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Khamnigan Mongol

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PREFACE

This is my third separately published book(let) on the language(s) of the Khamnigan (after Janhunen 1990a and 1991a), and my third grammatical description of Khamnigan Mongol (after Janhunen 1990a and 2003). In order not to repeat myself I have decided to focus the present volume on the two most important issues connected with the Khamnigan Mongol language: first, its status as the ethnospecific community language of a population of which large sections also speak another ethnic language (Ewenki); and second, its exceptional conservativeness as far as its linguistic structure and substance are concerned. Apart from these specific issues, this volume also contains a skeleton grammar (phonology and morphology). For additional information on synchronic details the reader may refer to the earlier titles mentioned in the Bibliography.

I worked among the Khamnigan during only four relatively brief field periods between 1989 and 1994. The main result of this work was the very (re)discovery of Khamnigan Mongol as a living language, as it still survives today in the Mergel basin of Hulun Buir, Inner Mongolia, China, at the same time as other known communities of Khamnigan in Russia and Mongolia are rapidly becoming (or have possibly already become) linguistically extinct. However, concerning the linguistic properties of Khamnigan Mongol, and also of the Ewenki dialects spoken by the Khamnigan, much detail work remains to be done. The currently available database inevitably leaves even many trivial questions unanswered. The present volume should therefore be accepted as another intermediate report on a language that would deserve much more careful attention.

In fieldwork among a small speech community with an endangered (or at least a potentially endangered) language, one cannot avoid noticing how fast time goes. Much of the material in my database derives from a few elderly informants, and recent information tells me that several of them, including the unforgettable persons of Sarpiim (Serafim) and Gulugein Gonchig (Nikolai), have passed away during the decade that has elapsed since my last visit to the Khamnigan. Although the language is still extant, its traditional social and ecological context is undergoing fundamental changes, and these changes may turn out to be too rapid to allow the language to survive. Whoever is going to work among the Khamnigan in the

future, the issue of linguistic survival (and possibly, revival) will have to be increasingly in the focus of all research. As for myself, I hope to be able to return to the Khamnigan at least for editing a collection of texts that still remains to be published.

Since leaving the Khamnigan, I have been working on the so-called Shirongolic languages of Amdo in a physical and cultural environment in many ways different from that of the Khamnigan habitat in northwestern Manchuria. Interestingly, the physical distance is also reflected on the linguistic level, in that the extreme conservatism of Khamnigan Mongol stands in stark contrast to the conspicuous innovativeness of the Shirongolic languages. The reasons for the different diachronic behaviour of languages which ultimately belong to the same genetic stock are still little understood, but it is obvious that the history of an individual language can only be studied against its entire comparative background. In this way, my work on other related languages may ultimately have opened new perspectives for me on Khamnigan Mongol also.

Completing this modest contribution to Khamnigan studies, I repeat my gratitude to all of my informants and local friends (some of whom were mentioned above), my companions in the field (especially Mr. Ju Leping and Prof. Borjigin Buhchulu), and the institutions which have supported my work: Inner Mongolia Academy of Social Sciences and the Academy of Finland. For the revision of the English language of the text I am grateful to Dr. Robert Whiting (State Archives of Assyria Project, University of Helsinki).

Helsinki, December 2004

Juha Janhunen

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

1p.	first person	priv.	privative
2p.	second person	progr.	progressive
3p.	third person	px	possessive suffix
		refl.	reflexive
abl.	ablative	res.	resultative
acc.	accusative	sg.	singular
ag.	agentive	term.	terminative
appr.	approximative	vol.	voluntative
aor.	aorist	vx	personal ending
ben.	benefactive		
coll.	collective	C	consonant
cond.	conditional	V	vowel
conf.	confirmative	#	word boundary
conv.	converb	-	morpheme boundary
corr.	corrogiative	/	unstable segment
dat.	dative	-	sandhi liaison
dur.	durative	*	reconstructed form
emph.	emphatic	~	alternative form
excl.	exclusive	<	diachronically from
fut.	futuritive	>	diachronically to
gen.	genitive	↑	synchronically from
hab.	habitive	→	synchronically to
imperf.	imperfective	:	morphological relationship
incl.	inclusive		
indef.	indefinite		
instr.	instrumental		
interr.	interrogative		
mod.	modal		
neg.	negative		
obl.	oblique		
ord.	ordinal		
part.	participle		
perf.	perfective		
pl.	plural		
poss.	possessive		
prescr.	prescriptive		

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INTRODUCTION

§1. Definition. *Khamnigan Mongol*, or simply *Khamnigan*, is the community language of an ethnolinguistic group that is best referred to as the *Khamnigan*. Genetically, Khamnigan Mongol belongs to the Mongolic language family, but areally it has evolved in close interaction with the Northern Tungusic Ewenki language. Politically, the speakers of Khamnigan Mongol have long lived in the context of the Russian, Chinese, and Mongolian states.

Since the Khamnigan ethnic group has nowhere an official status, its members are classified as belonging to other nationalities, including the Mongols proper (in Mongolia), Buryat (in Russia), and Ewenki (in China). Correspondingly, Khamnigan Mongol has been classified as a dialect of either Mongol proper (in Mongolia) or Buryat (in Russia). To some extent, these interpretations reflect the different cultural orientations as well as the different bases of bilingualism of the various local groups of Khamnigan. Linguistically, however, Khamnigan Mongol is a well-defined language, which can only be recognized as a separate member of the Mongolic family.

§2. Distribution. The native territory of the Khamnigan is located in and around the Onon and Argun river basins of Transbaikalia (Fig. 1). Smaller local basins occupied, or known to have been occupied, by the Khamnigan include, in particular, those of the rivers Onon-Borzya (flowing into the Onon) as well as Upper Borzya, Middle Borzya, Lower Borzya, Gazimur, and Urulyngui (all flowing into the Argun). Khamnigan communities have also existed in the basins of the rivers Ingoda and Aga (flowing into the Onon).

It is unclear to what extent the Khamnigan territory has historically extended to the right bank of the Argun, but at least in modern times groups of Khamnigan have lived and moved in parts of the Bargu (Barga) steppe, notably in the so-called Three Rivers Region (Khamnigan *Gurban Gol*, Russian *Trëkhrech'ye*), as well as in the basins of the rivers Imin, Mergel, and Hailar.

Administratively, the Khamnigan territory is today divided between Russia, China, and Mongolia. On the Mongolian side, the Khamnigan are mainly concentrated in the administrative entity of Dadal Sumun of Khentei Aimak. In Russia, the Khamnigan have lived especially within Nerchinsk District (*Nerchinskii okrug*) of Chita

Province (*Chitinskaya oblast'*). In China, the main area occupied by the Khamnigan forms the Ewenki Arrow (*Ewenke Sumu*) of the Old Bargut Banner (*Chen Baerhu Qi*) of Hulun Buir League, Inner Mongolia. A smaller group of Khamnigan lives in the Imin basin, within the Ewenke Banner (*Ewenke Qi*) of Hulun Buir.

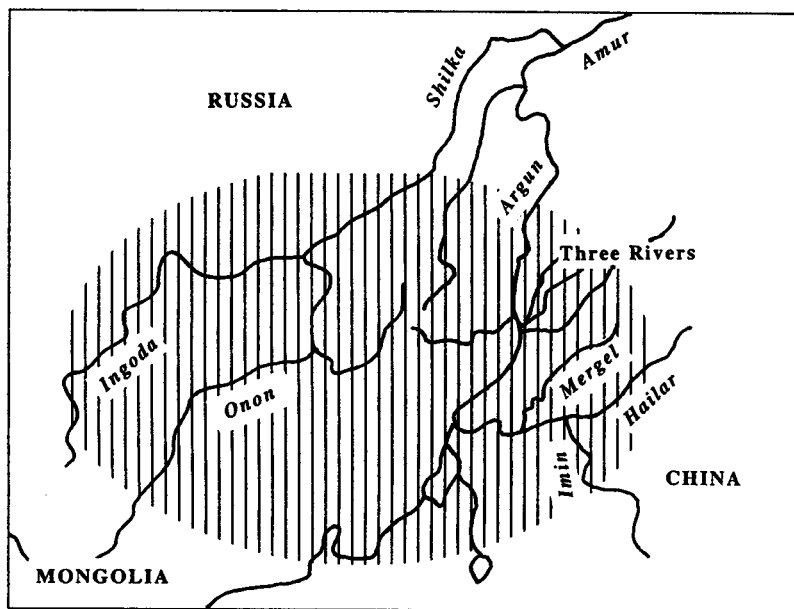


Fig 1. Khamnigan native territory.

§3. **History.** Although the Khamnigan native territory was the very source of expansion of the historical Mongols under Chinggis Khan, it remained a neglected periphery of both Mongolia and China until the arrival of the Russians, whose advance in the region was marked by the founding of the fort of Nerchinsk (1654). Soon after this, an important group of Khamnigan under the leadership of Prince Gantimur (*Khamnigan Gantumur*) submitted themselves to Russian rule (1667), initiating a process of acculturation during which the Khamnigan were even partially incorporated into the Russian Cossack system of hereditary borderguards.

After the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689), which settled the Sino-Russian border along the Argun, there is no information on any

Khamnigan groups living on the Chinese side of the river. There were, however, Khamnigan living in the Mongolian part of the Onon basin, which also provided a refuge for additional Khamnigan groups escaping the Russians. With time, contacts between the Khamnigan in Russia and Mongolia grew increasingly scarce.

A new group of Khamnigan on the Chinese side of the border arose when significant sections of the population of Nerchinsk District moved across the Argun in the years following the October Revolution (1917). The dominant element among the emigrants was White Russian Cossacks, who settled mainly in the Three Rivers Region. There were, however, also Buryat, who occupied a part of the Imin basin, as well as Khamnigan, who were divided between the Imin and Mergel basins, where their descendants still live today.

§4. Material culture. From the socioeconomic point of view the Khamnigan are best characterized as semi-nomadic cattle breeders with a minor impact of other forms of subsistence economy. The animals most typically kept by the Khamnigan include cattle, horses, sheep, and goats, but under Russian and Chinese influence pigs and poultry also occur. The herding mode of life involves an annual cycle of movements, which necessitates the use of movable dwellings (yurts) of the Mongolian type. In the winter camps, most Khamnigan today live in Siberian-style log houses.

In other aspects of material culture also, the Khamnigan are characterized by a combination of Mongolian and Russian features. Their traditional clothing is similar to that of the Buryat, but the Russian style of European clothing has become common among the male population of the Khamnigan in Russia and China. The diet is dominated by mutton, beef, and milk products, augmented by bread of the Russian type, as well as, occasionally, potatoes.

Under modern conditions, the Khamnigan in Russia and China have adopted elements of gardening and agriculture. On the other hand, traces of an old hunting culture, involving hunting expeditions to forested mountain regions, such as that of the Greater Khingan Range (*Da Xing'an Ling*), have persisted until recent times. Wild animals are hunted both for the meat and the raw materials.

§5. Spiritual culture. The traditional world view of the Khamnigan is based on concepts and practices close to the Siberian type of Shamanism. Practising shamans survived until the political purges of

the Great Terror (1934-1937) in Russia and the Cultural Revolution (1967-1976) in China. More recently, there has been a partial revival of the shamanist traditions among the Khamnigan in China.

With the beginning of the contacts with the Russians, Orthodox Christianity also came to influence the Khamnigan cultural heritage. A conversion on a larger scale started after the Russian archpriest Kirill Sukhanov settled among the Khamnigan (1772). Among the emigrant Khamnigan in China, there are still elderly individuals following Russian Orthodox customs. The shamanist and Christian elements are, however, becoming syncretized with more recent Buddhist influences, which are reaching the Khamnigan through the Buryat.

The Khamnigan have possessed a rich folkloric heritage of epic tales, part of which seem to be common with the Buryat, Dagur, and Ewenki. This heritage is, unfortunately, rapidly being replaced by modern influences radiating from the dominant Russian, Chinese, and Mongolian cultures.

§6. Appellations. The term Khamnigan (native shape *Kamnigan* : pl. *Kamnigad*) has no satisfactory etymology, but it seems originally to have been used by the Northern Mongols to denote the Northern Tungusic Ewenki speakers of the Baikal region. Due to the interaction between Mongolic and Tungusic populations, the term was transferred to denote also the speakers of Khamnigan Mongol, many of whom were and are bilingual in Ewenki.

As a technical term, the ethnonym Khamnigan is also used in Russian (*khamnigán* : pl. *khamnigáne* or *khamnigány*), but traditionally the Khamnigan used to be known to the Russians as the "Equestrian Tungus" (*kónnye tungúsy*), or "Horse Tungus", of Transbaikalia. In spite of the Mongolic community language of the Khamnigan, the Tungusic identification has been adopted into the Chinese usage, in which the Khamnigan of China are referred to as the "Tungus Ewenki". As a Russian loanword, the ethnonym Tungus is also known to the Khamnigan themselves (*Tungguus*).

Historically, there seems also to have been confusion among the Russians between the Khamnigan and the Dagur. The core part of the Khamnigan native territory in what later became Nerchinsk District is traditionally known to the Russians as Dauria (*Dauriya*) 'Dagur Land'. Since there is no evidence of Dagur ethnic presence in this region, the term was probably transferred from the Upper Amur region, where, indeed, a contact had existed between the Russians and

the Dagur. Most toponyms on early Russian maps from Dauria derive clearly from the Khamnigan Mongol language.

§7. Population size. The number of the Transbaikalian "Tungus" population under the Gantimur House reached ca. 25,000 people towards the end of the Czarist period (1897). It is, however, not clear how large a proportion of this population was actually using the Khamnigan Mongol language; in any case, the figure must have included an unknown number of monolingual Ewenki speakers, as well as fully assimilated Russian and even Buryat speakers. The size of the Khamnigan Mongol speech community is therefore likely to have been smaller, perhaps just several thousands.

In the 20th century, assimilation by speakers of Russian, Buryat, and Khalkha has further reduced the number of Khamnigan Mongol speakers in both Russia and Mongolia. The current number of remaining speakers in these two countries is unknown, but it may be down to only a few elderly individuals. Since the continuity of Khamnigan Mongol as a living language in both Russia and Mongolia has apparently been interrupted, the language is bound to disappear soon all over its earlier territory in the Onon basin.

On the Chinese side, however, Khamnigan Mongol remains a vigorous community language among the emigrant Khamnigan group in the Mergel basin. The number of Khamnigan Mongol speakers in the Mergel basin is currently over 1,500 people. The number of the Khamnigan in the Imin basin is probably less than 200, and assimilation by the local dialects of Mongol proper and Buryat seems to be progressing with an increasing speed.

§8. History of research. The earliest systematic information on the "Horse Tungus" of Transbaikalia and their ethnic environment was supplied by Grigorii Spasskii (1822) and Vasilii Parshin (1843, 1844), but it was only the Russian Mongolist A. M. Pozdneev, who (1880: 185-186) listed Khamnigan Mongol as a separate idiom, which he classified as the "Onon Buryat dialect" of the Buryat language. This identification was retained by the Buryat scholar Ts. J. Jamtsarano, who, in 1911, collected important samples of Khamnigan epic folklore, published much later (1982) by D. G. Damdinov.

Damdinov, himself a native Khamnigan, is also the author of a number of dialectological (1962, 1968), diachronic (1975, 1988), and ethnohistorical (1993) works on the Khamnigan and their Mongolic

language. Research on Khamnigan Mongol in Mongolia was initiated by Käthe U.-Köhlmi (1959) and L. Mishig (1961). The former (1964, 1981) has also written on the ethnic and political history of the Khamnigan. Other ethnohistorical works include those by B. O. Dolgix (1960: 326-351), A. S. Shubin (1973), V. A. Tugolukov (1975), T. B. Uvarova (1982) *née* Naumova (1979, 1982), A. M. Reshetov (1986), and J. O. Habeck (1994).

The Khamnigan who today live on the Chinese side of the border were first studied from the point of view of ethnology by a team of Japanese scholars, including Koichi Inoue (1988) and Shiro Sasaki (1989). Linguistic material was collected by Juha Janhunen (1990ab, 1997), who has also authored a number of specialized papers on the sociolinguistic (1991b, 1996a), diachronic (1992, 1996b), and synchronic (2003) position of Khamnigan Mongol. More recently, linguistic field work among the Khamnigan in China has been carried out by Yasuhiro Yamakoshi.

In parallel with the Khamnigan Mongol language, the Ewenki dialects spoken by the Khamnigan have been an object of research since the "Tungus" grammar of M. A. Castrén (1856), republished (in Russian) by Ye. I. Titov (1926). Castrén's data (from Titov) seem to have formed the basis for the discussion by B. Rinchen (1969), who also supplies independent information on Khamnigan Mongol. The diachronic and taxonomic status of the Ewenki dialects spoken by the Khamnigan was analyzed by Gerhard Doerfer (1985). A sketch of the Ewenki speech of the Khamnigan in present-day China is contained in Janhunen (1991a).

ETHNOLINGUISTIC CONTEXT

§9. External delimitation. Since the Mongol(ic) term *Khamnigan* (Written Mongol **qamniqhav** : pl. **qamniqhat**) refers generically to all the Tungusic-speaking Ewenki tribes living to the north of the Mongols, it has been historically used also of local populations that are not Khamnigan in the technical and linguistic sense. An example of such a population are the so-called "Armak Khamnigan" living in the Zakamna region south of Lake Baikal. The Armak Khamnigan, as reported by Damdinov (1977), are a group of Buryatized Ewenki speakers whose modern language is more or less identical with the local Buryat dialects in the region. The language shift from Ewenki to

Buryat seems to have taken place relatively recently, and there are no indications that this group would ever have spoken a Mongolic language of the Khamnigan Mongol type.

Another apparently fully assimilated group of former Ewenki speakers are the "Iro Khamnigan", studied by J. de Talko-Hryniewicz (1904). The Iro Khamnigan used to live in the basin of the river Iro (**vIrugae**), a tributary to the Orkhon in Northern Mongolia, and their territory was already in premodern times surrounded from all sides by Khalkha Mongol pastoral areas. Judging by the closeness of the Iro basin to the Khamnigan areas further to the east in Khentei Aimak, it cannot be ruled out, however, that they may at some earlier stage have been speakers of Khamnigan Mongol.

The ambiguity of the groups identified as "Khamnigan" also raises a question concerning the status of the Ewenki language in Mongolia. Ewenki is still occasionally listed as a language allegedly spoken in parts of Northeastern Mongolia, but no first-hand Ewenki language material has ever been published from the Mongolian side of the border. Most likely, any Ewenki speakers that may have been present among the Mongolian "Khamnigan" were assimilated already some generations ago.

§10. Bilingualism. Much of the confusion that surrounds the concept of "Khamnigan" is connected with their widespread bilingualism. In contrast to the ordinary monolingual speakers of both Ewenki and the various modern Mongolic languages (including Buryat and Mongol proper), a considerable proportion of Khamnigan Mongol speakers are bilingual in Ewenki. Within the bilingual sections of the Khamnigan community, the two languages (Ewenki and Khamnigan Mongol) are intertwined to the extent that it is impossible to tell which one is the actual vernacular. The Khamnigan are therefore a type example of what may be termed *ethnic bilingualism*.

The phenomenon of ethnic bilingualism is synchronically well attested and preserved among the Khamnigan community living today in the Mergel basin in China. Historically, an identical pattern of bilingualism is documented for those Khamnigan of whom today only remnants remain in the Russian part of Transbaikalia. It is therefore not unlikely that bilingualism was once also characteristic of the Khamnigan living on the Mongolian side of the border, although the former presence of the Ewenki language in Mongolia remains undocumented and somewhat controversial.

The ethnic bilingualism of the Khamnigan does not, however, cover the entire community. Judging by the situation among the modern Khamnigan in China, it seems that at least one third of the population has traditionally been monolingual in Khamnigan Mongol, while only up to two thirds of the population have been bilingual in Ewenki. By contrast, there are virtually no Khamnigan individuals monolingual in Ewenki only.

The observed asymmetry in the pattern of bilingualism suggests that Khamnigan Mongol has always functioned as the dominant community language of the Khamnigan, while Ewenki has filled the role of a second ethnic language. All over the Khamnigan territory, the Ewenki language has been slowly regressing, and this regression continues today among the remaining bilingual Khamnigan. Even so, the persistence of the bilingual pattern has been surprisingly strong, which can only be explained by assuming that it has become a part of the Khamnigan ethnic identity.

§11. Taxonomic status. It is important to note that while Khamnigan Mongol is taxonomically a separate Mongolic language, with a clear genetic distance from all other Mongolic languages (including Buryat and Mongol proper), the Ewenki speech of the Khamnigan seems to remain within the overall context of the Ewenki language. At the dialectal level, however, the varieties of Ewenki spoken by the Khamnigan are different from all other known varieties of this language and may therefore be identified as *Khamnigan Ewenki*. Both Khamnigan Mongol and Khamnigan Ewenki are thus ethnospecific idioms peculiar to the Khamnigan only.

The difference in the taxonomic status of the two languages of the Khamnigan means that while Khamnigan Mongol is distinct enough to prevent immediate communication with the speakers of other Mongolic languages, Khamnigan Ewenki would seem to allow relatively smooth communication with other Ewenki speakers. In practice, however, there is little evidence of the use of Khamnigan Ewenki in interethnic contacts. Most of the external relations of the Khamnigan have traditionally been carried out in languages other than either Khamnigan Mongol or Ewenki.

Although Khamnigan Mongol and Khamnigan Ewenki remain two completely distinct languages representing two separate language families, they belong historically to the same areal and typological complex ("Altaic"). Moreover, due to their coexistence as the ethnic

languages of a single population, they have developed a number of special interaction phenomena, which have further increased their inherent phonological and morphological parallelism. In this interactive relationship, it has generally been Khamnigan Ewenki that has adapted to the patterns offered by the more dominant Khamnigan Mongol language, rather than vice versa.

§12. Tribal division. Corresponding to their ethnic bilingualism, the Khamnigan are historically composed of tribes some of which seem to have been originally Mongolic speaking, while others were Tungusic speaking. There is no doubt that the mixing of the two components took place only when both Khamnigan Mongol and Ewenki had been formed as distinct languages, which gives a dating no earlier than the late Middle Mongol period (15th to 16th century). An even later date is suggested by the internal dialectal differences within both Khamnigan Mongol and Ewenki. On the other hand, information on the tribal history of the Khamnigan implies that the basis of their ethnic bilingualism had already been formed by the times of Gantimur (mid 17th century). After that, the two ethnic languages have coexisted in a relatively stable symbiosis.

There are some indications that the two ethnic languages of the Khamnigan were originally contributed by two separate tribal unions known by the Russian names Nelyud (*nelyudy* or *nelyuli*) and Namyat (*namyasincy*). Of these, the former mainly comprised tribes with clearly Ewenki names, many of which are still in use among the Khamnigan, including such as *Bayagiid*, *Duligaad*, *Cimcagiid*, and others. The latter, by contrast was dominated by tribes with Mongolic names, such as *Cibcinuud*, *Koonud*, *Jaltood*, and others, gathered around the central tribes *Kara Namied* 'Black Namyat (Naiman)' and *Shira Namied* 'Yellow Namyat (Naiman)'.

Altogether, the Khamnigan are composed of ca. 20 historical tribes, though some of them may be connected with secondary ethnic developments. Due to the ethnic mixing that has taken place it appears impossible to link the tribal identities with any synchronic linguistic parameters (such as bilingualism in Ewenki or dialectal differences). Also, most of the Khamnigan tribal names are well known from other Mongolic and/or Tungusic ethnic groups as well.

§13. Dialects. The material available today from Khamnigan Mongol and Khamnigan Ewenki allows both idioms to be divided into two

main dialects, labelled (after Castrén) according to the Transbaikalian localities of *Urulga* (*Urul'ga*) and *Mankovo* (*Man'kovo*). The two Khamnigan Mongol and two Khamnigan Ewenki dialects yield four possible bilingual combinations, all of which exist, or have existed, among certain sections of the Khamnigan population, as can be inferred from the linguistic material.

Among the modern Khamnigan in the Mergel basin, both of the two forms of Khamnigan Ewenki but only one form of Khamnigan Mongol survive. The surviving Khamnigan Mongol dialect may be identified as (a descendant of) the historical *Urulga* dialect, which is thus combined in a bilingual relationship with both the *Urulga* and the *Mankovo* dialect of Khamnigan Ewenki (also known as the *Urulyungui* and *Borzya* dialects, according to the localities from where the immediate ancestors of their modern speakers are assumed to have come to the Chinese side of the border).

§14. Ethnic environment. Historically, the Khamnigan native territory was surrounded by the areas of three Mongolic languages: (Eastern) Buryat in the west, *Dagur* in the northeast, and Mongol proper (including the *Khalkha* dialect) in the south and southwest. The presence of Buryat gradually increased due to ethnic movements which led to the formation of the Old and New Bargut in Hulun Buir (17th to 18th centuries) as well as the *Aga Buryat* in Eastern Transbaikalia (18th to 19th centuries). The location of *Dagur* also underwent changes, the most important of which was the intrusion of a *Dagur* group to the *Hailar* region of Hulun Buir (18th century). At the same time, a group of originally *Oirat*-speaking *Oelet* was imported to the region from *Jungaria*.

Ewenki was originally spoken all over the northern limits of the Khamnigan territory from Lake Baikal to the Upper Amur. An early dialectal split seems to have divided *Ewenki* into two forms, which may be termed *Siberian Ewenki* and *Manchurian Ewenki*. Of the two dialects of Khamnigan *Ewenki*, the *Urulga* (or *Urulyungui*) dialect belongs to the *Siberian Ewenki* branch, which is also represented by the dialects of the *Manchurian Reindeer Tungus* (in the Lower *Argun* region) and the *Orochen* (in the *Khingan* region). By contrast, the *Mankovo* (or *Borzya*) dialect of Khamnigan *Ewenki* belongs to the *Manchurian Ewenki* branch, which is also represented by the *Solon Ewenki* dialects in both the *Nonni* basin (since the 17th century) and the *Hailar* region (since the 18th century).

Since the formation of the Sino-Russian border (17th century), Russians have been an integral part of the ethnic environment of the Khamnigan. On the Chinese side (Fig. 2) Russian emigrant groups survived until recently (mid 20th century), and a trace of them is still preserved by a mixed group known as "Sino-Russians".

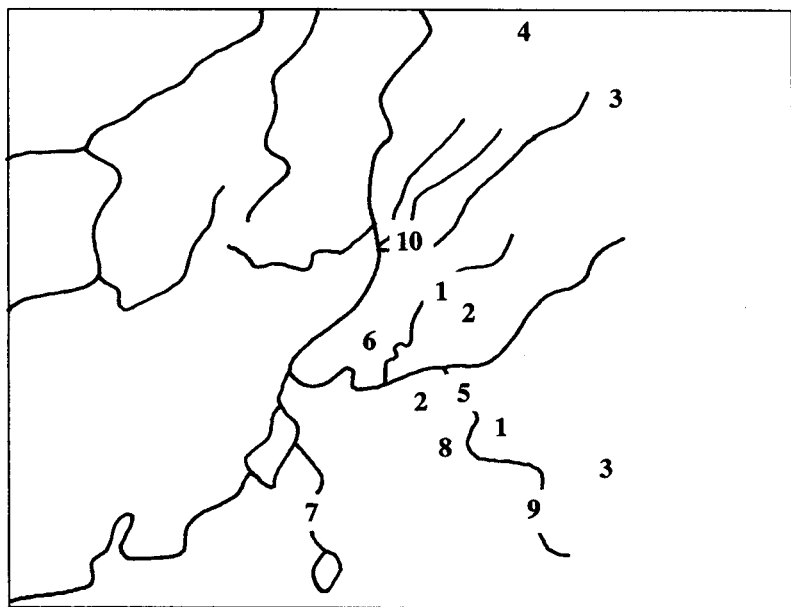


Fig. 2. Ethnic groups of Hulun Buir.

1. Khamnigan. 2. Solon. 3. Orochen. 4. Manchurian Reindeer Tungus. 5. Dagur. 6. Old Bargut. 7. New Bargut. 8. Buryat. 9. Oelet. 10. Sino-Russians. (Mongols proper and ethnic Chinese are not indicated.)

§15. Interethnic languages. In interaction with the neighbouring ethnolinguistic groups, the Khamnigan only rarely use their own languages, though bilingual individuals of the oldest generation mention having occasionally communicated in Ewenki with other Ewenki-speaking groups (the Orochen and the Solon). Buryat seems to have been used historically in communication with the Buryat, a circumstance that has led to the Buryatization of part of the Khamnigan population in Russian Transbaikalia. On the Chinese side today, communication between the Khamnigan and the other

