Tuva Republic or Tyva from Collins English Dictionary

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Summary Article: Tuva Republic from The Columbia Encyclopedia

(tu'va, Rus. tuvâ'), constituent republic (1990 est. pop. 366,000), 65,830 sq mi (170,500 sq km), extreme S Siberian Russia, on the Mongolian border. Kyzyl is the capital. The area is a mountain basin, c.2,000 ft (610 m) high, encircled by the Sayan and Tannu-Ola ranges. The eastern part is forested and elevated, and the west is a drier lowland. The area includes the upper course of the Yenisei River. There are many glacial lakes.

Cattle, horses, sheep, goats, reindeer, and camels are raised in the elevated steppe areas, and grain is cultivated in the irrigated lowlands. Lumbering is carried on extensively. The fur trade remains important in the northeast. Among the republic's industries are food processing; leather making; woodworking; auto repairing; and the manufacture of building materials.

Tuvans make up about 65% of the population, and Russians (who live primarily in urban areas) around 32%. Traditionally nomadic herders who engaged in supplemental hunting and agriculture, the Tuvans were encouraged by the Soviet government to adopt a sedentary mode of life, with an emphasis on collectivized agriculture. They are a Turkic-speaking people with Mongol strains; their religion is Tibetan Buddhism. The Tuvans have a rich folklore and are skilled artisans in silver, bronze, wood, and stone. They are also renowned for throat-singing, a vocal technique that enables a singer to produce two or three distinct tones simultaneously.

Controlled by the Mongols from the 13th to 18th cent., they were under Chinese rule from 1757 to 1911. During the 1911 revolution in China, czarist Russia fomented a separatist movement among the Tuvans, whose territory became nominally independent before being made a Russian protectorate in 1914. The chaos accompanying the Russian Revolution of 1917 allowed the Tuvans to again proclaim their independence; but in 1921 the Bolsheviks established a Tuvinian People's Republic, popularly called Tannu-Tuva. It was annexed by the USSR in 1944 as an autonomous region and became an autonomous republic in 1961. It was a signatory to the Mar. 31, 1992, treaty that created the Russian Federation (see Russia).

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