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Mount Keumgang (geography and history)

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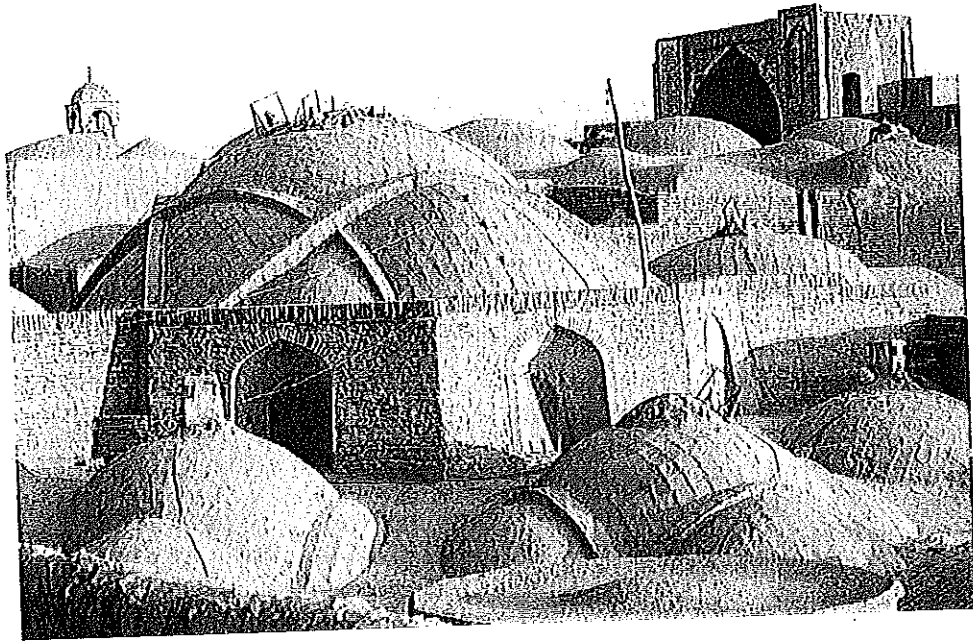


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The domed roof of the bazaar in Kerman in 1993. (K. M. WESTERMANN/CORBIS)

KERMAN (2002 est. province pop. 2.2 million; city pop. 419,000). In ancient times Kerman, a province in southeastern Iran, was known as Carmania (in Persian, "bravery and combat") and formed part of the province of Ariana in the Persian empire. The modern province has an area of about 186,000 square kilometers. The capital city, also Kerman, was founded as early as the third century CE by Ardashir I, founder of the Sasanid dynasty.

Kerman's history was violent: Arabs, Buyids, Seljuks, Turkmens, Mongols, and Persians invaded and ruled it and left their mark on the region. The Safavid ruler Ganj Ali Khan (1005–1034 CE) especially contributed to Kerman's prosperity.

Kerman borders the modern provinces of Khorasan and Yazd to the north; to the south, Hormuzgan, the Persian Gulf, and the Gulf of Oman; east, Sistan and Baluchistan; and west, Fars. Western Kerman is mountainous, while northern and eastern Kerman is desert, with little water. Its most important permanently flowing river is the Halil. To alleviate the shortage of surface water, the province developed many subterranean water canals known as *qanat*, an ancient Iranian method of groundwater use and transport; some *qanat* systems have been in use for thousands of years. Due to its aridity, Kerman has a low population density, with ten major urban areas scattered throughout the province.

The language spoken in Kerman is Persian, with provincial and local differences and expressions. Turk-

ish and Baluchi languages are also spoken by some regional nomadic tribes, who form a very small portion of the total population. Most people are Muslims, with some religious minorities such as Zoroastrians, who have been living in the area for thousands of years.

The economy of Kerman is based on agriculture and industry, as well as its rich copper mines. Agricultural products include grains, beets, henna, cumin, cotton, and citrus fruits; pistachios and dates are two of Kerman's major export items. Major nonagricultural exports are hand-woven carpets and rugs known as *gelim*. Kerman's carpets are known throughout the world for their delicacy, strength, and colors. The provincial capital, 1,060 kilometers from the Iranian capital of Tehran, is linked to it by road, rail, and air. Kerman also has good access to the Persian Gulf ports.

Payam Foroughi and Raissa Mubutdinova-Foroughi

Further Reading

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KEUMKANG, MOUNT Mount Keumkang (Keumkangsan, or "Diamond Mountain") is a range of spectacular peaks in Kangwon Province in eastern

North Korea. Keumkangsan includes some 12,000 individual peaks, as well as valleys and spectacular waterfalls. The highest peak within the range is Biro-bong, with a height of 1,698 meters. The range known as Manmulsan is unique in that its rugged terrain appears to change as light passes over and recedes from it. Keumkangsan is the northern extension of the Taebaek mountain range, which includes Soraksan (Mount Sorak) to the south. Like Soraksan, Keumkangsan has tremendous sentimental significance to Koreans because of its natural beauty and myths associated with it.

Keumkangsan's name is derived from a Buddhist poem that speaks of "the diamond mountain where the Bodhisattva lives." Legend holds that the region was originally controlled by nine dragons, which were defeated by the fifty-three Buddhas of the Yujeon Temple.

The region is largely undeveloped, although several archaeological and cultural sites exist there. The best-preserved of these dates from 670 CE during the Unified Shilla period (668–935 CE). In the late 1990s the region also became politically significant when the government of North Korea began to admit organized tours from South Korea. These tours were arranged by the Hyundai Corporation, which has begun economic development in North Korea.

Thomas P. Dolan

KHAI HUNG (1896–1947), Vietnamese writer. After graduating from senior high school, Tran Khanh Giu (Khai Hung) started teaching in a private institution called Thang Long School. The French authorities considered it an establishment in which liberal ideas and socialist doctrines were freely cultivated. It was there that Khai Hung made friends with patriots and writers who were to give a definite direction to the rest of his life. With a few young, politically and socially minded writers, he founded, in 1933, Tu Luc Van Doan, a literary, social, and political club. One year later, he published his first novel, *Nua chung xuan* (In Mid-Spring), followed by many more that made him into one of the most influential and popular authors of the time. In his novels, he attacked the traditional stratified society and showed the vacuity of Confucian virtues, which he felt were all there to make life miserable for everyone concerned. During this period, he was involved in many social endeavors. Finally, as the war portended drastic changes to the colony, Khai Hung launched himself into the political arena by joining the Dai Viet Party, which sought Vietnamese independence

by collaborating with Japanese occupational forces. After the war, as the Communist Party was establishing its political control over Vietnam, he sided with the rival old Nationalist Party. Early in 1947, a few months into the Franco-Vietnamese war, Khai Hung was kidnapped and assassinated by parties unknown.

Lam Truong Buu

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KHALKHA Khalkha is the official language of Mongolia and is spoken by approximately 90 percent of its population, about 2.4 million in 2000. Khalkha is actually a dialect of Mongol. In addition to Khalkha, other important Mongol dialects include Dariganga, spoken in southern Mongolia, and Chakhar, Urat, Kharchin-Tumet, Khorchin, Ujumchin, and Ordos, all spoken in Inner Mongolia. Khalkha encompasses a number of dialect variants, but differences are as minor as the differences between Khalkha and the other Mongol dialects, all of which are mutually comprehensible. The real differences are historical rather than linguistic. When Khalkha's direct connection with China ended after 1911, Russian became a dominant influence; the other languages of the Mongol group, with the exception of Dariganga, continued to be influenced by Chinese. The Mongol languages of China also continued to use the Uighur script and a spelling that is somewhat archaic and less precise but has the advantage of deemphasizing phonological variations.

Prior to 1940, Khalkha was also written with the Uighur script, but since that time a slightly modified Cyrillic script has been used that better reflects the phonological patterns of everyday speech. Since 1991, the Uighur script has made a comeback. From the standpoint of Mongolian linguistic nationalism, a general return to the Uighur script would be extremely important. All speakers of Mongol would write the same way, although terminological differences would persist.

After more than sixty years of development as a distinct literary language, Khalkha has now become a sophisticated medium of exchange and a Mongolian national language in every sense. The evolution of Khalkha has accelerated since the end of Communist rule, with the introduction of new social and economic institutions and vocabularies to support them. Whole