



Midge Conner

Location: The February 1982 *National Geographic* listed a figure of between 80,000 and 90,000 Gologs, living in six counties of the remote Golog Tibetan Prefecture in Qinghai Province.¹ A total of 100,343 people lived in the prefecture in 1953, but by 1964 the population had diminished to only 56,071.² Thousands of Golog migrated from the area. Thousands more were either killed in battle or starved to death by the Chinese army. The Golog region is virtually still outside Chinese control. Its extreme isolation was described by a visitor in the late 1920s: "A miserable land it is, of poverty and incredible filth; a land cut off from the modern world, a region which, for uncounted centuries, has had its own forms of government, of the religion and social customs; yet a region which knows no railway, no motor car, no radio, or aught of all that science and invention have

given the world since Marco Polo's day."³

Identity: The Golog are probably the most backward and primitive of all the various branches of the Tibetan race. According to one source, *Golog* means "those with heads on backwards."⁴ This name comes from their reputation for being an extremely stubborn and rebellious people.

Language: The Golog language is "largely unintelligible to most Tibetans."⁵ There are numerous dialects and local varieties spoken by dozens of different Golog tribes and clans.⁶

History: The Golog are the descendants of Tibetan warriors sent to guard the northern borders. "In the seventh century AD, the Tibetan king dispatched his fiercest warriors, ancestors of the present-day Gologs

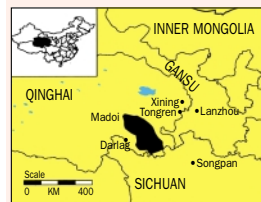
and neighboring Khampas, to guard the country's mountainous northern frontier against Chinese invasion. When the Tibetan kingdom eventually collapsed, the Gologs stayed in their mountain retreat, defiant of outside authority."⁷ A Chinese historian states, "Tibetan tribes from the Upper, Middle and Lower Golog all can trace their roots to Baima.... Baima County is situated on the southeast tip of Qinghai and borders on Sichuan."⁸

Customs: The nomadic Golog wear greasy sheepskins, yak-hide boots, and felt bowler hats, a lasting legacy of the British invasion of Tibet in the early 1900s. Many wild animals inhabit the Golog region, including "blue sheep, gazelles, bears, wolves, and deer."⁹

Religion: All Gologs are Tibetan Buddhists. Many Golog women have 108 braids of hair, considered an auspicious number by Tibetan Buddhists.

Christianity: Few Golog have ever heard of Jesus Christ or his offer of salvation. They have been separated from all outside influence, including Christianity, for centuries. "[Gologs] live here, and other tribes of Tibetans, with whom they quarrel and fight. Yet of these local wars, not even an echo ever reaches the outside world."¹⁰ In the early part of the twentieth century, some missionaries passed through the Golog area and distributed gospel literature, receiving an interested response from one Golog Head Lama.¹¹ In

recent years at least one mission agency has expressed interest in reaching the Gologs.



Population in China:
 90,000 (1982)
 127,600 (2000)
 164,600 (2010)
Location: Qinghai
Religion: Tibetan Buddhism
Christians: 10

Overview of the Golog

Countries: China
Pronunciation: "Gor-lok"
Other Names: Ngolok, Mgolog, Golok, Lhardi, Ngura, Amchok, Rimong, Kangsar, Kanggan, Tsokhar, Ngawa, Gatse, Butsang, Shahrang, Jazza
Population Source: 80,000 to 90,000 (1982 G. Rowell); Out of a total Tibetan population of 4,593,330 (1990 census)
Location: SE Qinghai: Golog Tibetan Prefecture: Jizhi, Madoi, Maqen, Gade, Baima, and Darlag counties
Status: Officially included under Tibetan
Language: Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Bodic, Bodish, Tibetan, Northern Tibetan
Dialects: Many
Religion: Tibetan Buddhism, Polytheism
Christians: 10
Scripture: None
Jesus film: None
Gospel Recordings: None
Christian Broadcasting: None
ROPAL code: GOC00

