

Mission Atlas Project

SnapShot

Country Name: Mongolia

Country Founded In: 1921

Population: 2,791,272 (July 2005 est.)

Government Type: Mixed parliamentary/presidential. There are 21 provinces and one municipality, Ulaanbaatar. The provinces are further divided into counties and other lesser units. Ulaanbaatar is divided into districts and *horoos*. Each administrative level elects its own legislative body, or *hural*. These hurals nominate the provincial governors, who are approved by the prime minister.

Geography: Mongolia is located in northern Asia, between China and Russia.

Number of People Groups: 25

Picture of Flag:



Religion Snapshot

Major Religion and Percent of population: Lamaist Buddhism 50%

All Religions and percentage for each: (2004)

Buddhist Lamaist 50%,

Non-religious 33%,

Shamanist 11%

Muslim 5%

Christian 1%

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mg>.

Government interaction with religion: Freedom of religion is guaranteed by the 1960 constitution. In the July 2001 Open Doors report, Mongolia ranked 63rd on the Persecution Index. In its most recent edition, Mongolia was not in the top 50 on the Open Doors list. All religious groups are required to be registered and some groups have reported being harassed by officials during the registration process. Separation of church and state is established in the constitution; however, traditionalists believe that Buddhism is the "natural religion" of the country. The government has partially supported the restoration of several important Buddhist sites, but otherwise does not subsidize the Buddhist religion. Mongolian law does not prohibit, but does restrict proselytizing, by forbidding the use of incentives, pressure, or "deceptive methods" to introduce religion. Protestant representatives report few obstructions to their various ministries in state institutions such as prisons, children's homes or hospitals once local officials are familiar with their work. Additionally, a Ministry of Education directive has banned mixing foreign language or other training with religious teaching or instruction. The edict was enforced, particularly in the capital area.

The government generally respected the human rights of its citizens however, members of the police at times beat prisoners and detainees. The constitution provides for freedom of speech, press, and expression and the government generally respected these rights in practice. A 1999 law bans censorship and protects freedom of expression from further legislation. The law also prevents state ownership or control of the media, however most radio and television stations are state owned. The majority of newspapers are affiliated with a particular political party. The government does not interfere with internet access.

<http://www.nationbynation.com/Mongolia/Human.html>

<http://www.opendoorsuk.org>

http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=213

Basic Facts

Demographics:

The estimated population is 2,791,272. The latest population growth rate is 1.45%. The birth rate is 21.5 births/1,000. The death rate is 7.0/1000. The average life expectancy is 64.5 years, slightly less for men, and slightly higher for women. The estimated population density is 1.36 people per square kilometer, making Mongolia one of the world's most sparsely populated nations. About two-thirds of the total population are under age 30. The infant mortality rate is 53.8 deaths/1,000 live births. Approximately 36% of the population live below the poverty line.

The 2002 census showed that 57 percent of the population was urban. The three largest cities--Ulaanbaatar, Darhan, and Erdenet--are in north-central Mongolia, on or near the main railroad line and the Selenge Moron River or its major tributaries. Half the country's population lives in this core area, with its river valleys, productive upland pastures, coal and copper mines, and relatively well-developed transportation system. About 54 percent of the population has access to safe water.

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mg.html#People>
<http://www.country-studies.com/mongolia/population.html>

Language:

Ninety percent of the population speaks Khalkh Mongol. Khalkh is an Altaic language related to Uzbek, Turkish, Kazakh, Korean, and possibly, Japanese. All dialects of Khalkh spoken in Mongolia are readily understood by native speakers of the language. The standard written form is based on the dialect of Ulaanbaatar, and uses the Cyrillic (Russian) alphabet. Recently, there have been attempts to restore the Mongolian script. The most common second languages are Russian, among older generations, and English, among the younger. There are 12 other languages, including Kalmyk-Oirat, Kazakh, Buriat, Mandarin and Tuvian. Buriat and Kalmyk-Oirat are in the same language family as Khalkh Mongolian.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/countries>

Society/ Culture:

Although 57 percent of the population now live in cities, historically and culturally Mongolians have been a nomadic, shepherding people. Even though the cities now have many Soviet-style high-rise apartments, most Mongolians continue to live in a *ger* (yurt), a large, domed tent with a wooden frame and overlaid with white felt or canvas. Each *ger* is heated by a woodstove. The interior is laid out in exactly the same manner.

Because of the harsh climate, herding has always been much more important economically than farming—the animals provide food, dairy products, transportation, and wool. Horses are by far the most important animal. The care of horses is a right of men, whereas tending and milking other animals (yaks, sheep, goats) is a female task. In Mongolian legends, the secondary hero is always the horse, which does more than just carry the hero. The high esteem for horses is also revealed in recreation and arts. Horseracing is a very popular pastime and the most prestigious race, and one of the main cultural events of the year, takes place at the Naadam Festival in July. Other culturally important competitions at the festival are wrestling and archery. Families will travel for days to be able to participate or just attend this grand event.

In the home, rural Mongolians maintain their traditional roles. Men take care of the horses and the herds and make saddles, harnesses, and weapons. In addition, they hunt to supplement the traditional diet of dairy products, and mutton. Women's responsibilities include cooking, taking care of the children, and making clothing. In the cities, many women are working outside of the home, leaving young children at a daycare center or with an older relative.

Tibetan Buddhist monks had been traveling to Mongolia since the 7th century. After conquering much of the known world during the 13th and 14th centuries many Mongols began to search for spiritual meaning, and Buddhism flourished. In 1576, Altan Khan,

the leader of Mongolia and a descendant of Genghis Khan, bestowed the title "Dalai Lama" upon his spiritual guru.

This spiritual bond between Tibet and Mongolia continues into the present day. Mongolia's paintings, music and literature are dominated by Tibetan Buddhism and nomadism. The traditional *Tsam* dances, forbidden under Communism but now making a comeback, depict the nomadic lifestyle and Shamanist influence. The Mongolian singing style, *hoomi* has often been described as "double singing" because it sounds like several notes being sung simultaneously. Perfecting this eerie acoustic style requires years of training. *Hoomi* is performed almost exclusively by men.

An old Mongolian saying goes something like "Breakfast, keep for yourself; lunch, share with your friends; dinner, give to your enemies." The biggest and most important meals for Mongolians are breakfast and lunch, which will usually consist of boiled mutton with lots of fat and flour and maybe some dairy products or rice. The Mongolians are avid tea drinkers and the classic drink is *süütei tsai* (salty tea). Men who refuse to drink *arkhi* (vodka) are considered weak or effeminate. Herders make their own unique home brew *airag*, which is fermented horse's milk with an alcoholic content of about three percent.

Although many Mongolians claim descent from Genghis Khan, generally speaking, lineages and clans have not played a major role in modern Mongolian society. In the 1980s, most Mongolians lived in nuclear families composed of a married couple, their children, and perhaps a widowed parent. Since the twentieth century, most marriages have been initiated by the couple themselves rather than by parental arrangement.

http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/north_east_asia

<http://www.country-studies.com>

<http://www.mongoliatravel.com/culture.html>

Government:

Typically, the prime minister and cabinet exercise most of the power. The president is elected by direct, popular vote, and is limited to two four-year terms. The last presidential election was in May 2005. The president appoints the prime minister from the majority political party. The president is also responsible for initiating and vetoing legislation (subject to a two-thirds override). He has the power to dissolve the government, which means a new cabinet and prime minister will need to be nominated. The government can also be dissolved when the prime minister resigns, when half the cabinet resigns simultaneously, or upon a vote of dissolution by the legislature.

The judicial branch of government consists of local courts, provincial courts, and the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court hears appeals from lower courts and cases involving alleged misconduct by high-level officials. Local courts primarily hear routine criminal and civil cases; provincial courts hear more serious cases and appeals from the local courts. The Constitutional Court, separate from the criminal court system, has sole jurisdiction over constitutional questions.

The one house legislature, called the State Great Hural has 76 members elected by district, to four-year terms. The legislature is empowered to create and amend laws, set domestic and foreign policy, ratify treaties, and to declare a state of emergency.

There are 24 political parties. All citizens over 18 are allowed to vote. It is mandatory for all males to serve at least two years in the Mongolian armed forces. The total active strength of the armed forces is about 9,100 with about 140,000 reserves.

Economy:

The most important industries in Mongolia have traditionally been herding and agriculture related. The most important agricultural products are wheat, barley, vegetables, forage crops, sheep, goats, cattle, camels, and horses. In addition, there are also substantial deposits of copper, coal, molybdenum, tin, tungsten and gold. By sector, the GDP is composed of agriculture – 20.6%, industry – 21.4%, and services – 58%. The 2004 estimated GDP was \$5.33 billion US, which made the per capita GDP \$1900. Inflation in the same year was estimated at 11 percent and the unemployment rate is about 6.7. The most recent data indicates there are approximately 82,000 motor vehicles in use in Mongolia. Of this number, 44,000 are cars and 25,000 trucks. Vehicles are made in over 20 different countries, but Russia provides 72% of them.

Oil consumption and imports are each approximately 11,000 barrels each day. Mongolia has an annual estimated trade deficit of \$147 million dollars. China is by far the largest export recipient (50.7%), followed by the US (26.3%). The major products for export are copper, apparel, livestock, animal products, cashmere, wool, hides, and fluorspar. The principle importers are Russia (31%), China (23.1%), Japan, and South Korea. Chief imports are machinery and equipment, fuel, cars, food products, industrial consumer goods, chemicals, building materials, sugar, and tea. Mongolia purchases 80% of its petroleum products and a substantial amount of electric power from Russia, leaving it vulnerable to price increases. Mongolia receives approximately \$215 million in economic aid every year.

There is a significant “grey economy”, especially with China. This refers to trade activities that operate outside the tax and banking systems and that disregard government regulations. The World Bank and other international financial institutions estimate the grey economy to be at least equal to that of the official economy. Much of this money comes from Mongolians working abroad both legally and illegally. Money laundering is growing as an accompanying concern. Mongolia joined the World Trade Organization in 1997.

The United States, primarily through its USAID program, provides economic assistance through technical advisors in several government offices, economic reform training, and grants of equipment such as diesel generators. The Peace Corps has approximately 100 volunteers in Mongolia, working in English teaching, teacher training, agricultural development, and community health education. In addition to the Peace Corps, another

prominent NGO is an umbrella organization called Joint Christian Services (JCS) made up of several mission organizations including Interserve, OMF, World Concern, and YWAM. JCS is involved in several development projects including alcohol abuse reduction, an agricultural development/microenterprise project, and a veterinarian-training project.

<http://www.my.omf.org/content.asp?id=23057>

<http://www.realadventures.com/listings/1024091.htm>

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/mg.html>

Literacy:

The reported literacy rate for Mongolia is a probably exaggerated 98%. During the Communist era, literacy was strongly promoted. However, Communist governments have been notorious for positive propaganda. Literacy is defined as the percentage of people over the age of 15 who can read and write.

Land:

The total land area is 604,247 sq miles (1,564,116 sq km), making Mongolia nearly the size of Alaska. Its border with China is 4,677 km and with Russia is 3,543 km. The terrain is vast semi-desert, desert plains, and grassy steppe, with mountains in the west and southwest. The Gobi Desert is south central. The land is one percent arable and nine percent forest. The climate is considered desert. Inner Mongolia refers to that area south of the Gobi Desert, which, throughout much of history, has been under Chinese control

Brief History of Mongolia:

Little is known about the pre-historic inhabitants of this region, but archeological evidence suggests it was occupied for thousands of years before Christ. By the first millennium BC, bronze-working people lived in Mongolia. By the eighth century BC, Scythians or related groups, nomadic Indo-European speakers from the north shore of the Black Sea, were the principle inhabitants of the region. With the appearance of iron weapons by the third century BC, the inhabitants of Mongolia had begun to form tribal alliances and to threaten China. Two major groups came to the forefront during the next several centuries, the *Yuezhi* and the *Xiongnu*. There were constant struggles and alliances with the various groups, and with tribes under Chinese control.

Eventually, the Xiongnu expelled the Yuezhi, who were driven toward the southwest, to become the Kushans of Iranian, Afghan, and Indian history. Later, the Xiongnu, were also driven west. Their descendants established the Hun Empire in Central and Eastern Europe, made famous by their leader, Attila. The name, "Mongol," was first recorded by the Chinese during the Tang dynasty (618-907 AD). During that time period Mongolia was dominated by a Turkic people called the Uighurs. The Uighurs controlled most of Mongolia until 840 AD when the Uighurs were defeated by the Kyrgyz. The Kyrgyz of today live in the Chinese province of Xinjiang and in the county of Kyrgyzstan. Other

tribes scattered throughout the area were primarily Mongol in their ethnologic characteristics as well.

Around 1185, a chieftain named Temujin began to consolidate many clans and destroyed those who opposed him. In 1203, there was a great 'khuriltai' (meeting), where he was proclaimed "Chinggis (Genghis) Khan," the leader of all of the clans in Mongolia. Genghis and the next two or three generations of his successors conquered nearly all of Asia and European Russia and sent armies as far as central Europe and Southeast Asia, establishing the largest land empire in the history of the world.

Genghis Khan's grandson Kublai Khan conquered China and established the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368 AD). Militarily, the Mongols were only defeated by the Mamluks of Egypt and by the Japanese. The vast Mongol empire needed many administrators, and eventually the Mongol leaders began to employ the people they had conquered as civil servants. After Kublai Khan's death in 1294, the Mongols became increasingly dependent on the people they ruled. Mongols usually did not learn the languages of the lands they occupied. They were deeply resented as an elite, privileged class exempt from taxation; and the empire became ridden with factions vying for power.

Although Mongol-led groups sometimes exercised wide political power over their conquered territories, their strength declined rapidly after the Mongol dynasty in China was overthrown in 1368. The decline of the Yuan coincided with similar declines in all the other Khanates throughout Asia. Finally, the last vestige of the once great empire was defeated at Moscow in 1480.

During the 14th and 15th centuries, the Mongols lost their previous unity and divided into Eastern Mongols and Western Mongols (Oirat Mongols). Then in the 16th century the Eastern Mongols split up into Outer Mongolia (Khalkha Mongolia) and Inner Mongolia. The Mongols waged war on each other, and dominance went first to Oirat Mongolia and then to East Mongolia.

At the beginning of the 17th century, the Zurchid tribe of Manchurians became powerful and established the State of Chin. The Manchurians subdued Inner Mongolia in the 1630s, Khalkha Mongolia in 1691 and Oirat Mongolia in 1757. The 17th-20th century period was the most tragic for the Mongols. In fact, the Manchurians cut off the Mongolian state from world civilization for three centuries. However, during this time, Tibetan Buddhism flourished.

Outer Mongolia was a Chinese province (1691-1911), an autonomous state under Russian protection (1912-19), and again a Chinese province (1919-21). As Manchurian authority in China diminished, and as Russia and Japan confronted each other, Russia gave military and diplomatic support to nationalists among the Mongol religious leaders and nobles. The Mongols accepted Russian aid and proclaimed their independence of Chinese rule in 1911, shortly after a successful Chinese rebellion against the Manchus. By agreements signed in 1913 and 1915, the Russian government forced the new Chinese Republican government to accept Mongolian autonomy.

The Russian revolution and civil war afforded Chinese warlords an opportunity to re-establish their rule in Outer Mongolia, and Chinese troops were sent to Mongolia in 1919. Following Soviet military victories over White Russian forces in the early 1920s and the occupation of the Mongolian capital Urga in July 1921, Moscow again became the major outside influence on Mongolia.

The Mongolian People's Republic (the world's second Communist country), was proclaimed on November 25, 1924. Between 1925 and 1928, power under the communist regime consolidated under the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP). Several factors characterized the country during this period: the society, basically, was nomadic and illiterate; there was no industrial class; the aristocracy and the religious establishment shared the country's wealth; the party lacked grassroots support; and the government had little organization or experience. In an effort at rapid socioeconomic reform, the communist government applied extreme measures that attacked the two most dominant institutions in the country--the aristocracy and the religious establishment.

After Josef Stalin came to power in the Soviet Union, the purge of religion intensified. By the late 1930s, many monks had been executed or sent into exile while hundreds of monasteries were destroyed.

Between 1932 and 1945, there were several anti-communist uprisings. In the summer of 1939, the Soviet-Mongolian army defeated Japanese forces that had invaded eastern Mongolia. Following the war, the Soviet Union reasserted its influence in Mongolia. With Moscow providing security and dictating foreign policy, the Mongolian government was able to focus on civilian enterprise.

International ties expanded. Mongolia established relations with North Korea and the new communist governments in Eastern Europe. It also increased its participation in communist-sponsored conferences and international organizations. Mongolia became a member of the United Nations in 1961. During the 1960s and 1970s tension developed between the Soviet Union and China. Mongolia tried to remain neutral. In 1966, the Soviet Union sent in thousands of troops to guard the Chinese-Mongolian border. Relations with China deteriorated and in 1983 Mongolia began expelling some of the 7,000 ethnic Chinese.

In the 1980s, the MPRP selected Jambyn Batmonkh as head of state. He was strongly influenced by the reform policies of the USSR's Mikhail Gorbachev. In late 1989 and early 1990, pro-democracy marches and hunger strikes took place. In May of 1990, the constitution was amended to allow for a multi-party system, although the Communist won an overwhelming majority in the subsequent election. In 1993, the first direct presidential election occurred, and in 1996, the first non-communist government came into power.

*<http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/CHEMPIRE/YUAN.HTM>
<http://www.mongoliatravel.com>*

<http://www.nationbynation.com/Mongolia>
<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/>
<http://www.indiana.edu/~mongsoc>
<http://tps.dpi.state.nc.us/connectasia/mongolia>
<http://www.country-studies.com/mongolia/>
http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/north_east_asia/mongolia

Christian History:

Nestorian missionaries from Persia and China reached Mongolia in the 7th Century. A handful of Catholic missionaries traveling with early European explorers and along the Silk Road visited in the 13th Century. The Nestorians disappeared after Tamurlane converted to Islam in the 14th century and Catholicism never established a foothold.

The first Protestant missionary to Mongolia, James Gilmore, of the London Missionary Society arrived in 1872, and died there 21 years later. He could count his converts on one hand. At that time, the eldest son of every family was dedicated to be a Buddhist priest. During the Communist era (1924-1990), all theistic religion came under severe repression.

After the peaceful revolution of 1990, Mongolia was once again open for religious workers. A modern Khalkh translation of the New Testament, published in 1990, became available in Mongolia. Several Mongols who converted to Christianity in Eastern Europe returned to Mongolia in 1991, and Western Christians began arriving later that year. Half a dozen churches established by the end of 1992. Today, there is a good degree of religious freedom and at least fifteen different denominations.

Religions:

Non-Christian Religions:

Shamanism/Animism

The earliest documented religion of the people in this region was *Boe*. Before the Tibetans converted to Buddhism, their original religious belief was *Bon*, a faith similar to *Boe* of the Mongols. This native religion does not have a standardized doctrine, but a diversity of local beliefs and practices, which by a number of common characteristics can be lumped together. Central in this belief is the worship of the Blue, Mighty, Eternal Heaven. In *Boe*, there is a total of 99 *ngri* or heavenly creatures, of which, *Köke Mönge Tngri* (Eternal Blue Heaven) is the chief. In general the religion is called shamanism (shaman is, in fact, a Mongolian-related word), but shamanism implies the need for a religious specialist, or medium, through which healing, divination, and revelation is given. *Boe* is more accurately a form of animism. Practitioners employ many rituals including sacrifices to gods or ancestors (using mare's milk or other food), talismans, and charms. Many of these rituals are to preserve the health and continuity of the family and community.

Buddhism

The first contact between Buddhists from India and Mongolians was in the 4th century A.D. There is evidence of contact and some influence in the 7th and 10th centuries. Genghis Khan, known for his religious tolerance, allowed Christians, Muslims, animists, and others to practice their religions unmolested.

After the death of Genghis, unrest developed in the newly conquered area of Tibet, and a grandson of the Khan was sent to restore order. A friendship developed between the general and a Buddhist sect leader. Thereafter, there was always a *lama* present in the court of the khans, probably more for political reasons than spiritual.

While at the Mongolian court, the *lama* converted great parts of the ruling class, including Kublai Khan. For the first time Mongolia came under major, Buddhist influence, although it seems to mainly have been limited to the upper class. From the 13th century until the end of the 16th, Buddhism declined in influence.

Altan Khan met with a Tibetan Buddhist leader and gave him the title *Dalai Lama*. "Dalai" means "Ocean" in Mongolian, and "Lama" is Tibetan for "spiritual teacher". The title refers to the extent of the lama's wisdom. Later, a great-grandson of Altan Khan was declared the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, thus strengthening ties between Mongolia and Tibetan Buddhism. From that time on, Buddhism became the dominant religion in the Mongolian territory and established a large monk class.

Mongolians have several cultural similarities with Tibetans—geography and climate which promote nomadic herding rather than farming--and cultural differences from Chinese, which may explain the ease with which the Tibetan form of Buddhism spread. The clergy continued to grow in numbers and wealth. At the end of the nineteenth century there were close to 600 monasteries and temples, and 243 *lamas*.

In the 1920s, one third of all Mongolian males were monks and the clergy controlled 20 percent of the region's wealth. The new communist regime was very displeased to find that so many men were not eligible for military service. In the persecution of the 1930s, the clergy nearly became extinct. In 1960, the historically important monastery at Gandan Djoo underwent restoration. It was only in 1990 after the influence of Soviet perestroika, that Buddhism began its revival.

Islam

The 126,000 Muslims in Mongolia mostly live in the west and are ethnically Han Chinese, Kazakh, Uighur, or Uzbek. They are Sunnis of the Hanafi school. The vast majority in these groups does not practice pure Islam, but supplements Islam with some elements of traditional religion, i.e. talismans, the "evil eye", and the use of shamans. There are no Islamic schools or universities in Mongolia. A Mongolian Muslim Society has its headquarters in Ulaanbaatar. There are at least 10 mosques in the western Kazakh-dominated regions.

Other

There are at least 21 Baha'i assemblies in Mongolia, with at least 4000 followers.

Christian cults and sects

With the religious freedom that began in 1991 came expatriate Mormons and missionary Jehovah Witnesses. According to Johnstone (2001), there were fifteen Mormon congregations (6 in Ulaanbaatar) and up to 3,000 adherents. Mormon material is available in Mongolian. The Watchtower society reported only one congregation in Ulaanbaatar with approximately thirty adherents. The Jehovah Witnesses have published material in Mongolian, but do not have a branch office within the country. The Watchman Nee/Little Flock movement has sixteen Assembly Hall churches.

Catholics/ Orthodox Churches

There are three congregations of Russian Orthodox who either settled in Mongolia or were there as a part of Soviet military occupation. Currently, eight Catholic congregations with up to 1200 adherents and possibly 51 missionaries are noted, but exact numbers are not certain.

Protestants/ Evangelicals/ Pentecostals

The World Christian Encyclopedia reports that there are approximately 30,000 Great Commission Christians in 320 cell groups or churches. There is at least one Christian community in most of the cities of Mongolia. In addition, there are hundreds of isolated "radio" Christians. The majority of believers are under the age of 25. The Bible is now available in two languages, with the New Testament in one language, and translation in progress on another seven. The *Jesus* film has been translated into most dialects and is often shown on television and in theaters. There are Christian radio and television stations. There are over 365 missionaries from more than 55 agencies including the International Mission Board (SBC) and the United Methodist Church. There are also more than 400 Seventh Day Adventists working from eight mission centers, 40 evangelical Mongolian Partnership churches, and several other indigenous denominations.

<http://www.lds.org>

<http://www.watchtower.org/>

<http://www.mongoluls.net/shashin/>

http://encyclopedia.laborlawtalk.com/Dalai_Lama

<http://www.innermongolia.org/>

<http://depts.washington.edu/uwch>

[http://anic21.com/bbs/viewWorld Christian Encyclopedia \(2001\)](http://anic21.com/bbs/viewWorld Christian Encyclopedia (2001))

People Groups in Mongolia

Introductory Note on People Groups:

The climate, geography, and history shared by all Mongolian peoples are generally a greater influence on Mongolian culture, customs, and society than is ethnicity. All rural Mongolians have similar diets, folklore, occupations, and lifestyles. There are 12 languages, but most people are bilingual in Khalkh, the official language. With the exception of four Muslim groups, all Mongolians share a religious heritage of Boe animism, followed by Lamaistic Buddhism, followed by state-promoted atheism. To avoid redundancy, only brief or unique descriptions of culture and religion are listed below. For more information, please refer to the sections on non-Christian religions or society/culture above.

There are several factors contributing to discrepancies in the number of people groups. Some sources list only six distinct groups, several others list twenty but disagree on the identities. Spelling variation and the use of antiquated names also contribute to the lack of consensus. Some groups who self-identify as a distinct people are included in another people in anthropological or government statistics.

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Barga (pop. 2000)

Originally, from the Lake Baikal region of Siberia, they now live in remote pockets of Dornod and Tuv provinces. They are more numerous in Inner Mongolia. There is a region of Inner Mongolia, and a dialect of Khalkh that share the same name.

<http://danielroy.tripod.com>

7486

Bayad, Bavit, Bait (pop. 55,480)

The Bayad speak the Kalmyk-Oirat dialect. Their principle religion is Boe. Most inhabit the Malchin, Khyargas, and Zuungovi districts of Uvs province in the northwest corner of Mongolia. They are descendants of Oirat Mongols.

<http://www.uvsmongolia.mn/>

<http://www.mongolianembassy.us>

British, 100

The majority of British in Mongolia are probably involved in commercial and diplomatic efforts. It can be assumed that they live mostly in the cities of Ulaanbaatar, Darkhan, or Erdenet. Their primary language is English, in which they have full access to the gospel.

7488

Buryat, Buriat, Northern Mongolian (pop. 65,810)

The Buryat are of the Mongolian people cluster. They can be found in Russia, China, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and the provinces of Dornod, Kentia, Selenge, Tuv, Bulgan, and

Khuvsgul in Mongolia. The largest group of them lives in Siberia, along Lake Baikal, and along the border with Russia. They can also be identified as **Bargu, Bargu Buriat, Bur'add, Buriat-Mongolian, Buryat, Mongolian Buriat, Northern Mongolian, North Mongolian, and Northeastern Mongolian**. The Buryat speak the Buriat language, which is a dialect of Mongolian, and are often bilingual.

The Buryat are descendents of western Mongol people and northern Siberians. The culture of the Buryat people is very similar to that of the Mongolians. They love music, dance, chess, and sports. Traditionally, four social classes were the basis of the clan system. Arranged marriages are common among some and marriage outside of the tribe is often not accepted. Divorce has increased in recent times.

Their religion is Boe. They see the spiritual world as a reflection of the natural world. Tibetan Buddhism became more prominent among them in the seventeenth century, but continues to mix with their traditional animism.

The percentage of evangelical Christians among them is unknown. They have the Bible or portions of the Bible, gospel audio and the *Jesus* Film available in their language.

One Europe, Many Nations: A Historical Dictionary of European National Groups.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>
<http://www.adoptapeople.com>
<http://www.buryatmongol.com/history.html>
<http://www.tagnet.org/esd/groups.html>
<http://www.peopleteams.org/buryat>

7489

Dariganga (pop. 32,900)

The Dariganga dwell primarily in the southeastern region, along the border with China, mostly in the Sühbaatar province. The Dariganga are part of the eastern group of Mongols, therefore closely related to the Khalkha Mongols and most of the Chinese Mongols. The Dariganga language is closely related to Khalkh, and is often referred to as a Mongolian dialect. The majority of Dariganga practice Lamaistic Buddhism, the traditional Boe religion, or a combination of both. *Obos*, piles of stones thought to be inhabited by local spirits, can still be seen on almost every hilltop in the region. Dariganga craftsmen are famous throughout Mongolia for their silver cups, saddles, knives, and decorative ropes. They do have the *Jesus* Film, Scripture portions, and some gospel recordings in their language. It is estimated that there are over 1,000 believers, but no church.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/countries.php>
ubpost.mongolnews.mn/virtualmongolia

7490

Darkhan, Darkhat, Darkhad (pop. 20,350)

The Darkhan are a people of Turkic descent. They live predominantly in Khuvsgul province, in the northwestern part of Mongolia. In addition, Darkhan tribesmen are the hereditary sentries at the treasure house of Genghis Khan, in Inner Mongolia. According to Joshua Project, there is no translation of the Darkhan language. The language is not intelligible with Khalkh Mongolian. They are predominantly animist/shamanist. There are very few, if any, known believers. There is no known agency working among them. Ethnologue reported that the Darkhat of Mongolia and the Darkhan of Inner Mongolia are distinct groups.

<http://www.smhric.org>

<http://www.iias.nl/iiasn>

<http://www.mongolianembassy.us>

<http://www.ethnologue.org>

46426

Mongolian Deaf

There are an unknown number of users out of the 10,000-147,000 estimated deaf population. The language is distinct from any other sign language.

<http://www.ethnologue.com>

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Durbet, Dorwot, Dörvöd (pop. 83,760)

The Durbet live in the Uvs and Khovd provinces, in the western third of Mongolia, mostly near the Russian border. In the early 17th century, most of their ancestors (the Oirat) left their homeland, Dzhungaria, in the Xinjiang region of China, to settle in the fertile pastureland of the northern Caucasus Mountains. In 1771, many returned to avoid the oppression of the Russian tsar. The typical Durbet dress includes velvet hats, loose fitted coats, and heavily padded long pants. Durbet men often shave their heads, except for a small area in the back where they grow a ponytail. Spoken poetry is an important part of Durbet culture. Traditionally, a poet will recite while accompanied by a two-stringed lute called a *dombr*. Approximately 70% of the Durbet practice Boe, the traditional Mongolian religion. Christians seem to be only a couple of dozen among the Durbet. The Durbet write and speak the Khalkh dialect and have the Bible or portions of the Bible, gospel audio and the *Jesus* Film available in their language.

<http://www.ksafe.com/profiles/>

00000

Dzakhchin, Dzakchin, Zahchin, Zakhchin, (pop. 38,000)

This group lives in two enclaves in the western third of Mongolia, the greater concentration being in Khovd province. There are multiple agencies working among them. There are no churches, but several believers. They speak Khalkh and are descended from Oirat Mongols.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/countries.php>

7491

Evenki, Tungus, Solon, Ewenke, Owenke, Suolon, Khamnigan (pop. 1,010)

Most of this small group lives in Selenge province in north central Mongolia. The Evenki, formerly known as the *Tungus* lived originally around the vicinity of Lake Baikal. They self-designated as the *Even*, but are different than the Lamut Even people. The **Solon** branch of this group is actually a separate people group speaking a mutually unintelligible dialect. The Evenki within China mostly live in the northwest corner of Manchuria. The Evenki in Russia live north of northern central Mongolia. The Evenki have traditionally been herders and hunters. It is common for Evenki to live in clan groups of three to ten families. Their name in the Tungus language means "forest people." They are of the Turkic or Altaic people cluster. The Evenk language is the largest of the northern group of the Manchu-Tungus languages, a group that also includes the Even and Negidal languages. The basic vocabulary has much in common with the Mongolian and the Turkic languages, indicating a close relation. Most Evenki are bilingual in Mongolian. There was no written language before the 1920's. The New Testament and other Bible portions have been available since 2002. They are primarily shamanists/animists; however, they are approximately five percent evangelical. There is at least one missions agency committed to working among the Evenki.

<http://www.ksafe.com/profiles>

<http://www.omf.org.uk>

<http://www.eki.ee/books/redbook/evenks.sht>

22144

Han Chinese, Mandarin, Qotong, Hoton (pop. 41,000)

The Chinese in Mongolia are generally identified with the *Hui* (pronounced *way*) of China. They differ from other Chinese Muslim groups in that they do not have their own language. Instead, they speak the Chinese dialect of their locality, mixed with a few Arabic and Persian words. Currently the greatest concentration of Han is in the northwest, especially Uvs province.

Hui trace their ancestors back to Muslim traders, soldiers, and officials who came to China during the seventh through fourteenth centuries, settling and marrying local Han (the majority race) women. Outer Mongolia was a Chinese province from 1691-1911 and again from 1919-1921. Some Han were encouraged to migrate by the government, as a way of easing overpopulation, and to assist in unifying the Chinese-held lands.

In the 1920s, most of the Chinese population lived in Ulaanbaatar and other urban areas. They worked as merchants, peddlers, farmers and artisans. Many of the Chinese married Mongol women, but their children, who spoke Mongol as their first language, were regarded as Chinese by the rules of Chinese and Mongol society.

The Hui have so well assimilated into the Chinese society that they are almost indistinguishable from the Han Chinese, except in dietary and religious practices. One of the primary reasons they have kept their own languages and customs is because they have

a deeply ingrained belief in the superiority of their culture. The Chinese are usually very industrious, devoted to their studies, and are known for their politeness. Their traditions center on harmony.

The Han are a superstitious people that value luck as a way to get through life. They believe their ancestors are in the spirit realm. The majority of them do not profess any religion. The Mongolian Han who are Muslim (approximately 2000) are known as **Qotong** (distinct from the *Khoton*). The Mongolian Han are an unreached group with fewer than one-half percent believers. There is at least one agency committed to working among them. There is a complete Bible as well as *Jesus* Film and gospel recordings in the Mandarin language.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/countries.php>

7495

Kalmyk-Oirat, Western Mongol (pop. 242,000)

The Kalmyk people are of the Mongolian people cluster. They reside in Mongolia, Russia, and China, however small groups of them live in Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, the United States, and Uzbekistan. Alternate identifications include the Jazyk, Kalmuk, Kalmytskii, Kalmytz, Khalmag, Qalmaq, Volba Oirat, Weilate, and Xinjiang Mongol. In China, they are referred to the Oirats. The Kalmyk speak Kalmyk-Oirat.

The Kalmyk left their homeland of Dzhungaria, in the present day Xinjiang province of China, in the beginning of the seventeenth century and settled in the northern Caucasus region. Many, however, returned to Dzhungaria in 1771, in order to flee from Russian imperialism. Those who stayed in Russia became known as the Kalmyks, which in Turkish means “to remain behind.” Many of those who stayed were deported to Siberia and Central Asia during World War II.

They place a lot of emphasis on respect for the older generations. Younger generations must show respect and obey the elders of the community. Marriage and family are important to the Kalmyk people. While monogamy was common, polygamy was a practice among the chiefs and higher class. Often, arranged marriages occurred after consulting with an astrologist about compatibility. Engagements would sometimes last six to seven years. Today, couples often marry in their mid-twenties. Divorces among them are becoming more common. Households usually consist of extended families.

Hospitality is another tradition that is very important to the Kalmyk. They graciously offer food and drinks to complete strangers, without asking any questions. Usually, a guest will be seated to the right of his hosts, considered the place of honor. In the past, in more rural locations, the host will meet a guest before he even reaches the house in order to help with the horse, and the other family members will take the guests inside and give him a pipe, tea, and pastry, while others tend the horse. Sometimes a sheep is slaughtered for feeding guests. Those staying overnight will not leave without receiving a gift and a special ceremony. On the way out, a guest is accompanied to the main road by

horsemen. The Kalmyk were traditionally nomadic people known for their love of horses.

Traditionally, fire played an important role in Kalmyk traditions. They used to see fire as sacred. Before eating, sacrifices were offered to the god of fire. If water spilled on a fire accidentally, that was considered very bad. To please the god of fire, they would throw a piece of butter or fat into the fire.

The primary religion of the Kalmyks is Tibetan Buddhism. They were traditionally animists and Shamanists until the late sixteenth century. Only about 0.40% of them are Christian adherents. They have portions of the Bible, the *Jesus* film, and Christian radio broadcasts available in their language. Important sub-groups of the Oirat are the **Khoshuud (Hoshut, Hoshuud)** and the **Torgut (Turgut, Torguud)**.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/countries.php>

7493

Kazakh, Qazaq (pop. 183,000)

The Kazakh are a Turkic people. They are also known as Hazake, Mazax, Qazaq, or Qazaqi people. They are the second largest Muslim group within Central Asia. While most live in Kazakhstan, they are found throughout Central Asia and Eastern Europe. In Mongolia, they live in the extreme western corner, especially the Bayan-Olgii province, nearest to the nation of Kazakhstan and in mining communities near Ulaanbaatar. They speak Kazakh, which belongs to the Turkic branch of the Ural-Altai language family. Their written language is based on the Arabic alphabet.

As clans joined together for protection, the Kazakh became a distinct ethnic group in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. During the nineteenth century, Russia annexed Kazakhstan, and during the Russian Civil War, during the 1920s, and in the Communist purges of the 1930s, nearly half of the Kazakh population was killed. During this time, many fled to parts of China and Mongolia.

Like most Mongols, the Kazaks are frequently herders. Many have horses, but only for prestige. A Kazakh's wealth is based on the number of horses he owns. Another occupation of many Kazakh men is coal mining.

Most Kazakhs continue to live in *gers*, or yurts. The nuclear family, which generally consists of a man, his parents, his wife or wives, and their children, is the most important unit within the Kazakh society. When a girl marries, she becomes part of the husband's immediate family. Today, marriages are generally monogamous. Many times, poor, individual families cannot survive without living with a clan.

The Kazakhs have black hair, Mongolian features, and medium frames. They have the reputation for being short-tempered, but also warm-hearted, sincere, and a hospitable people. Their clothing comes from felt and sheepskins. They are well known for their

handmade embroideries, which usually consist of flower and animal horn patterns created on black, red, and purple velveteen. They have a rich heritage of literature that has been handed down orally. Some Kazakhs can play a two stringed instrument called a *combra*.

The Kazak embraced Islam during the sixteenth century and still consider themselves Sunni Muslim today. In reality, however, they are the least Islamic of the Central Asian Turks. Their Islamic practices combine with traditional folk rituals, such as ancestor worship, animism, and the use of shamans. Kazakhs are generally very loyal to their traditions, and as a result, there are few Christians among the Kazakhs in Mongolia. There is one agency working among them. There are Bibles, the *Jesus* film, Christian audio resources, and radio broadcasts available in their language.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.chsource.org/Kazak.htm>

<http://www.china.org.cn/e-groups/>

<http://www.timcopejourneys.com>

7494

Khalkha, Hahl, Khalkh (pop. 2,053,900)

The Khalkha resided throughout Mongolia, except in the west and far north. The Khalkha are the largest ethnic group in Mongolia, comprising about 90% of the population. They are the core of all the Mongol peoples across North Asia. The Khalkha consider themselves the direct descendants of Genghis Khan and their language to be the true Mongolian language; therefore, they view themselves as the preservers of Mongol culture. The Borjigin, **Hatgin**, **Hotgoid**, **Sartuul**, and **Iljigin** are subgroups of Khalkha Mongolians. To this day, most of Mongolia's politicians and officials are Khalkha Mongol. The Khalkh language is generally understood by most of the other Mongolian ethnic groups.

Urban Khalkha Mongols, especially those with a college education, tend to delay marriage until they reach their late twenties. Birth control is discouraged in Mongolia. Rural Khalkha follow the traditional nomadic and herding lifestyle.

At least sixty percent of Khalkha Mongols follow Lamaistic Buddhism, the traditional Boe religion, or a mixture of both. There is full access to the gospel in written, audio, and video formats. There are many growing churches, and the beginning of an indigenous church planting movement.

<http://www.my.omf.org>

<http://www.cpcaches.com/stories/mftkok/khanofkhans1.htm>

7497

Khoton (pop. 8,900)

Of Turkic descent, about 6000 live in Uvs province. They are, for most, Sunni Muslim and there are few, if any, Christian believers among them. They can sometimes be distinguished from other ethnic groups by the predominance of dark shades, instead of

bright colors, in their clothing. Their primary language is Kalmyk-Oirat. They have portions of the Bible, the *Jesus* film, and Christian radio broadcasts available in their language.

www.skiouros.net/varia/ncmpr/ncmpr.htm

7499

Mingat, Myangad (pop. 7,100)

The Mingat speak Kalmyk-Oirat. They are in the Mongol people cluster. They live predominantly in the western provinces of Uvs and Khovd. The majority are non-religious. It is thought there are no churches and fewer than 30 believers. The *Jesus* film and Bible are available.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net/countries.php>

<http://danielroy.tripod.com/>

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Oold, Uuld, Olot, Eleut, Elute, Oyirad (pop. 11,400)

They live in Khovd and Arkhangai provinces among the Altai Mountains. They are a sub-division of the Oirat people and speak the Oirat language. They have portions of the Bible, the *Jesus* film, and Christian radio broadcasts available in their language.

<http://danielroy.tripod.com/>

<http://www.ethnologue.com>

7501

Peripheral Mongolian, Southern-Eastern Mongolian, Hanl, Northern Mongolian, (pop. 131,000)

There is some confusion in terms, but Peripheral Mongolian usually refers to those Mongolians who live in the Inner Mongolia region of China, as opposed to Northern Mongolians, or Buryat. The language, also called Peripheral Mongolian, is mostly mutually intelligible with Khalkha, but there are important phonological differences. Just as there are more Mongolians in China than in Mongolia, there are also more speakers of Peripheral Mongolian than there are of Khalkh, the original dialect.

There are various dialects of Mongolian spoken by nearly five million people in northern China. It is not clear when these groups migrated from Chinese Mongolia.

During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, Chinese Mongolians suffered at the hands of Maoist reformers. Any expression of ethnic identity caused severe punishment. All references to Buddhism and Buddhist buildings were removed. This government persecution continued until the early 1970s, when the Mongols officially were recognized as one of China's ethnic minorities. As a result of Communist rule and Marxist teachings, about half of the Chinese Mongolians became either atheists or non-religious. Since the fall of Communism in Mongolia, many of these people have reverted to their historic religions, Tibetan Buddhism and Boe animism. Estimations are approximately 500

Christian believers have been noted among them. They have Bible portions, the New Testament, gospel recordings, and the *Jesus* film in their dialect.

<http://www.ksafe.com/profiles/clusters/8039.html>

7504

Russian (pop. 4100)

The Rus of Kiev, descendants of eastern Slavic people, are well known for their mass conversion to Orthodox Christianity in 988. The Kievan Rus were isolated from the Catholic West because of this decision, and the Mongol invasion of the 13th century held Russia in a developmental lurch for two centuries. Moscow replaced Kiev as the most powerful Russian city as Ivan I became Prince of Muscovy and the collector of tribute to the Mongols. Muscovy gained strength and the people of Russia expanded as the Mongol rule faded. Successive Russian rulers grew the empire through conquest and annexation.

Central Asia fell in the 1860s. As Manchu authority in China diminished, and Russia and Japan confronted each other, Russia gave military and diplomatic support to nationalists among the Mongol religious leaders and nobles. By agreements signed in 1913 and 1915, the Russian government forced the new Chinese Republican Government to accept Mongolian autonomy.

World War I and the defeats Russia suffered created ground for the Bolshevik revolution and the end of the Romanov's 300-year dynasty. Following Soviet military victories over White Russian forces in the early 1920s and the occupation of the Mongolian capital Urga in July 1921, Moscow again became the major outside influence on Mongolia.

The acknowledgement of the Mongolian People's Republic (the world's second Communist country) came on November 25, 1924. For the next 65 years, there was a constant Russian military presence in Mongolia.

The Russians who currently live in Mongolia are either settlers or remnants of the Russian military. They are predominantly atheistic. Most ethnic Mongolians still resent Russians for the years of Soviet domination. A few Russians are nominally Russian Orthodox. Estimations run between two and five percent are evangelical. They have the Bible, Gospel audio recordings, Christian radio broadcasting, and the *Jesus* film in Russian.

<http://www.nationmaster.com/country/rs>

<http://www.ahart4russia.com/Ekaterinburg.htm>

<http://www.peopleteams.org/stavteam/default.htm>

<http://www.hope4ufa.com/>

http://www.nupi.no/cgi-win/Russland/etnisk_b.exe?Russian

<http://danielroy.tripod.com/>

00000

Torgut, Torguud (pop. 10,500)

see also Kalmyk-Oirat

The Torgut are an ethnic subgroup of the Oirat. The Torgut speak the same language as the Oirat, but they view themselves as ethnically separate. They have been described as “a law unto themselves, with their Tibetan religion, Mongolian language, and unspeakable customs.”

Torgut history closely mirrors that of the Oirat. They migrated from Xinjiang to Russia, where they lived until 1771 when Russian pressure forced most Torgut to flee back to China. Thousands died of starvation or were killed and plundered by bandits on the return journey to Xinjiang.

Folk dancing is a favorite pastime of the Torgut. The *bielgee*, or “dance of the body,” originated during the Chinese Manchu Dynasty. The Chinese Manchus, who feared a Mongol uprising, outlawed large public gatherings. Traditional dancers adapted to performing privately inside the yurt where there was little legroom. The dancers expressed themselves by using their arms, legs, and other parts of their bodies in rhythmic movements. The Torgut have no Scripture in written or audio form.

<http://www.ksafe.com/profiles/clusters/8039.html>

7505

Tsaatan (pop. 400)

Their name means “they have reindeer” and their entire existence depends on reindeer, which they use for milk, clothing, transportation, and meat. They are perhaps Mongolia’s smallest ethnic group. They reside in over 100,000 square km of northern Mongolia, but mostly in northern Khuvsgul province, bordering Russia, and the Russian region of Tuva. The Tsaatan are extremely nomadic, often moving their small encampments every two or three weeks while looking for the grasses and mosses favored by their reindeer.

Somewhat different from other yurts, the Tsaatan version resembles a Native American tepee. Anthropologists are concerned that increasing tourism, land privatization, and the declining reindeer population will soon bring the end of traditional Tsaatan livelihood.

Theirs is a Turkic language and differs greatly from Mongolian. The secondary language is Urianhay. The Tuva, the larger ethnic group to which the Tsaatan belong, have the Bible portions and *Jesus* film in their dialect. There is a ministry commitment and a church start amongst the Tuva, but it is unknown if these efforts have extended to the Tsaatan.

<http://danielroy.tripod.com/cgi-bin/alternate/mongolia/opi9.html>

7505

Tuvinian, Tannu-Tuva, Urianhay, Uriankhai (pop. 27,300)

The Mongolian Tuvinians reside in the Altai Nuruu Mountains in Khovd and Bayan-Ulgii provinces, and possibly along the Russian border in Uvs and Dzavhan provinces. The **Shor** are a sub-group that maybe found near the western border with Russia. Their language is Tuvini (Altaic Turkic family). The native language, which is distinct from both Chinese and Russian Tuvini, is declining in use and most Tuvinians can speak and understand Khalkh. Their ancestors migrated from the former Soviet Union many years ago.

Tuvinians do not live in yurts but square, log houses with mud roofs. In addition to herding, they hunt, and do a limited amount of farming—mostly grains, but vegetables are on the increase.

The Tuvinian culture is widely known for its oral, epic poetry and music. The Tuvinian use more than fifty different musical instruments, and are famous for their distinctive throat singing, which enables the well trained to sing two or even four notes simultaneously.

Religiously, the Tuvinian are approximately one-third Lamaistic Buddhists, one-third, Boe/shamanists, and the rest, especially among the younger generation, atheists. There are portions of the Bible in their native language and an abundance of materials in their second language. Probably less than two percent have ever been evangelized, thus, no known believers.

<http://www.ksafe.com/profiles>

00000

Uighur Uyghur (pop. 1010)

The Mongolian Uighur live primarily in Khovsgul province of the central north. Uighurs, a Turkic group, originated from southern Siberia. In the mid 9th century, they fled their homeland to western China. Uighur, an Altaic Turkic language related to Uzbek and Kazakh, is their heart language. Literacy is high in Khalkh. The Uighurs have generally assimilated into the northern province. The Uighurs are considered to be a proud, happy and independent people.

Men that are more traditional wear a *qiapan*, which is a long gown with a distinctive, slanted collar. Women wear broad sleeved dresses with black waistcoats. Many, however, are starting to dress more western. Most Uighurs wear a small cap that has four pointed corners. Long hair for women is regarded as a sign of beauty. In the past, girls combed their hair into a dozen pigtailed. When women marry, they often wear their hair in two pigtailed.

The Uighurs are considered Sunni Muslim. A Bible translation was completed in 1950 in their language. The *Jesus* film, God's Story video, Christian radio broadcasts, and Christian audio recordings are also available in their language. Multiple agencies are currently working among this people group around the world. They are 0.05% evangelical.

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet.htm>
<http://www.joshuaproject.net>
<http://www.ethnologue.com>
<http://www.asiaharvest.org/>
<http://www.china.org.cn/e-groups/shaoshu/shao-2-uygur.htm>
<http://www.paulnoll.com/China/Minorities/min-Uygur.html>

00000

Ukrainian 500

The remaining Ukrainians of Mongolia probably live in Ulaanbaatar or in the nearby mining districts. Ukrainian people are of the Eastern Slav people cluster. They speak Ukrainian, which borrows from Polish. Many have intermarried with Russians, which has complicated their ethnic composition.

Generally, when family or friends get together, a bottle of vodka comes out. To refuse to drink is considered poor manners when everyone present is partaking. It is an affront and a show of great disrespect for those around.

Among the Ukrainians, education is greatly valued.

Ukrainians have been at least nominally Orthodox since the late 10th century. Many are also non-religious. The Bible, the God Story video, *Jesus* film, audio recordings, and Christian broadcasting have been translated into their language.

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/europe/ukraine/culture.htm>
<http://reachukraine.org/regional/people.htm>
<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

Kurian and Johnson, *World Christian Encyclopedia*. Vol. 2, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. Minahan, James. *Encyclopedia of the Stateless Nations* vol. I-IV, Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2002.

7509

Uzbeks, Chantuu (pop. 370)

The Uzbek are descended from Kazakhs. In the 14th century, they took the name *Uzbek* because their ruler was the Ozbeg Khan of the Golden Horde.

Uzbek live with extended families, with a patriarchal authority ruling over several generations. Each village has an elder, and several villages comprise an *elat*. Every *elat* is governed by a council of male elders.

Unlike other groups, marriage between siblings or between other close relatives is forbidden. It is very uncommon to see a single adult in Uzbek society. Daughters must

marry in order of age. Women are expected to have their first baby within the first year of marriage.

Singing and dancing is also an important part of Uzbek culture. Most dances are solo dances, with the dancer turning circles while waving her arms. They also have a unique tambourine dance. The Uzbeks love poetry and are taught to recite poems from an early age. Another popular pastime is to hunt wild birds with falcons.

The Uzbek are Sunni Muslim, mostly of the Hanafi school. The Hanafi school is one of the more liberal schools of Muslim law. It places more emphasis on local custom and less on the Hadith, or the supposed sayings of Muhammad. Islam is an important part of the everyday life of an Uzbek, however, there are still some traditional beliefs mixed in with their practice of Islam. In 2000, it was estimated that there were 20 believers among the Mongolian Uzbeks. They have the New Testament and other Bible portions, Christian radio and audio materials in their language.

<http://www.ksafe.com/profiles/clusters/8039.html>

00000

Uzemchin (pop. 4,100)

Up to about 4,100 Uzemchin live in extreme eastern Dornod and Sühbaatar, sharing similarities with the ethnic Mongolians of Inner Mongolia. The Uzemchin are one of Mongolia's minority groups. They are known for the variety of their songs, usually about horses, strong men, and good riders taking part in the many traditional equestrian games.

The provincial capital of Dornod, Choibalsan, is a poor city with the highest unemployment rate in Mongolia. From the ruined appearance of many city houses, it looks like Choibalsan suffered a horrible earthquake. In fact, the Russian buildings were abandoned after 1990 and the bricks, windows, gates and anything useable have been looted to help build new houses in the town's East.

Their language is a dialect of Khalkh, the majority language of Mongolia; therefore, they have the gospel in several different forms.

*<http://www.soundtransformations.btinternet.co.uk/>
<http://www.legendtour.ru/eng/mongolia/r0600.shtml>*

Unclassified/ Other Individuals 1000

Other Possible people groups include Haazgan, Savar, Buruud, Hereid, Hotuud, Hoshuud, and Taichuud in Khovd province. Also, Huuchid, Tshar, Barag, Baarin, Khorchin, Ujumchin, Khoshuud, Tsongol, and Jakhachin,

Missiological Implications

1. With only about one percent of Mongolia professing to be Christian, there is still an enormous amount of work to be done. No indigenous group is yet considered reached. Therefore, the key missionary implication is numbers. More personnel, money, and other resources are needed.
2. The Bible, the *Jesus* Film translation, and audio recordings need to be continued. There are still up to nine dialects or languages that do not have the gospel in any form.
3. Rape, murder, promiscuity, and alcoholism are increasing in urban areas. Many youth are joining gangs, which can lead to criminal activity. Missionaries and indigenous believers should pray and consider how to have Christian ethics integrated into Mongolian schools. Alcohol abuse reduction programs, such as those begun by Joint Christian Services, as well as other community development programs, need to be duplicated in every city and town.
4. There are numerous tent-making or short-term opportunities. There is a desperate need for veterinarians, and those who can teach animal husbandry. Healthcare workers and health educators, those who can teach business and marketing principles, as well as those who can teach English should be recruited. Experts in economics, administration, and democracy could be hired as consultants to the national and local governments. With the increasing use of computers and cellular telephones, those skilled in electronics or computers would have opportunity to reach the younger city dwellers.
5. With the revival of Lamaistic Buddhism, older people have returned to the beliefs of their ancestors in large numbers. The best way to reach every Buddhist is through a faithful testimony and life that is demonstrated within a relationship. Likewise, to counteract the work of Muslim missionaries in Kazakh areas, Christians, including women and entire families, must be willing to go to them, and establish relationships.
6. Christians should recognize the important role of shamans in some Mongolian societies. In the past, some missionaries have referred to shamans as witchdoctors, which fail to recognize the spiritual world to which these religious leaders relate. Missionary teaching that shamanists' activities and beliefs are superstition begs the question of the reality of the spirit world, antagonizes those who know it is real, and serves to drive the activities of shamans underground. Shamans' motives are often similar to those of missionaries and health workers—to bring well-being and health to their people. Realizing the shamans' importance in Mongolian societies should prompt Christian workers to befriend them, pray for them, and at times work with them. In addition, Christians, especially from non-charismatic or non-pentecostal organizations, should not be afraid to pray for and expect healings, and other miraculous signs. Healings give a seal of authenticity, which has been and will be especially effective among the older generations.

7. Since Mongolians have a rich heritage of epic poems, songs, stories and proverbs, those trying to reach them need to exploit these interests. Missionaries should utilize Chronological Bible Storying, and pass this method on to indigenous church leaders. In addition, printed material should emphasize the forms of poetry, proverbs, and parables, which are familiar to the Mongolians. Also, as much as possible utilize skits, plays, and dances which reflect nomadism, herding, and other aspects of everyday Mongolian life. Since the Mongolian church has typically been “young”, it is important to utilize the testimony of older, rural, believers—considered to be the only “real Mongolians”.
8. For hundreds of years, Mongolians have celebrated Naadam, their great national festival, with archery, horseracing, and wrestling competitions. All of Mongolia stops working and families will travel for several days to get to the nearest town hosting a festival. Naadam is an excellent time to plan outreach activities such as singing, dancing, skits, storytelling, or testimonies of athletes.
9. Every effort must be made to “Mongolize” the evangelism and the resulting church. As soon as possible, leadership and church planting should be turned over to Mongolians. Even the Scripture translations need to be thoroughly checked for local relevance. One team had introduced the term *Yertontsiin Ezen* (Master of the Universe) to refer to God. The new term sounded unfamiliar and unreal to Mongolians. It was a foreign word made of Mongolian sounds. When the elders decided instead to use word *Burhan*, the generic Mongolian word for God, and one used for centuries by Buddhists, the comprehension, and the results, immediately improved.
10. Since Mongolians have physiological and linguistic similarities with Koreans and with Japanese, and physiological and cultural similarities with American Indians, utilizing these other ethnic groups could cause the removal of some cultural barriers. Chinese Christians may also be able to relate somewhat easier than Westerners could.
11. Christian can take advantage of Mongolia’s growing tourism industry to reach remote areas and to teach micro-enterprise development to Mongolian believers. For example, a missionary adventure-lover could open a mountain biking/camel touring company, hire Mongolians to staff it, and then train them to market the company, and to use it as a witnessing/discipleship platform.

Pictures

Links

<http://www.cpcoaches.com/stories/mftkok/khanofkhans1.htm>
<http://www.acts.edu/oldmissions/Mongoliahist.html>
<http://www.chriskaplonski.com/mongolia/ethnicgroups.html>
http://www.mongolia.org.hk/country_info-5-02.htm
<http://www.mongoliantculture.com/MongolianHistoryResourc>
<http://www.asiaharvest.org/>
<http://www.joshuaproject.net/>

