = Have heard the gospel but have not become Christians
 C = Are adherents to some form of Christianity

More than 55 million speakers of the Jin Chinese language, called *Jinyu*, inhabit parts of five provinces in northern China: Shanxi (22.3 million speakers in the year 2000), Hebei (10.6 million), areas north of the Yellow River in Henan (9.4 million), Inner Mongolia (8.2 million), and the northern part of Shaanxi (3.2 million). Jin is spoken in a total of 175 cities and counties throughout northern China.¹

The province of Shanxi, with its capital at Taiyuan, was the location for one of the most gruesome incidents in Christian history, when thousands of Chinese Christians and almost 200 foreign missionaries were massacred during the Boxer Rebellion in the summer of 1900. Approximately two-thirds of the total population of Shanxi Province are Jin-speaking Chinese. These days, most visitors find Shanxi people to be friendly and good-natured. One scholar says, 'The people of Shanxi are generally

expected to be conservative, simple and thrifty. The man from Shanxi . . . is often the butt of Chinese jokes, taking a role somewhat like that of the Scotsman in the humor of English-speaking peoples. Although the people of Shanxi do have a reputation for being hard-working and good at business, they are also expected to be honest and straightforward in their dealings.'²

The Jin language was formerly considered part of the *Xibei Guanhua* dialect of Mandarin, but many scholars now consider Jin a distinct language. Some have even found the Jin language to be similar to

Hakka Chinese, now spoken throughout south China. With all education and media in China using standard Mandarin, the Jin language—which contains ten dialects—is confined more and more to home and social use.

The majority of Jin Chinese are atheists. About 20 per cent of people living in the Jin area view themselves as Buddhists, but less than half of that number actually practise their religion. The Jin warrant inclusion in this book, however, because even at 20 per cent the total number of professing Buddhists among the Jin is 12 million people.



International Mission Board

Today, there are an estimated two million Jin Chinese Christians. Hebei—where more than 10 million Jin speakers live—is the strongest Catholic region in China with more than 800,000 Catholic church members.³ Shanxi, Shaanxi, northern Henan and Inner

Mongolia have also been experiencing church growth in recent years, as zealous house church evangelists travel all across the breadth of China in search of lost souls to lead to the Master. God has honoured the sacrifice of his servants in 1900, and in numerous locations where Christians were murdered the church today is strong and vibrant. Despite these encouraging events, the majority of Jin Chinese have still to hear the gospel for the first time. The region is densely populated, and the sheer number of people requires a large-scale systematic evangelistic plan in order to make a significant impact among this large group.