

Mission Atlas Project

Kyrgyzstan

SnapShot

Country Name: Kyrgyz Republic

Country Founded In: August 31, 1991

Population: 5,146,281

Government Type: Republic

Geography: Central Asia, east of Uzbekistan, south of Kazakhstan, north of Tajikistan and west of China

Number of People Groups: 45

Picture of Flag:



Religion Snapshot

Major Religion and Percent of population: 75% Muslim (Mostly Sunni)

All Religions and % for each:

Muslims (Sunni)	78.08%
Russian Orthodox	5.34%
Zoroastrians	0%
Hindus	0%
Baha'is	0.02%
Jewish	0.12%
Buddhists	0.35%
Christians	7.83%

Government interaction with religion: The constitution provides for freedom of religion in Kyrgyzstan. There are no government opposed restrictions on worship, however, religious bodies are required to register their congregations. While the

government claims that it has not denied any religious organization registration, there have been reports that smaller groups have had difficulties registering. Religious activities have been monitored more closely due to the government's fear of Islamic fundamentalism which is seen as a threat to the country's stability. The Constitution supports the separation of Church and State and the government does not officially support any one religion. The government recognizes three Muslims holidays and one Christian holiday as national holidays. Missionary groups of various faiths are allowed to operate freely within Kyrgyzstan, but are asked to register.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2001/5598.htm>

Basic Facts

Demographics:

As of July 2005, the population of Kyrgyzstan was 5,146,281. The population growth rate is +1.29%. Age structure stands 0-14 years 31.6%; 15-64 years 62.3%; 65+ years 6.2% (2005 est.) The birth rate stands at 22.48 births per 1000 population and the death rate 7.13 deaths per 1000 population. Infant mortality rate is 35.64 deaths per 1000 live births. Life expectancy is 64.16 years for males and 72.38 years for females. Less than 0.1% of the adult population is infected with HIV/ AIDS. The urban/rural division stands at 40.08% urban with a 1.8% urban growth rate. The largest cities are Bishkek (743,601), Osh (276,066), Dzalal-Abad (92,601), Tomak (82,518), and Karakol (74,521).

Encarta Encyclopedia: Johnstone and Mandryk
www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/kz.html

Language:

The official language of Kyrgyzstan is Kyrgyz and Russian

Society/ Culture:

45 people groups make up Kyrgyzstan.

The primary people divisions are:

Kyrgyz (64.9%)

Uzbek (13.8%)

Russian (12.5%)

Dungan (1.1%)

Ukrainian (1%)

Uygur (1%)

Other (5.7%)

The people of Kyrgyzstan are a diverse group of people. About 45 people groups. Most in Kyrgyzstan speak both Russian and Kyrgyz, and many are learning English as well.

Most people in Kyrgyzstan hold hospitality to be something of importance. Many groups in Kyrgyzstan go out of their way to make guests feel welcome and often greet their guests with a meal of tea, bread, fresh and dried fruits and candy.

Although Islam forbids the use of alcohol, many will drink alcohol, usually vodka, with their guests. When a guest is present, it is not uncommon for them to kill a lamb, without spilling any blood, and serving the head of the lamb to the guest of honor. The guest is then expected to give slices of the lamb's ears and eyes to other guests that are present.

The people of Kyrgyzstan are known to be peaceful, gentle people. One Kyrgyz legend says, "At the beginning of mankind, God gave land to every people, according to their talents and personality. He distributed fertile valleys, rocky mountains, dry deserts, forests, and everything the world had to offer. At the end of the distribution, God noticed the Kyrgyz, who had been sleeping at the foot of a tree, when everybody else was fighting for the best part of the world. This carelessness touched God so much in his very heart that He decided to give him an especially fertile and beautiful part of the world, so he wouldn't have to work too hard to survive."

Respect of Elders is also important in Kyrgyz society. Both hands are used to shake the hands of someone who is older. In addition, elderly parents are cared for by their children. It is unacceptable to many in Kyrgyzstan to allow an elderly parent to live in a nursing home. In most places, it is considered important to know one's ancestors back several, sometimes seven, generations and also to know which tribe they are from.

Families are very important to the people of Kyrgyzstan. Extended families are common in the more rural areas. Elders are respected and the man is the head of the household. Many ceremonies are observed. The cutting of a child's umbilical cord as well as the naming of the child is both important celebrations. The wedding is the most important celebration in this society and often demands a high bride price to be paid to the bride's family.

Many in Kyrgyzstan are nomadic. The yurt or yurta is still a common dwelling in the country. These homes are usually made of sheep's felt and can be found throughout the country. Those living in cities still build a yurt for important holidays and celebrations. Carpets are usually spread over the walls and floors for decoration. A stove is usually in the center of the room and is used for both cooking and heating the room. A yurt that is being lived in is usually divided into the men's half and the women's half. The man's part acts as storage for hunting and fishing utilities as well as riding gear and things needed for the sheep. The woman's side stores things for the kitchen and anything that is needed for crafts.

People in Kyrgyzstan wear both traditional and Western-style dress. Many of the traditional clothes are made of animal skins. Married women will often cover their heads with white scarves tied as turbans. Men in Kyrgyzstan are known for their steeple-shaped hats that sometimes have gold embroidery.

The people of Kyrgyzstan have a rich culture. They often have lavish celebrations and many enjoy music, poetry, and ancient crafts. Story telling is an important part of their culture and they often sing their tales, accompanied by the dombra, which is a three stringed instrument. The most famous story is called the "Manas" and it is twenty times longer than the Odyssey. It is about the hero Manas and is reflective of Kyrgyz customs and philosophies. Girls and women often make patterned carpets from sheep's felt called Shyrdak and Ala-Kiyiz.

Food in Kyrgyzstan resembles that of the Middle East or Mediterranean. They use rice, seasonings, vegetables, legumes, yogurt, and grilled meats. Meat and potatoes with a spicy side dish are commonly served. Tea is served at almost every meal, usually without milk. Fermented mare's milk, called Kumys, is a mildly alcoholic drink that is served in the spring and summer. Bozo is a thick, yeasty mix that is made of fermented millet. Kazy-Karta is a national dish made of horse intestine and stomach that is often served to guests. Everyday dishes include Kesme, which is a noodle soup made with potatoes and meat, Shorpo, which is a rich meat broth made with potatoes, peas, and carrots, Lagman, which is a spicy soup made with meat, vegetables, and noodles, and Chuchvara, which is made of meat dumplings. Horsemeat is very common and is often served in sausages.

Horseback riding is common and an important part of the culture in Kyrgyzstan. Several horseback riding games exist among them and children are often taught to ride horses when they first begin to walk. One of the most popular is Kokpar or Buzkashi. It is a sport similar to polo which uses a headless goat carcass instead of a ball. Another sport is GyzGuu. In this sport a boy and girl chase each other on horseback. If the boy catches the girl, he can kiss her and if she catches him, she beats him with her riding whip.

Women in Kyrgyzstan play a more prominent role than they do in any other Central Asian country. In the past, they worked as equals with men in order to survive in a nomadic economy. They were responsible for chores such as milking, as well as raising their children. Within the family, women were treated as equals with their husbands. During the Russian conquest of Quqon, the wife of Khan Almyr-bek led a group of tribes. Since the country's independence, women have been in the positions of state procurator, which is the top law enforcement official in the government, minister of education, ambassadors, and minister of foreign affairs. Women also participate in banking, business, and editing.

The majority of the people in Kyrgyzstan are Sunni Muslim. The more devout Muslims live in southern part of the country and in the north; the people are more Russified and tend to be more atheist or Orthodox. The people in Kyrgyzstan who are Muslim celebrate several religious ceremonies. Most take part in a month of fasting called Ramadan. Many start the month by wearing new clothes and going to prayer. Children often receive gifts during this time. At the end of the month, they take part in a three-day feast. This Eid-i-Ramazan is a time of joy where relatives get together. Eid Al-Fitr celebrates the end of the time of fasting. Another important celebration is Kurban Ait, of the Feast of the Sacrifice. This feast celebrates Abraham's sacrifice of a sheep in place of his son as ordered by Allah. Usually during this celebration, families slay a sheep and give some of

the meat to the poor. Another important celebration is the celebration of Mohammed's birthday, which is called Mouloud. Ashura is the tenth day of the month Muharram according to the Islamic calendar. This is seen as a day of mourning of the martyrdom of Hussein and his followers at the battle of Kerbala.

Other holidays include New Year's Day on January 1, Russian Orthodox Christmas on January 7, Women's Day, in March, Nooruz in March, Good Friday and Easter Monday in April, International Labor Day on May 1, Victory Day May 9, Independence Day on August 31, Knowledge Day on September 1, Christmas on December 26, and Constitution Day on May 5.

<http://muslimministries.iteams.org/asia/kyrgyz.php> <http://www.advantour.com/kyrgyzstan/culture.htm>
<http://countrystudies.us/kyrgyzstan/11.htm>; http://www.cac-biodiversity.org/kgz/kgz_culture.htm
http://www.cac-biodiversity.org/kgz/kgz_visitor.htm
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyrgyzstan#Culture>
www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/kz.html

Government:

Kyrgyzstan is a republic. Acting President Kurmanbek Bakiyev has been chief of state since March 24, 2005. He became president after Askar Akayev was forced to resign and flee the country due to widespread protests resigned on April 11, 2005.

The president is elected by popular vote for a five year term and the next election is scheduled for 2010. The head of government, who is appointed by the president, is Acting Prime Minister Medetbek Kerimkulov. He has been in office since June 20, 2005. In the executive branch, there is a Cabinet of Ministers that is appointed by the president with the approval of the Prime Minister. The legislative branch is made up of a bicameral Supreme Council, called the Jorgorku Kenesh, which consists of the Assembly of People's Representatives and the Legislative Assembly. The Judicial Branch consists of a Supreme Court in which judges are appointed by the Supreme Council for 10 year terms. It is also made up of a Constitutional Court and Higher Court of Arbitration.

www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/kz.html
<http://www.country-studies.com/kyrgyzstan/government.html>
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/eur/8366.htm>

Economy:

The Gross Domestic Product of Kyrgyzstan stood at \$8.495 billion in 2004. Kyrgyzstan is a poor country that relies mostly on agriculture. It was the first CIS country to be accepted into the World Trade Organization. Kyrgyzstan has the largest natural growth walnut forest in the world. Only 7.3% of the land is arable. Cotton and tobacco are the most valuable crops to the country. Agricultural products common to Kyrgyzstan include cotton, tobacco, vegetables, potatoes, grapes, fruits and berries, sheep, goats, cattle, and wool. Other industries include textiles, small machinery, food processing, cement, shoes, sawn logs, refrigerators, furniture, electric motors, gold, and rare metals. The country's

natural resources include abundant hydropower, large deposits of gold and rare earth metals, coal, oil, natural gas, and deposits of nepheline, mercury, bismuth, lead, and zinc.

Kyrgyzstan's main exports are cotton, wool, meat, tobacco, gold, mercury, uranium, natural gas, hydropower, machinery, and shoes. About 23.8% of Kyrgyzstan's exports go to UAE, 16.9% goes to Switzerland, 16.9% goes to Russia, 10.1% goes to Kazakhstan, and 9.8% goes to China. Kyrgyzstan's major imports include oil, gas, machinery, equipment, chemicals, and foodstuffs. 23.1% of Kyrgyzstan's imports come from Russia and 22.9% come from China. Kyrgyzstan receives about 19.3% of the country's imports from Kazakhstan, 7.2% from Turkey, 4.5% from Germany, 4.4% from Uzbekistan, and 4.2% from the United States.

In 2004, almost 40% of Kyrgyzstan lived in poverty. In 2004, the employment breakdown was 38.5% agriculture, 22.8% industry, and 38.7% services. Kyrgyzstan received \$50 million in economic aid from the United States in 2001.

Drug trafficking is becoming an increasing problem in Kyrgyzstan. It has become a transit country for Southwest Asian narcotics that are going to Russia and to Europe. There is limited cultivation of opium poppy that is for illegal domestic consumption.

There are many development opportunities in Kyrgyzstan. Water pollution is a big problem in the country. Many people get their water from polluted streams and wells and are exposed to water borne diseases. In addition, the country is suffering from increasing soil salinity due to faulty irrigation practices, so people are needed to help with water projects, especially in the southern part of the country. People are needed to teach more efficient farming methods and to help them learn more modern farming techniques. People are also needed to teach computer and business skills to those in universities. Doctors are needed to come teach local doctors and to lead health conferences. English teachers are needed throughout the country.

One group is currently running a program to assist over 1,000 schools and orphanages. They are working to repair infrastructure and create a safe and comfortable learning environment for children. They have also established a conflict prevention program in the Ferghana Valley region. People are needed to help those in Kyrgyzstan prepare for and respond to natural disasters.

<http://www2.mercycorps.org/items/310> <http://www.win1040.com/countries/a0000056.cfm>

http://www.fh.org/prayer_tajikistan

<http://www.freenet.kg/peacecorps/project.html>

Johnstone, Patrick & Mandryk, Jason. Operation World: 21st Century Edition. Cumbria, CA: Paternoster Lifestyle, 2001.

www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/kz.html

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

http://www.fh.org/prayer_kyrgyzstan www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/car/index/html

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

Literacy:

Tajikistan has a total 97% literacy rate, with 99% of men and 96% of women above the age of 15 able to read and write.

www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/kz.html

Land/Geography:

Kyrgyzstan is in Central Asia, east of Uzbekistan, south of Kazakhstan, and north of Tajikistan and west of China. It is a landlocked country, joining with China, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. Kyrgyzstan is slightly smaller than South Dakota. The country's landscape is mostly dominated by the Tien Shan Mountains.

www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/kz.html

History of Kyrgyzstan

Stone Age and Bronze Age

It is believed by some that people have been in Kyrgyzstan for the past 200,000 to 300,000 years. Chinese chronicles from around 2000BC are the first records of Kyrgyz civilization. The Kyrgyz originally lived in the northwestern part of what is now Mongolia.

6th and 7th Century BCE

In the 6th and 7th century, the Saks inhabited the area. They were considered to be a part of the network of Scythian culture. They set up their first state in South-East Kazakhstan and northeastern Kyrgyzstan. They had a written language, mythology, and were known for their animal styled art which was sometimes made of gold and bronze. It was one of the south Saka tribes, known as the Massagetes, who was able to force out Alexander the Great in the 4th century. The Scythians were the first to master firing an arrow from a galloping horse.

The "Golden Man" or "Golden Warrior/Prince" was found at the Issyk burial mound near Almaty in Kazakhstan. A silver bowl with an inscription on it was also found near this site. Some think the inscription may be in an Iranian language. Other relics have been found at a burial mound near Lake Issyk-Kul. It is believed that this was a time period where many elements of the inhabitant's culture developed.

Achaemenid Rule, ca. 550-331 BC

Central Asia's geographical location drew many foreign invaders. Many include Kyrgyzstan as being a part of the ancient Persian province of Sogdiana. The Silk Road was important for the transport of precious stone from India, silver goods from Iran, Byzantine cloths, Turkic slaves, and Afraibian ceramics. During the rule of Darius the Great, the Achaemenid (Persian) Empire expanded to its peak and included much of Central Asia. By the fourth century BC, Persian control of the outlying areas and the internal cohesion of the empire deteriorated.

In the fourth and third centuries BC, Kyrgyz were among those who constantly invaded Chinese territory and stimulated the building of the original Great Wall of China. Kyrgyz freed themselves from being controlled by the Huns by moving to present day Siberia. When they left Siberia, they formed the Kyrgyz Khanate at the beginning of the first millennium. The Scythian tribes in Kyrgyzstan were fierce and were able to resist the armies of Alexander the Great in 328-327 BC.

Central Asian and Sassanian Rule, ca. 150 B.C.-700 A.D.

In the third and second centuries BC, the Parthians, a nomadic people speaking Indo-European languages, entered into the Iranian Plateau and established control in most of what is Iran. Bactria and Sogdiana first joined the Seleukids, but later became part of a Greco-Bactrian state and the Kushan Empire, which formed about 100 years later. The Kushans, who were another Indo-European group entered Central Asia and established an empire that would last for almost four centuries. The Kushan Empire spread and became among the most powerful empires of its time. The empire reached from the Indus Valley to the Gobi desert and as far west as the Iranian Plateau and included present day Kyrgyzstan.

By the beginning of the second century, the Kushan Empire reached its greatest geographic and cultural peak. It became a center of literature and art and also became a center of trade, especially in silk. It became part of a trade route into East Asia. Kanishka, who was the leader during this time was considered Kushans greatest ruler. During his reign, Mahayana Buddhism, reached its peak in Central Asia.

During the third century, the Kushan Empire became fragmented and was easily taken over by the Sassanians, of the Iranian Dynasty, and the Guptas, of the Indian dynasty. These kingdoms were ununified and fell to the Hephthalites, or the White Huns. The White Huns destroyed the Buddhist culture and left most of the area in ruins. The Hephthalites are believed to have remained in control for about a century, until they were defeated by the Western Turks and an up rise of the Sassanians. At this time, Kyrgyzstan was a part of the Western Turkish Khanate. By the middle of the seventh century, the Buddhist culture and earlier Zoroastrian influence began to fade. Now there is little left that bears witness of these strong influences.

The Turkic Kaganate from the sixth century was the earliest state in the region that was well documented. A large population of Turks lived in Kyrgyzstan near Lake Issyk- Kul.

Islamic Conquest, ca. 637-900AD

After the death of Mohammad, Islam spread the Middle East and Central Asia. Five years after the death of Mohammad, at the Battle of Qadisiya in 637AD, Arab Muslims defeated the Iranian Sassanians and began taking over the regions east of Iran. This raid brought local rulers under the control of the Umayyad caliphs. Between the seventh and ninth centuries, most of Central Asia was converted from Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and folk religions to Sunni Islam. Kyrgyzstan was the site of an important battle in 751AD. The Turks allied with the Arabs and Tibetan armies to drive out a large

Tang Chinese army. The Abbasid Dynasty grew stronger and was able to subdue the Arab invaders by the middle of the eighth century.

Semi-independent states began to emerge throughout the empire by the middle of the ninth century as the Abbasid rule began to deteriorate. One of the best known dynasties during this time was that of the Samanid. During this time, Iranian Muslim scholarship, Shia Islam, dominated the area. Bukhara was the capital during this time. This dynasty lasted until the middle of the tenth century when Turkish tribes from the north and the Ghaznavids from the south took on the faltering Samanid Dynasty.

Mongol Rule, ca. 1220-1506

In 1220 Genghis Khan, overran Central Asia, destroying its cities and people. Kyrgyzstan was devastated. This conquest quickened the process of Turkification in the region because Genghis Khan's armies, while led by Mongols, were mostly made up of Turkic tribes. As these armies settled, they intermixed with the local populations. His empire spread from China to the Caspian Sea. While his power was great, Genghis Khan failed to loosen the grips of Islam on Central Asia. By the thirteenth century, even his descendants were Muslims.

The Mongols destroyed Buddhist monuments and buildings. The invasion by the Mongols cost Kyrgyzstan its independence and written language. After Genghis Khan's death in 1227 Central Asia went through a period of fragmentation. The khanate was broken up into many smaller ones and Kyrgyzstan was ruled by Chagatai Khan, who was the second son of Genghis Khan. Fragmentation lasted until the 1380's with the rise of Timor Lenk, or Tamerlane. Timor, who was of both Turkish and Mongol descent claimed to be an ancestor of Genghis Khan and was able to consolidate the kingdoms, which founded a powerful state, with the capital in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. He started a series of military campaigns and by the late fourteenth century, he expanded his dynasty from India to Turkey. Movarounnahr, the new centralized part of Central Asia, saw much advancement in the economy, as well as in social and military institutes that had been undermined by the Mongol domination.

Between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries the Turkish people in Kyrgyzstan were absorbed into the Mongolian empire. They became a part of the province of the Chagatai Khan, who was the second son of Genghis Khan. The Kipchak- Kyrgyz people in the area between the Irtysh and Yenisey rivers moved to the Tian Shan area. Here, they mixed with the Mongols and local Turkish groups and in the 15th and 16th centuries, the Kyrgyz people were formed. In 1510, Kyrgyz tribes gained freedom, but by the seventeenth century, they were overrun by the Kalmyks. In 1685, the Mongol Oyrats subdued the Kyrgyz. They were a ruthless group and drove large numbers of Kyrgyz south, into what is now Tajikistan. In the eighteenth century, the Manchus overtook them and the Kyrgyz became subjects of the Chinese. Between 1710 and 1876, the Uzbeks held power over them. Uzbek Khan Madali of Kokand ruled Kyrgyz. By this time, Russia began to show an interest in the region and the Kyrgyz strengthened Kyrgyz willingness to seek protection from Russia.

Arrival of the Russians, ca. 1862-1916

In 1862, the Kyrgyz, with the support of Russian troops, rebelled against the Khanate of Kokland. After the defeat, Russian troops occupied northern Kyrgyzstan and in 1864, Northern Kyrgyzstan joined the Russian Empire and became part of the region Semirechensk. Thousands of Russian colonists came to Kyrgyzstan and by 1876, all of Kyrgyzstan had become part of the Russian Empire. During this time, the Kyrgyz saw their land confiscated and they were forced to integrate into the economic and political life of Russia.

Confiscated land, forced labor, and unfair economic policies led to many revolts against the tsarist authorities. Many Kyrgyz moved to the Pamir Mountains or to Afghanistan. As those indigenous to Central Asia were forced into mandatory military service, a major rebellion was triggered. In 1876, the rebellion began in Uzbekistan and then spread throughout Central Asia. It was quickly and brutally put down by the czarist regime. An estimated 2,000 Slavic settlers and even more local people were killed in the rebellion and one-third of the Kyrgyz population was driven to China. The Kyrgyz fought Bolshevik control from 1917-1921.

Due to years of war and unrest, there was a famine from 1921-1922 that led to about 500,000 Kyrgyz deaths. In 1924, Kyrgyzstan was designated the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Region was made a part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It was changed to the Kyrgyz Autonomous Republic in 1926 and became a constituent republic of the Soviet Union on December 5, 1936.

Under initial Soviet rule, the Kyrgyz Republic saw many changes. Literacy increased and a standard language was introduced. The area saw both economic and social development. Despite suppression under Stalin regime, many aspects of Kyrgyz culture were maintained. While some culture was maintained, the Kyrgyz were forced to abandon their nomadic way of life in order to accept modern farming and industrial production techniques. They were made to work in the industries of textile, leather, tobacco, lumber, metal, and hydroelectric power.

Ethnic Violence and the Rise of Akayev, ca. 1980-1990

Reforms by Gorbachev in the 1980 led to problems with land and housing for the Kyrgyz. Land and housing were the two biggest factors causing ethnic violence between the Uzbeks and the Kyrgyz. Most of the Uzbek population in Kyrgyzstan was located around the city of Osh. Adalat, an Uzbek rights group, began demanding that Moscow grant the Uzbeks autonomy in Osh and allow the city to become a part of Uzbekistan. The Kyrgyz formed an opposing group called the Osh-aimagy. In June of 1990, the Osh City Council, which was primarily made up of Kyrgyz, announced plans to build a cotton processing plant on an Uzbek collective farm. This announcement led to several days of violent riots that resulted in 320 Kyrgyz and Uzbek deaths. The government stopped the violence by imposing a curfew that was enforced by the military. Order was restored in August of 1990.

The riots brought to surface much political discontentment that had been forming. An activist group called the Democratic Movement of Kyrgyzstan began calling for the resignation of Absamat Masaliyev, the president of the republic's parliament. He was accused of mishandling the Osh riots. They headed up several hunger strikes and public demonstrations. Gorbachev's reform policies called for a new election and Masaliyev was unable to win the votes necessary to remain in power. None of the three presidential candidates in this election were able to gain the necessary majority so the Supreme Soviet selected Askar Akayev as a compromise president. He was a physicist who had been serving at the republic's Academy of Sciences and was a non-Communist.

Independence and Akayev's Presidency, ca. 1990-present day

The January after his election, Akayev put into place a new government of reform-oriented politicians. In December of 1990, the government voted to change the Republic's name to the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and in 1991, the capital's name was changed back to Bishkek.

There was an attempted coup in Moscow on August of 1991. The coup collapsed within a week and on August 31, 1991, the Supreme Soviet voted to declare independence from the U.S.S.R. It became a member of the Russian dominated Commonwealth of Independent States. In September, Kyrgyz was declared as the official language. A new constitution was approved. The Supreme Soviet scheduled direct presidential elections for October of 1991, and Akayev ran unopposed, receiving 95% of the popular vote. On December 21, 1991, the Kyrgyz Republic formally became a part of the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

In December of 1991, Akayev vetoed a law approved by the Parliament which gave the Kyrgyz exclusive right to the land. Hostility between the Uzbeks and Kyrgyz was already great, so Akayev was trying to avoid more conflict between the two groups. During this time, Kyrgyzstan created a National Guard of a thousand troops and also asked CIS forces to remain in the country for security reasons.

While in office, Akayev strengthened ties with China and Kazakhstan and initiated a program of free-market reforms. In 2001, he strengthened ties with the United States and Russia by renting out land for military bases. He also made changes to the constitution, staged elections, and intimidated political opponents. In 1995, Akayev attempted to extend his term with a referendum, but was forced by Parliament to hold an election in December of that year. He used government resources and state owned media to run his campaign and three out of six candidates were de-registered shortly before the election. He was re-elected with between 60%-75% of the vote. In October of 2000, Akayev was reelected. Observers said that the election was corrupt and was full of intimidation and ballot fraud. A 2003 referendum affirmed Akayev's current term.

While in office, Akayev made changes in the constitution that enhanced his power as president and gained for himself lifelong immunity from prosecution. Akayev strengthened the country's economic relationship with Russia. Due to growing tensions in the country, however, many ethnic Russians, mostly technicians and the more educated

occupations, left the country. Civil war broke out in Tajikistan and along its borders in 1992 and as a result many refugees and “freedom fighters” were fleeing into Kyrgyzstan. In 1999, Islamic militants took over several towns along the border. In 2000, Kyrgyzstani forces fought Uzbek guerillas that were based in Tajikistan and were coming into the Fergana Valley.

Tensions between the Kyrgyz and the Uzbeks over land, along with ethnic discrimination, lead to an instability which greatly affected the economy. Unemployment rates were high and in 2003, about 50% of the population lived below the poverty line. Many factories were closed and there was an increase in malnutrition. The Gross Domestic Product fell and a United Nations report stated that about 88% of the country’s population lives on less than \$4 a day.

Elections in 2005 brought about a lot of controversy and lead to many violent protests throughout the country. On March 24, 2005, Akayev was forced to flee the country and on April 4, he announced his resignation. When Akayev resigned, opposition leader Kurmanbek Bakiev stepped in as interim president and prime minister. He was formally elected president by 88.7% vote in the elections held June 10, 2005.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1296485.stm http://www.cac-biodiversity.org/kgz/kgz_history.htm <http://www.advantour.com/kyrgyzstan/history.htm>
<http://www.historyofnations.net/asia/kyrgyzstan.html> <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0107698.htm>
<http://www.motherearthtravel.com/kyrgyzstan/history.htm>
http://workmall.com/wfb2001/kyrgyzstan/kyrgyzstan_history_early_history.html
http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/section/kyrgyzst_history.asp <http://countrystudies.us/kyrgyzstan/4.htm>
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/destinations/asia/kyrgyzstan/> http://gbgm-umc.org/country_profiles/countries/kgz/History.stm
http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/central_asia/tajikistan/history.htm
<http://www.historyofnations.net/asia/tajikistan.html> <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0108024.html>
<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0861423.html> http://gbgm-umc.org/country_profiles/countries/tjk/History.stm <http://countrystudies.us/tajikistan/1.htm>
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Christian History

Christianity first came to Central Asia around 250AD as Christians traveled the Silk Road. At first, it was strongly opposed, however, by 410AD, almost one fourth of the population claimed to be Christians. Nestorian Christianity reached Central Asian the fourth century; however, it was completely wiped out by Islam during the time of the Arab invasion. During the twelfth century, Italian and French monks on their way to China brought Christianity back to the area. Tomak became the seat of the Nestorian archbishopric. It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that Christianity returned to the region. The Russian Orthodox Church came to Kyrgyzstan as the Russians began colonizing the country. As a result, many see Christianity as the religion of the Russians. During Stalin’s reign, many minorities in the former Soviet Union were deported to Central Asia. This brought Protestants and Roman Catholics to the area for the first time.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, both Islam and Russian Orthodoxy increased in the area. Protestantism also increased as new settlers brought in various Protestant denominations. Protestantism grew the most when a large group of Germans were deported to Kyrgyzstan in the 1930's and 1940's. Many of these were Lutheran and Mennonites. While the Protestant population increased, there were few, if any, known ethnic Central Asians converted to Christianity. Some expatriate Evangelical Christians, many from Korea, have come to Kyrgyzstan to help with different aspects of national development and to teach in Bible schools. These workers are doing prison ministries, running orphanages and schools for the blind, and putting on well attended concerts.

Today there are about 300 Protestant congregations in the country. Since 1998, more than 685 Christian missionaries have worked in Kyrgyzstan. Aside from Orthodox Churches, Kyrgyzstan also has members in several other Christian denominations. Roman Catholics, Baptists, Presbyterians, Pentecostals, the Korean Methodist Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Old Mennonites, the New Apostolic congregation, as well as a few other congregations exist.

The constitution provides for freedom of religion in Kyrgyzstan. According to the 2004 International Religious Freedom Report, however, the government of Kyrgyzstan is concerned about the growing number of Christian preaching and worshipping in the country. The government may soon be imposing a law prohibiting proselytizing due to growing conflicts over conversion in the southern part of the country. These conflicts include burial problems, social exclusion, and threats from their Muslim neighbors. In one village, almost all of the members of a local Protestant Church left the congregation due to pressure by local Muslims. In another village, Muslims demanded punishment for those who had converted to Christianity. Christian converts are often accused by Muslims of receiving money to go to services or to profess Christianity.

Non-Christian Religions

Buddhism, Hindu, Baha'i, and Zoroastrian

Islam is the biggest non-Christian religion in Kyrgyzstan, however, there are several other religions that practice in the country. By the beginning of the second century, the Kushan Empire reached its greatest geographic and cultural peak. It became a center of literature and art and also became a center of trade, especially in silk. It became part of a trade route into East Asia. Kanishka, who was the leader during this time, was considered to be the Kushans greatest ruler. During his reign, Mahayana Buddhism reached its peak in Central Asia. By the middle of the seventh century, the Buddhist culture and earlier Zoroastrian influence began to fade. There are some small communities of Buddhists, Zoroastrians, and Baha'is found throughout Kyrgyzstan. While freedom of religion is allowed, some of these groups face opposition from Islamic groups. It is estimated that by the middle of 2000, there were about 940 Zoroastrians, 940 Baha'is, and 20,411 Buddhists in Kyrgyzstan.

Islam

After the death of Mohammad, Islam spread the Middle East and Central Asia. Five years after the death of Mohammad, at the Battle of Qadisiya in 637AD, Arab Muslims defeated the Iranian Sassanians and began taking over the regions east of Iran. This raid brought local rulers under the control of the Umayyad caliphs. Between the seventh and ninth centuries, most of Central Asia was converted from Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and folk religions to Sunni Islam. The Abbasid Dynasty grew stronger and was able to subdue the Arab invaders by the middle of the eight century.

Semi-independent states began to emerge throughout the empire by the middle of the ninth century as the Abbasid rule began to deteriorate. One of the best known dynasties during this time was that of the Samanid. During this time, Iranian Muslim scholarship, Shia Islam, dominated the area. Bukhara was the capital during this time. This dynasty lasted until the middle of the tenth century when Turkish tribes from the north and the Ghaznavids from the south took on the faltering Samanid Dynasty. Rule changed hands many times over the next centuries, but Islam remained the predominate and almost the only acceptable religion of the area until the Russian conquest.

The most intense exposure the Kyrgyz had to Islam was when the Jungars drove the Kyrgyz in the Tian Shan regions to the Islamic Fergana Valley in the seventeenth century. As the danger from the Jungars became less intense, many Kyrgyz returned to their homes in the Tian Shan region and Islam became less influential in their lives. The Kyrgyz were able to remain only slightly influenced by Islam until the nineteenth century. At that point, almost all of the Kyrgyz had at least superficially embraced Islam.

During the Soviet Era, authorities did not prohibit Islam; rather they used it to control the people. In many places, mosques and madrassahs were closed and religious festivals were banned. During the 1920's and 1930's, Muslims experienced harsh anti-Islamic attacks. In addition to bans on festivals and meetings, many were killed. Muslims were forced to go underground and secretly practiced their religion, or they were forced to practice their religion under the close scrutiny of the Soviet government.

In the 1940's, Islam became more accepted, but was strictly controlled by the Kremlin. The 1970's and 1980's saw a new effort at minimizing the influence of Islam and hostility towards Islam escalated during the Soviet military involvement with Afghanistan. Government feared Muslim extremists. In 1990, Muslims from different countries in the Former Soviet Union began to organize the Islamic Rebirth Party.

Today, Kyrgyzstan has a large Muslim population, with an estimated 78.08% of the population calling themselves Muslims. Although a large portion of the population professes to be Muslims, the degree of religious observance varies widely. About 40% of the country's Muslims claim to be of the Wahhabi sect. Islam is practiced differently in the northern and southern part of the country. Muslims tend to be more devout in the southern part of the country. In the north, Islam is generally mixed with animistic and shamanistic practices. Many do not know or practice the basic tenants of Islam. Folk Islam is very common and many people mix folk traditions from other religions, such as Zoroastrianism, in with what they know of Islam. Many eat pork and drink alcohol.

Most claiming Islam in Kyrgyzstan are Sunni Muslims. The Sunni branch of Islam has been a part of the sedentary population of Central Asia for about 1,200 years. A small group, however, are Shi'a Muslims, with a percentage of those being Ismailis. There are only about 1,000 Shi'a Muslims living in the country. Ismailism first gained followers in Central Asia during the early tenth century. Muslims have faced some persecution in recent years. Several mosques have been closed in the Suzak district of southern Kyrgyzstan. Also, there have been reports teachers in schools telling schoolchildren not to perform the daily prayers and reports of schools not allowing children to attend classes with their heads covered.

Islamic fundamentalism has grown in the southern part of the country. The fundamental group Hizb-ut-Tahrir has been persecuting those who convert to Christianity and recently five members of the organization were arrested for distributing propaganda that encouraged people in the area to overthrow the Kyrgyz leadership in order to establish an Islamic caliphate in the Ferghana Valley. In 2000, about 300 people, mostly members of Hizb-ut-Tahrir were arrested for distributing religious literature.

There are more than 3,000 mosques in Kyrgyzstan, with more than 2,000 of these having been built since the year 2000. There are more than 20 madrassahs and eight Islamic institutions in the country. In an attempt to restore Islam to the area, Middle Eastern countries and Asian countries such as Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey are funding the construction of new mosques and schools. They are sponsoring the training of new Islamic leaders and have sent Arabic teachers into the country.

Judaism

There are approximately 2,500 Jews in Kyrgyzstan. Today the Jewish community mostly resides in Bishkek. There is an Ashkenazi synagogue and several Bukharan services held in Bishkek. There are also several Bukharan houses of prayer throughout the Ferghana Valley and Jewish communities in Osh, Karakol, and Dzhahalal-Abad. The Menorah Center in Bishkek is the center of Jewish life in Kyrgyzstan and is supported by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

The Bukharic Jew people group is sometimes considered the Central Asian Jew people group. The Central Asian Jew is also sometimes called Sarikoli, Sarykloy, Tadzik, and Tajiki. Many prefer to be called "Isro'il" or "Yahudi." They have a strong sense of Jewish identity, however the Jews of Asia have a distinct lifestyle. Most of these Jews are Ashkenazim which are descendents of the Jews who inhabited the Germanic region of Europe. They speak Eastern Yiddish, a German dialect that is mixed with Hebrew. The Bukharic Jews speak Bokhara, which is a Jewish dialect of Tajik. This is one of the Asian Jews distinguishing features.

It is estimated that Jews settled along the Great Silk Road beginning in the 4th century. There is archeological evidence that shows a group of Jewish traders from Khazaria in the region during the end of the 6th century. A group of Bukharan Jews lived in the areas that now make up Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan for about 2,000 years. They

settled mostly in Bukhara, which is how they derived their name “Bukharan.” These people claim to be descendants from the ten tribes of Israel who were forced to Persia in the fifth century. Traditionally, these families were patriarchal and patrilineal and households were made up of extended families. Nuclear families, however, are becoming more common. In the past, Bukharan Jews only married other Bukharan Jews. Ashkenazic Jews in larger cities, however, are now intermarrying with Muslims. Traditionally a matchmaker was sent to the parents of the bride and a dowry and bride price was agreed upon.

Jewish tradition had an influence on Kyrgyz culture. Several legends passed on by Kyrgyz referred to a large mountain near Osh called “King Solomon’s throne.” Local Jews believed that one night God took Solomon to that mountain and many compared the mountain to Mt. Zion. Since the eighth century, Kyrgyz have used the Star of David in architecture and crafts. Kyrgyz traditions consider Adam to be the father of sewing and weaving, Noah the father of architecture and carpentry, David the father of metallurgy and tinwork, and Abraham the father of barbers.

The Russian and Soviet eras were particularly hard for Jews in Russia, with synagogues shut down and religion repressed, some were imprisoned by the State. Ashkenazi Jews settled in the cities of Karakol, Bishkek, and Osh. In Osh, Bukharan Jews and Ashkenazic Jews lived in separate communities and did not intermarry. The Ashkenazic Jews tended to be better educated and the Bukharan Jews often worked as bankers, shoemakers, barbers, and butchers. The Ashkenazim Jews were more secular, while the Bukharan Jews were more religiously devout. It was not until the early 1990’s that the two groups prayed together.

In 1898, Osh had the largest population of Jews in Kyrgyzstan and had a separate Jewish cemetery. Until 1915, the Jews of Kyrgyzstan had no schools or synagogues and services were held in the homes of the local rabbis. Jewish funerals were conducted by leaders brought in from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Most Kyrgyz Jews lived in larger cities and the Russian Empire forbid Jews to settle in villages.

During World War One, large groups of Ashkenazi Jews came from Europe, many of them having been exiled due to involvement with oppositional political parties. Initially, they were well received. The Bukharan Jews, however, were not treated as well. They were forced to serve the army through manual and technical labor. In 1916, Jewish refugees and POWs from the German and Austro-Hungarian armies were sent to Kyrgyzstan and forced to work in coalmines, factories, irrigation projects, and railroad construction. During this time, wealthy Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Kyrgyz were allowed to pay poor members of the community to take their place in serving through this kind of labor, but Jewish leaders were prohibited from paying non-Jews to take their place.

During the 1930’s, a large number of Russian Jews fled to Kyrgyzstan to escape persecution and during World War Two more than 20,000 Jewish refugees came into the country. Many of these immigrants were Ashkenazim from Russia, Ukraine, and Poland. Those settling in the cities adjusted quickly. However, those who settled in farming areas experienced much difficulty. Many had never been involved in agriculture and were

unable to keep up with the quotas. Many locals were suspicious of the Jewish refugees and several were imprisoned for alleged “counter revolutionary activity” and “spreading lies.”

1941 saw more freedom for the Jewish community. During this year, authorities allowed a synagogue in Bishkek to be opened and kosher butchers and bakeries were allowed to open near the synagogue. After this, other synagogues were opened in Osh and Kant. The Jewish community was officially recognized in 1945 and they were allowed to celebrate Jewish holidays and hold activities until the 1950's. During the 1950's, all religious activities except for the High Holiday services were banned.

A movement for Jewish rights was bolstered by the Six-Day War and many began applying for entry into Israel in the 1970's. During this time, many Jews considered themselves to be atheists, but regularly visited the synagogue in order to maintain their ties with the Jewish community. Under Gorbachev more freedom was attained and in the early 1990's ten's of thousands of Jews were emigrating annually. Approximately one million fled after the fall of communism and many continue to immigrate to Israel today. Many left due to economic difficulties and the more educated have left due to political unrest. Islamic fundamentalists have spread anti-Semitic propaganda, and although this has been met with opposition by the general population and government, hostility towards Jews has increased in the southern part of the country.

In the past, the Bukharan Jews worked as peddlers, shoemakers, barbers, factory workers, and collective farmers. Today they continue working in these traditional occupations and are also working as engineers, doctors, teachers, and musicians. In addition, women often dance at Jewish and Muslim weddings.

Atheism/ Non-religious

In 2000, there were an estimated 295,162 atheists in Kyrgyzstan. Another source suggests that in 2002, 639,110 people considered themselves to be non-religious. One report notes that the non-religious group has a negative growth rate of – 1.6%.

Non-Christian, Church-like Groups

Several of Kyrgyzstan's Christian sects are on a “black list” of “destructive religious sects.” There are 32 organizations on this list. Some of those on the list include Seventh-Day Adventist, Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Church of Jesus Christ

Church of Jesus Christ

Kyrgyzstan's largest Christian sect is the *Church of Jesus Christ*, which has between 6,000 and 10,000 members. About 40% of this group is made up of ethnic Kyrgyz and there are 28 congregations throughout the country. This group has received the most persecution of other Christian sects. The church has been banned from registration in

several towns and in other areas, churches have been closed down or threatened. Leaders from the political opposition were all arrested and put in prison.

Jehovah's Witnesses

Jehovah's Witnesses congregations have also grown and the congregations are made up of ethnic Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Kurds, Tatars, and Russians. Jehovah's Witnesses are now one of the fastest growing groups in the country and they have about 4,000 members and 35 congregations in small towns throughout the country.

Russian Orthodox

There are more than 40 Russian Orthodox Churches in Kyrgyzstan as well as seven seminaries. Aside from Islam, Russian Orthodoxy is the most popular religion in the country. There are an estimated 270,000 Russian Orthodox Christians in Kyrgyzstan.

Other branches of the Orthodox Church in Kyrgyzstan are the Georgian Orthodox Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and a few other independent Orthodox Churches. There are three registered Catholic congregations with about 12,000 people affiliated with the church. These are mostly made up of Estonians, Byelorussians, Lithuanians, and a few Russians. There are two Armenian Apostolic congregations.

Second to Islam in Kyrgyzstan, is the Russian Orthodox Church. The Russian Orthodox Church traces its roots back to 988. Russia adopted Christianity as the official religion when Prince Vladimir of Kiev became a Christian in 988. The ceremony for Prince Vladimir was based upon Byzantine rites and this would serve as a model for the rise of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The church traces its apostolic succession through the Patriarch of Constantinople. At the Council of Florence in 1439, leaders of the Catholic and Orthodox Church agreed to reunify the two branches of Christianity. The Russian people rejected the concessions to the Catholics and Metropolitan Isidore was kicked out of his position in the church. The Russian Orthodox Church today remains separate from the Vatican. In 1448, the Russian Orthodox Church separated from the Patriarchate of Constantinople and installed Metropolitan Jonas who was given the title of Metropolitan of Moscow and all of Rus. Patriarch Nikon, in 1652 attempted to centralize the power that had been distributed locally while conforming Russian Orthodox rites and rituals to those of the Greek Orthodox Church.

An example of this conformation was the insistence that Russians cross themselves with three fingers instead of two. People saw these changes as heresy and this led to Nikon's loss of power. One leader, Tsar Aleksey, however, maintained Nikon's changes and persecuted those who opposed Nikon's changes. They were persecuted until Peter the Great's reign, which allowed people to practice their own style of Orthodoxy.

The Russian Orthodox Church grew during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In 1686, the Metropolia of Kiev was moved from Constantinople to Moscow, which brought

millions of followers under the authority of the Russian Orthodox Patriarch. Missionaries were sent across Siberia and into Alaska and the United States. In 1721, Peter the Great established the Holy and Supreme Synod to govern the church instead of leaving the authority with one person. Things remained this way until after the Russian Revolution in 1917. During this time, bishops elected a new patriarch. By 1914, there were 55,173 Russian Orthodox Churches, 29,593 chapels, and 112,629 priests in Russia. The church had to coexist with a secular government and followers were often disadvantaged and persecuted. During the 1920's and 1930's, many churches were converted into secular buildings and over 50,000 priests were sent to Labor camps or executed. Several seminaries were reopened in 1944, but relations between the Church and government got worse after Stalin's death. People were kept from many jobs due to their faith. University students were forced to take courses in Scientific Atheism.

In 1988, the Russian Orthodox Church celebrated its millennial anniversary. This became a turning point for the Russian Orthodox Church. The government changed from trying to work against religion to trying to use religion to gain support.

Russian Orthodoxy was introduced to Kyrgyzstan in the middle of the nineteenth century by the Russians. As a result, many see Christianity as the religion of the Russians. During Stalin's reign, many minorities in the former Soviet Union were deported to Central Asia. This brought Protestants and Roman Catholics to the area for the first time. Local Christians never developed a vision to reach out to other Muslim groups, so there were very few indigenous believers in Kyrgyzstan.

Russian Orthodox Churches have several unique features. The interiors are highly decorative, often decorated with frescos of saints or scenes that reach up to the domes. There is usually an icon of Christ in the main dome. There are often no pews and churches are lit with candles instead of electric lights. Worshippers often buy candles and place them on stands, a ritual that signifies asking a saint for a favor or for honoring a dead loved one. Colors, especially on the domes, have significance. Black represents submission, green represents the Trinity, blue represents the spirit of God, and Gold represents Jesus. Domes which are often very colorful are designed to look like candles from a distance. The number of domes is also significant on a church. One dome represents Jesus, three indicates the Trinity, and five indicates Jesus and the four evangelists. The crosses on top of the domes have a crescent shape with horns upturned as part of the base. This represents an anchor, signifying that the church is a ship of faith in the sea of vanity. Many churches are not built symmetrically, believing that symmetry is the enemy of beauty.

Roman Catholic

Three registered Roman Catholic churches serve in Kyrgyzstan and report an estimated 12,000- 26,000 people affiliated with the church. The main cathedral is in Bishkek. The current head of the Catholic Church in Kyrgyzstan is Father Aleksandr Kan. He suggests that the Catholic Church in Kyrgyzstan could actually register up to 40 small parishes around the country. However, he has seen no reason to register these congregations.

Protestants/ Evangelicals/ Pentecostals

Several Protestant organizations of various denominations serve in Kyrgyzstan. Many in the country equate Christianity with Russian Orthodoxy and with the Russian government that tried to impose its ways on the people of Central Asia. While freedom of religion is expressed in Kyrgyzstan's Constitution, Christians are still persecuted by some members of local government. There are reports of Christians being given excessive fines and being beaten. Some churches have been refused registration.

In addition, Muslim fundamentalists have also targeted Christians. The government may soon be imposing a law prohibiting proselytizing due to growing conflicts over conversion in the southern part of the country. These conflicts include burial problems, social exclusion, and threats from their Muslim neighbors. In one village, almost all of the members of a local Protestant Church left the congregation due to pressure by local Muslims. In another village, Muslims demanded punishment for those who had converted to Christianity. Christian converts are often accused by Muslims of receiving money to go to services or to profess Christianity.

There are more than 250 Protestant organizations registered in Kyrgyzstan. In Bishkek alone, there are about 30 Protestant congregations registered. In addition to the churches that are registered, there are many more meeting underground in house churches. Many church leaders require children to bring parental consent when they attend services. There are an estimated 800 Christian missionaries in Kyrgyzstan. Most of them are from South Korea, Germany, and the United States. Many Protestant churches are made up of non-Kyrgyz, however, there is a Baptist church in the Naryn region that is predominately ethnic Kyrgyz. This group of believers has incorporated some Muslim aspects of prayer into their Christian practices.

There are about 5,600 Baptists in Kyrgyzstan that make up 39 churches. These are mostly made up of Russians and Germans. Johnson reports some 50 congregations in the five groups of Baptists and over 3800 members (6500 adherents).

The Evangelical Lutheran Church is the largest evangelical denomination in Kyrgyzstan. It is estimated that about 20,000 people make up this denomination.

Pentecostal churches in Kyrgyzstan are mostly made up of Russians. Pentecostal churches report round 25 congregations with 3000 members and 5800 adherents.

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People Groups in Kyrgyzstan

24334

Armenian (4,300)

The Armenians of Kyrgyzstan are also known as the Armiane, Ermeni, Ermini, Hai, and Western Armenian. The Armenians use the Armenian language. Armenians come from the Trans-Caucasus Mountains of Armenia. They are an ancient people from the Caucasus with a 3,000 year history that has been researched and detailed. They have a deep tie to Christianity, since 303 when they became the first nation to declare it as the state religion, though many are Muslim. The Armenians have struggled to remain both Christian and free, defending against Turks, Mongols, Persians, Soviets, and Kurds, and so on. The Diaspora of Armenians has a varied and broken connection to this republic. Before leaving Armenia, they experienced much suffering. In the first part of this century, almost half of the people in Armenia were slaughtered by the Turks.

The Armenians in Kyrgyzstan are primarily Orthodox Christians. They are about 50% Christian adherent, however the percentage of evangelical believers is unknown. They have portions of the Bible, Christian radio, the God's story video, and the Jesus Film available in their language. 16% are non-religious. 8% are atheist. There are multiple groups working among these people.

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<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

24345

Avar, Daghestani (1,000)

The Avar are also called Batlux, Dagestani, Daghestani, and Maarulal. They are one of the major Daghestani ethnic groups in the former Soviet Union. They are made up of a complex mix of related, but distinct ethnic groups. They are mostly found in the Dagestan, in the North Caucasus Mountain region of Russia and are one of the largest people groups in that region. They controlled much of the river valley and plateau area in the highlands. They are also found in Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and the Ukraine. They speak the Avar language, which is part of the northeast Caucasian linguistic family. Since many of them live in isolated mountain areas, dialects between groups are often incomprehensible to others groups.

The Avars have a family centered lifestyle. Girls marry near the age of 15 to the preference of her parents. Divorce is possible for both whereas in years past only men had this possibility.

They were farmers on the collected lands of the Soviets but this did not change their community values. Only a small percentage of their land is arable, and they have created terraces to maintain the land. They fish in the Caspian, and herd sheep as other sources of food. Their homes are built on the mountain slopes. Most are of stone and are two or three stories.

They are Sunni Muslims, many of the Shafi school. Many attend mosques regularly, pray daily, and carryout common Muslim practices. The percentage of evangelicals is unknown and it is suggested that about 1% of them are Christian adherents. In some areas, the Georgian Orthodox Christianity was introduced between the 5th and 12th centuries. Avar Christians are largely Nestorian. They have the Bible or portions of the Bible, Gospel audio and the Jesus Film in their language. There are no known groups working among them. There are about 650,000 people in the Avar people cluster, and among those, there are only about 30 known believers.

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24335

Azerbaijani, North (17,400)

The Azerbaijani, also known as the Azeri, are of the Turkic affinity block. They are also called Azeri Turk, Turkmen, and South Azerbaijani. The name is derived from words meaning “fire” and “guardian” and points to the sacred oil fires that were lit by fire worshippers in their homeland. They are found throughout the former Soviet Union, with a large population found in Uzbekistan. In Kyrgyzstan, they are found just north of Biskek. This group speaks Northern Azerbaijani. The two main language subgroups are

North Azerbaijani, and South Azerbaijani. The differences in the two are in the sound and grammar. The language was written in fourteenth century. The Azeri language is of the southwestern branch of the Turkic language group.

This group of people has experienced many invasions. They were first captured by the Persians in the sixth century but were overtaken by the Turks the eleventh century. Russia took over the area in the beginning of the nineteenth century. In Kyrgyzstan some of the Azeri are rural farmers, while others live in the cities and work as technicians and engineers. In some places they work as industrious workers in larger cities and towns. Some work in lower skilled jobs. They also used to be known for their rug weaving.

The clan structure was common in the Azeri tradition. A clan, called *hoj*, would carry the name of a common ancestor. Landless peasants made up the lowest class, called *tavyrga*. Marriage to first cousins was encouraged before the Soviet era. After which there were unions outside the extended family. It was common that forty members of the extended family live in the same house, called a *gazma*. The clan works the land for the mutual survival of its members. Marriage outside the family was not allowed before the Soviet period. This has changed over the past decade. However, they still encourage marriage within the family or clan in order to protect their culture. Although many are Muslims, having more than one wife is only acceptable in cases of infertility.

The diet of the Azeri has consisted of rice pilaf, boiled and grilled meats like goat, beef, and lamb. A traditional yogurt soup is called *dovga*. The traditional mutton stew is called *bozartma*. Tea and wine are traditional and popular drinks.

The Northern Azerbaijani are mostly Shiite Muslims. There are some who are Sunni Muslims of the Hanafite branch. They practice Islam, though the Azeri women tend to be less restricted than the women of other Muslim groups. Many of the women work outside of the home and are allowed to be in leadership positions. The number of Christians among the Azeri in Kyrgyzstan is unknown. They have the Bible, the God's Story video, Christian audio recordings, and the Jesus Film in their language. In Russia, they are 78% Muslim, 20% non-religious, and about 2% Russian Orthodox.

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Balkar (2,000)

The Balkars are of the Caucasus people cluster. They are also called Alan, Karachai, and Karachay. They are mostly located in the Kabardino-Balkaria in the southern region of the Russian Federation, however they can also be found in Uzbekistan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. The Balkar living in Russia live in high valleys where the

farmland is terraced and the woods are complemented with alpine meadows. Herding and mining are done in these mountains as well. They speak the Karachay-Balkar language which has Turkic roots and is different from other languages in the area. It is the literary language that uses a Cyrillic alphabet.

The Balkar are believed to be the descendants of the Huns, Karachais, Kypchak, Khazar, Bulgarians, Alan, and Caucasian peoples. Their roots are very intertwined with the history and culture of these different groups because they maintained friendly cultural and economic relations with those around them.

The Karachay and Balkars constitute one nation though they are often separated due to the territorial isolation that took place in the fourteenth century. For ages the Karachais and Balkars have raised the yailag cattle in the alpine pastures along with their sheep. The two groups refer to themselves as the Taulu. The area has long been the stage of conflict between outside forces that have wished to exert control over it, from tribes to nation states.

The last instance was the movement of Russia into the lands that the Ottoman Empire controlled at the end of the eighteenth century. Many of the Muslims in the territory favored the Turks over the Russians. In the years following the Balkars sought some independence in their territory, but were caught in between wars and government shifts.

The Karachai-Balkar state finally collapsed after the Soviets took the territory back from the Germans. Like other people groups, between 25% and 50% lost their lands when they were deported to Siberia and Kazakhstan between 1944 and 1957, treated in completely inhumane ways. One account of such treatment was when a Karachai region was given two hours to evacuate by the Russians. Anyone who resisted was killed and houses were burned. About 63,333 people, about half of which were children, were loaded into livestock wagons and sent to the deserts of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. Those that survived the deportation were allowed to return to the territory, but were under KGB scrutiny until the end of the Soviet Union. Since then, the Karachay-Balkar people have sought and struggled to find the freedom they want, meeting barriers in government and themselves as loyalties are split due to their diverse background and deep needs.

They are primarily Sunni Muslims, with some pagan elements still retained. The percentage of Christians among the Balkar people in Kyrgyzstan is unknown. They have the Bible or portions of the Bible, Christian audio recordings, and the Jesus Film available in their language. Many connect Christianity with Russian oppression.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

Minahan, James B. *One Europe, Many Nations: A Historical Dictionary of European National Groups*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000.

http://www.adoptapeople.com/Profiles/p_code6/301.htm

<http://www.imb.org/centralasia/pray/Karachai.html>

<http://www.kafkas.org.tr/english/index.html>

Bashkir, Bashkort (4,400)

The Bashkir or Bashkort people are of the Ural-Siberian people cluster. They are also known as Bashkirian people. This group speaks the Bashkir language. They are mostly found in Russia and make up about 0.9% of the people in Russia. Most live in Bashkortostan, an autonomous republic of the Russian Federation, however even within their own republic they are a minority, outnumbered by the Russians and Tatars. Large populations are also found in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Belarus.

The Bashkir were cattle breeders and hunters before they set up trading centers in the Urals. They were nomadic shepherds before settling down. Along the Silk Road they not only interacted with merchants but with their religion. They became Muslims in the 10th century after interaction with the Arabs. They had a real tribal outlook that caused the group to adhere well throughout most of their history. During the past several centuries the number of other peoples moving into the Bashkir area has burgeoned. There are over 100 nationalities in Bashkortostan. There were many farmers that lost land. Most still are small farmers, but some have acquired jobs as skilled industrial workers.

Family is important to the Bashkir people and the new married couples live with the husband's parents at first. Polygamy exists on a small scale, mostly among those of high social status. Many of their traditions have been lost, however there is still a strong sense of kinship and loyalty to kinsmen. The village is considered the key to their social structure. Many live in peasant communities and rely on farming and animal breeding. They raise horses and sheep, as well as cattle and goats. Koumiss is a fermented drink they make from horses milk.

The Bashkirs are closely related to the Russian Tatars and are only distinguished by their language dialect. They speak Bashkir, however many claim Tatar as their native language. Before the Russian Revolution, the Bashkirian culture did not exist, rather they thought of themselves as being Tatars until the 1930's.

The Bashkirs are primarily Sunni Muslims, however, to many, being a Muslim is more about maintaining family traditions than about spiritual convictions. The older generations practice Islam most fervently. To them, Christianity is closely linked with being Russian. A small minority of Christians converted by the Russian Orthodox Church called the Nagaibaks still exist. There are tensions still lingering from Communism and from foreign peoples. They have the portions of the Bible, Christian radio broadcasts, and the Jesus film available in their language. They are 70% Sunni Muslims. About 7% are Christian adherent and the number of evangelicals is unknown. They are basically unreached by the Gospel with only a small group of Bashkort believers worldwide.

<http://www.adoptapeople.com/Profiles/clusters/8003.htm>

<http://www.imb.org/centralasia/people/bashkort.htm>

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

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.janzteam.com/OSTEUROPE/en/cr2.htm>

www.MIRFocus.com
<http://www.russiatoday.ru/en/profile/people/nat/891.html>

24338 **Bulgar (600)**

The Bulgar are of the Southern Slav people cluster. They are primarily found in the Balkan region of southern Europe, however are found throughout Central Asia and Europe. The largest groups of them are found in Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine, the United States, and Turkey. They are also known as Bogomil, Bulgarian, Moldavian, Palityan, and Pomak. This people group speaks the Bulgarian, however many are bilingual.

The Bulgar people are often thought of as Bulgarian since they speak Bulgarian and have many features and practices that are Bulgarian. The Pomaks, however, are different from Bulgarians in their non-Bulgarian names and their practice of Islam, instead of Orthodox Christianity.

Many rely on farming to make a living. They grow rye, barley, corn, flax, tobacco, and hemp. They also raise cows, goats, and sheep. Some of the women make a living by weaving. Foods common to them are bread, potatoes, beans, yogurt, cheeses, lamb, and goat. In some places they live in two story buildings, living in the top story and keeping the animals on the first floor.

Marriages are often arranged and many marry in their mid to late teens. Although polygamy is allowed by Islamic law, it is uncommon. Weddings often combine Muslim and Christian traditions.

Most of the Bulgar people today Orthodox Christians. Some, however, are Muslims. They are believed to have been forcibly converted to Islam in the 1370's. Overtime, they have adopted Muslim customs, however, there is still an absence of Islamic practices among many of the Bulgar people who are Muslims. Their language lacks many religious words and important Muslim saints are unknown to many of the Bulgars. They do, however, observe some of the feast days of some of the Christian saints. To them, Christianity is closely linked with being Russian, so there is often a mistrust of Christians. About 72% are Christian adherent, most of those being Bulgarian Orthodox. They have the Bible or portions of the Bible, Christian Radio Broadcasting, Gospel audio recordings and the Jesus Film available in their language. Many of them are not religious or atheist.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>
http://www.gewi.kfunigraz.ac.at/csbsc/ulf/pomak_identities.htm

24339 **Byelorussian (10,100)**

The Byelorussian are of the Eastern Slav people cluster. They are found throughout the former Soviet Union. They are also known as White Russians, Baltorusins, Baltorussians,

Belorussians, Belarusins, Baltorussians, Belarus, Beloruthenians, White Ruthenians, and Krivichis. They speak the Belarusan, which has four basic dialects. In some places, the Byelorussians depend on lumbering and growing potatoes to support themselves.

The Belarusians are made up of several groups that evolved into this ethnicity. Some of these groups are the Krivichi, Radzimichi, Dregovich, and Viatichi people. Among the Russian people, they are sometimes looked down on and simply categorized as Russians. Throughout their history, the Belarusins have suffered a lot. Under Stalin's rule, about 15% of their population was deported to concentration camps, where most of them died. Another 5% of their population died of starvation after the state took their produce. During World War II, three out of every four Belarusian towns were completely destroyed. The Germans killed more than a million Belarusians and deported tens of thousands more for forced labor. Stalin, after Russia regained the area of Belarus in 1944, continued killing and persecuting the Belarusins. The Belarusians were also negatively affected by the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986. The reactor was located northern Ukraine, however, radiation spread widely and more than 2,000,000 people were exposed. Epidemiologists began detecting unusually high rates of cancer and neurological disorders in the Belarusian people by 1991.

The Belarusians have had to fight to maintain their culture. Aside from persecution and genocide, they have struggled to maintain their identity. In 1986 a group of students organized the Talaka Historical- Cultural Association in order to bring about a Belarusian national revival. They emphasized their ties to Poland and Lithuania and pulled away from their ties with Russia. In 1991 Belarus was recognized as an independent nation within the commonwealth.

Their primary religion is Russian Orthodoxy and they are 70% Christian adherent. The number of evangelicals is unknown. They have the Bible or portions of the Bible, Gospel audio recordings, Christian Radio Broadcasting and the Jesus Film available to them in their language.

Olson, James. *An Ethnohistorical Dictionary of the Russian and Soviet Empires*. Westport, CT:

Greenwood Press, 1994.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

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

<http://www.russiatoday.ru/en/profile/people/nat/897.html>

24340

Chechen (3,100)

The Chechen's are of the Caucasus people cluster. They are also called the Nokhichi or the Shishan people. They are found throughout Central Asia and part of the former Soviet Union. Many Chechens live in the southern region of Russia between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. They speak the Chechen language, which is also known as Nokhchin, and Nokshin Muott.

There has been conflict between Chechens and the Russian government for most of the Twentieth Century. They are known to be a strong people and have a history of fighting for their independence. During World War II, they fought with the Red Army, however, from 1944-1957 Russia deported somewhere between a quarter and half of the Chechen population to Siberia and Central Asia from their Chechen homeland. They lost much of the productive farm land during that era. They also suffered deeply with the loss of their economic resources and civil rights. Many returned in 1968 but they returned to closed Mosques and repressive religious atmosphere. Muslim missionaries only stepped up the work during this period. When the Chechen Republic declared independence in 1991 the Russian government came in to control the situation. This invasion has resulted in a ruining of relations and the land since then. In Russia, they are considered the Mafia of Russia and are generally feared and disliked by Russians.

Chechen society is generally patriarchal, with relaxation having come with the twentieth century. Women are often allowed to work outside of the home. It is not uncommon for Chechens to marry outside of their clan and marriage between blood relatives within three generations is forbidden. The groom to be's family pays the brides family a dowry to guarantee against divorce. In the past, the wife was not allowed to eat with her husband or speak to his relatives. She was to show absolute submission. Chechens have a variety of occupations and tend to be at all income levels. Many are farmers and grow grains, fruits, and vegetables. Others work in oil refineries or raise fine-fleeced sheep.

They are the most devout of the Muslims in the Russian federation. There may be a growing Christian population. Ancient church ruins make it clear that there used to be some Christians among the Chechens, however, since the seventeenth century, Chechens have been known to be Muslims.

Today the Chechens are primarily Sunni Muslims. The number of Christian adherents and evangelicals are is unknown. They have portions of the Bible, radio broadcasts, and the Jesus Film available in their language.

Olson, James. *An Ethnohistorical Dictionary of the Russian and Soviet Empires*. Westport , CT: Greenwood Press, 1994.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

http://www.adoptapeople.com/Profiles/p_code/982.htm

<http://archives.tconline.org/news/lastfrontier/Chechen.html>

<http://www.peopleteams.org/chechen/>

<http://www.russiatoday.ru/en/profile/people/nat/1472.html>

24343

Chuvash (2,200)

The Chuvash are of the Ural- Siberian people cluster. They are also known as the Bolgar and Bulgar people. They are found throughout Central Asia and the former Soviet Union. They speak Chuvash which belongs to the Turkic group of languages. It is said to be the only remaining branch of the Old- Bulgaric language.

The Chuvash are likely descended from Bulgar ancestors that moved from Asia into the Mid-Volga area. The Chuvash influenced the Turkic language in the 4th century and the language today shows the different dialects that have been mixed over its history. They established their own Chuvash Empire that came under the influence of Ilmaic and Mongol forces in the 13th century. In 1552 Russia took over the Chuvashia area and the people became Orthodox Christian. The Russians acted as protectors of the Chuvash. There is no Chuvash written history until the 1500's. The first Russian documentation of the Chuvash name was in 1521. By the 1800's, Chuvash as a written language had developed. In 1920 the area of the Chuvash was called the Chuvash Autonomous Region, but in the 1990's it was called the Chuvash Republic.

The Chuvash are primarily Christians, however there are some Muslims among them. About 35% of the population is Christian adherent, with most of those being Orthodox Christians. There are few, if any, evangelical believers among them. Some of the population is animistic or non-religious. They have the New Testament, Bible portions, Christian Radio broadcasting, and the Jesus film in the Bolgar language.

<http://www.unpo.org/member.php?arg=17>

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/oldworld/europe/chuvash.html>

http://www.ozturkler.com/data_english/0007/0007_15_07.htm

<http://www.chuvashia.com/cap/main.asp?prev=103&pos=11>

http://www.helsinki.fi/~tasalmin/europe_report.html#Chuvash

24344

Crimean Tatar (3,200)

The Crimean Tartar people are of the Ural- Siberian people cluster. They are a part of the larger Tatar population found in Russia. They are also known as Crimean Turks, Kazan Tatar, Krymchak, Nogai, Tatar Nogay, Tartar, and Tatar people. The Crimean Tatar people are located in their historical homeland on the Crimean Peninsula in Russia, however, many were deported in 1944 to what is now Central Asia. They were deported to Tajikistan, the Ukraine, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Azerbaijan. Many have returned to their homeland. They are also found in Bulgaria, Jordan, Moldova, Romania, and Kazakhstan. The largest group of Crimean Tatar are found in Turkey.

Their language is Crimean Turkish. There are several dialects: the Northern of Steppe dialect, the Central dialect, and the Southern or coastal dialect. The dates of their written language go back to the thirteenth century. Some reforms were made to the literary language in the nineteenth century. The Arabic script, the Latin alphabet, and the Russian Cyrillic, in that order have been used as the Crimean Tatar alphabet. When the mass deportation occurred in 1944, the culture suffered serious setbacks. A generation of children was uneducated due to relocation and it was not until 1957 that they were allowed to publish their own newspaper in Tashkent.

Historically, the Crimean Tatars established the Khanate of Crimea in 1443 as a remnant of the Golden Horde. They were powerful in the 16th century through the end of the 17th

century in the eastern European region. Turkey was an allied partner with the Crimean Tatars until in the 18th century Russia annexed the Khanate during its wars with Turkey. By the mid 19th century many of the Tatars immigrated to Turkey while Russians emigrated into the former Khanate. As the 19th century came to a close the Crimean Tatars had established hundreds of schools, and were in a full awakening of nationalism. This eventually led to a call to the new government for cultural autonomy. They were given territorial autonomy later. In 1921, the Crimean Autonomous Republic was established and for a while toleration existed. By 1928, however, there were acts of suppression and sovietization of the Crimean Tatars. The Germans were welcomed as liberators in 1941, but this led to the deportation of 183,155 Crimean Tatars on May 18, 1944. Almost half of them died in concentration camps on the way to their new homes. They were declared traitors to the Soviet Union and deprived of autonomy. Further repression was taken during the 20th century, and only nearing the end of the Soviet Union were the Tatars allowed to return in small numbers to Crimea. Even with fall of the old government, there is still strong Russian opposition to the establishment of a Crimean State.

Due to their deportation, it has been difficult for the Crimean Tatars to maintain their identity. They have assimilated into Russian culture, however, the older generations still hold to their ethnic traditions. Children do not have schools of their own and are educated by the schools of the ethnic majority. For this reason, they do not learn about their own history, language, or culture. About 75% of these children cannot read or speak their native language of Krym.

Family is very important to this group. It is common for two to three generations to live in the same house. They tend to marry within their own culture, however a small percentage of them marry in other groups. Families are patriarchal and patrilineal, where the lineage is traced through the male. Work is often divided by gender and men tend to work outside of the home, while women work within the home, taking care of the house and children.

The Crimean Tatars are Sunni Muslims of the Hanafite branch. The Quran, however, is not available to them in their language. There are few, if any, known Christians among them. There are portions of the Bible, the Jesus film, Christian audio recordings, and Christian radio broadcasts available to them in their language. The God's Story Video is not available.

http://www.eki.ee/books/redbook/crimean_tatars.shtml

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.kresy.co.uk/krym.html>

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=crh

<http://www.unpo.org/member.php?arg=20>

<http://www.irex.uz/?id=publications&file=art006>

24346

Dargin (2,700)

The Dargin people are of the Caucasus people cluster. They are also called Darghinian and Dargwa. They are mostly found in the mountainous south of the Dagestan Republic in southern Russia, however, smaller groups are found scattered throughout Kazakhstan, Armenia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. The Dargin people are made up of four smaller groups and are comprised of more than 360,000 people. They speak Dargwa. Traditionally they were highland agriculturists and traders. They have been able to maintain their traditional extended family structures, village assembly, and council of elders. They are originally from the North East Caucasus area.

The Dargins are Sunni Muslims. Islam entered the Dargin people in the eighth century, however, they did not completely accept Islam until the fifteenth century. Only about 1% of them are Christian adherents. They have the Jesus film and portions of Scripture available to them in their language.

http://www.mirfocus.com/pages/ppl_dr.html

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://languageserver.uni-graz.at/ls/lang?id=3065>

http://www.kafkas.org.tr/english/bgkafkas/Ethnicgeography_Dargin.htm

24347

Dungan (60,000)

The Dungan people are of the Chinese- Hui people cluster. They are also known as Hui, Huizu, Huizui, and Khoton. The Dungan are found mostly in Qirghizstan, Qazaqstan, Western China, however groups of them are also found in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Canada. In Kyrgyzstan, they are mostly found around Osh and Dzalal-Abad and in the northern part of the country. There are also groups of them found in Karakol. They are originally from Shaanxi and Kansu in China and fled Chinese persecution over a hundred years ago. They came to Kyrgyzstan after loosing the Dungan revolt to the Chinese Empire from 1862-1877. They speak Dungan, which is divided into two main dialects, Shaanxi and Kansu. Most in Kyrgyzstan also speak Kyrgyz and many of the young also speak Russian. The language is Mandarin with only three tones instead of four and uses the Cryllic script.

Many work as vegetable and rice farmers. They also raise dairy cattle. Some are involved in growing opium. Most farmers live on collective farms. Farms are usually found in river valleys and villages may contain two or more collective farms. The farms have electricity, running water, and gas for cooking. Each farm is like a small city and they usually have a hospital, stores, a post office, and one or two schools. Subjects are taught in Russian. The children receive a few hours of instruction in Dungan each week. Some farms have evening schools, dairies, bath houses, and machine repair shops. The Dungan living in cities often work as writers, linguists, historians, poets, and editors. They tend to live as extended families. Many are wealthy and love in comfortable homes.

The Dungan are endogamous. The ones in Kyrgyzstan are less conservative than the Dungan of Kazakhstan. In Kyrgyzstan, Dungan girls are allowed to marry a Dungan from any place. Family is very important to them and they have as many children as possible. The average family has eight children. Since 1921, polygamy and a bride price are no longer practiced.

The Dungan are known to be hospitable and they often hold lavish banquets to preserve their culture. Meals consist of fried vegetables, lamb, chicken, noodles, and seasonings. Weddings, birthdays, and funerals are big events that are observed with elaborate ceremonies.

The Dungans are Sunni Muslims. They are less devout than the Dungan in Kazakhstan. The older generations observe Islamic law more strictly than the younger generations who are more indifferent to Islam. Many do not turn towards observing the practices of Islam until they reach their forties. There are few, if any, known believers among them. There are portions of Scripture translated in their language, however, they do not have the Jesus film, Christian radio broadcasts, or God's Story Video translated in their language.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.tagnet.org/esd/groups.html>

<http://www.pinyin.info/readings/texts/dungan.htm> <http://www.hartford>

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=dng

[hwp.com/archives/53/index-de.html](http://www.hwp.com/archives/53/index-de.html)

24349

Estonian (500)

The Estonian people are of the Finno- Ugric people cluster. They are also called Estlased, Estonia, Northern Estonian, and Southern Estonian. They are found throughout Europe, Central Asia, and the former Soviet Union. They speak Estonian, which is a Finnic literary language that uses Latin script.

They have been ruled by more powerful surrounding countries throughout their history. They were annexed to the USSR during World War II. They have, however, been able to maintain their culture. They hold a song festival every five years, a tradition over one hundred years old. Traditionally these people were farmers and fishermen. While some traditions are still maintained, the Estonians are also strongly influenced by the West. In Estonia, they have a very high standard of living and are technologically advanced. They tend to be educated and are closely related to the Finns culturally, religiously, and linguistically.

Estonians are primarily Orthodox Christians. Lutheranism is the traditional Estonian religion. In Kyrgyzstan, they are about 61% Christian adherent and the number of evangelicals is unknown. In Estonia, rallies and evangelistic concerts have been successful in reaching the Estonian youth. Some youth from Estonia have been a part of Gospel outreach teams to the former Soviet Union and as a whole, Estonian Christian are active in evangelism. The Estonians have the Bible, Jesus Film, Christian radio broadcasts, and Christian audio recordings available to them in their language.

<http://www.janzteam.com/OSTEUROPE/en/bnw2.htm>
<http://www.hope4cee.org/Estonia/>
<http://www.joshuaproject.net>
<http://www.ekkleisia.ee/english/weare.htm>
<http://www.bgcworld.org/cplantin/estonia.htm>
<http://www.visitestonia.com/>
<http://www.riik.ee/en/>

24350

Georgian (1,200)

The Georgian people are of the Caucasus people cluster. They are also called Adjari, Adzhar, Gruzin, Imerxey Georgian, and Western Georgian. They are mostly found in Europe, Central Asia, and the former Soviet Union. The Adjari are a separate ethnic group and speak a Georgian that is heavily influenced by Turkish. Gruzin is the Russian word for the Georgians. Within the Georgian people there are subgroups that are distinct in religion and location in the Caucasus. They speak Georgian a language in the Caucasus language family which has had its own script since pre-Christian times.

The Georgians who live along the Black Sea, trace their ancestry back to Japheth, Noah's son. They are known for their horsemanship and in 79AD were said to have performed before the Roman Emperor Vespasian. They tend to be very nationalistic and many take pride in their "native son" Joseph Stalin. They are also known to be resourceful and ambitious. They were considered the "black sheep" of the Soviet Union.

Due to the location of Georgia, being sandwiched between the West and the East, it has been invaded numerous times, impacting the people in the culture and livelihood. Georgia became a Christian state in the fourth century and was a strong influence in the area until Islam became too aggressive to contain. The Arab-Georgian conflicts lasted from the seventh through the ninth century. By 1008 there was a united Georgian kingdom which had a Golden Age in the twelfth century. The Golden Horde engulfed the entire country in the thirteenth century. The tie to Byzantium has kept Georgia in contact with Christians, but the disruptions of the invaders, then the fall of Constantinople pushed Georgia into stagnation. The state disintegrated into three kingdoms, and fell further with the Turkish-Persian Wars. Russia influenced the Georgian people, later taking them into the Russian Empire and Soviet Union. Internal strife in the Caucasus through most of the twentieth century was coupled with harsh purges by the Soviet leaders. Industrialization and urbanization expanded rapidly and the Georgian Communist Party pressed for nationalist policies. Under Gorbachev, Georgian nationalism grew into reforms and a national revival. The Georgian Orthodox Church and nationalist groups pushed for moral regeneration and independence. Georgia declared independence in April, 1991, but by the end of 1992 civil war erupted. In 1995, a popular election restored progression by electing Eduard Shevardnadze as President. He held office until legislative election manipulation in Nov. 2003 led to his resignation. Mikheil Saakashvili was elected president in early 2004. Since the independence of

Georgia, many Georgians considered moving back under the Georgian government's active immigration policy.

The Georgian population is primarily non-Religious. In Kyrgyzstan, they are estimated to be about 30% Christian adherent, but the number of evangelicals is unknown. They have the Bible, Jesus Film, Gospel audio recordings, and Christian radio broadcasting in their Georgian language.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.janzteam.com/OSTEUROPE/en/cauc3.htm>

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

<http://www.imb.org/centralasia/pray/Adjari.html>

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

00000

German, Volga German (20,000)

These ancestral Germans moved to the Volga valley in Russia in July 1763 when Catherine II, the Russian Empress invited them to settle there. The situation in Germany at that time was bad. There was religious persecution, poverty was extreme following the Seven Years War and there were high taxes. An invitation to leave was welcomed by many. When they settled they were expected to farm the land only in the Volga region. The government paid for a church within each colony, but required it to be repaid for the cost. Four years later there was a set of detail instructions and regulations for them to follow.

By 1890's there were almost 1.8 million German inhabitants in Russia. The Volga region had run out of land and so the newer immigrants were sent to Siberia. When the Germany declared War in 1914, hostility towards the Germans in Russia grew and the passage of the Laws of Liquidation formally gave threat to the Russian Germans. The laws were not enacted but served to keep the Germans in submission. The first relocation of the Volga Germans took place in July of 1915, when they were sent to Eastern Russia. In the communities of the Germans, of which 76% were Lutherans, the religious solidarity was seen as a threat when the Bolsheviks took over in 1917. The Volga-Germans were severely persecuted. A labor commune of Volga Germans was established on October 19, 1918. Males in these camps had a very low survival rate. By 1919, pastors were sent to slave camps because they were considered propagandists against the Russian government.

Between 1921 and 1922, widespread famine wiped out one-third of those Germans still in the Volga Region. On December 19, 1924, the Volga German ASSR was established but later closed on August 28, 1941. The city of Engels was the capital of the Volga-German ASSR. In the 1930's, collectivization began and private property was removed. Nearly all the clergy were killed and the churches were beyond repair. With World War II the condition of the Volga Germans only worsened as they were considered enemies of the state. Along with the closing of the Volga-German ASSR, the Decree of Banishment

forced a mass evacuation. The young men were sent to the Russian Army and young women became domestic servants in the big cities. Everyone else was banished.

In September 1955, amnesty was given to the remaining Volga Germans but they were asked not to return to their original settlements. In August 1964, the U.S.S.R. admitted guilt in charging innocent people and urged Soviets to give assistance to Russian Germans. In January 1965, the Decree of 1941 was voided. Afterwards, many Volga Germans attempted to return to their former cities and found they were unwelcome. They settled in the Ural Mountains, Siberia, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. Others immigrated to the United States and Canada. The Law/Right of Return was used by many people of German ancestries who wanted to return to Germany but were living in Eastern Europe.

In Kyrgyzstan, they are 80% adherent to Christianity, and the number of evangelicals is unknown. They have the Bible, Gospel audio recording, Christian radio broadcasting, and the Jesus film available in Standard German.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volga_Germans
<http://www.lhm.org/LID/lidhist.htm> see article
<http://www.joshuaproject.net>
<http://www.volgagermans.net/>
<http://www.grhs.com/archive/reviews/volga.html>
<http://www.irex.uz/?id=publications&file=art006>

00000

Greek (2,200)

The Greeks are sometimes called Dimotiki, Greek Crypriot, Hellenic, Romei, Romeos, and Urum. The Greeks in Kyrgyzstan are mostly from Russia. The Black Sea area was a place of trade between the Byzantine Empire and its neighbors for centuries. As power changed hands the Black Sea remained a place of importance in trade relations. The spread of religion also occurred throughout the Black Sea region. Greek Orthodox and missionaries have carried their Christianity to the Slavs, Khazars, and Alans.

The Russians raided the Black Sea during the 9th and 10th Centuries but later traded with them. During the era of the Golden Horde, Greeks immigrated to the Russian lands and contributed much to their culture. After the fall of Byzantium, trade with the Ottomans and Russians made use of the Greeks.

Conditions for the Greeks changed drastically from the Tsarist years to the Bolsheviki revolution. The Greeks fought against the Bolsheviki and many were deported to remote areas of Russia. Churches and schools of the Greek Orthodoxy were closed. More hardship came during World War II under the Nazis. The Greeks were caught in the Crimean War conflict and some were deported to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Siberia with the Crimean Tatars. After Stalin died, many Greeks were allowed to return to the Black Sea region. Many immigrated to Greece as well. They are 90% Greek Orthodox. They have the Bible, Gospel audio recordings, and the Jesus film in Greek.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

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

00000

Han Chinese, Mandarin (42,000)

The Han make up 90% of the population of China. The Han are the largest people group on the world, making them about 1.3 Billion in number. Although most are founding China, the Han Chinese are found in almost every country in the world. They are also called Beijinghua, Cantonese, Chinese, Guanhua, Guoyu, Hakka, Sino-Mauritian Han Chinese, Mandrin, Hoton, Huizui, Kreol, Mandarin, Northern Chinese, Pei, Potinhua, and Putonghua. Most speak one of several Chinese dialects including Mandarin, Cantonese, and Hokkien. In Kyrgyzstan, they speak Mandarin.

The Han are from China and ruled China for centuries. In 1276, after the Mongol invasion, they began fleeing to other countries. In many places, the Diaspora of Han are usually not welcomed and are mistreated. Many of them settled in urban areas and got involved with business and commerce and became influential where they settled. They often believe their culture to be superior, so many have been able to maintain their culture and language, depending on which country they live in. They have maintained many of their customs, especially those concerning marriage and family.

Children are treated affectionately and boys are often indulged. Growing up, children are pushed to do well in school and they are expected to spend a lot of time on their studies. They are known for their politeness and avoid conflict and confrontation. Saving face is very important to them, so they must not lose ground in an argument, or it will cause great embarrassment.

Their traditions are centered on harmony. Relationships are very important among the Han people, and it is often who you know that is more important than what you know or what you can do.

The Han are a superstitious people that value luck as a way to get through life. They consult horoscopes and value the concept of seeking harmony. They believe their ancestors are in the spirit realm and if treated properly, these spirits will bring good luck. Ghosts are the spirits of dead people who are angry over their deaths and they tend to be malicious and cause trouble. Many are irreligious in practice. Their primary religion is Buddhism. The percentage of Han who are Christian adherents or evangelical are unknown. The Bible, the Jesus film, Christian radio broadcasting, and audio gospel recordings are available in the Mandarin language.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.imb.org/easia/peopleplaces/upg/han.htm>

<http://www.adoptapeople.com/Profiles/clusters/8072.htm>

00000

Ingush (600)

The Ingush are of the Caucasus people cluster. They are mostly found in Russia and Kazakhstan, however, groups of them can be found in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. They are mostly located in the Caucasus region and in the southeastern part of the former Soviet Union. In Kazakhstan, they are mostly found in Uzyn-Agach and in a village southwest of Urdzhar. They came to Kazakhstan in 1946, when they were exiled from the Chechen Republic. They were deported from their home as punishment for supporting the German's in World War II. About 50% of them died on their way to Siberia and Central Asia. They were given the opportunity to return to their homeland in 1958, but many chose to stay in Kazakhstan. They are also called Chechen, Galgai, and Ingus. Their primary language is Ingush, but most also speak Russian.

The Ingush are known for their hospitality and courage. Many are tall and wear Western clothing. They have a rich culture and enjoy dancing, wood carving, music, and felt making. Most are farmers that grow grains or they raise sheep or other livestock. Those living in the mountains trade eggs and dairy products for the grain produced by the plains dwellers.

Work is usually divided by gender. Men are responsible for defending the homes, taking care of the livestock, and doing construction work, while women are responsible for gardening, cooking, and caring for the children. Men are the heads of the home and are considered the owners of everything under his roof. This includes the women. Ingush society is tribal and men owe complete allegiance to the head of their clan. Different tribes are grouped by distinctions in language.

Marriages are often arranged. On occasion, a mother may arrange for her daughter to elope, however, if the man changes her mind, she may never get the opportunity to marry. Upon marriage, the wife becomes a part of the husband's clan and never speaks of her parents names again. While intermarriage was not allowed in the past, many are beginning to intermarry with Russians today.

The Ingush are primarily Sunni Muslims. They converted to Islam in the 1800's and remain devout. There are few, if any, known Christians among them. They do not have any resources available to them in their language.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

24351

Jew, Bukharic, Central Asian (6,200)

There are approximately 2,500 Jews in Kyrgyzstan. Today the Jewish community mostly resides in Bishkek. There is an Ashkenazi synagogue and several Bukharan services held in Bishkek. There are also several Bukharan houses of prayer throughout the Ferghana Valley and Jewish communities in Osh, Karakol, and Dzhahalal-Abad. The Menorah Center

in Bishkek is the center of Jewish life in Kyrgyzstan and is supported by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

The Bukharic Jew people group is sometimes considered the Central Asian Jew people group. The Central Asian Jew is also sometimes called Sarikoli, Sarykloy, Tadzik, and Tajiki. Many prefer to be called “Isro’il” or “Yahudi.” They have a strong sense of Jewish identity, with the Jews of Asia having a distinct lifestyle. Most of these Jews are Ashkenazim which are descendents of the Jews who inhabited the Germanic region of Europe. They speak Eastern Yiddish, a German dialect that is mixed with Hebrew. The Bukharic Jews speak Bokhara, which is a Jewish dialect of Tajik. This is one of the Asian Jews distinguishing features.

It is estimated that Jews settled along the Great Silk Road beginning in the 4th century. There is archeological evidence that shows a group of Jewish traders from Khazaria in the region during the end of the 6th century. A group of Bukharan Jews lived in the areas that now make up Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan for about 2,000 years. They settled mostly in Bukhara, which is how they derived their name “Bukharan.” These people claim to be descendents from the ten tribes of Israel who were forced to Persia in the fifth century. Traditionally, these families were patriarchal and patrilineal and households were made up of extended families. Nuclear families, however, are becoming more common.

In the past, Bukharan Jews only married other Bukharan Jews. Ashkenazic Jews in larger cities, however, are now intermarrying with Muslims. Traditionally a matchmaker was sent to the parents of the bride and a dowry and bride price was agreed upon.

Jewish tradition had an influence on Kyrgyz culture. Several legends passed on by Kyrgyz referred to a large mountain near Osh called “King Solomon’s throne.” Local Jews believed that one night God took Solomon to that mountain and many compared the mountain to Mt. Zion. Since the eighth century, Kyrgyz have used the Star of David in architecture and crafts. Kyrgyz traditions consider Adam to be the father of sewing and weaving, Noah the father of architecture and carpentry, David the father of metallurgy and tinwork, and Abraham the father of barbers.

The Russian and Soviet eras were particularly hard for Jews in Russia, with synagogues shut down and religion repressed. Some Jews were imprisoned by the State. Ashkenazi Jews settled in the cities of Karakol, Bishkek, and Osh. In Osh, Bukharan Jews and Ashkenazic Jews lived in separate communities and did not intermarry. The Ashkenazic Jews tended to be better educated and the Bukharian Jews often worked as bankers, shoemakers, barbers, and butchers. The Ashkenazim Jews were more secular, while the Bukharian Jews were more religiously devout. It was not until the early 1990’s that the two groups prayed together.

In 1898, Osh had the largest population of Jews in Kyrgyzstan and had a separate Jewish cemetery. Until 1915, the Jews of Kyrgyzstan had no schools or synagogues and services were held in the homes of the local rabbis. Jewish funerals were conducted by leaders

brought in from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Most Kyrgyz Jews lived in larger cities and the Russian Empire forbid Jews to settle in villages.

During World War One, large groups of Ashkenazi Jews came from Europe, many of them having been exiled due to involvement with oppositional political parties. Initially, they were well received. The Bukharan Jews, however, were not treated as well. They were forced to serve the army through manual and technical labor. In 1916, Jewish refugees and POWs from the German and Austro-Hungarian armies were sent to Kyrgyzstan and forced to work in coalmines, factories, irrigation projects, and railroad construction. During this time, wealthy Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Kyrgyz were allowed to pay poor members of the community to take their place in serving through this kind of labor, but Jewish leaders were prohibited from paying non-Jews to take their place.

During the 1930's, a large number of Russian Jews fled to Kyrgyzstan to escape persecution and during World War Two more than 20,000 Jewish refugees came into the country. Many of these immigrants were Ashkenazim from Russia, Ukraine, and Poland. Those settling in the cities adjusted quickly, however, those who settled in farming areas experienced much difficulty. Many had never been involved in agriculture and were unable to keep up with the quotas. Many locals were suspicious of the Jewish refugees and several were imprisoned for alleged "counter revolutionary activity" and "spreading lies."

1941 saw more freedom for the Jewish community. During this year, authorities allowed a synagogue in Bishkek to be opened and kosher butchers and bakeries were allowed to open near the synagogue. After this, other synagogues were opened in Osh and Kant. The Jewish community was officially recognized in 1945 and they were allowed to celebrate Jewish holidays and hold activities until the 1950's. During the 1950's, all religious activities except for the High Holiday services were banned.

A movement for Jewish rights was bolstered by the Six-Day War and many began applying for entry into Israel in the 1970's. During this time, many Jews considered themselves to be atheists, but regularly visited the synagogue in order to maintain their ties with the Jewish community. Under Gorbachev more freedom was attained and in the early 1990's ten's of thousands of Jews were emigrating annually. Approximately one million fled after the fall of communism and many continue to immigrate to Israel today. Many left due to economic difficulties and the more educated have left due to political unrest. Islamic fundamentalists have spread anti-Semitic propaganda, and although this has been met with opposition by the general population and government, hostility towards Jews has increased in the southern part of the country.

In the past, the Bukharan Jews worked as peddlers, shoemakers, barbers, factory workers, and collective farmers. Today they continue working in these traditional occupations and are also working as engineers, doctors, teachers, and musicians. In addition, women often dance at Jewish and Muslim weddings. Jews in the cities tend to not adhere strictly to Jewish practices. The Bukharic Jews tend to hold tightly to their traditions and religion. They follow the Law of Moses and have strict laws concerning diet, circumcision, and

the Sabbath. There are few, if any, known Christians among the Bukharic Jews in Kyrgyzstan. They have the Bible, Jesus film, Christian radio broadcasting, and Gospel audio recordings in their language.

<http://www.adoptapeople.com/Profiles/clusters/8095.htm>
<http://www.peopleteams.org/forzionsake/upgs.htm>
http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/Human_Rights/sjmove.html
<http://www.wzo.org.il/en/resources/view.asp?id=1547&subject=131>
<http://www.blossomingrose.org/chernobyl/howmany.htm>
http://www.nupi.no/cgi-win/Russland/etnisk_b.exe?Jewish
<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

24352

Kalmyk- Oirat (5,500)

The Kalmyk people are of the Mongolian people cluster. They are mostly found in Mongolia, Russia, and China, however small groups of them are also found in Kyrgyzstan, the Ukraine, the United States, and Uzbekistan. They are also called the Durbet, Jazyk, Kalmuk, Kalmyk-Oirat, Kalmytskii, Kalmytz, Khalmag, Oirat, Qalmaq, Volba Oirat, Weilate, Western Mongol, Western Mongolian, Western Mongul, and Xinjiang Mongol. The Kalmyk speak Kalmyk-Oirat. The Kalmyk were traditionally nomadic people who were known for their love of horses.

In China, they are called the Oirats. They left their homeland of Dzhungaria, in the present day Xinjiang province, 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.

The Kalmyk place a lot of emphasis on respect for the older generations. Households are usually made up of extended families. Younger generations are expected to show respect and obey the elders of the community. Interrupting an older person in conversation is considered very rude. When entering a house, younger people are to give way to older people, and if an old came to a house, young people are expected to open the door from him and support him from both sides.

Marriage and family are important to the Kalmyk people. Traditionally, marriage was a symbol of adulthood. While monogamy was common, polygamy was sometimes practiced among the chiefs and higher class. Marriages were often arranged after consulting with an astrologist about compatibility. Engagements would sometimes last six to seven years. Today, couples often marry in their mid twenties. Divorces are becoming more common and abortions, in places such as China, are the primary means of birth control.

Hospitality another tradition that is very important to the Kalmyk. They are known to offer food and drinks to complete strangers, without asking them any questions. A guest

will usually be seated to the right side of his host, which is the place of honor. In the past and in more rural places, 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 guest inside and give him a pipe, tea, and pastry, while the horse is being seen after. Sometimes sheep are slaughtered for guests and 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.

Traditionally, fire played an important role in Kalmyk traditions. They believed fire could cleanse everything they had fire ceremonies. They used to see fire as sacred and before eating, sacrifices were to be made to the God of fire. If water was spilled on a fire accidentally, it was considered very bad and 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 adherent. They have portions of the Bible, the Jesus Film, and Christian Radio Broadcasts available in their language.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>
<http://www.kalmykiaembassy.ru/html/emap.html>
http://www.ksafe.com/profiles/p_code/1632.html

24353

Karachai, Alan (2,300)

The Karachai people are of the Caucasus people cluster. They are mostly found in Russia, however, they are also found in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. They are sometimes known as the Alan or the Karachay people. They speak Karachay- Balkar.

The Karachai came to the Caucasus Mountains in the 13th Century when the Golden Horde drove them along with the Bulgars and Kypchaks out of their way. They all resisted the Crimean khans of the 16th – 18th centuries. They later were assimilated into the Alan tribe. They came under Russian control in 1828 and lost land rights in 1870. Many left for Turkey in reaction to the land reform. In 1940, the Karachay were deported to Central Asia and thousands died. In 1957, they were allowed to return to their homeland.

Many still farm and raise cattle, goats and sheep. Others enjoy the modern conveniences of gas stoves and glass windows. Women and girls care for the home while the men and boys care for the livestock. Most rural women have long hair but keep it covered with scarves. Singing is a regular part of their lifestyle.

In religious practices the Karachai are Sunni Muslims of the Hannafi school but they also practice their former animist traditions. Each village has its own Mosque. The number of Christians among them is unknown. There are Bible and New Testament portions in the Karachay language, as well as the Jesus film and gospel audio recordings.

http://www.nupi.no/cgi-win/Russland/etnisk_b.exe?Karachayev
<http://www.joshuaproject.net/peopctry.php>

24354

Karakalpak, Black Hat (50,000)

The Karakalpak, which is translated “black hat,” are of the Kazakh people cluster which descend from the Turks. They are sometimes called the Black Hat, Kara- Kalpak, or the Karapapakh people. They are found mostly in Uzbekistan, with about 92% of them living in the Karakalpak Republic in Uzbekistan. They are, however, also found in Iran, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan. The Karakalpak people speak Southwestern Karakalpak, which is similar to Uzbek. A written language was not available until 1925, after the Karakalpak Republic was founded.

The Karakalpak are believed to have descended from Iranians and Mongolians. They were Turks who became dominated during the Mongolian invasion. When fighting with the Russians, the Karakalpak were known as fierce fighters and were known for their proficiency in taking people captive. They used to be a loose allegiance of semi-nomadic tribes, however, in the 1920’s they established the Karakalpak Republic, also known as Karakalpakisatan, in Uzbekistan. This republic is a combination of the Khivan Khanate and Khorezum People’s Republic. The tribes are divided into clans which are called uru. The uru are then divided into family groups called Koshes, which all share a common male ancestor. These groups are very loyal to each other and share land.

Many Karakalpak are farmers and herders. They often live in small villages with less than 50 houses. In many places, women and children are responsible for harvesting the crops, while the men are responsible for planting the crops and herding the animals. In some places, both men and women are able to work in factories. The families are patrilineal, which means their descent is traced through the male lineage. Big families are seen as ideal and usually consist of as many as four generations within the same household. The Karakalpaks place a strong emphasis on sharing meals together and believe the time spent together at meals will keep their relationships close.

Karakalpak girls often marry young, and the groom must pay a bride price to the girl’s family. After they marry, the girl is expected to leave her home and live with her husband’s family. Unlike several other groups in Afghanistan, if a woman’s husband dies, she is entitled to half of the inheritance, and the rest goes to the man’s sons.

The Karakalpaks are mostly Sunni Muslim of the Nanafi sect. They tend to be orthodox in their beliefs, and they are known for being the most and pious and observant of the religious customs among all the other nationalities within Central Asia. The Karakalpak republic in Uzbekistan is one of the major centers of Sufism.

There are few, if any, known believers and no churches among the Karakalpak people. There are no known groups working among them. They have a Bible translation or parts

of the Bible, the Jesus Film, and Christian audio recording available in their language, however, there are no radio broadcasts available to them.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

http://www.ozturkler.com/data_english/0007/0007_10.htm

<http://karakalpak.homestead.com/>

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=Afghanistan

Weeks, Richard. Muslim People: A World Ethnographic Survey. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978.

24355

Kazakh (41,000)

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 also found in Mongolia, Ukraine, Russia, China, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkey, Tajikistan, Iran, Germany, Belarus, and with smaller populations in a few other countries. In Kyrgyzstan, groups of them are found in the north eastern part of the country. 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 Kazak became a distinct ethnic group in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. During the nineteenth century, Russia claimed Kazakhstan, and during the Russian Civil War, during the 1920's-1930's, about half of the Kazak population was killed. During this time, many fled to parts of China and Mongolia. Since the 1960's, however, many have returned to Kazakhstan.

Kazakhs used to be nomadic shepherds, however, they lost much of their land during the Soviet rule and were forced to do collective farming. They lived in yurts, dome shaped tents. Many times, poor, individual families cannot survive without living with a clan. In cities, outside of Afghanistan, western dress is common among the Kazak. However, within Afghanistan, the Kazak's dress more like other groups within their region. A common sport among the Kazakhs is a sport called "girl chasing" in which a young man and a young woman on separate horses, chases the man and if she catches him, lashes him lightly with a whip.

Kazakh society is both patriarchal, which means male-dominated, and patrilineal, which means they trace ancestral descent through the male lineage. In some places, however, this gradually changing and shifting legal authority over to the heads of collective farms. This has caused a breakdown in the overall traditional family structure.

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. Traditionally, feudal lords and tribal chiefs practiced polygamy and marriages were arranged. Richer men could marry up to four wives, while the poorer could not afford the bride price to even marry. This changed, however, and families began exchanging their daughters as each

other's daughter-in-law without asking for gifts. When a girl marries, she becomes part of the husband's immediate family.

The Kazaks are known as warm-hearted, sincere, and hospitable people. In some places, a guest will be presented with a sheep's head. As a sign of appreciation, the guest cuts a slice off the right cheek and puts it back on the plate. They are known for their handmade embroideries, which usually consist of flower and animal horn patterns on a black, red, and purple velveteen.

They have a rich heritage of literature which has been handed down orally. Some play a two stringed instrument called a Combra.

The Kazakh people of Tajikistan are mostly Sunni Muslims; however, many combine the Islamic practices with their traditional folk religions, which involve worship of spirits and fire, animism, and ancestor worship. Many consult Shamans, priests, to cure the sick, communicate with spirits, and manipulate the spirits to control events. There are few, if any, Christians among the Kazakhs in Kyrgyzstan. There are Bibles, the Jesus Film, Christian audio resources, and radio broadcasts available in their language.

<http://www.pcn.org.uk/Uzbekistan%20-%202001.pdf>
<http://www.joshuaproject.net> <http://www.chsource.org/Kazak.htm>
<http://www.china.org.cn/e-groups/shaoshu/shao-2-kazak.htm>

24356

Khalkha, Hahl, Khalkh (90)

The Khalkha people are of the Mongolian people cluster. They are found in Mongolia, China, Kyrgyzstan, North Korea, Russia, and Taiwan. 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 to be 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. The Khalkha are also known as the Bait, Bayad, Bayit, Hahl Mongol, Hanl, Khalka, Khalkha Mongol, Meng Zu, Menggu, Mongolian, Oirat, Southeastern Mongolian, and the Western Mongul. Their primary language is Halh Mongolian and the language is generally understood by most other Mongolian ethnic groups.

Most Khalkha live in cities, however, there is a portion of them that are still nomadic. Those living a nomadic lifestyle tend to live in yurts and migrate seasonally with their animals. They usually raise horses, cattle, and sheep and may move up to five times a year. Other Khalkha's live and work on collective, community farms. Many Khalkha living in the cities work in jobs of industry, mining, and transport. Birth control is discouraged in Mongolia.

Traditionally, the Khalkha married very young. On average, girls married at age 13 or 14 and the boys were only a few years older. Today, most marry in their early to mid

twenties. Those with a college education tend to delay marriage until they reach their late twenties. They are expected to have children very early in their marriages.

At least sixty percent of Khalkha Mongols follow Lamaistic Buddhism, the traditional Boe religion, or a mixture of both. Originally, they were Shamanists and believed in an unseen world of gods and spirits and depended on shamans to manipulate this world.

In the late 1500's most converted to Tibetan Buddhism and by 1900 almost 60% of males in Mongolia served as priests in Buddhists monasteries. When the Marxists movement launched, many became either non-religious or atheists. Today, most practice a combination of shamanism and Buddhism. The Khalkha have is full access to the gospel in their language in written, audio, and video formats. The number of Christian adherents and evangelicals among the Khalkha in Kyrgyzstan is unknown.

http://www.global12project.com/2004/profiles/p_code2/313.html

<http://www.oz.net/~guerrero/khalkha.html> <http://www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Khalkha>

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

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

24358

Korean (20,200)

Many of the Korean people of Tajikistan came from Russia. They joined the Bolsheviks during the Civil War, due to hatred of the Japanese for their treatment of their families in Korea years earlier. Many Koreans became Communist Party members. The Koreans successfully worked rice farm collectives established on the Ussuri River.

Some Koreans moved to Central Asia on the promise of free, irrigable land. Stalin deported the remaining Koreans in the Far Eastern territory to Central Asia. In Kyrgyzstan, they are found mostly on farms and orchards in the Fergana Valley. While most have adopted Central Asian clothes and farm implements, many have been able to maintain their traditional customs, foods, furniture, and architecture.

Koreans are found throughout the world. They are also known as Chaoxian, Chejuma, Chosun, Chosun Jok, Hanghohua, Hanguk Mal, and North and South Korean. The Bible, Jesus film, Christian radio broadcasting, and Gospel audio recordings are available in the Korean language. About 20% of them are Christian adherent and an estimated 12.50% are evangelical. Their primary religion is secularism.

http://www.adoptapeople.com/Profiles/p_code2/967.htm

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

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

Olson, James. *An Ethnohistorical Dictionary of the Russian and Soviet Empires*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994.

26639

Kurmanji, Northern Kurd (15,700)

The Kurds are divided into the Northern and Southern Kurds. The Northern Kurds are also called the Turkish Kurd, Yazidi, Yezidi, and Kermanji. Large numbers of Kurds came to the Caucasus region during the 19th and 20th centuries seeking refuge from the wars between Ottoman Turkey and Tsarist Russia. Many live in cities and have a higher standard of living than those in Turkey. They usually do not face discrimination and many even hold high political offices throughout Central Asia.

In Kyrgyzstan, they are mostly found in the northern part of the country. They are literate in Kurmanji, which is published. There are radio broadcasts in Kurmanji as well. The Urfi dialect is used. The Kurds in Kyrgyzstan typically speak a northern dialect of Kurdish.

Kurds in some areas, especially southern Kurds, are very poor. They have no politically recognized homeland, which has sometimes led them to be called “the Orphans of the Universe,” however they have a strong ethnic identity. They are the largest ethnic group in the world without a country of their own. They are from an area sometimes called Kurdistan, which refers to a region covering southeastern Turkey, northeastern Syria, northern Iraq, and western Iran.

The Kurds have a rich history and consider themselves to be descendants of the Medes, which are mentioned in the Old Testament. Two of the most famous Kurds are King Darius, mentioned in the Old Testament book of Daniel, and Saladin, who retook Jerusalem in 1187 from the Crusaders. Like Saladin, the people in general, resist subjugation by other nations. They were conquered by the Arabs in the 7th century and have desired independence from their various rulers since that time.

The Kurds are often persecuted in Turkey and Iran. In Turkey, where almost half of all the Kurds live, the government has continued to refuse to recognize them as a separate ethnic group. In addition, until recent times, they made it illegal to speak Kurdish in public. The Iranian government has a history of persecuting this group, as does the Iraqi government. In Iraq, Kurdish villages have been destroyed, they were assaulted by chemical weapons, and many were forced into detention camps. They have fled to areas surrounding their former localities, seeking refuge. Currently Kurds campaign for an independent nation.

Today, most Kurds make a living by farming and raising livestock. Some live in permanent homes, however, some are still semi-nomadic. They move to the mountains during the summer and travel to the plains during the winter months.

The Kurds are diverse and have differing tribal associations, lifestyles, and religious practices depending on where they live. The Kurds are tribal people. In the absence of a national Kurdish state and government, individual tribes are the highest source of authority for the people. In Kurd society, there is a clear division of labor by age and sex.

Marriages are usually arranged and it is not uncommon for first cousins to marry. Upon marriage, the wife usually moves into the husband's household. Family is very important to the Kurds. Men are the ones who make the decisions and women are under the authority and protection of the men. A woman's honor is very important, so she must dress very modestly. Kurds value family loyalty and honor.

Traditionally, Kurds practiced a religion called Yazdanism then later practiced Zoroastrianism. Today the Kurds are primarily Sunni Muslims. Kurd minorities have been associated with the secret and unorthodox sects of Islam. The number of evangelical Christians among the Kurd in Kyrgyzstan is unknown and they are estimated to be about 0.02% Christian adherent. They have the Bible, Christian radio broadcasting, Gospel audio recordings and the Jesus film available in the Kurdi language.

http://www.adoptapeople.com/Profiles/p_code/77.htm
<http://www.xs4all.nl/~tank/kurdish/htdocs/index.html>
<http://www.ibtnet.org/pdf/kurdish.pdf>
<http://www.perspectives.org/students/ip/kurds/>
<http://www.eki.ee/books/redbook/maps/bigmap4.gif>
<http://www.eki.ee/books/redbook/kurds.shtml>
<http://www.joshuaproject.net>
<http://www.xs4all.nl/~tank/kurdish/htdocs/facts/society.html>
<http://mm.iteams.org/asia/kurds.php>

24357

Kyrgyz, Kirghiz (2,800,000)

The Kirghiz are of the Turkic affinity block and they are found in Afghanistan, China, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and the Ukraine. In Kyrgyzstan, they number over 2.2 million and make up over half of Kyrgyzstan's population. They are found throughout the country. They Kirghiz became a distinct nationality in the fourteenth century and settled where they are today in the fifteenth century. They are also called Kara, Ke'erkzi, and Kirgiz. The Kirghiz speak Kirgiz, a Kirghizian language belonging to the Turkic group. This is divided into the northern and southern groups. Yensei is a Kirghiz script which was lost. Now Kirghiz have adapted a new script based on the Arabo- Persian alphabet.

The Kirghiz are primarily a nomadic people and travel almost all year round. Many of the Kirghiz practice high altitude pastoralist, raising fat tailed sheep, yaks, goats, camels, and horses. They are able to manage the high altitude living by their multilayered clothing and housing styles. They live in Yurts, round tents that can be heated by fire. The more wealthy Kirghiz live in stone and mud homes. There has been conflict between the Uzbek and Kirghiz communities, mostly over land and housing.

The Kirghiz are a patrilineal society, where the line of descent is traced through the males. The more wealthy Kirghiz may practice polygamy. Many also follow levirate marriage customs, such as a widow with a least one child is entitled to a husband from the same lineage as her deceased spouse. Contrary to Islam, the women often receive no inheritance, and instead of the sons getting an equal portion of the inheritance, they receive an

inheritance based on their birth order. Usually the oldest son inherits the father prestige, political standing, and pasture lands, while the youngest son inherits the family yurt and the herd. In many places, the khan is the judge, mediator, and political and economic leader.

Marriages in Kirghiz society are usually arranged, sometimes even before birth. A gift, such as a roasted sheep, is often presented to the bride-to-be, and gifts are often given from the groom-to-be's family to that of the future bride's. The family is usually composed of three generations, with married couples living with the husband's family. Household decisions are made by all adult members, and no one member can impose his or her will on the rest of the house. Men are usually responsible for herding horses and cattle, cutting wood and grass, and other heavy household chores, while women usually hold the responsibility of milking, shearing, and grazing the animals.

The Kirghiz are very hospitable. All visitors, strangers or friends, are offered the best at the meal. In many places, mutton from the sheep's head shows a high respect for the guest. A guest must leave food in his bowl to show that the host has been generous and that he has received more than his fill of food. When a guest arrives on horseback, the host unsaddles the guest's horse, and then puts saddles it back up when the guest leaves. Anyone moving his tent is entertained by his neighbors a gift of farewell or welcome. Dependence on alcohol, tea, and opium is a growing problem among the Kirghiz. The diet among the Kirghiz herdsmen usually consists of animal byproducts, as well as some cabbages, onions, and potatoes. They often drink goat's milk, yogurt, and tea with milk and salt. The more Kirghiz wealthy eat beef, mutton, horse, and camel meat with flour and rice. Butter is stored in dried sheep and cattle stomachs.

Almost all Kirghiz play a musical instrument the komuz. They have songs that express people's anger, joys, sorrows, and losses and sing for almost every occasion, including songs to say goodbye to a guest. They are known for their epic poem called "Manas" which tells a story of a hero whose descendants are the Kirghiz people.

They have many taboos, some of which include where one can use the bathroom, how they speak to each other, and an abhorrence of cursing or lying.

The Kirghiz are Sunni Muslim, but tend to hold to their more traditional, pre-Islamic practices. They have continued with their old practice of ancestor worship and Islam is not a big part of everyday life among the Kirghiz. Most do not have their own mosques and are unfamiliar with the Islamic holidays. It is possible that only a few among them actually know the basic tenants of Islam. They are few, if any, known Christian adherents and evangelicals. They have portions of the Bible, the Jesus Film, God's Story Video, Christian audio recordings, and radio broadcasts translated in their language.

<http://www.china.org.cn/e-groups/shaoshu/shao-2-kirgiz.htm>

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

<http://www.orientaltravel.com/people/Kirgiz.htm>

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

[www.gl.iit.edu/govdocs/afghanistan/People in Afgh.](http://www.gl.iit.edu/govdocs/afghanistan/People%20in%20Afgh.)

24360

Lak (257)

The Lak are of the Lori-Bakhtiari people cluster, which is a part of the Indo- Iranian affinity block. They are from the Dagestan Republic in what they call Lakstan. Many Lak live in the basins of the upper Kazikumukh, Tleusarakh, and Khatar Rivers in the former Soviet Union. They live in the high mountain passes that make them isolated in the winter. They also live throughout Central Asia. They are also called Kumux and Laki.

They are related to the Dargins. In the Lak language there are five dialects: Kumuk, Vikhli, Ashtikuli, Vitskh, and Balkar-Calakan. Before the nineteenth century, the Lak wrote in Arabic, however, in 1928 they were forced by the Russians to use the Latin script. Ten years later, the Cyrillic alphabet replaced the Latin alphabet and Russian words replaced the Arabic and Persian works. Today the Cyrillic alphabet is used in literature. About 95% of the Lak speak their language but they are multilingual.

Traditionally the Lak were shepherds, raising sheep and goats. They practiced transhumant shepherding, which required them to move their livestock from mountain to lowland areas as the seasons changed. In areas where they continue to shepherd, the men raise and tend to the livestock, while the women are responsible for the farming. They depend on meat and milk for food, but also grow peas, barley, wheat, and potatoes.

Many were also local craftsmen. They continue to be known for their jewelry and coppersmiths. Today they also work as merchants and make saddles and harnesses. Some work as masons, candy makers, and tinsmiths. Women work in rug weaving, spinning, and making ceramics. The Lak have a history of migrating to neighboring areas for economic reasons. In Russia, they assimilated into Russian culture and became one of the most multilingual groups in the former Soviet Union.

Family is important to the Lak people. They used to live in extended family units called Takhums. These were made up of several families, descending from a common male ancestor. Marriages were often arranged and kept within the takhum. The eldest women often played a major role in arranging these marriages. A bride price is a custom that still exists today, but it is more of a symbolic transaction than a financial one.

The Lak were exposed to Christianity by the Armenians and Georgians in the sixth century, but they converted to Islam in the eighth century. They are believed to be the first people in the Dagestan area of Russia to encounter Islam. They are Shafi Sunni Muslims. There are few, if any, known believers among them in Kyrgyzstan. There are Bible portions and the Jesus film in the Lak language. There is almost no Christian witness among them.

http://www.adoptapeople.com/Profiles/p_code5/980.htm

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

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

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Minahan, James. *One Europe, Many Nations: A Historical Dictionary of European National Groups*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000.

24361

Lezghian (2,700)

The Lezghian people are of the Caucasus people cluster. They are also called Lezghi people. Lezgin homeland is in Dagestan and Azerbaijan. The Lezgins are believed to be the descendents of merging Alty, Akhty, and Rutul peoples. They are bilingual in Azeri. Their neighbors are the Aguls, Azeri, Rutuls, Tabasarans, and Tsakhurs. They resisted Russification and have strong traditional culture. In their homeland, they are geographically isolated and remain among the least educated in the former Soviet Union.

Many have retained their traditional rural lifestyle. They raise sheep and goats in highland areas and cattle in lower land areas. Weaving, pottery, making rugs, and gold and silversmithing are also ways of earning income for them.

The Lezghian are primarily Sunni Muslims, having been fully converted to Islam in the 19th century. In some areas, they are Shiites Muslims. In Russia, they are known as one of the more devout Muslim groups. In Kyrgyzstan, there are about 1% Christian adherent. They have portions of the Bible, the Jesus film, and Christian Audio Recordings in the Legzi language.

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<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

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

http://www.adoptapeople.com/Profiles/p_code/1939.htm

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24362

Lithuanian (500)

The Lithuanians are of the Baltic people cluster. They are found through out Eastern Europe and Central Asia. There are also large groups of them found in the United States and Western Europe. The Lithuanians are also known as the Samogit, so named for the Samogitian hills in west Lithuania. They are Baltic descendents of the tribes that settled along the Baltic coast and inland thousands of years ago. Their language is related to ancient Sanskrit. It is part of the Baltic group of languages.

During the Middle Ages the Germanic lords set up feudal systems, introduced Christianity and organized the tribes. The Lithuanians were ruled by Poland from 1501 through the 1800's. The Lithuanian society was shaped by the Roman Catholic culture.

Lithuania was occupied by the Germans in WWI, and experienced turbulent governmental upheaval after 1917. In 1920 Poland invaded Lithuania and battled through the 1930's to establish stability. The occupation by the Russians in 1941, divided

Lithuanians into many groups that fought for Germany, while others were taken away to German labor camps. About 200,000 Lithuanian Jews were murdered.

By 1944, the Soviets had overtaken all of Lithuania, shipping 120,000 – 300,000 religious, cultural, or national leaders off to prison camps in Europe, Siberia, and Central Asia. Nationalist strength grew in the 1980's and an independence declaration in 1990 was restated in 1991 to Russia. Government instability in the 1990's was due to scandal, resignations, and dismissal. Lithuanians did not enjoy the economic growth that other post-communist peoples did. In 1999 they suffered from the highest suicide rate in Europe, with many unemployed and still suffering from the turbulent past.

In Kyrgyzstan, they are about 85% Christian adherent, likely Roman Catholic. Lithuanians have saints that are believed to intervene with God on behalf of peasant welfare. One of these saints is St. Casimir. Other saints are believed to perform lesser miracles. St. George, for example, is considered the protector of animals. They also have a strong devotion to the Virgin Mary and those in Lithuania make pilgrimages to the shrine of Our Lady of Siluva. Those who used to live under Prussian control tend to be Lutheran. They have the Bible, Jesus film, Gospel audio recordings, and Christian radio broadcasting in Lithuanian.

Minahan, James. *One Europe, Many Nations: A Historical Dictionary of European National Groups*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

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

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24363

Moldavian (2,000)

The Moldavians are of the Romanian people cluster. The largest groups are found in Moldova, the Ukraine, and Russia. The Moldavians are those descendants from the territory occupied by current Moldova, but their exact ancestry is still debated. They are also referred to as the Moldavians. They speak Romanian and most today use a Cyrillic script.

Their homeland was established in the 14th Century and in the following centuries experienced wars over that territory. The Ottomans, Poles, Russians, and Habsburgs were all interested in this land. The Russians and Turks fought over the area in the 18th Century and the Russian empire conquered the people. Consequently, around 100,000 Moldavians moved into Russia.

After the Russian revolution, Moldova became a Romanian province when it entered into a union with Romania. In 1924, a Moldovan ASSR was proclaimed to counter the Romanian claims and create a Communist buffer. After 1939, the larger Moldovan area was overtaken and harshly "Russified," including the relocation of 100,000 Moldavians.

A short period of Axis occupation only exacerbated the situation later, when Romania itself was taken over in 1944. National communists later replaced Stalinism in the area. Brezhnev banned Moldovan Romanian cultural contacts by 1970.

In 1989, the Latin script was reintroduced and Moldovan language was declared the same as Romanian. In 1990 the Moldovan SSR changed its name to Moldova. They declared independence on August 27, 1991 and in December 1991 Moldova joined the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). There has not been a significant migration of Moldavians to Moldova. The Moldovans remain the second poorest of the European nations after Albania.

There are some differences between Moldovans and Romanians but they are very similar in culture and language. The term Moldovan is used to distinguish a person using the Romanian language that lives in the Bessarabia region formerly controlled by the Soviet Union. They are 82% Christian adherent, likely of the Romanian Orthodox Church. There are few, if any, known Evangelicals. They have the Bible, the Jesus film, Gospel audio recordings, and both Christian radio and audio recordings in the Romanian language.

One Europe, Many Nations: A Historical Dictionary of European National Groups by James B. Minahan (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000) 465-471.

Olson, James. *An Ethnohistorical Dictionary of the Russian and Soviet Empires*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

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

24364

Mordvinian (5,200)

The Mordvinian people are also called the Mordva, Erzya, or Moksha. They are mostly found in the Middle Volga region and in the Mordvinian Autonomous Republic parts of Russia. They are part of the Finnish groups of people. They speak Erzya, which is in the Finnic group of the Uralian branch of the Uralic- Altaic family. They are almost all bilingual and the population of this people group is decreasing, as many are assimilating into the cultures they live in.

The Mordvinian are primarily Orthodox Christians. Approximately 65% of the population is Christian adherent and the percentage of evangelicals is unknown. They have the Jesus Film and portions of Scripture in their language.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.peoplegroups.org/MapSearch.aspx?country=Tajikistan>

Olson, James. *An Ethnohistorical Dictionary of the Russian and Soviet Empires*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994.

24365

Ossete (800)

The Ossete people are of the Caucasus people cluster. They are also Allagir, Iron, Tagaur, Western Ossete, and Western Ossetian. They are mostly found in Georgia and Russia, however are also found in the areas of the former Soviet Union. They speak Osetin, which is an Indo-European language of the Iranian group. They use a Cyrillic script. It is influenced by Turkic languages. They are involved in dairy farming, cattle breeding, and timber harvesting. The production of hydroelectric power and metal casting is important in their economy.

The Alans are their ancestors. They call themselves the Iristi. Their presence in the Caucasus is due to invaders like the Huns, Arabs and Georgians. Their intermarriage of the tribes has led to divisions into three subgroups, the Irons, Tuallags and the Digors. The Iron and Digors are mainly in Russia and the Tuallag are in Georgia.

They adopted Christianity in the 4th -5th centuries, with Russian orthodoxy influencing them in the 18th century. Kabardian mediation in the 17th century led to the introduction of Islam. Some Ossetians remained Christians and enjoyed the Russian protection against the Kabards, while other converted to Islam. These Christians settled Vladikavkaz in response to the protection and expansion of Russia in the Caucasus.

Ossetes generally favored the Russians to their Muslim neighbors. Tensions were high during World War I and after the Bolshevik Revolution groups tried to meet in concilliary meetings to work out the future. The Civil War hit the area in the middle of 1918. Ossetians were among those that were arrested and executed by the Bolsheviks and Muslims.

In 1924 North Ossentia was created as an autonomous region. It was occupied by Germans in World War II. The Ossetians did not cooperate with the Nazis, but the Muslim Digors were deported with other Muslims to Central Asia by Stalin (Stalin's mother was Ossentian). In 1957 some Digors returned to Ossentia, but many remained in various parts of Central Asia. The 1980's sparked a nationalist movement. After the collapse of the USSR, Ossetians fought the Ingush in their villages over the right to Vladikavkaz. Ethnic tension remains.

The New Testament, Christian radio broadcasting, the Jesus Film, and Gospel audio recordings are available in the Ossetin language. They are 36% Christian adherent, most of those being Orthodox Christians. The number of evangelicals is unknown. Their primary religion is Islam.

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=oss

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.ibtnet.org/pdf/ossetic.pdf>

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24366

Polish (1,500)

The Polish are among the Western Slav people cluster. Until the late 18th century the Polish people lived in their independent state, but when Prussia, Russia and Austria-Hungary partitioned the Polish homeland for themselves. In Post-WWI, a new Poland was created and Poles moved into these new areas of Lithuania, Ukraine, and Belarus. After the 1939 repartitioning of Poland by Russia and Germany, nearly two million Poles ended up living in Soviet Union. There were many Poles deported by Stalin into Siberia and Central Asia and half a million of those deported died during transit. The rest of the Poles were subject to the cruelties of Nazi occupation.

In some places, young couples live with a set of parents during the first few years of marriage. Families normally have one or two children, but rural families have three to four. Though nuclear families are the norm, single parent households are on the rise. Traditionally, fathers are stern while mothers serve as mediators between him and the children. While both parents normally are employed, the children take on tasks such as cooking, cleaning, etc.

Religion is a major component of Polish life. They are primarily Roman Catholic and live in relational community based on their past and present as Catholics. Catholicism is important to their identity as Poles.

Before Poland became Christian under the reign of *Prince Mieczyslaw* during 962 to 992, Christians from Moravia had already come into the country. However, no organized church existed. When *Mieczyslaw* married the Catholic daughter of the Bohemian prince, he embraced Christianity. In order for the priesthood to be independent of Germany, *Boleslaw the Great* (992 to 1025), established protection and patronage to the priests. The pope promptly appointed Bishops. In 1006, the Benedictines migrated to Poland.

Between 1025 and 1034 a revolution occurred against the church and its ministers. Nevertheless, *Casimir I* restored Christianity by building churches and convents. By 1079, the Church had grown in stature. They stood up to the corrupt king gaining esteem and influence in the political realm that continues today. The following years brought continued growth in political matters. Over the next one hundred years, debates raged between the state, the pope, and the church over power and rules.

During the 14th century, bishops were elected by the State. Much of this influence came from German missionaries moving eastward. Battles were conducted during the Reformation over the church and state influence. For instance, in 1518, Lutheranism spread to Poland. In addition, Calvinism came in 1548. The debates included arguments over celibacy, Mass in the vernacular, and communion. However, in 1587, Catholicism was given official recognition while Protestants were restricted. Jesuits came to Poland to open schools.

The 1700s brought oppression on Protestants who were considered heretics. Over the years, the laws were loosened on toleration of Protestants. Because of World War II, Poland was transformed into a single religious state. Communism had little effect on the Catholic Church's efforts. After years of Catholic influence, the state-sponsored atheistic propaganda only served to bond most to the church's appealing message.

Today, the people are tied to the Church leadership through love and confidence. The Catholic Church continues to dominate political aspects of Poland. Without question, Poland is one of the most strongly dominated Roman Catholic countries in the world. The highlight of the Catholic Church in Poland was the election of Karol Cardinal Wojtyla who became Pope John Paul II in 1978.

In Poland, Protestant beliefs are allowed, but evangelicals are discriminated against and considered sectarian by established denominations. The percentage of Christian adherents among the Polish in Kyrgyzstan is unknown and they are about 12.50% evangelical. They have the Bible, the Jesus film, Christian radio broadcasting, and Gospel audio recordings.

<http://www.teamwarsaw.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.worldmap.org/php/country>

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

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

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840

Russian (300,000)

The Russian people are also called Russ, Olossu, and Eluosi. They are the descendants of eastern Slavic origins. Russians include those who have intermarried with the following groups but consider themselves Russian: Menshcheryaks, Polekh, Goryuns, Starozhily (old inhabitants), Bukhtarmans, Polyaks, Semeikis, Kerzhaks, Urals, Kamchadals, Zatundren, Sayans, Karyms, Kolymchans, Yakutyans, Markovs, Russkoustins, Pomors. Their primary language is Russian.

The Russian state was formed in 1521 but the Rus' of Kiev are well known for their leaders Prince Vladimir who converted to Byzantine 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. The Mongol control forced many Rus' into the West, creating Byelorussians and Ukrainians emerged as well. 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.

In 1453 Moscow was declared the Third Rome by the Russian Orthodox leaders. In 1480, tribute payment ceased and by 1500 much of the ethnic Russian territory was under Muscovy control. Ivan the IV annexed the Volga River basing and Central Asian lands

and Cossacks settled into these areas, as well as the frontiers of Siberia. More expansion led to wars with Poland, and conflicts with China. Peter the Great led Russians into Western empowerment, but through oppressive means. He took control of the northern Baltic area after defeating the Swedish King Charles XII. Under Peter the Great, the Russian Orthodox Church became controlled by the government.

Russia expanded into Crimea and the Black Sea with Catherine II at the head of the Empire. Russian relations with the Ottoman Empire had weakened Turkey until they were not a threat any longer. Expansion into the Caucasus and into Alaska came in early 19th century. Russia became larger than its original ethnic Russia. Russification programs ensued under the leadership of Nicholas I and Alexander II. Central Asia was taken in the 1860's, and Far Eastern relations forced the sale of Alaska to the United States to pay for work in the Far East.

World War I and the defeats Russia suffered created ground for the Bolshevik revolution and the end of the Romanov's 300-year dynasty. Civil infighting led the Russians to chose between the new Red Army and old leadership calling themselves White Army. This ended in 1920 with foreign intervention. Lenin's death in 1924 left the Union of Soviet Socialists Republic in the hands of Joseph Stalin.

Stalin and the Russian people dominated the government and anyone thought to be opposed to Stalin and his policies were executed. The failed alliance with Germany in World War II, forced Stalin into the court of the allies. The loss of 20 million people during the war, along with the suppression of the people suspected of working with the Nazis, was a great hardship to the Russian nation. Yet, the state emerged from the war as a superpower.

The lands that Russia held prior to WWI were regained in the aftermath of the second war. The peoples of these nations were forced into collectives and many were deported to slave or work camps in Siberia and Central Asia. The USSR used this slave labor for its heavy industries as it attempted to build huge military stores. Stalin's death ended some oppression of the peoples of the USSR. The Russian people and the Soviet Man became the ideal to which all peoples were to adhere.

Soviet Russification led to many new generations of people that called themselves Russian who were of other ethnic descent. Russians felt that the Soviet shadow obscured what it meant to be Russian. Nationalism surfaced during the Gorbachev era with three separate movements that reacted to the West and to Soviet policies.

The Russian people have suffered much repression and loss of birth rates due to the environmental pollution by the industrial, petroleum, and nuclear waste created in the Soviet era.

The Russian people in Kyrgyzstan are 31.30% adherent to Russian Orthodoxy and the percentage of evangelicals is unknown. They have the Bible, Gospel audio recordings, Christian radio broadcasting, the God's Story Video, and the Jesus film in Russian.

<http://www.nationmaster.com/country/rs>
<http://www.ahart4russia.com/Ekaterinburg.htm>
<http://www.eglobalaccess.com/carrie/uzbek/culture.htm>
<http://www.peopleteams.org/stavteam/default.htm>
<http://www.hope4ufa.com/>
http://www.nupi.no/cgi-win/Russland/etnisk_b.exe?Russian
<http://www.pcn.org.uk/Uzbekistan%20-%202001.pdf>
<http://www.russianservice.com/regions.asp?Main=Uzbekistan>
<http://www.joshuaproject.net>
http://www.stopvaw.org/printview/Ethnic_minorities4.html
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24369

Tajik (36,000)

The Tajiks are of the Indo- Iranian affinity block. They are found throughout Eastern Europe and Central Asia, however, the largest populations of them are found in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan. They are believed to be the original Persian population of Afghanistan and Turkmenistan. In Kyrgyzstan, they are mostly found in the southwestern part of the country. The Tajiks are also known as the Afghani Tajik, the Persian Tajik, Tadjhik, and Tadjhiki. Their primary language is Tajiki, however, most speak Dari. The literacy rate among the Tajik men is about 10% and even lower among the women.

The Tajiks are known as proud, hardworking, gracious, and hospitable. They have a rich tradition and have passed down a heritage of folklore, folksongs, and folk dances through each generation. Buzkashi, or “goat pulling,” is their national sport. In Buzkashi, men of horses pick up and drag a goat carcass to a certain place on a field, sometimes miles away.

The Tajik place a lot of emphasis on etiquette. The young must greet the elders. When friends and relatives meet, they shake hands and pat each other’s beards. Men will often bow with their right hand over their check, and women, with both arms across her chest. They never remove their hats while talking to another, unless a very serious situation is being discussed. They often go out of their way to greet and help strangers, however in recent times, some have become a little more cautious.

The Tajiks that live in the more rural areas work as migrant farmers and herdsmen. They farm wheat, barley, and grain. Some live a semi-nomadic life. These Tajiks will often plant their crops in the spring take their herds to highland grazing grounds during the summer, then return to harvest their crops in the fall. The Tajiks living in more urban areas often work as skilled artists or traders.

When working in the fields, men wear turbans over colorful caps. Rural women tend to wear veils. Women in the urban areas wear shawls. Many Tajik houses are square, with

flat roofs. Many have moved to the cities and will work on farms during the summer, then return to the cities for the rest of the year. This has caused job instability and tension has developed between the Uzbeks and Tajiks, as they often compete for jobs.

It is common among Tajiks for three generations to live in one house. In many homes, senior family members, guests, and juniors sleep on different sides of the same room. In Tajik society, women do not receive an inheritance and they are under the authority of their father, or if married their husband and father-in-law. Traditionally marriages were arranged and one could not intermarry. Today, it is not uncommon for Tajiks to intermarry with Uzbeks and Pashtuns, so they're features are not always easy to recognize. Tajiks have seen centuries of war and tribal conflicts.

The Tajiks are 99% Sunni Muslims of the Hanafite sect. They are very devout and are known to be strong in their faith and adhere closely to its beliefs. Islam is seen in every part of their lives. There are a few Ismaili Shias that live in the more remote areas. Although devout Muslims some spiritism and folk Islam can be found among the Tajiks.

There are few Christians among the Tajiks. There are few, if any, known believers among them. They have portions of Scripture, the Jesus Film, the God's Story Video, and Radio Broadcasts available in their language.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.china.org.cn/e-groups/shaoshu/shao-2-tajik.htm>

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

<http://www.imb.org/centralasia/pray.htm>

<http://www.russianservice.com/regions.asp?Main=Uzbekistan>

<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/ins/uzbeki95.pdf> [www.gl.iit.edu/govdocs/afghanistan/People in Afgh.](http://www.gl.iit.edu/govdocs/afghanistan/People%20in%20Afgh)

24370

Tatar (73,200)

The Tatar people are of the Ural Siberian people cluster and the Turkic affinity block. They are found in all of the former Soviet Union and in places in Turkey and China. Their main population is found around the Volga region of Russia. They are also known as the Dada, Dadan, Kazan Tatar, Tatar, Tata'er, Tura, and Turkish Tatar. They speak Tatar, which belongs to the Turkic language family of the Altaic language system. About thirty percent of the Tatar people speak Russian.

The Tatar people survived the Mongolian invasion in the thirteenth century as well as the Russian conquest in the sixteenth century. By the nineteenth century, their cities were among the great cultural centers in the Islamic world. It was in the nineteenth century that the Tatar dispersed to Central Asian countries.

The Tatars are very diverse. Some have blue eyes and blond hair, while others have Mongoloid features. They often have little facial hair.

Most of the Tatar people have lost their tribal structure. They've become settled and are mostly peasants and merchants. In Russia, some work in manufacturing industries and

petroleum refineries. Others work on community farms. In more urban areas of Russia, they live like the other Russians.

Many have small families and couples live apart from their families after they marry. Those living in more rural areas are more traditional. They live in homes with three generations living under the same roof.

The father is the head of the household for the Tatar people. He is responsible for the family income and strenuous labor. Women are usually responsible for household duties like cooking, cleaning, and carrying water. Sometimes they also take care of livestock.

Marriages are monogamous and intermarriage between the Tatar and other ethnic groups is acceptable. Marriages between cousins do happen, but they are uncommon. During the wedding ceremony, the newlyweds drink sugar water from the same cup as a symbol of a sweet life together. Sometimes the groom moves in with the wife's family, and does not return to his own family until the first child is born.

Several ceremonies are held for children. Three days after a baby is born, the baby receives a religious blessing. Seven weeks later, the child's cradle rites are performed. In many places, forty days after the child's birth, the child is bathed in water that is taken from 40 different places. This is a ceremony intended to bring good health to the child. The child is usually given an Islamic name, with the surname of the father or grandfather.

The culture of the Tatars is rich. They play music on instruments such as the Kuni, which is a wooden flute, the Kebisi, a type of harmonica, and a two-stringed violin. Men dance in a way that involves a lot of squatting, kicking, and leaping. A game that is common among them is called the "jumping walk" contest. In this game, people race holding an egg on a spoon in their mouths.

The Tatar are mostly Sunni Muslims of the Hanafite branch, however, most are not devout. Folk Islamic practices are common, such as the belief in supernatural powers like the "evil eye." Many, in other areas of the world, eat pork, which is forbidden in Islam and many do not take part in Islamic fasts. In some places, however, they celebrate festivals, such as the Saban Festival, or the "rites of spring," which have their origins in shamanism. Many are suspicious of Christianity due to the Russian Orthodox Church's attempt to convert them through coercion.

In Kyrgyzstan, the Tatar are about 1.50% Christian adherent, with few, if any, known evangelicals. They have portions of Scripture, the Jesus Film, the God's Story Video, and Radio Broadcasts available in their language.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://realafghan.com/history/language.htm>

<http://www.china.org.cn/e-groups/shaoshu/shao-2-Tatar.htm> <http://www.chsource.org/Tatar.htm>

24371

Turk (22,000)

The Turk people are of the Turkish people cluster. They are found in over 45 countries of the world. They are also called Anatolian, Baharlu Turk, Meskhetian Turk, Ottoman Turk, Rumelian Turk, and Urum. Their primary language is Turkish.

They are originally from Meskheta, which lies along the borders of Georgia and Turkey. During the Ottoman Empire, Turkish settlers moved into Meskheta, which resulted in a mix of the Turk and Meskheta populations. The Russians call them the Meskhetian Turk, which means "Turks from Turkey." In 1944, Stalin forced them from their homeland in Georgia to the southeastern part of Uzbekistan. He considered them a problem because they had strong ties to Turkey and seemed to be resistant to Soviet assimilation. Stalin may have seen them as a threat, although they showed no signs of disloyalty. Contrary to this possible belief, more than 20,000 Meskhetian Turks died fighting Nazi forces in the Red Army. Another 20,000 or so fought with the Red Army against enemy forces. About 15,000 of them died of starvation or cold in their deportation to Central Asia.

In 1989, there was an outbreak of ethnic violence in the Ferghana Valley and many Meskhetian Turks were forced to be uprooted again. They scattered across Central Asia, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine. Many feel they were unjustly removed from their homeland. Many want to return to Georgia, but their government would not allow them to return unless they took on Georgian names and considered themselves Georgians.

Traditionally Turks were farmers who used sophisticated agricultural techniques. They used wood and ceramic conduits for crop irrigation. They grew fruits and vegetables. They also raised cattle. They lost many of their agricultural practices in their move to Central Asia.

Family is important to the Meskhetian Turks. They have maintained their marriage traditions. In some families marriages are arranged and the girl's father receives a bride price. After the matchmaking is conducted, the families celebrate with a banquet. In other families, the marriages might not be arranged, but the parent's advice is still sought. Going on a date alone with the opposite sex is not allowed. Friends must go out in groups. Weddings always take place on a Friday. The day before the wedding, a mullah confirms the wedding in the presence of two witnesses. The wedding is celebrated with colorful costumes and decorations. After the celebration, the newly married couple lives in a new home which is made especially for the new family. Couples often marry in their teens or as young adults.

The Meskhetian Turks are considered to be all Sunni Muslims of the Hanafite School. They are considered to be devout Muslims, however they also hold to some folk practices. One of these practices is lighting a fire over a grave and praying for the dead. They also celebrate rituals and festivals that are centered around agriculture. Some hold to their beliefs in magic and sorcery. Some still try to bring rain with magic. Another

practice is the use of “moon water,” which is water that is left outside under a clear sky for the night, for healing.

The number of Christians among them is unknown. They have the Bible, the Jesus Film, God’s Story Video, Christian audio recordings, and Christian radio broadcasts in their language.

Olson, James. *An Ethnohistorical Dictionary of the Russian and Soviet Empires*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=47557&SelectRegion=Asia&SelectCountry=KYRGYZSTN>

<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/ins/uzbeki95.pdf>

24372

Turkmen, Turkoman (1,000)

The Turkomani people are of the Turkmen people cluster. They are found in Turkmenistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, India, Uzbekistan, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Ukraine, Tajikistan, and Syria. In Tajikistan, they mostly live in the southwestern part of the country. They are also known as the Anauli, Azerbaijani, Chaghatai, Esari, Goklen, Jagarta, Trukhmeny, Turkoman, and Yomud. They speak Turkmen which belongs to the Oguz group of Turkic languages. This language borrows many words Arabic and Persian, as well as Russian. After converting to Islam, they used an Arabic script, then a Latin alphabet was used from 1920-1940. Since 1940, however, it has used a Cyrillic script. Each tribe among the Turkmen speaks its own dialect of the language.

They are very similar to the Anatolian Turks, however, are different in that they have retained strong tribal and clan divisions. The Turkomani are a tribal group and divide themselves into tribal confederations by territory. They used to be called, “children of the desert” because they used to rob caravans of Persian traders. At one point, they were also involved in slave trading. They used to be nomadic herdsmen, however, now they are more semi-nomadic. They raise cattle and sheep and farm cotton, wheat, and barley. There tends to be a division among them between the sedentary farmers and the nomadic herdsmen. The farmers tend to live in oases, river valleys, and mountain slopes, while the herdsmen roam the plains for pastures for their herds. Due to lack of rainfall, the Turkomani are forced to live near water sources. No strong political leaders or tribal chiefs have emerged from the Turomani.

The Turkmani are known as being strong, hospitable, sincere, and trustworthy, as well as hot-headed and vengeful. They are known to be tall and thin. Men generally wear baggy pants, coarse shirts, and wool hats. Women wear jewelry and cover their heads. The society is male dominated and the older males in the family have the most authority. Sons must be obedient and respectful of elders, especially their fathers. Women are under the authority of men in their society.

Family is very important to the Turkomani. Marriages are often arranged and families tend to intermarry in order to preserve wealth. They tend to marry within their tribe.

Like the Tajik, they Turkmani enjoy playing Buzkashi, which is a game like polo where teams on horseback try to put a headless carcass in the goal. They are well known for their carpets and rugs, which are woven by both men and women.

The Turkomani are Sunni Muslims of the Hannafi branch, however, mysticism and other religious traditions are still practiced. There are few, if any, known believers or churches among these people. There are currently portions of the Bible, Jesus Films, Christian audio recordings, and radio broadcasts available in their language

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

<http://www.farsinet.com/pwo/people.html>

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

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

Olson, James. *An Ethnohistorical Dictionary of the Russian and Soviet Empires*. Westport , CT: Greenwood Press, 1994.

24373

Udmurt (700)

The Udmurt are of the Finno-Ugric people cluster. They are mostly found in Russia, however, large groups of them can also be found in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Belarus, and the Ukraine. A small group of them is found in Kyrgyzstan. They are from the Udmurt Autonomous Republic in Russia. They are also known as the Kalmez and Votyak people. They used to be called the Votyaks, Ary, Ariane, and Otiaki. They speak Udmurt which is a part of the Permian group of the Finnic branch of the Uralic- Altaic language family. They are closely related to the Komi people.

This people group is believed to have appeared as an ethnic group in the sixth century. In the eighth century, they fell under the rule of the Khazar Empire and survived with slash and burn agriculture, hunting, and fishing. By the ninth century, Volga Bulgarians gained control of the people and remained in power until the twelfth century when the Mongol Tartars took over. During the middle of the sixteenth century, the Russian Empire took control of their area. In 1552, they voluntarily accepted Russian annexation.

They are primarily Orthodox Christians and many practice Shamanism. Traditionally, they were animists whose lives revolved around the shaman. In the sixteenth century, Russian Orthodox missionaries began the long process of trying to convert them. Their effort became even more intense in the 1800's. During this time, the missionaries developed a literary language for them. Many only accepted Russian Orthodoxy superficially. The number of Christian adherents among them is unknown. They have portions of the Bible, the Jesus Film, and Christian radio broadcasts available to them in their language.

Olson, James. *An Ethnohistorical Dictionary of the Russian and Soviet Empires*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

24374

Uighur (37,000)

The Uighur people, whose name literally means “allied,” are of the Uighur people cluster and the Turkic affinity block. They mostly live in northwestern China, however significant populations of them can be found in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, with a smaller population in Afghanistan. In Kyrgyzstan, they mostly live just south of Osh. They make up less than 1% of the country’s population.

They are also known as the Huihe, Kashgar, Kashgar Turki, Kashgar-Yarkand, Taranchi, Uighuir, Uiguir, Uigur, Weiwuer, and Yuanhe. They originated from the Turkish nomads who resided in Siberia. In 840AD, they were forced to leave their homeland and many fled to western China. They are said to be the ancestors of the Huihui of China. During the seventh century Arabs and Persians immigrated to China for trade. Those who became permanent residents built mosques and intermarried with the Han. Their offspring was identified with other Muslim immigrants during the thirteen and fourteenth century. They lived along the Silk Road which allowed them to become the middle men between the Orient and Europe. They have been significantly influenced by the Russians and other Central Asian People groups. As a result, only 15% speak Uighur, an Altaic Turkic language, as their first language. Most are bilingual.

In some places, the Uighur are shepherds and farmers and in other places they are involved in manufacturing, mining, trading, and transportation. Most consume meat and milk daily. Tea is a common drink among them. Noodles and bread are staple foods. Guests are often honored with a meal of Paulo, which is sweet rice mixed with mutton, sheep fat, carrots, raisins, and onions.

The Uighurs have maintained their culture and simplicity through living an isolated life, however they have also been able to have contact with many cultures. They have been described as both simple and sophisticated. The Uighur people are known to be proud, happy and independent.

More traditional men wear a qiapan, which is a long gown with a distinctive, slanted collar. Women wear broad sleeved dresses with black waist coats. 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 Uighur are Sunni Muslims. While they used to be Muslim in name only, the Uighur are becoming more devout in some areas. While the Bible has not been translated into their language, the New Testament and Scripture portions have. The Jesus Film, God’s Story Video, Christian radio broadcasts, and Christian audio recordings are also available in their language. There are few Christians among them and it is estimated that about 0.12% of the population is evangelical.

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/kidsweb/world/pakistan/pakpeop.htm>
<http://www.joshuaproject.net>
http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=uig
<http://www.asiaharvest.org/pages/profiles/china/chinaPeoples/U/Uygur.pdf>
<http://www.china.org.cn/e-groups/shaoshu/shao-2-uygur.htm>
<http://www.paulnoll.com/China/Minorities/min-Uygur.html>

24375

Ukrainian (89,000)

The Ukrainian people are of the Eastern Slav people cluster. They are found in almost 40 countries of the world, however, the largest groups of them are found in Russia and the Ukraine. Massive resettlements of Ukrainians dating from the end of the nineteenth century brought many Ukrainians to Central Asia. They've mostly settled in larger towns. They speak Ukrainian, which borrows from Polish. Ukrainian is an eastern Slavic language and is very close to the 9th century Slavonic used before the Slavonic from Bulgaria arrived with Christianity in the 10th century. In the latter half of the 19th century this language was banned, but has persevered and is becoming more widespread. It became the official language of the Ukraine in 1990. Many have intermarried with Russians, which has complicated their ethnic composition.

Peasant dishes made up of grains and staple vegetables, potatoes, cabbage, beets and mushrooms, make up the average diet. Meat is normally fried, boiled, or stewed. Cherries and plums are used to sweeten desserts and are sometime baked into sweet breads. The sacred dish in the country is "*Salo*," pig fat. This goes back for centuries, it has the same love that the French have for wine. Borscht, a beet and mixed vegetable broth, is the national soup and is normally served with cream.

In some places, alcohol is an immense problem and plays a major role in Ukrainian society. Ukrainians consume an enormous amount of spirits. It affects the whole of the society, from the workforce, lifespan, and the complete moral atmosphere of the country. Unlike in the past when Vodka was one of the only spirits one could purchase, Ukrainians in their homeland and many other places now have the complete gamut of alcohol including beer, wine, brandy, and rum. It is estimated that there are nearly 1 million confirmed chronic alcoholics or potential alcoholics in Ukraine.

The factors that contribute to the level of consumption are the lack of economic opportunity, demoralism, and no faith in professed ideals. "Alcohol is an anesthetic that helps to survive the operation called life," as quoted by Bernard Shaw. Traditionally, drinking for the average Ukrainian is a ritual and is a part of any social event or family occasion. Generally when family or friends get together, a bottle of vodka comes out. It is considered poor manners to refuse to drink when everyone is partaking. It is seen as an affront and a show of no respect for those around.

Among the Ukrainians, education is greatly valued. Most of all children receive a high school education and many of those go on to attend the university or some other form of

higher education. Kiev University in Ukraine is recognized as one of the top schools in the world.

Many of the Ukrainians are Orthodox Christians. According to some, the Apostle Andrew sailed through the Black Sea and landed in the area that is known as the Ukraine and preached the Gospel to the tribe's people. The late 10th century saw the arrival of Christianity in the Ukraine with the baptism of *Prince Vladimir*. In 988 the Prince accepted Christianity as the religion of the territory and had everyone baptized.

A split in the Church, the Roman Church from the Orthodox Church, occurred in 1054. The Orthodox Church later split into three segments, all having some relation to the Moscow controlled Russian Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism. In 1596 a number of Ukrainian Bishops seeking to achieve for their brethren a level of recognition similar to that of the Catholics, brought their church into full union with the Pope. Although they were in union with the Pope, they were allowed to maintain their distinct liturgy and rites. The Soviets, in their attempt to crush the Ukrainians spirits, destroyed hundreds of churches in the 1930's.

This union and the New Economic Policy eventually produced regrettable consequences for Ukraine. Beginning in the late 1920s, Joseph Stalin sensing nationalistic ideas developing in Ukraine and deciding to show the rest of the empire what happens to problem children brutally reversed both trends. Peasant landholdings were forcibly collectivized and crops were extorted to support industrialization. The resulting artificial famine in 1932 and 1933 cost the lives of an estimated 5 million to 7 million Ukrainians.

In the mid-1930s Stalin initiated mass arrests and executions of his opponents or possible opponents, resulting in the devastation of Ukraine's intelligentsia by the end of the decade. Meanwhile, in Galicia an extreme form of nationalism, embodied in the *Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN)*, developed and called for independence at any cost. In the latter half of the decade he smashed the Ukrainian intelligence agency and went after the *Ukrainian Orthodox Church* destroying over 250 buildings. *Stalin* sought the complete helplessness and hopelessness of the people, even to the point of wanting to deport the whole country.

Having a reputation as a known rebellious region, Ukraine suffered more than the average under the Russians. The first war and the famine were over. As the world approached another World War, the Ukrainians first greeted the Germans as liberators perhaps partly as a result of the 7 million persons Stalin had murdered through the "famine." The tactics of the Nazis quickly transformed this hope. The war, along with the famine, took over half of the male and a quarter of the female population. Six million Ukrainians died in the fighting of WWII.

Many of the Ukrainian people are Orthodox Christians. Many are also non-religious. The percentage of Christian adherents in Kyrgyzstan is about 60% and the percentage of evangelicals is unknown. The Bible, God's Story Video, the Jesus Film, audio recordings, and Christian broadcasting have been translated into their language.

<http://www.usukraine.org/cpp/resources/education.shtml>.
<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/europe/ukraine/culture.htm>.
<http://reachukraine.org/regional/people.htm>. <http://www.irex.uz/?id=publications&file=art006>
<http://www.brama.com/survey/messages/7479.html> http://www.mswia.gov.pl/eng_mn_narod_1_list.html
<http://www.joshuaproject.net> <http://www.ethnologue.com>
http://www.ukraineobserver.com/archive.php?section=READERS_FORUM&issue=127. 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.

24376

Uzbek, Northern (620,000)

The Uzbek, whose name literally means “master of oneself,” are a Turkic people group. They are also known as the Ouzbek, Ozbek, Usbaki, Northern Uzbek, Uzbeki, and Wuzibieke. The northern Uzbeks are usually the Uzbeks that are north of Afghanistan. Those in Afghanistan and Pakistan are usually called Southern Uzbeks. They are found throughout Central Asia, with almost 20 million of them residing in Uzbekistan. Afghanistan has the second largest population of Uzbeks and Tajikistan has the third largest population. In Kyrgyzstan, they are mostly found in the rural Osh region.

The Uzbek have broad, flat faces, and usually have lighter skin than the Pashtuns. They speak Northern Uzbek, which is a Turkic language of the Altaic language family. It is closely related to the Uighur language. Most Northern Uzbeks are bilingual, with many speaking Russian or Tajik.

The Uzbek are believed to be descendants of Central Asian Turks who aided Genghis Khan. The unity of the Turks and Mongols eventually faded and different kingdoms formed. The Uzbek descended from these kingdoms.

Most Uzbek used to be semi-nomadic farmers, however today, many are farmers or live and work in larger towns. The farmers grow cotton, fruits, vegetables, and grains. Many in Afghanistan are also stockmen and breed the karakul sheep. In some places, noodles are a staple food and are used for two common dishes, Ash, which is noodles mixed with yogurt, and Ashak which is an Uzbek style of Ravioli. Bread and tea is almost always part of an Uzbek meal. It is common for Uzbeks to eat with their fingers.

Family is very important to Uzbek. Uzbek families are patriarchal, with the male ruling over several generations. They often live with extended families, with three generations under one roof. Unlike other groups, marriage between siblings or between other close relatives is forbidden. Most marriages are arranged and it is not uncommon for them to marry Uighurs or Tartars. 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. Traditionally, the groom’s family had to offer gifts to the bride’s family and cover the cost of the wedding feasts. The ceremony would take place at the house of the bride, then after the ceremony, she would be taken to the groom’s home. Sometimes, friends and family would take the bride after the ceremony, and the husband would have to offer gifts to “redeem” her.

Uzbek often live in villages headed by an elder. Several villages make up an elat, which is governed by a council of elders. Uzbek interact with various ethnic groups. They tend to have close relationships with the Uighurs and Kazaks. Age and respect for elders is very important in Uzbek culture. The oldest person is the one who prays at meals and breaks the bread. There are different ways of addressing people according to their age.

Many Uzbek men enjoy playing Buzkashi, which is a game like polo where teams on horseback try to put a headless carcass in the goal. 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 Uzbek love poetry and are taught to recite poems from an early age.

The Uzbek are Sunni Muslim, most of the Hanafite branch. 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. There are few Christians among the Uzbeks, with only about 0.05% in Kyrgyzstan being evangelical. They have portions of Scripture, the Jesus Film, God's Story Video, Christian radio broadcasts, and Christian audio recordings are all available in their language.

<http://www.joshuaproject.net>

http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=uig

<http://www.afghan-network.net/Ethnic-Groups/uzbeks-turkmen.html>

<http://mm.iteams.org/asia/uzbeks.php>

http://www.sclink.net/synapse/about/fullstory_public.cfm?aboutid=4127&website=sclink.net

<http://www.china.org.cn/e-groups/shaoshu/shao-2-ozbek.htm>

<http://www.pcn.org.uk/Uzbekistan%20-%202001.pdf>

Missiological Implications

1. Evangelical Christians should mount a massive movement of prayer the people and churches in Kyrgyzstan. The first and all-important step in the evangelization of the peoples of Kyrgyzstan is of course prayer. The battle is a spiritual one, so missionaries need prayer to face it.

Evangelical Christians should develop viable methods for reaching peoples in Kyrgyzstan for Christ and developing them in the Christian life and a church culture.

In discussing religion, it is important to remember that it is better to loose the battle in order to win the war. Muslims can have a great sense of pride in themselves as well as their religion, and to damage this could be detrimental to the relationship a Christian is trying to establish. When having theological discussions, do not focus on the difference between the religions or quickly raise issues that would cause an argument. For example, referring to Jesus as the Messiah or the Spirit of God would be acceptable to a Muslim since those are titles the Quran gives Him, however referring to Him as the Son of God would be considered blasphemy and the Muslim would be offended. Starting with common ground will help to develop understanding and trust in a non-threatening way.

Another important thing to remember is to not demean Islam, Mohammed, or the Quran in any way. Doing either of these would lose the respect of the Muslim. It is okay to admit that you do not agree with the views of Islam, but to do something such as calling Mohammed a pedophile or the anti-Christ, as some public figures have done, will quickly shut the door to further communication. Demeaning their prophet or Holy book in any way will anger them and possibly get the missionary kicked out of the country or imprisoned.

Christian witness Kyrgyzstan must address the element of fear. This fear can be with either the missionary or the Muslim.. Although proselytizing is legal in Kyrgyzstan, some are facing persecution for doing so. If one person gets caught, it is possible that the entire group that person is associated with will face consequences. For this reason, a missionary must be very careful in meeting with Muslims so as not to endanger them. For a Muslim to be persecuted because he or she converted to Christianity and is standing firm in their faith is one thing; to be persecuted because of contact with a missionary is another. As much as possible, evangelism and discipleship needs to be done through national believers. It is not wise for missionaries to attend the church services of the local believers.

2. Evangelical Christians should help believers in Kyrgyzstan mold an expression of Christianity and church that fits the culture of Kyrgyzstan

When a person converts to Christianity, it is important to respect local customs, or Christians will lose even more respect. For example, it may not be wise to encourage a Muslim woman who has become a believer to stop veiling. Since veiling is *not in opposition* to the teachings of the Bible, to encourage her to stop, would just be to make her more western and not more Christian. If the woman does unveil and her husband and family are not believers, this creates major problems and confirms that Christian women disrespect their husbands. The women can be seen as morally loose and in rebellion. This is not the message Christians want to give. A new convert's testimony will have no value if the first sign of his or her faith is perceived as rebellion and immorality.

For a person in Kyrgyzstan to convert to Christianity it is a huge step that could have severe consequences. In some areas, if someone even thinks a Muslim is considering changing religions, it could mean death or expulsion from the family. Families will kill other family members who turn from Islam to save the honor of the family

3. Evangelical Christians should seek ways to reach Muslim men and women through ministry to families and witness through Christian family living.

Christians should seek to reach entire families. Single women can serve in Muslim communities. The need is for couples to be able to live and reach out to families in order to balance the proportion of men to women. While women are most able to reach women this method would still leave large segments of the

population (men) unreached. The great need is to work as families to model Christian families for non-believers and new believers. The Muslims need to see for themselves how a Christian husband acts and how he honors and protects his wife and family. They need to see how a Christian wife acts and speaks respectfully to her husband. They even need to see how a Christian child respects the parents and how he or she is brought up. Christian families will stand out in Kyrgyzstan, and will gain much respect.

As a Muslim man is exposed to a Christian family and strong marriage, he will see a beautiful picture of Christ and the church in the wife's voluntary submission to a loving husband, who constantly lays down his life for her needs and desires. This will not only be a picture of the Gospel, but will also show him that he has nothing to fear in the liberation of women in Christ. Muslims do notice that Christian marriages are different than their own, so living out a strong marriage in front of a Muslim can be a powerful witness. If God is in a home, He will shine through even when the family is simply going about their daily lives. Harold R. Cook says, "When a couple goes out to the mission field, its witness to Christ and the Christian life is more than that of two individuals. Something else has been added. It is their joint witness as a Christian family. Here is a place where one and one equals more than two."

4. Evangelical Christians should demonstrate the characteristic of responsibility and service to overcome centuries of oppression and betrayal.

The people of Kyrgyzstan have a history of people betraying and oppressing them. In addition, many equate Christianity with Russian Orthodoxy and Russian oppression. For this reason, the message of Jesus Christ must be spread through relationships that are built on trust and understanding. This will help in tearing down barriers and stereotypes.

5. Evangelical Christians should live in such a way so as to provide an accurate picture of Christianity and Christian living.

A major challenge facing those seeking to work with the people of Kyrgyzstan is how Christians are perceived. Many in Kyrgyzstan equate Christianity with Russian Orthodoxy and Russian oppression and therefore reject Christianity. Most Muslims believe that Christians have perverted historical data as well as their Scriptures, with a bias against Islam. Both Muslim men and women view Christian women as undesirable. Many Muslims see them as disrespectful to their husbands, immodest, treated badly by Christian men, and sexually loose. In addition, women without children are seen as not truly feminine. For the most part, Muslims think all Americans are Christians and hence believe that all Americans are like those represented by television shows. If a Tajik asks if you are a Christian, it is better to ask them what they mean when they say "Christian." This will likely open a door to explain what it really means to be a follower of Christ.

Because of the western stereotype, many Muslims do not expect Christians to be able to meet their cultural requirements for decency. Christians must strive to learn the cultural standards for decent living but it is difficult to reach an accurate understanding for what really is acceptable. For example, one may be told that a certain way of dressing is an acceptable way of dressing in public, however when pressed, the Muslim may say, "It is okay for YOU to wear that, but I never would." Therefore, Christians cannot assume that a certain behavior or dress is acceptable just because they are told by the locals that it is. All situations and behaviors must be analyzed before accepting them as suitable. Since acceptable practices vary from culture to culture, it is best for missionaries to find a local mentor to help them. Any time a question arises, ask the mentor what he or she would do and why. This methodology will help decrease costly mistakes.

To help dispel the widespread misconceptions about Christianity and Christians, missionaries should strive to live an incarnational life-style. Christians must live open and transparent lives before their Muslim friends and neighbors. The more contact a Christian has with a Muslim, the better the opportunity to share what devoted followers of Christ should look like. A Christian should study the culture and know what is offensive and avoid those behaviors. They should refrain from such activities as eating pork or drinking alcohol in the presence of a Muslim. Likewise, a man or a woman wearing shorts or tight fitting clothing is not appropriate.

6. Evangelical Christians should practice and teach relationship evangelism.

Christians must know and understand individual Muslims. Muslims in Kyrgyzstan, even within the same people group, can be very different; therefore it is important not to generalize. In order to avoid the error of generalization, Christians should strive to understand and relate to each individual and demonstrate genuine concern for them. These relationships grow out of efforts to spend time asking open ended questions in order to learn of their background. This questioning and listening will allow you to address the person's needs, hopes, and fears in a more specific way. Christian witnesses should ask what Kyrgyzstan people believe and why. The witness should try to understand how the Kyrgyzstan family and relationships are affected by their faith. These witnesses show they care about them as people and friends, and not just a project or someone to convert.

Since many in Kyrgyzstan will be suspicious about the motives of a Christian or an American, it is important to show this intense concern for them as people. If a Christian says or implies that he or she is present to convert the Muslim or to "save their soul," the Muslim will likely be defensive. It is better to acknowledge the differences of religion and use common ground to develop trust.

Christians should be honest in acknowledging that they are followers of Christ, but not to go on to say that they are there to change the Muslim's religion. While this is the hope of many missionaries, it is better to say that the reason for being there is because they are committed followers of God and they believe God has brought them to the place they are serving to love and help Muslims. This will help lower the defense of the Muslim community in which the missionary serves, but only if those words are followed by loving and helpful actions.

In developing a clear understanding of Muslim women and how they see themselves, Christians can begin forming relationships that will lead to an opportunity to share the gospel.

6. Evangelical Christians should also seek definite methods of reaching women for Christ in Kyrgyzstan

Field missionaries suggest that only 6 out of 200 believers in the Muslim world are women. Muslim women need to hear how they are viewed in God's eyes. As mentioned earlier, Muslim women are given the idea that their bodies are polluted and polluting. How refreshing it is for them to hear that Jesus, a respected prophet in Islam, did not view women in that way. Jesus, in Luke 8 reaches his hand to a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years. In fact, Jesus treats women with great care and respect. His story begins with the faith of a woman. As Jesus ministers, He talks with and commends the faith and actions of the women He encounters. He defend them and offers them relationship and undeserved forgiveness. God left His throne in Heaven, becoming the person of Jesus Christ and served women. The widow of Nain, the Samaritan woman at the well, Peter's mother-in-law, the woman caught in adultery, Jairus's daughter, the woman with a hemorrhage of blood, and the Syro-phoenecian woman are just some of the women Jesus saw fit to love and serve. In addition, the God who created woman, and her body, looked upon it and said it was good, with all its functions.

With a few exceptions, Muslim women do not want to hear that Christians have come to free them from their lives that are perceived by Westerners as horrible. Christian witnesses should change their focus from thinking of challenges facing Muslim women to those facing women in today's Muslim world. Both Muslim and Christian women are concerned about the things that make up daily life. Muslim women think, act, and react like women. Women, Muslim, Christian, or other, face the same problems, only in a different setting. It is where and how the solutions are looked for that has more relevance to religion.

Of women surveyed by Debi Bartlotti, three common emotions arose repeatedly. The first is a sense of powerlessness. In reaction, some women look to the darker side of Islam, go to shrines, and buy amulets. They seek to gain power by pronouncing curses. The second common emotion that comes up is fear. Muslim women fear gossip, slander, shame, and dishonor. In addition, women in Folk

Islam settings fear evil spirits, the evil eye, and death. The third common emotion is a lack of identity.

A missionary must be careful not to further isolate the women that she is trying to serve. Sometimes, going to a woman's house for a long visit can create gossip, and hurt the woman's honor. In areas where this is a possibility, it is best to ask the women to set boundaries for you. Let her decide when, where, and for how long you meet. Respect a sudden change in plan. If a missionary senses that the woman is uncomfortable, she should mention this to the woman and consider leaving. Share about religious things only with permissions and be careful when giving them religious materials to keep. If religious materials are found by a husband or other family member, this could bring the woman danger or end the missionary's privilege to have contact with the woman. Further, it is the task of Christian women to take the Gospel to Muslim women. There are very few circumstances where it would be appropriate for a man to speak alone to a woman about spiritual issues. A man speaking with a woman about such matters could dishonor both him and the Muslim woman and possibly put them in danger.

10. Evangelical Christians should understand and implement the fullest meaning of hospitality as it is expressed in the culture of Kyrgyzstan

Hospitality is another key aspect in working among Muslims. It is a common element among Muslims worldwide, whether in the Middle East, Central Asia, or Indonesia. Usually this task falls on the woman of the house. It is important for women to observe and follow the customs of hospitality appropriate for that culture in order to build relationships with Muslims. Not knowing and practicing the customs of hospitality can lead to an appearance of being rude or cold, which could possibly shut the door to further meetings with neighbors and friends.

12. Evangelical Christians should practice the deepest meanings of servanthood by serving physical needs of the people of Kyrgyzstan

Many development and aid workers are needed. This approach gives a person legitimate access to the country, however, in order to maintain the company's reputation, it is important that the person do what they say they are there to do. They must go as a Christian who is called by God to help the people of Kyrgyzstan in what ever way they say they are going to help and they must work with integrity towards that job.

13. Evangelical Christians should help the believers in Kyrgyzstan recognize and practice the ministry of evangelistic outreach to their fellow countrymen.

Many indigenous believers in Kyrgyzstan are not reaching out to their neighbors. It is important to disciple them and encourage them to reach out to those with the same or a similar culture.

14. Evangelical Christians should aid the churches in Kyrgyzstan to develop leadership training.

The lack of leadership among the indigenous churches can be addressed through locally based leadership training. Workers are needed to disciple and train local believers so that they are able effectively lead the local body of believers. While this need might be partially addressed through leadership training schools with campus-based approaches, the more effective means would be to establish methods of training on local levels.

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