

THE FULAAN BULOG 'RED SPRINGS' AND THE MONGOL PRESENCE IN THE
HUZHU TU (MONGGHUL) AREA, QINGHAI PROVINCE, PR CHINA

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ABSTRACT

Mongghul origins are controversial. One argument holds that the Xianbei or Tuyuhun are origins of the modern-day Mongghul (Monguor ethnicity, officially recognized in China today as the Tu nationality), while a second suggests that the Mongghul language and everyday practices exhibit Mongol lineage. This article provides further insight into the origins of the Mongghul people, particularly through evidence provided by individuals from Huzhu Tu (Mongghul) Autonomous County. Oral narratives contain valuable accounts of the history of the Fulaan Bulog 'Red Springs' region, local religious practices, customs surrounding field boundary rituals of the Mongghul of Huzhu, and other aspects of Mongghul history and culture in Huzhu.

KEYWORDS

Mongghul (Tu), Monguor origins, Huzhu Tu, Qinghai, Xianbei, Tuyuhun, Red Springs, *chansi*

Oral accounts help round out the story of the past, providing a fuller, more accurate picture provided by other historical materials and, at times, even contradicting the written record by giving accounts absent from other records. Oral accounts may serve as the only source of information available about a certain idea and enable people to share their versions of the past in their own words, with their own voices, through their own understandings. Complicating the story of origins with memories of elders passed down over generations, historians may avoid sweeping generalizations that overlook important variables in the historical context.¹

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¹ A revised version of <https://bit.ly/39tE5J7> (accessed 28 March 2020).

LOCATION: MAPS

FIG 1. The People's Republic of China (with Qinghai Province in blue).¹



FIG 2. Qinghai Province.² Haixi Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Xining City, Haidong City, Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Golok (Mgo log, Guoluo) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and Yushu (Yul shul) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (next page).

¹ <https://bit.ly/38gvpWw> (accessed 6 March 2020).

² From <https://bit.ly/3klnZrX> (accessed 8 August 2020).

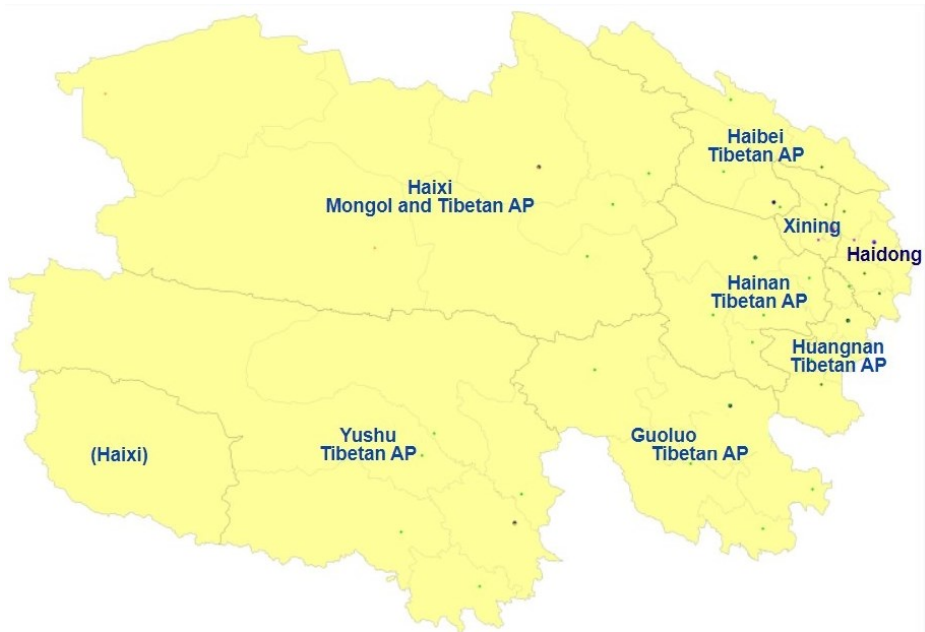
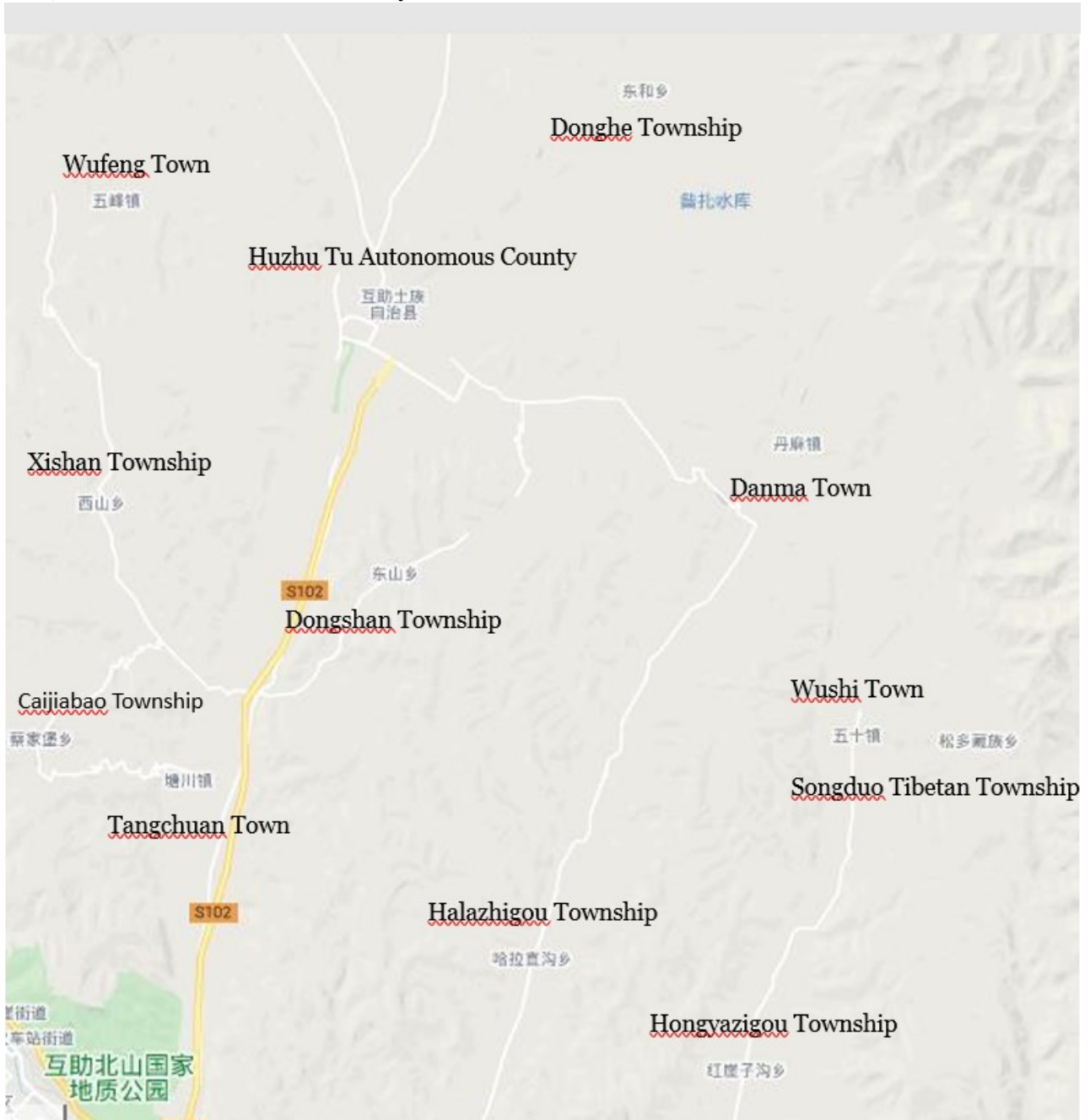


FIG 3. Haidong City.¹ Huzhu Tu Autonomous County, Ledu Region, Ping'an Region, Minhe Hui and Tu Autonomous County, Hualong Hui Autonomous County, and Xunhua Salar (Sala) Autonomous County.



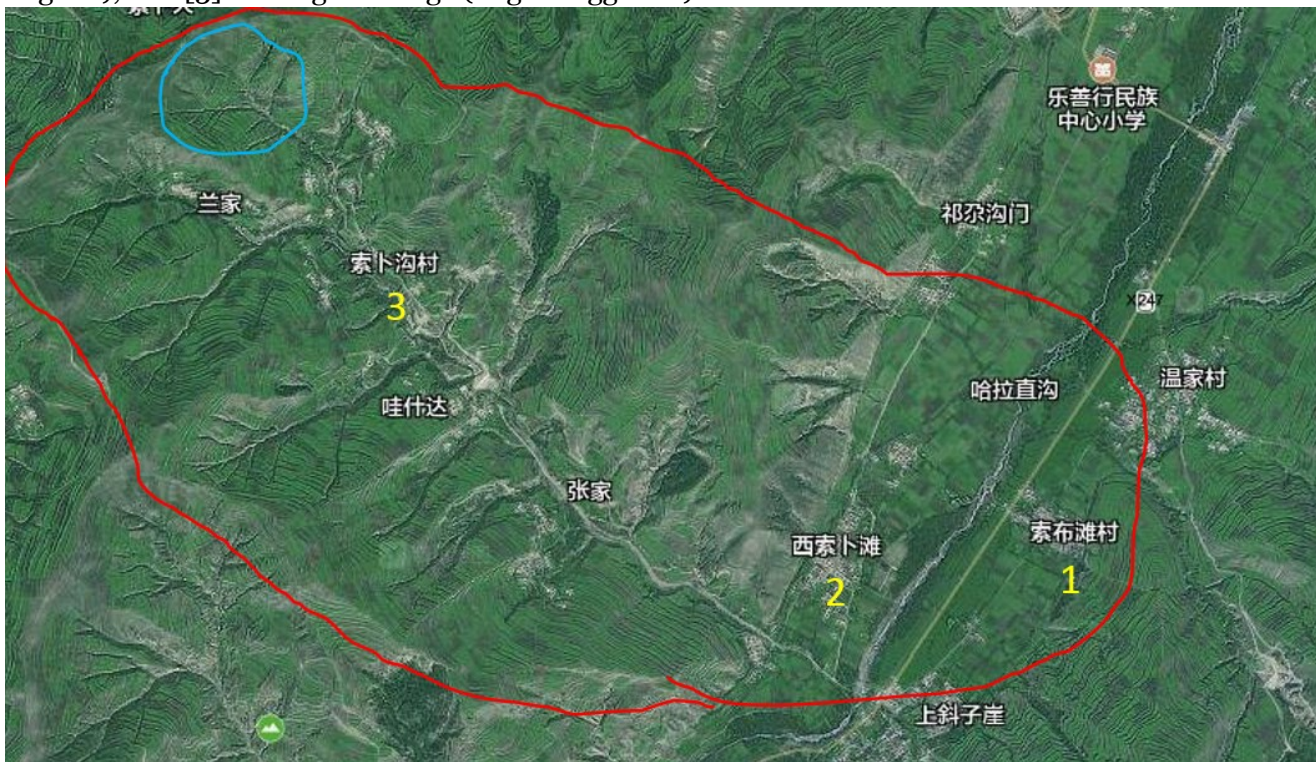
¹ From <https://bit.ly/2PFAyjq> (accessed 9 August 2020).

FIG 4. Huzhu Tu Autonomous County.¹



¹ <https://bit.ly/2Uqyx8> (accessed 8 March 2020).

FIG 5. Sughua Valley, and the Sughuanghuali villages and vicinity.¹ Mongols historically resided inside the red circle. The blue circle indicates the Moluu Ula 'Round Hills' and Fulaan Bulog 'Red Springs' location. [1] East Suobutan Village (Girili Sughua), [2] West Suobutan Village (Narasirigu Sughua), and [3] Suobugou Village (Sughuangghuali).



INTRODUCTION

We begin with a brief outline of scholars arguing that the Mongghul² are descendants of the Xianbei or Tuyuhun ethnic group. However, other scholars refute this claim, citing linguistic and cultural evidence that points instead toward the Mongols as the ancestors of modern-day Mongghul. The relationship between Mongghul and Mongols is particularly compelling when examining evidence from the Red Springs region in Huzhu Tu (Mongghul) Autonomous County. Thus, the bulk of the article provides Mongghul oral narratives from Huzhu detailing this relationship that involves important information on the Red Springs region, the Sughua *chansi*,³ and other historical and contemporary aspects of Mongghul culture, life, and governance in the Huzhu area. The article concludes with sixteen photographs taken September-October 2013 in the Sughua Village vicinity.

The difficulties encountered when attempting to determine the "origins" of any ethnic group are illustrated by this article, particularly one which involves a relatively homogeneous and geographically localizable population whose members share a common language, a common cultural

¹ <https://bit.ly/3cFVgdt> (accessed 6 March 2020).

² Mongghul in the Huzhu area were historically divided into Haliqi (meaning unknown) and Fulaan Nara 'Red Sun'. Haliqi includes the present Danma, Donggou, Weiyuan, Taizi, and Dongshan townships. Fulaan Nara refers to Wushi, Songduo, and Hongyazigou townships (Huzhu County) and Shdara Township (Ledu Region). Fulaan Nara is located northeast of the Dongyuan Mountains, while Haliqi is southwest of the same mountains. Before 1980, all Fulaan Nara residents referred to themselves as "Karilang" and not as "Mongghul." Slight differences exist between dialects and dress in the two areas (Limusishiden 2019:20). After about 1980, more and more young Karilang began saying they were "Mongghul." In the year 2020, teenagers attending school would reply "Tu" if they were asked to comment on their ethnicity, regardless of their home area in Huzhu.

³ A local official title similar to *tusi* (Zi and Limusishiden, 5 January 2014, personal communication).

base, and a common gene pool. However, when it comes to "origins," language, culture, and genes can point in very different directions. This is the case with the Huzhu Mongghul. Genetically, the Huzhu Mongghul continue the heritage of the old local populations that, since ancient times, have inhabited the Huangshui River Basin and neighboring areas on the upper Yellow River. Culturally, they belong to the sphere of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism, but with a significant admixture of Chinese and Mongolian elements and old local traditions.

Linguistically, the Mongghul are Mongols, in the sense that the lineage of their language derives from the language of the historical Mongols who, under Chinggis Khan and his heirs, left Mongolian-speaking communities, probably military troops, in the region. With the language also came genes and cultural features. Still, ultimately the number of Mongolian ancestors among the Huzhu Mongghul is probably relatively small compared with the number of local individuals absorbed into the Mongghul linguistic sphere by political, economic, or such social ties as marriage. Also, the language of the Huzhu Mongghul has absorbed many features and elements from both Tibetan and Chinese, although the affiliation of the language remains unambiguously Mongolic. All of this makes the definition of the ethnic origins of the Huzhu Mongghul, like that of their close relatives, the Minhe Mangghuer, a complicated question with no simple answer.

Even so, this study shows that the folk memory of the Huzhu Mongghul preserves knowledge of their linguistic and historical connection with the Mongols, and not with any other group. Thanks to the relatively short time - 700 to 800 years - that has elapsed after the separation of the Huangshui Mongols from the Mongols of Mongolia, even non-sophisticated speakers can notice the similarity of the languages. They are also conscious of the elements shared by the Huzhu Mongghul with the mainstream Mongols in material and spiritual culture. This is important to understand when other connections are sought for the Huzhu Mongghul.

In some circles, it is popular to view the Huzhu Mongghul as heirs of the ancient Tuyuhun people (T, 'A zha), who had a kingdom in this same region centuries before the Mongol conquest, and who are represented to have migrated to this region from the context of the Xianbei, a protohistorical ethnic complex that originated further northeast in Mongolia and Manchuria. However, the Tuyuhun "theory" of Mongghul origins has no base in folk memory. Although there is no reason to doubt that the genes of the ancient Tuyuhun survive in the local populations of the region, including the Huzhu Mongghul, and although it is possible that some of the local cultural features also go back to Tuyuhun times, the language of the Huzhu Mongghul has no direct connection with the Tuyuhun language. In fact, we do not know what language or languages the Tuyuhun spoke. However, historical sources suggest that the Tuyuhun kingdom's founders may originally have spoken a Para-Mongolic language related to the language of the Khitan (Qidan) of the Liao Dynasty (907-1125).¹ Whatever the case may be, the whole notion of linking the Huzhu Mongghul with the Tuyuhun is based on a modern confusion of the two ethnonyms - Tu 土族 (Tuzu) and Tuyuhun 吐谷浑 - and has no specific historical or linguistic foundation.

While the origins of the Mongghul remain controversial, certain scholars continue to point to the Xianbei or Tuyuhun ethnic group as the origin of modern-day Mongghul. However, other Mongghul specialists (Li Shenghua 2004:149-160; Li Keyu 1992:6; Janhunen 2003:287) contend that the Mongghul language and everyday practice indicate Mongol lineage. Currently, as Mongghul culture rapidly disappears, the lack of clarity on Mongghul origins creates urgency in continuing

¹ On the "migration" and possible linguistic identity of the Tuyuhun, see Janhunen (2006) and Vovin (2015). Even the assumption that the Tuyuhun "arrived" from the northeast and spoke a Para-Mongolic language does not mean that they kept this language during the centuries of their presence in the upper Yellow River region. More likely, they adopted one or several local languages that had been spoken in the region earlier. All these former languages were subsequently lost and covered by the ancestral forms of the Tibetan, Mongolic, Turkic, and Chinese varieties spoken today by the local ethnic groups.

research and cultural preservation. This article provides oral accounts, linguistic evidence, and examples of everyday practice illustrating the Mongghul influence on the Mongghul.

ACADEMIC CONTROVERSY

A number of academics and the official Tu association in China argue that Mongghul are descended from the Xianbei¹ or Tuyuhun ethnic group, a nomadic people living in the regions now known as Qinghai, Gansu, and northwestern Sichuan between the fourth and seventh centuries CE. Scholars such as Zhou Weizhou, author of the *Tuyuhun Data Collection* (1991:1-2),² support this claim:

吐谷浑国共存三百多年，于唐龙朔三年（公元 663 年）为吐蕃所灭。此后，除原青海及甘南等地吐谷浑部众为吐蕃统治而外，其余则散居于今甘肃河西、宁夏、内蒙、山西、陕西北部及河北北部等地；直到北宋后，吐谷浑部活动才基本上不见于中国史籍。而留存在青海和甘肃的吐谷浑余部，北宋以后逐渐与藏、蒙等族融合，形成为今天我国西部的少数民族--土族。

The Tuyuhun Kingdom lasted more than 300 years and was extinguished by Tibetans in the third year of Tang Longshuo (663 CE). After that, apart from those Tuyuhun tribes formerly living in the areas of Qinghai and Gannan who Tibetans ruled, the remaining tribes scattered over the areas of today's Hexi in Gansu Province, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Shanxi Province, the northern part of Shaanxi Province, and the northern part of Hebei Province. Until after the Northern Song Dynasty,³ the Tuyuhun tribes' activities are nearly invisible in Chinese historical records. After the Northern Song Dynasty, the remaining Tuyuhun tribes living in Qinghai and Gansu provinces gradually mixed with Tibetan and Mongolian peoples and formed today's small ethnic group in the northwest of China - the Tu Nationality.

Similarly, the Qinghai Tu Nationality Association and Lü Jianfu, author of *History of the Tu Nationality* (2002), assert that Mongghul are Tuyuhun descendants:

青海土族研究会于 2003 年 8 月在西宁为吕建福先生《土族史》的正式出版举办了首发式和学术研讨会。并正式向社会宣布青海土族研究会采纳吕建福教授的研究成果，认定土族是鲜卑--吐谷浑的后裔。

The Qinghai Tu Nationality Association held the launch ceremony and symposium for Mr. Lü Jianfu's publication of *History of the Tu Nationality* in August 2003 in Xining and formally announced that the Qinghai Tu Nationality Association accepted Professor Lü Jianfu's research findings that affirm the Tu Nationality is descended from the Xianbei, that is, the Tuyuhun (Bao Spring 2006:10).⁴

These announcements brought criticism, particularly among Mongghul scholars from the Huzhu region as neither Zhou's nor Lü's works include information related to contemporary Mongghul culture and practice in regions such as Huzhu Tu Autonomous County in Qinghai Province. Li Shenghua refutes: "The Mongghul are absolutely not the descendants of the Tuyuhun" (2004:149-160). Ji Junde also stated in a conversation on 5 January 2014: "It is complete nonsense to represent the Tuyuhun as the origins of the Mongghul. We are Mongol descendants. In fact, I am currently

¹ Hu (2010:2) writes, "Ethnically they [the Tu] are Xianbei as part of the Donghu federation in Manchuria."

² The *Tuyuhun Data Collection* is a collection of information concerning the Tuyuhun from a number of disparate sources and is the most comprehensive source on the topic.

³ 960-1127 CE.

⁴ See Hu's (2010) review of Lü's book.

writing a book arguing that the Mongghul are Mongol." Both Li and Ji suspect that those who insist that the Tuyuhun are the ancestors of modern-day Mongghul have not done field research in the Mongghul areas and have relied solely on textual sources.

In contrast, Li Shenghua and Ji Junde argue that today's Mongghul nationality is descended from the Mongols. Li Keyu (1992:6) contends that his research over the years on Mongghul social history and language has led him to conclude that modern Mongghul are descended from Mongols who settled in the Hehuang and Haomen at various times. Language, culture, and everyday practices of contemporary Mongghul lend credence to the close ties between Mongghul and Mongol peoples. Examples of linguistic and cultural similarities include:

- Among other similarities, Mongghul language shares Mongolic-based lexical items (Limusishiden et al. 2014:13).
- Mongol linguistics professor, Qinggeertai, argues: "The language spoken by Mongghul is genuine Mongol language" (Li Keyu 1992:59).
- In 1956, Tuodayewa [Bulyash Khoichievna Todaeva, 1915-2014] researched Mongghul areas and concluded that the Mongghul language includes characteristics of the Mongol language from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, characteristics which had vanished from the language of contemporary Mongols. In addition, the Mongghul language has also been influenced by the Chinese and Tibetan languages (Li Keyu, 1992:57).
- "Tangdarihgiima," a well-known song sung in Mongghul in Huzhu areas, suggests Mongghul are Mongol descendants:

Tangdarihgiima,
Mongghul hanni kuu xjunwa,
Mongghul dognangi dolaya.
Mongghul darisuuna bii mashida,
Mongghul ugonu guleya,
Xjiribu adalngi layaju,
Mongghul ghajarida npleenju.

Tangdarihgiima,
Mongghul khan's descendants,
Singing Mongghul songs.
Do not forget our Mongghul customs,
Keep speaking our Mongghul language,
We joyfully make our lives,
Mongghul lives will be prosperous.

- Both Mongghul and Mongols practice the traditional Mongghul *bog* ritual.¹ In the Mongghul case, the central ritual activity involves inviting deities and ancestral souls to a sumptuous "banquet" where religious practitioners known as *fashi* chant scriptures, dance, tell jokes, and burn incense to delight the "guests."²
- Limuzhunmaa (b. 1942), father of Limusishiden, recalls wearing coarse woolen robes, sheepskin robes, and cloth robes when he was a child. Each robe featured a small, narrow collar and buttons that buttoned on the right side of the upper chest in the Mongolic style. Later, owing to the

¹ See Zhao 2008:138.

² For more, see Limusishiden and Roche (2016:35-74).

influence of Tibetan culture, robes tended to feature a large, wide collar, with the top right portion of the chest unbuttoned and the fabric turned over.

- Mongghul scholars Li and Li find that the historical headdress of the Mongghul, the *niudaari*,¹ is similar to the headdress worn by Mongol noblewomen during the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368). They conclude:

the Mongghul *niudaari* and *paotu*² both derived from the ancient Mongols, but over a long period of time, as the nomadic lifestyle of the Mongghul became more agricultural, the historical headdress also changed. The changing names of the headdresses - Tughuan *niudaari*, *njasi niudaari*, *shge niudaari*, and *xuugulang niudaari* reflect the process of the Mongghul turning to an agricultural way of life (2005:91).

Janhunnen comments on the relationship between Mongghul origins and the Mongols (2003:287):

Little is known about the early history of the Mongghul, but it seems safe to assume that the current Mongolic presence in Qinghai does not antedate the occupation of the region by Mongol troops in 1227. When the Yuan Dynasty fell in 1368, the ancestors of the present-day Mongghul and Mangghuer, who apparently shared much of their history until premodern times, instead of following other Mongol groups back to the northern homeland beyond the Great Wall, declared themselves loyal to the Ming, and later to the Qing. From Ming times onward, they are known as border guards in the vicinity of Lanzhou. The fact that they early adopted the lifestyle of sedentary agriculturalists is likely to have been instrumental in their ethnic, linguistic, and ideological separation from the traditional nomadic society of the Mongols.³

More extensive study, particularly fieldwork, is necessary to further clarify the Mongghul ethnic group's origins. In the meantime, this article offers information from oral accounts supporting the claim that the Mongghul are descended from the Mongols.

EVIDENCE FROM ORAL ACCOUNTS

This article provides further insight into the origins of the Mongghul people, particularly through evidence provided by individuals from Huzhu Tu (Mongghul) Autonomous County. The oral accounts contain valuable information about the history of the Red Springs region, local religious practices, customs surrounding the *chansi*, field boundary rituals of the Mongghul of Huzhu, and other aspects of Mongghul history and culture in Huzhu.

The Mongghul villages of Sughuatang (T, Sog po thang 'Mongol Plain'; C, Suobutan, Sughua Plain), and Sughuangghuali (C, Suobugou, Sughua Valley) are both located in today's Danma (T, 'Dan ma) Town in Huzhu. All the people living in these villages today speak Mongghul and are classified as

¹ *Niudaari* 'headdress'. In 1934, the ruling Ma Family forced Mongghul women to stop wearing their distinctive clothing; consequently, *niudaari* disappeared. *Niudaari* included the Tughuan *niudaari*, *boqi* 'winnowing tray' *niudaari*, *njasi* 'plow' *niudaari*, and *shge* 'big' *niudaari*. The Tughuan *niudaari* was worn only by women living under the jurisdiction of the Tughuan Living Buddha. *Niudaari* were made of paper and easily damaged by rain, explaining why local Chinese urged each other to hurry once they noticed Mongghul women running back home from the fields - a sign of imminent rain (Limusishiden et al. 2014:86).

² A headscarf a Mongghul woman wears when she leaves her home to go to her husband's home as part of marriage rituals.

³ See Dede's comments (2015:18) on Monguor origins: "The Mongol Theory, which is given most space in this text, suggests that the Monguor are descendants of thirteenth-century Mongol soldiers."

Tu. In 2016, there were a total of 386 households with a population of 1,589 in Sughuatang and 207 households with a population of 854 in Sughuangghuali.¹ The latter is located in a valley behind a hill bordering Sughuatang. It takes one hour to walk from one village to the other.

The Mongghul name of the region where the villages are located, "Sughua," is derived from Tibetan "Sog po" 'Mongol'. Both villages are thought to be historically Mongolian (Li Keyu 1992:96; Limusishiden and Stuart 1998:172-181). The Tibetan "Sog po" is also present in Mongghul in "Suhu," which refers to Mongols and is used in some of the folk narratives below.

Aside from Sughuatang and Sughuangghuali villages, the Mongghul village of Gurija near the Sughuatang area, near Danma (T, 'Dan ma) Town consisted, in the year 2000, of sixty-five families with a total of 325 villagers.²

ORAL ACCOUNT ONE: LIMUSISHIDEN

I was about eleven years old when Granny Duranzin (~1906-1982) from my village visited my home and chatted with my grandparents and parents. She told us this story during her visit:

In the past, some Mongghul traveled to Aloxa [Alxa, Alashan] in a Mongol area. They walked past large deserts to reach their destination. At night, they placed a wooden stick on the ground in the direction they were walking so that the following morning, they would not become disoriented by the strong winds that blew at night. They stayed there for a few months and returned home after finishing their business. They were able to communicate with the Mongols when they were in Aloxa.

Because of that story, I felt that the Mongghul were similar to the Mongols. Granny Duranzin also regarded Mongghul and Mongols as the same people.

In the past few years, many Mongolian-speaking Mongols have visited the hospital where I work to obtain medical treatment. When I said that I was a Qighaan Mongghul 'White Mongol', they immediately commented that I must be from Huzhu County. Some of them directly stated that Mongghul and Mongols were once the same people.

Many older Mongghul still refer to themselves as Mongol. Until about 2014, most Mongghul born before the 1980s referred to Mongols as "Hara Mongghul" 'Black Mongols'. Mongolians from Haixi Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture often call Mongghul "Qighaan Mongghul" 'White Mongols'.³ Mongghul typically refer to themselves as "Mongghul" without the prefix "Qighaan." The full term "Qighaan Mongghul" is only used on specific occasions, such as when Mongol and Mongghul people are together. Those born after 1980 tend to use the Chinese term "Mengguzu" to refer to Mongols. To distinguish between them, they may still refer to them as Hara and Qighaan Mongghul, respectively.

¹ According to Luusi Jansan, a resident of Sughuatang Village, local residents lived in Sughuatang until the population increased to the point that some moved into the valley.

² Limusishiden collected this data from the village in 2000. Qiao writes that *gurija* means 'one hundred tents' in Mongol (2013:72). However, if this information concerning the meaning is correct, the name must be based on Tibetan *gur brgya* 'one hundred tents', in modern pronunciation [kər ɬa], where the word *gur* [kər] is a borrowing from Mongolian *ger* [kər] 'tent'. In Mongolian, 'one hundred tents', would be *nigen jaxun ger*, in the modern language *neg juu ger* [nək tsu[:]gər], which cannot possibly be the source of the form *gurija*.

³ Mongghul, "*qighaan*" and Mongolian *cagaan* 'white' are often used in a commendatory sense, while Mongghul "*hara*" and Mongolian *har* 'black' are derogatory. However, there is no derogatory connotation when Mongghul refer to Mongols as "Hara." It is simply a historical custom of address. In fact, 'white' in Mongolian can also connote 'pure, noble, aristocratic', while 'black' can refer to 'profane, secular, general'. In view of this, it is possible that the term 'Black Mongols' is used simply in reference to the mainstream Mongols, while the term 'White Mongols' refers to the Mongghul as a special group of professional border guards led by hereditary officials and noblemen (*tusi* and *chansi*).

An opinion at odds with the above is illustrated by Limusishiden's interview with Wang Caihua (b. 1952), a Mongolian from Keke Town, Wulan County, Haixi Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture who, in 2020, was the chief editor of *Chaidamu Baoshe* 'Chaidamu Newspaper Office'. While in Limusishiden's office at Qinghai University Affiliated Hospital on 25 March 2020, he stated:

"Caghan Mongghul" doesn't refer to "White Mongghul." *Caghan*, as used here, means "long ago" "long before." "Caghan Mongghul" refers to Mongols who lived here very early. That is to say, the Mongols [refers to Mongghul] lived in today's Huzhu and Minhe areas before the Yuan Dynasty was founded.¹

ORAL ACCOUNT TWO: LUOBUJIA

Luobujia (T, Nor bu rgyal, b. 1940) is a Mongol from Haiyan County, Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. He speaks Mongolian. On 19 February 2016, he gave the following account in the Qinghai Chinese dialect to Limusishiden in his office:

The Mongols in Haiyan are called "Qighaan Mongol" by the Mongols who live in Haixi Mongol Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. There is a derogatory connotation, meaning that Mongols in Haiyan are not to be considered real Mongols because they have been Sinicized and have an agricultural economy.

This suggests that the term "Qighaan Mongghul" refers to the Mongghul people and those Mongols who live among Han Chinese communities or those who do not live a pastoral lifestyle. Such use of the concept of 'White Mongols' may be due to confusion connected with the fact that the Haiyan Mongols are a numerically small group who live in a region dominated by Mongghul and Tibetans. In contrast, the Haixi Mongols live traditionally in a more monoethnic Mongolian environment. Both the Haiyan Mongols (east of Lake Koko Nor) and the Haixi Mongols (west of the Lake) are descendants of the Western Mongol Dzungar or Oirat groups that entered the region in the sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries.

ORAL ACCOUNT THREE: LUUSI JANSAN

Luusi Jansan (b. 1949), a middle school graduate who had worked at a salaried government job in Huzhu County, has been living in Sughuatang Village since he retired in 2009. He is the uncle of Hgalazang Danzhu (T, Skal bzang don grub; see oral accounts Eight, Nine, and Ten). He is also the grandson of the last Sughua *chansi*. He gave the following accounts (Three, Four, Five, Six, and Seven) to Limusishiden on 22 September 2013 at his home in Sughuatang Village. Account Three details the founding of the Sughua region with Mongol ancestry at the center:

Long ago, Mongol soldiers were defeated by their rivals in the area known today as Weiyuan Town, Huzhu Tu Autonomous County. Giriliti,² a general under Chinggis Khan, fled with his defeated armies to what is known as the Sughua area today. They never returned to their original home regions but lived permanently in the Sughua area and married local Tibetan women. Their population grew over time, and many of them moved away.

Originally, we lived in camps in the Sughua area. Later, we built houses with enclosing walls. Many

¹ We were unable to confirm the claim that "white" would mean "ancient" in Mongolian, nor is it clear why "ancient" would, in this case, imply "more ancient than the Yuan Dynasty." See also the preceding footnote.

² Mongol: Gereltu 'light' (Limusishiden et al. 2013:127-143). The exact Mongolian form is *gereltü*, composed of *gerel* 'light' and *-tu/-tü*, a variant of the suffix for possessive nouns ('possessing something', 'with something'), that is: *gereltü* 'with light, having light' > 'shining'.

years after that, the Suhu population increased so much that they built a *tuan* 'castle' in Sughuangghuali Village. Castle walls were built to guard against invaders. It was said that the enclosing walls of the *tuan* were built under the rule of the Mongolian general, Giriliti.

ORAL ACCOUNT FOUR: LUUSI JANSAN

The Sughua region today and expansion into Sughuangghuali Valley:

Sughuatang includes the natural villages of Zangwa Ama (with thirty households) and Giri Sughua (fifty households). Sughuangghuali Village is located in the valley behind the hill of Sughuatang Village. Sughuangghuali includes the natural villages of Warishida (about seventy households), Suriguniu (thirty households), Linja (fifteen households), and Xaraghuali (about twenty households). Both Sughuatang and Sughuangghuali villagers have the same ancestors, and all villagers worship *purghan*¹ in their temples.

Once the population of Sughuatang Village increased, the Sughua *chansi* arranged for some of them to move to Sughuangghuali Valley. Meanwhile, a new temple was built in Sughuangghuali supported by the Sughua *chansi* to encourage them to live in the valley. Sughuangghuali villagers worship two Dragon King *purghan*. One is the Black Dragon King *purghan*, which was said to have been unearthed from Dadunling, atop Dadunling Hill behind Sughuangghuali Village where the big *lasizi*,² the Sughua Lasizi [T, Sog po lab tse 'Mongol Lab tse'] is located. Once, someone unearthed it and sent it to the Sughuangghuali Village temple. Sughuangghuali villagers called it the Second Dragon King *purghan*. People outside the village called it the *chansi* Dragon King *purghan*, meaning the Second Dragon King *purghan* connected to the Sughua *chansi*.

ORAL ACCOUNT FIVE: LUUSI JANSAN

After the addition of a monastery, Sughua *tuan* was later renamed Sughua Rgunba (Sughua Monastery)³ (Nian and Bai 1993:132):

It was said that Rgulang [T, Dgon lung] Monastery⁴ had not yet been built before my family was given the official position of *chansi*, and my family, along with the other twelve headmen from the region, went to Lhasa to apply to build the monastery known today as Rgulang.

After Rgulang Monastery was constructed, the Tughuan [T, Thu'u bkwan] Living Buddha [unclear incarnation] suggested the Sughua *chansi* build a monastery since the Sughua area had built a *tuan*. Thus,

¹ The *purghan* [*pram*] is a deity represented in the form of an image in a sedan or a cloth-covered pole held by four men or a man, respectively. The *purghan* permeates Mongghul village life. It is available for consultation and represents the possibility that supplicants' distresses may be alleviated. For more on the *purghan*, see Limusishiden (2015:79-98). The Huzhu Mongghul word *purghan* is a regular development of Mongolic *burkan* (*burqan*) that basically means 'Buddha' and secondarily, any 'deity', 'god'. Etymologically, the Mongolic word is a borrowing from Ancient Uighur *burkan* (*burqan*), which is a compound of *bur* 'Buddha' and *kan* (*qan*) 'prince'. The first part, *bur*, is a borrowing from ancient Northwest Chinese **pur*, from an earlier **put*, which yields *fo* 佛 in modern Mandarin. In Huzhu Mongghul, as in regular Mongolian, the word is used both for the Buddha and of various other deities.

² *Lasizi* (T, *lab tse*) refers to mountain deities and the site where mountain deities are worshipped, often on a mountain peak. The *lasizi* is where offerings are made to the mountain deity, as well as the deity's dwelling/palace.

³ Sughua Rgunba refers to Sog po dgon ba 'Mongol Monastery'. *Rgunba* = (T) *dgon pa* 'monastery'.

⁴ Rgulang (T, Dgon lung; C, Youningsi), a Dge lugs monastery located in Sitan Village, Wushi Town. There were 197 monks in 1990 (Nian and Bai 1993:122-126). Pu (2013:71-75) reports 396 monks in 1957, while Smith (2013:291) reports over 300 monks. See also Brag dgon pa dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas (1982:54-76).

a monastery was also needed to protect the local people. The Tughuan Living Buddha also promised to assign thirteen monks from Rgulang Monastery to this new monastery after it was completed.

Years later, villagers built a monastery. However, in the end, only nine monks were sent there rather than the original thirteen. In the following years, the Sughua people became too poor to support those monks, who returned to Rgulang Monastery.

After the monastery was built, Sughua *tuan* was renamed Sughua Rgunba [Sughua Monastery]. Once the monks left Sughua Monastery, its name was changed again to Sughuatang [the Sughua Plain] and was cared for by local villagers.

Today, my village temple has Sakyamuni, Tsongkhapa, and Wughuangmiile¹ images, *Guanjiri* (Kanjur, T, *Bka' 'gyur*), a spear of Danjansang *purghan*² and also its *tangka* [T, *thang ga*], and a *tangka* of Lamusang.³

ORAL ACCOUNT SIX: LUUSI JANSAN

The Sughua *chansi* and his important responsibility for managing local villages' irrigation are described below:

My family was called the Sughua *chansi*, an official position given by the governor. My family was the head of the Suhu people and ruled the people until the position was abolished around 1935.

The Sughua *chansi* was in charge of Sughua Village's daily activities and managed the irrigation water in Haliqi Valley, including modern-day Danma Town and Halazhigou Township. Sughua is located in the middle of Haliqi Valley, where the Danma River flows from the foot of the Chilib Mountain in the north to the opening of Xiaoxia in the south, and finally merges into a large branch of the Yellow River. All the villages south of Sughuatang Village in the lower reaches of the Danma River require irrigation for their fields twice a year. The villages in the upper areas of the valley do not require irrigation because of the high altitude and cold climate. Years ago, the spring in Sughuatang Village was large, and water flowed from it into the Danma River.

The first irrigation occurs in winter during the first frost, which falls between late in the ninth to the middle of the tenth lunar months. If certain fields are not irrigated in the winter, they must be irrigated once the crops sprout the following year. The second irrigation occurs once the crops are tall enough to hide a pigeon. This typically dates from the twentieth of the third lunar month to the first day of the fourth lunar month.

The individual villages needing irrigation for their fields are, from north to south: Sughuatang → Shancheng → Chaergoumen → Maohebu → Songbu → Weijiabu → Xinzhuang → Baiya → Jiangjiazhuang → Shijiawan → Feijia → Caijia → Sunjia → Yanchang → Xinyuan. Sughuatang, Shancheng, Chaergoumen, and Maohebu belong to present-day Danma Town. The remaining towns are part of Halazhigou Township. Songbu Village is the only Mongghul village in Halazhigou Township. The others are Han Chinese. Thus, most of the fields to be irrigated are owned by Han.

Villagers located in the lower reaches of the Danma River would come to the Sughua *chansi's* home before the twice-yearly irrigation periods and ask when their village fields could be irrigated. The Sughua

¹ Wughuangmiile (T, 'Od dpag med) is said to have flown to the Huzhu Mongghul area from the Potala and lived in the temple of Xewarishidi (Wughuangmiile) Village, Songduo Township, Huzhu County (Limusishiden and Stuart 2010:67).

² The *purghan* of Danjansang (T, Dam can tshang) is originally from Rgulang Monastery. It is a male *purghan* with three brothers. The older brother is Danjan Qijii Rjebu (T, Dam can chos kyi rgyal po), the second is Danjan Duriji Luhu, and the third is Danjan Guran Luhu. The Danjansang *purghan* in the Sughua area is the third one.

³ T, Lha mo tshang.

chansi first told them to go to Sughua Monastery, burn juniper branches, light butter lamps, and make prostrations. Delighting the *purghan* at Sughua Monastery meant more water for villagers to irrigate their fields. Afterward, they were to return and receive a specialized wooden plate inscribed with words that we did not understand.

Typically, each village was allowed two days and two nights of irrigation. Once that time was over, the village sent people to the *chansi's* home to return the wooden plate, which was given to the waiting representatives from another village. This was how it went twice a year, every year. This was my family's official power given by the government.

If the *chansi* was upset by a particular village, he asked his people to change the direction of the water to have it flow into another plains area. This would anger the villagers who were supposed to receive irrigation water, and they would come to fight with the *chansi*. Knowing this, the *chansi* would order villagers from Sughuatang and Sughuangghuali to come to fight them. They would assemble at what today is known as the Janba Taigai area, where there is a small hill with many stones, and stand there with their slingshots prepared. Seeing them, the upset village did not dare walk forward to fight, but their urgent need for water caused them to implore the *chansi* again until he promised to provide irrigation water for their fields.

The following accounts regard the Sughua *chansi* and his higher position relative to other regional headmen.

ORAL ACCOUNT SEVEN: LUUSI JANSAN

The Sughua *chansi* had a high position in the Mongghul area. In addition, the *chansi* decided the date of the yearly *hguara*,¹ further indicating his important position:

Historically, the Sughua *chansi* held a high position among the thirteen headmen in the Huzhu area. In the past, Suhga [T, Gsol kha]² was held once a year for the deity, Lamusang. Buddhist scriptures were chanted to Lamusang yearly in Rgulang Monastery, where all thirteen headmen gathered. The ritual could not start without the Sughua *chansi*, but if he had already arrived and some of the other headmen had not, the ritual could begin.

During the yearly *hguara*, the *chansi* led the march mounted on a horse, with a man leading the horse by the reins. On this occasion, the *purghan* did not designate where villagers should perform the hail-prevention rites. Instead, the *chansi* decided, demonstrating his important position. Besides, whenever the *chansi* came to Sughuangghuali Valley from Sughuatang, the Dragon King *purghan* carried by the villagers quickly went out of the temple to receive the *chansi*, who did not dismount before the Dragon King *purghan*.

ORAL ACCOUNT EIGHT: H GALAZANG DANZHU

Hgalazang Danzhu (T, Skal bzang don grub, b. 1972), a farmer living in Sughuatang Village, studied for two years in his village primary school and is the great-grandson of the last Sughua *chansi*. On 22 September 2013, he gave the following account to Limusishiden in his home in Sughuatang. He maintained that Mongghul in Sughuatang and Sughuangghuali were originally Mongols. Historically,

¹ During the fourth, fifth, and sixth lunisolar months, every Mongghul village has their own designated dates to perform a march in their village fields. The participants include green crop officers, temple keepers, village *purghan*, and at least one male representative from each of the households. See the latter part of this article that presents the *hguara* of the two Sughua villages.

² A ritual focusing on Lamusang. In 2019, this ritual was no longer held at Rgulang Monastery.

as the population grew and the grassland became insufficient, many villagers from Sughuatang and Sughuangghuali moved away:

We were originally Mongols. During the Great Leap Forward (1958-1960), an official work team gave all the Suhu people the surname "Suo," derived from the "Su" of Suhu. Now, we are all officially registered as Tu. Mongols had lived in this area for a long time. Later, as the Suhu population grew and the grassland became insufficient, many Suhu people left the Sughua area and moved to areas in [the contemporary] Datong [Hui and Tu Autonomous County, Xining City], Qilian, and Menyuan counties [Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture], and Dulan and Wulan counties [Haixi Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture].

All the Suhu residents in today's Sughuatang and Sughuangghuali villages are those who did not leave [not people who later moved in]. We have made our living by farming. Also, those surnamed Su living in Szanghuali Village in Donggou Township and Xangshida Village in Danma Town and the Su-surnamed people in Huzhu, were all originally Suhu people who moved away from the Sughua area.

ORAL ACCOUNT NINE: H GALAZANG DANZHU

An account of the Red Springs region and its familiarity to Mongols is given:

In the past, there were three big springs in Waliga, located in Sughuangghuali Village. Historically, Suhu soldiers who their rivals had defeated settled there because of the plentiful water from the three springs and the fertile grassland. The springs are called "Ghuran Bulog" 'Three Springs' by local people. They are also referred to as Red Springs because of the red soil in the springs' vicinity. One spring is located atop the Round Hills while the other two are located at the foot of the hills. The largest one on top of the Round Hills formed a *cuan* 'large pool' where water flowed in.

ORAL ACCOUNT TEN: H GALAZANG DANZHU

This account reflects on how the larger spring and the *cuan* disappeared:

A woman once fled here after conflict with her husband. When she passed by the larger spring, menstrual discomfort led her to remove her pants and wash them in the spring. This caused the large spring to disappear because it had been polluted. However, a new spring soon formed at the foot of the Round Hills. Initially, red water flowed out of the spring. Later, the red water returned to a normal color and was clean again. However, the soil surrounding the new spring turned red, so locals call it Red Springs.

In the past, my grandfather's (b. ~1931) and great-grandfather's (b. ~1907) generations traveled to areas where Mongols from the Sughuatang and Sughuangghuali areas had migrated, for instance, Qilian, Tianjun, Dulan, and Wulan. The main reason they went there was population increase and a limited amount of cultivatable land, which limited their ability to make a living. Some of them moved to areas surrounding Suhu while others traveled to distant Mongol regions to live. When local Mongols learned that they were White Mongols, they often excitedly asked where they were from. Though the Mongols often did not know the Sughua area very well, they did recognize Round Hills and Red Springs.

What's more, they said, "We are happy to know you are from Red Springs. Our ancestors were originally from there, too. We are the same people. You are from our natal homeland." Thus, they were warmly welcomed and entertained.

ORAL ACCOUNT ELEVEN: GINDIN DANZHU

Limusishiden visited Sughuangghuali Village and spoke to Gindin Danzhu (T, Dge 'dun don grub, b. 1958), a farmer who studied for two years in primary school. According to his oral account, the history of Mongols in the modern-day Huzhu region is also evident in certain discovered artifacts. The following is their edited conversation from 6 October 2013:

When I was a child, I once followed my mother to a field where she harvested as I played at one of the Red Springs. The soil beside the spring is red. I dug out a copper object that had small grooves, a flower pattern, and some lettering. I gave it to my mother. She didn't know what it was, so she asked other people harvesting in their fields, but they also didn't understand the lettering. They believed it might be a copper dog 'headdress ornament' used to decorate the *yejuari*¹ headdress. Mongghul men and women in some places in Huzhu Mongghul areas used to wear this *yejuari* headdress. Thus, I thought Mongols might have lived here before. My grandfather often told us:

The Mongols in Chaka, Dulan County and Tianjun, Haixi Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture know us and our Sughua area when you talk with them, so tell them you are from the Sughua area. They specifically know the names of the Red Springs and Round Hills. They will treat you well because they think we were originally the same people. We are all Mongols, but they eventually left the Sughua area.

Contemporary cultural practices, such as local customs for the fifteenth night of the eighth month, also point to Mongolian influence:

It is said Han people offer a watermelon to the moon on the fifteenth night of the eighth month to represent the head of a Mongol soldier and cut it into pieces. We never venerate the moon rising from the sky that night. Instead, we take a handful of ash from the kitchen stove and throw it outside the window to express our unwillingness to see the moon that evening. We throw ash because it covers the blood on the Mongols' heads.

Han people also make mooncakes on that night, but we never do. This is because that was the night Han people put notices inside the mooncakes informing each other that they would join together in an uprising on the night of the thirtieth day, and that is the night they suddenly rose up and killed the Mongol soldiers.

The two Dragon King *purghan* of the area and local customs surrounding the *hguara* are related below:

There are two temples in Sughuangghuali Village. The two Dragon King *purghan* are in one temple while another temple enshrines images of Sakyamuni, Wughuangmiile, and Zhunmaasangqan and the spears of Danjansang and Bagharisang.

The first Dragon King *purghan* in our village is the Yellow Dragon King. The second is the Black Dragon King. The second *purghan* has a more extended history than the first one. Our ancestors told us that the Black Dragon King *purghan* came out from the spring in Sughuatang, appearing as a square stone

¹ T, *g.yu byu ru* 'turquoise/coral ornament'. A conical women's headdress featuring a hole in the center and made with copper and an agate fixed in the copper. Historically, Mongghul women wore the *yejuari* headdress. For example, Danjansuu (b. 1936), the mother of Limusishiden's wife Jugui, wore this headdress before 1980. Danjansuu said both Mongol and Mongghul women wore this headdress. After the 1980s, *yejuari* headdresses vanished among the Huzhu Mongghul.

the size of an adult man's hand with a *tangka* pattern on it. Later, it became our *purghan* when the *tangka*-patterned stone was placed inside the wooden sedan. Because of his origins from under the earth, he dislikes seeing blood. He also dislikes visiting family homes because he believes the house's front gates are unclean. If visiting a house is necessary, he is carried over the compound walls into the house's courtyard.

The Yellow Dragon King *purghan* is different. He visits families if he is invited for a consultation. In the sedan, his head and face are shown to the public, while the head and face of the Black Dragon King are covered with black cloth.

The Dragon King *purghan* decides the Sughua *hguara* date in our village temple on the eighth day of the fifth month. The day is typically the ninth or tenth day of the fifth month. On that day, the spear *purghan* of Danjansang is brought by Sughuatang people to Sughuangghuali Village. Once the spear of Danjansang and the Sughuatang villagers arrive at the temple in Sughuangghuali Valley, villagers there welcome them with a slaughtered sheep. When the *hguara* marching time approaches, participants from both of the two villages start marching.

During the march, the male drummers walk first,¹ followed by the man with a conch shell horn and the Buddhist umbrella holders. In total, thirteen Buddhist flags are part of the march. Ten to twenty men walk in a line between every two flags. One hundred and eight volumes of Buddhist scripture are carried on the march. The Dragon King *purghan* and spear *purghan* are not carried in strict order. Sometimes they are at the front, and sometimes, they are at the sides of the procession. The parade circles the villagers' fields to delineate and patrol the village boundaries.

During *hguara*, villagers ask the *purghan* where and in which direction they should hold a *padila* 'suppress evil rite' to prevent disasters such as floods, drought, hail, frost, and so forth from afflicting the young crops. Once the *purghan* designates the site, the villagers dig a hole and bury an upturned black bowl, pot, earthenware vase, or triangular plow, as well as a piece of sacred cloth from the sedan. Most locations for this rite are at a mountain pass or ridge where it is thought to be easier to attack the entryway of evils during the crop-growing time.

Once *hguara* is finished, the parade participants return to the temple where they decide the *chin* 'annual village rules' that involve several prohibitions: no quarreling and fighting, particularly between husbands and wives; no herding on slopes; no constructing or demolishing houses; and no logging in the village. There are also specific requirements, e.g., every family must go to the temple, light butter lamps to the Dragon King *purghan*, burn juniper branches, and make three prostrations. Importantly, *chin* ensures a successful harvest. Rules and requirements are dismissed once the crops are harvested in late autumn after the villagers again consult the Dragon King *purghan*.

FURTHER SUPPORT FOR MONGOL ORIGINS

Further information supporting the claim that Mongghul from the Huzhu area are Mongol descendants includes Gerilete, a general under Chinggis Khan, who once garrisoned the modern-day Suobutan areas, Danma Town, Huzhu County. Later, Gerilete died from a disease. His subordinates married local Huo'er people and became Tu people (Yan and Wang 1994:881).

In *Youningsizhi (sanzhong) 'Three Histories of Youning Monastery'* (1990:25), a minister, Gerilete, of the Dzungar, is described as leading his subordinates to current-day Huzhu County to settle and that most Huo'er people are his descendants. Gerilete was reincarnated after his death as a devil, living on the rocks of Guolong Mountain where Rgulang Monastery is located. Jiase² Living

¹ In the past, the *chansi* went first, mounted on his horse. A man led the horse by its reins.

² Jiase = Rgyal sras don yod chos kyi rgya mtsho, Jiaseduan yuequejiji acuo (Limusishiden 2019:37).

Buddha subdued Gerilete and ordered him to protect the local area.

Li and Li (2005:164) suggest:

郭尔朵即格勒特, "奥丹"是嘉赛活佛给格勒特的名字, 它又是奥鲁特·丹巴嘉措的简缩形式, 奥鲁特就是奥鲁赤。民和三川地区崖尔寺供奉的郭尔朵和互助佑宁寺石崖上土地庙中供奉的格勒特都是西平王奥鲁赤的塑像。奥鲁赤是始祖忽必烈的儿子, 成吉思汗的第四代孙, 是土族西祁土司贡哥的祖父。

Guo'erduo is actually Gelete [Niidosang, Giriliti]; the [Tibetan] name 'Aodan' was given to him [Giriliti] by Jiase Living Buddha, and is an abbreviation for Aolute Danbajiacuo; Aolute is also rendered Aoluchi. The image of Guo'erduo worshipped in Ya'er Monastery¹ in Sanchuan, Minhe County, and the image of Gelete kept in Tudi Temple behind Youning [Rgulang, Dgon lung] Monastery are both images of Aoluchi, Xiping Wang, or the Prince of Xiping. Aoluchi refers to Kublai Khan's [1215-1294] son, the fourth generation of Chinggis Khan, and the grandfather of the Tu West Qi *tusi*, Gongge.

As is typical of folk narratives, the above accounts are somewhat diffuse and contain various confusions, although they are based on a kernel of historical fact. For one thing, the name of Gerilete, due to its passing through a number of Mongolic, Tibetan, and Chinese varieties, is quoted in different shapes, including Guo'erduo, Gelete, Giriliti, or Girilitu (also mentioned in Oral Account Three above). Also, the accounts are mutually contradictory as to the period when this Gerilete was active. Was he a general under the historical Mongols of Chinggis Khan (twelfth to thirteenth centuries) or an official under the much later Western Mongols of the Dzungar empire (sixteenth to seventeenth centuries)? Unless we are dealing with two different persons with this name, the latter version appears more likely. In that case, it may be assumed that a group of Western Mongols (Oirat) mixed with the ancestors of the Mongghul and thus entered the composition of the modern "Tu" nationality. This does not mean that the Mongghul as a linguistic group would not date back to Chinggis Khan's times, but only that they may have received additional Mongol elements from the later Western Mongols in this same region. This further complicates the question concerning the ethnic "origins" of the Mongghul.

In this connection, the ethnonym Huo'er is also a source of confusion. In Chinese scholarship, it is occasionally claimed that *huo'er* is connected with the ancient ethnonym *hu*, a name the Chinese used during the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD) for their northern neighbors. Huo'er is the Chinese rendering of Tibetan *hor*, which is the conventional name for the peoples living north of Tibet.² In modern usage, this name refers specifically to the Mongghul and Mangghuer (Yan and Wang 1994:822), while "regular" Mongols are called by the name *sog* (*sog po*). In some sources, the terms *hor* and *sog* are used interchangeably. Krang dbyi sung (Zhang Yisun) suggests:

Hor, the meaning varies at different times, i.e., it meant Yu gur (Huiqi) during the Tang and Song dynasties; Mongol during the Yuan Dynasty; 'A zha (Tuyuhun) between the Yuan and Ming dynasties; and it currently refers to herders in the north of the Tibet Autonomous Region and the Tu nationality in northeast Qinghai (1993:3071).

¹ Also known as Wushigousi (Wushigou Monastery), Yasi (Ya Monastery), Maojiasi (Maojia Monastery), Wushizhihegongqinxiazhiqunkelin, 'Ai shi brag dgon chen bshad sgrub chos 'khor gling, located one hundred kilometers south of Chuankou Town, Minhe County and fourteen kilometers northwest of Wushi Village, Guanting Town (Nian and Bai 1993:93). See also Brag dgon pa dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas (1982:225).

² "Hor" appears regularly in Tibetan historical literature. Hor sog/Hor sog po is the general Tibetan name for the Mongols. Hor and Sog po are used separately and interchangeably, but refer to the same ethnic group, the Mongols.

As far as the ultimate origins of the terms *hor* and *sog* are concerned, a widely accepted explanation is that both are names of historical peoples that lived north of Tibet. *Hor* derives from Turkic *uygur* (*uygur*, *uighur*), the name of the Ancient Uighur in Xinjiang (ninth to thirteenth centuries), while *sog* derives from *sogd* of the Sogdians, a group of Central Asian Iranians. The reference to Mongolic-speaking groups is secondary in both cases. It may be noted that the term *horpa* is also used for the Horpa peoples, speaking Sino-Tibetan (Transhimalayan) languages of the Rgyalrongic group in Sichuan. It remains unclear how the name came to be applied to these particular Horpa people.

Manzihun, a Mongghul folktale, supports the idea that Mongol soldiers settled in the region in its description of how Mongol soldiers had initial conflicts with local people, defeated them, and came to live permanently in the Sughuatang area:

Perhaps during the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), soldiers of Chinggis Khan (1162-1227) reached Koko Nor and camped on a great plain lying on the shady morning side at the foot of the Chilib Mountains. Afterward, many of Chinggis Khan's soldiers did not return home but resided there. The local people called those Black Mongol soldiers Suhuu, and the great plain where the soldiers camped was called the Suhuu Plain.

After the Suhuu settled in this area, to find women to start families with (to "keep their chimneys smoking"), they began marrying local women. The people of the two areas got along well. There soon arose some unpleasantness and conflict, however... (Limusishiden and Stuart 1998:172-181).

Numerous accounts concerning the Mongols are available in Tibetan language history books, testimony to the close contact between the two peoples, particularly since the establishment of a patron-priest relationship by Godan (T, Hor go tan rgyal po; C, Kuoduan, uncle of Kublai Khan, and Sa skya kung dga' rgyal mtshan (Sakya Pandita, 1182-1251). Certain Tibetan history books have chapters on the Mongols, some of which specifically address A mdo, including the current Huzhu and Minhe areas, and use "Sog po" and "Hor" interchangeably, or "Hor sog," a combination of the two. However, a few of these classics use "Xianbei" 'Tuyuhun'.¹

In the *Chos sde chen po dgon lung byams pa gling gi dkar chag 'History of Dgon lung Monastery'*, Thu'u bkwan blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma² writes:

The current Hor people are descendants of Chinggis Khan's minister, Ke rel thu [Gereltü], and his entourage who moved to this place. After his death, Ke rel thu's spirit became a powerful ghost dwelling in the rocky mountain in Dgon lung due to his karmic deeds. The spirit manifested in his original Mongol appearance before Rgyal sras rin po che [the founder of this monastery], who subdued it and ordained it to be a regional protector deity (1988:12-13).

We now present information about Mongols and the Huzhu Tu in the form of short comments made in late March 2020 by fourteen Mongghul elders (all illiterate) in Fintai (C, Fengtai) Village, Weiyuan Town; Shgeayili and Qighaan Dawa villages, Dongshan Township; Yomaja and Tangra villages, Donggou Township; Huarin Village, Danma Town; Xuangwa and Foorijang villages, Wushi Town, Huzhu County; and Shgeayili Village, Dala Township, Ledu Region.

¹ Brag dgon pa bstan pa rab rgyas (1982); Thu'u bkwan blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1988); Dbal mang pandita dkon mchog rgyal mtshan (2015); Sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor (1992); Dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba (1986); and Tshal pa kun dga' rdo rje (1981). The last reference mentions Hor and Thu lu hun 'Tuyuhun' separately (1981:17).

² The third incarnation of the Thu'u bkwan Bla ma lineage (1737-1802) was born in the Pra sti Tribe in the contemporary Songlin Township, Tianzhu Tibetan Autonomous County, Gansu Province and lived in Dgon lung Monastery for many years.

Limusishiden asked, "*Qi qanglaji Mongghul dangmani anjisa rsanna?* 'What have you heard about where the Mongghul originally came from?'"

FIG 6. Consultants and location of interview.

Consultant	Location of Interview
Qi Chenghai (male, b. 1938)	Fintai Village, Weiyuan Town, Huzhu County
Qi Daicai (male, b. 1950)	Fintai Village, Weiyuan Town, Huzhu County
Defuzi (male, b. 1950)	Shgeayili Village, Dongshan Township, Huzhu County
Bailong (male, b. 1953)	Qighaan Dawa Village, Dongshan Township, Huzhu County
Jiuchinzi (C, Dong Xinling, male, b. 1939)	Qighaan Dawa Village, Dongshan Township, Huzhu County
Qishiai (male, b. 1952)	Tangra Village, Donggou Township, Huzhu County
Lama (C, Wang Guolu, male, b. 1947)	Yomaja Village, Donggou Township, Huzhu County
Huarighasirang (C, Yi Dehu, male, b. 1960)	Huarin Village, Danma Town, Huzhu County
Saibin (female, b. 1948)	Xuangwa Village, Wushi Town, Huzhu County
Baghasirang (male, b. 1952)	Xuangwa Village, Wushi Town, Huzhu County
Limurinqan (C, Li Yongfu, male, b. 1932)	Xuangwa Village, Wushi Town, Huzhu County
Limuxja (male, b. 1956)	Xuangwa Village, Wushi Town, Huzhu County
Dunzhi (male, b. 1954)	Foorijang Village, Wushi Town
Durijisirang (male, b. 1950)	Shgeayili Village, Dala Township, Ledu Region

ORAL ACCOUNTS FROM ILLITERATE MONGGHUL ELDERS IN MARCH 2020

Qi Chenghai

When I was young, some old men in our village said we were Mongol descendants. Mongol soldiers came here and some stayed. Today's Mongghul are descendants of those Mongol soldiers who stayed. The place-name "Bawataizi" in Taizi Township, Huzhu County, is Bawantai meaning "eighty thousand Mongol soldiers gathering place." Eighty thousand Mongol soldiers once gathered there.

Qi Daicai

When I was young, there was a picture of a Mongol couple hung in my shrine room. The man was standing, gazing into the distance with a bow and arrows on his back. The woman was bent over, making butter in a churn. Both wore tall conical hats with tassels. My grandfather said the couple was known as Jamaji - our first ancestors. We worshiped them as our ancestors. They are the ancestors of all Mongghul. We don't know who they were. What does Jamaji mean? The portrait was burned during the Anti-superstition Movement in 1958.¹

Defuzi

Our village old men said Mongghul ancestors were from Mongol areas. We are Mongol descendants. Today, I don't know why Mongghul are called the Tu nationality.

¹ "Jamaji" is possibly a cognate of Mongolian *jamci*, from *jam* 'road' and the actor noun suffix *-ci*, yielding *jam-ci* 'the one on the road' > 'guide'. In Mongghul, "guide" is *moori durijin* – *moori* 'road' *durijin* 'leader'. Mongghul *moori* 'road' is the cognate of 'Mongolian *mör* 'path, trace, track'. See Limusishiden and Stuart (1998:56) for *jamujee* 'go-between' in a song sung when the matchmaker was in the bride's parents' room and women from the bride's side were abusing the matchmaker. In this context, *jamujee* is similar in meaning to "guide."

Bailong

When I was young, my grandfathers said Mongghul were descended from the Mongols.

Jiuchinzi

When I was young, my great-grandfather sometimes told us that Chinggis Khan once came to our Mongghul areas with his troops. Later, his troops escaped after they were defeated - except for a father and his son. We are descendants of that father and son. When Chinggis Khan's generals and troops fled from our Mongghul areas to Mongol areas, they took the written Mongol language with them. That's why we now don't know written Mongol and have not been successful in recording our Mongghul history.

Qishiai

When I was young, village old men chatted and said Mongghul historically were from Aloxia areas [Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region].

Lama

In the past, old people in our village said Mongghul are originally from today's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

Huarighasirang

When I was young, old men in my village said Mongghul roots are Mongol. We have no Mongol written language, so we have not recorded our history.

Saibin

My paternal grandfather told us one of Chinggis Khan's younger brothers came here with his family and soldiers. We are their descendants.

Baghasirang

In the past, our village old men sometimes gathered and talked. They said Mongghul are Mongol. Niidosang Deity¹ in Rgulang Monastery first lived in Qaaghuali Village, Danma Town. Niidosang was a real man - a Mongol general. When Niidosang died, his soul wandered on mountain cliffs where the monastery is now located. Later, his soul was designated as a guardian deity of Rgulang Monastery. From this, we knew we were Mongol descendants. Another comment was that Chinggis Khan's utterly defeated soldiers and generals came, lived here, and gradually became today's Mongghul.

Limuringan

I heard from old people that Mongghul ancestors were from the Mongol area. It is unclear how, when, and why they came here.

Limuxja

When I was young, some old men said that Mongol soldiers came to our Mongghul area from the south of China after they were defeated. They left some of their defeated soldiers here who became today's Mongghul people.

¹ See Limusishiden et al. (2013) for more on Niidosang.

Dunzhi

Some of our old village men said Chinggis Khan's soldiers in the south of China were defeated. They retreated to our area, where some stayed and became today's Mongghul. Many years ago, some Mongols came to my village and asked some old men about our origins. The old men told them we were from Mongol areas in the past.

Durijisirang

My father told me our roots are Mongol because the Mongghul term for a wooden house is *ger*, which is similar to what Mongols call their yurts. The columns of Mongghul wooden houses are called *tuligha*. Mongols also refer to "column" as *tuligha*.¹ Chinese is used for the remaining parts of a wooden house. In the past, we lived in Mongol yurts but later lived in houses of wood. When Mongol soldiers came to Huzhu and Ledu areas, they married Tibetan women. Others stayed in Minhe and married Chinese women. Therefore, there are differences between Huzhu Mongghul and Minhe Mongghul [Mangghuer], including songs, dress, and dialects.

CONCLUSION

Although official sources have formally stated that the Mongghul are not Mongol descendants, much of the evidence for this claim derives from textual sources. However, oral accounts, linguistic similarities, folklore, and everyday practice among the Mongghul of the Huzhu region presented in this paper provide evidence to the contrary. Mongghul in rural Huzhu would be unable to identify "Tuyuhun" or "Xianbei," particularly those who are illiterate and born before 1960. However, they are familiar with oral accounts and the Mongols and believe Mongghul have strong historical ties and may be descended from the Mongols.

Lineage is a notion that is easily complicated. For example, a Han or a Tibetan man moves into a Mongghul home and lives with a woman. They have children who grow up speaking Mongghul, take the woman's surname, and are officially classified as Tu. Or, a Tibetan woman who speaks only Tibetan moves into a Mongghul home and lives with a Mongghul man, whose mother might be classified as Han or Tibetan, but their children grow up speaking Mongghul and are classified as Tu. Given these examples, what is the meaning of the question, "Are our ancestors Mongol, Tuyuhun, or Xianbei?" People may speak a language fluently but have no clear lineage relationship with most of those who speak it. For example, most Tu raised in Xining speak no Mongghul/Mangghuer, but are classified as Tu. However, the fact that they only speak Chinese does not mean that all their ancestors were Han. Certain names of Mongghul people and places in this paper are influenced by Tibetan (and Chinese), suggesting broader cultural associations.

Three suggestions are made to deepen understanding of Tu history. First, a survey of geographical names in Huzhu and Minhe counties, including Mongghul/Mangghuer names for every village, gully, valley, hill, mountain, and field. An analysis of these names would help determine relations with other languages.

Second, comparing DNA analysis results from Mongghul/Mangghuer with DNA analysis results from Mongols in China and local Tibetans (including Tibetans in Huzhu County, Ledu and Ping'an regions, and Xunhua and Hualong counties, Haidong City).

Thirdly, collect historical records in Mongolian and Tibetan that deal with the

¹ Mongghul *ger*, Mongol, *ger*. Regarding, *tuligha*, Mongolian *tulga* (*tulgha/n*) refers to the iron support for fire, according to Lessing: 'iron support consisting of four legs and two or more rings on which a kettle is placed' (1962:840). The word is based on the root *tul-* 'to lean against'. The *tulga* marks the center of the Mongol yurt.

Mongghul/Mangghuer, including oral accounts from Tibetan elders living in Huzhu County regarding their perspective on Mongghul origins. This would add to the current discussion that is primarily based on Chinese and English language materials.

At a time of rapid Mongghul culture disappearance, study and fieldwork are urgently needed to examine Mongghul origins and better support continued research and cultural preservation. Furthermore, in closely examining the origin of the Mongghul people, we recognize the value of interrogating the evolution of "Mongghul" as an ethnic concept and relate that evolving process to social and political contexts of historical and modern sources including contemporary official and local histories. We are also aware of the risk of conflating oral accounts and memories as factual histories and retrieving the "real" past from contemporary cultural life and practices that risk reading our own concerns and meanings into the historical and contemporary data we collect.

We pause and ask why the question of Mongghul origins is important, and to whom? This is particularly relevant in light of archaeological work at Fintai Village, which is about three kilometers from the center of the Huzhu County Town where excavation of a site at the rim of a fertile valley (2,500 m) unearthed remains of wooden houses (~1,190-~920 BC), mud brick constructions (~980-750 BC), and barley remains, suggesting a well-established, mixed agropastoral economy (Wagner et al. 2011:15736).

Meanwhile, in nearby Minhe Hui and Tu Autonomous County, human remains from Lajia Village dating back 3,800-4,000 years have been found (Gao et al. 2007). A bowl of well-preserved 4,000-year-old noodles found at this site allows for the reconstruction of the earliest recorded preparation of noodles (Liu et al. 2005:967-968). Furthermore, a "white proto-porcelain sherd with a glossy surface" found here "is likely to be the earliest high-temperature glazed and kaolin-based proto-porcelain so far found in China, and even in the world" (Zhou et al. 2019:598). Additionally:

sequences in the DNA of the Tu people from modern China indicate that Europeans similar to modern Greeks mixed with an East Asian population around 1200 BC. The source of this European DNA might have been merchants travelling the Silk Road (Cossins 2014).¹

On-going DNA and archaeological research promise to complicate in exciting, revelatory ways the question of Tu/Mongghul/Monguor ancestry beyond Xianbei-Tuyuhun-Mongol. What is, however, already clear today is that the origins of the Mongghul, with their unique combination of genetic, cultural, and linguistic features, involve a complex system of many chronological layers. At the bottom lie the genes and cultural features inherited from the ancient local populations of the region. But genes and cultural features were also contributed by the later population movements connected with the Tuyuhun, the Tibetans, the Han Chinese, the historical Mongols, and the Western Mongols.

Ultimately, it is only language that can be traced backward in a single uniform lineage. The language spoken by the Mongghul is a direct heir of the language spoken by the historical Mongols. From this perspective, it is correct to say that the Mongghul are "Mongols" despite all the other elements they have absorbed. Folk memory of the Mongol connection is still retained today in the historical consciousness of the Mongghul people.

¹ See also Hellenthal et al. (2014).

PHOTOGRAPHS

FIG 7. Sughuatang Village and Sughua Monastery (22 September 2013, Jugui).



FIG 8. The spring located at the tip of the Round Hills and the pool have both disappeared. The site has been plowed and planted to wheat (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 9. The Round Hills (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 10. One of the springs located at the foot of the Round Hills. Water is only within the spring pit. No water flows out (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 11. A spring located at the foot of the Round Hills. No water flows out (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 12. Sughua Castle's (*tuan*) broken enclosing wall. The castle was built on an "island" surrounded by deep gullies in the valley of Sughuangghuali Village (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 13. A hole made in the castle wall by invaders during the Qing Dynasty in order to attack the Sughua people *chansi*, and villages' *purghan* (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 14. The remnants of the castle's front gate (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 15. The only remaining wooden room inside the castle was built atop the front gate for night guard duty (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 16. This enclosing wall was built inside the castle for the Sughua *chansi* and his family members to live during invasions. Double enclosing walls made the *chansi* safer from attacks from outside the castle (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 17. The hole in the wall was the castle's back gate (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 18. Outside view of the castle's enclosing walls (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 19. The holes in the wall were used as shelves and chimneys by households when they were forced to take refuge (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 20. Historically, the bare space was a hidden place for the *purghan* when the *chansi*, his people, and the *purghan* took refuge inside the castle during invasions. Nowadays, villagers from Sughuangghuali offer incense and make prostrations here (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 21. Sughuangghuali Village's *muyiu* 'temple' where the two Dragon Kings' *purghan* are enshrined and worshipped (7 October 2013, Jugui).



FIG 22. Sughuangghuali Village 'laghang' deity room'. Inside are images of Sakyamuni, Wughuangmiile, and Zhunmaasangqan; and the spears of Danjansang and Bagharisang (7 October 2013, Jugui).



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NON-ENGLISH TERMS

'a zha འ་མཁའ། Tuyuhun	<i>bog</i> , a ritual featuring spirit mediums
<i>adalngi</i> , life	<i>boqi</i> , winnowing tray
Aloxa, Alashan 阿拉善, place name in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region	Caijia 蔡家 Village
Aodan 奥丹, a person's name	Caijiabao 蔡家堡 Township
Aoluchi 奥鲁赤, a person's name	Chaergoumen 岔尔沟门 Village
Aolute Danbajiacuo 奥鲁特丹巴嘉措, Bstan pa rgyal mthso འཕུལ་པ་རྒྱལ་མཚོ།, Aoluchi, Xiping Wang	Chaka 茶卡 Town, Wulan County
Bagharisang, Baghari (King Foorigisigari; T, hor gur dkar rgyal po ཧོར་གུར་དཀར་རྒྱལ་པོ།), a well-known deity worshipped by Mongghul, and a rival of King Gesar (ge sar rgyal po གེ་སར་རྒྱལ་པོ།)	<i>chansi</i> 禅司, a former local official title
Baiya 白崖 Village	Chileb (Longwangshan 龙王山) Mountains
Bao Yizhi 鲍义志, a person's name	<i>chin</i> , annual village rules
<i>bojitou</i> 簸箕头, a traditional headdress	Chuankou 川口 Town
	Chuluu, a person's name
	<i>cuan</i> , big pond
	Dadunling 大敦岭, a hilltop
	Danjan Qijiji Rjewu, dam can chos kyi rgyal po དམ་ཅན་ཚོས་གྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ། Yama Samayi, Dharmaraja 'Lord of Hell'

Danjan Duriji Luhu,¹ dam can bdud kyi lu hu
 དམ་ཅན་བདུད་ཀྱི་ལུ་ལྷ།
 Danjan Guran Luhu, dam can gu ru lu hu དམ་
 ཅན་གུ་རུ་ལུ་ལྷ།
 Danjansang, dam can tshang དམ་ཅན་ཚང་།, a male
purghan; dam 'byar ma དམ་འབྱར་མ།
 Danjansuu, possibly: dam can mtsho དམ་ཅན་
 མཚོ། or bstan rgyal mtsho བསྟན་རྒྱལ་མཚོ།, a
 person's name
 Danma 丹麻 'dan ma འདན་མ་ Town
darisuuna, custom
 Datong 大通 Hui and Tu Autonomous County
 dgon lung དགོན་ལུང་།, Rgulang
dog, a headdress adornment
dognangi, songs
dolaya, sing
 Donggou 东沟 Township
 Donghe 东和 Township
 Donghu 东胡, a name of a tribal confederation
 of nomads
 Dongshan 东山 Township
 Dongyuan 东元 Mountains
 Dulan 都兰 County
 Duranzin, a person's name
fashi 法师, master of magic
 Feijia 费家, a village name
 Fintai, Fengtai 丰台 Village
 Fulaan Bulog 'Red Springs', a place name
 Fulaan Nara 'Red Sun', a place name
 Gannan 甘南 Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture
 Gansu 甘肃 Province
ghajarida, earth
 Ghuran Bulog 'Three Springs'
 Girili Sughua, a village name

Gindin Danzhu, dge 'dun don grub དགོ་འདུན་དོན་
 གུབ། a person's name
 Giri Sughua, a village name
 Giriliti, Niidosang, Guo'erduo, Gelete, Aodan,
 Aolute Danbajiacuo, bstan pa rgya mthso
 བསྟན་པ་རྒྱལ་མཚོ།, Aolute, Aoluchi, one of Chinggis
 Khan's generals
 Golok, mgo log མགོ་ལོག་ Guoluo 果洛 Tibetan
 Autonomous Prefecture
 Gongge 贡哥, a person's name
Guanjiri, bka' 'gyur བཀའ་རྒྱུ་རྒྱ། volumes of
 Buddha's teachings in Tibetan translation
 Guanting 官亭 Town
guleya, speak
 Guolong 郭隆
 Gurija, Qiaojigou 乔吉沟 Village
 gur brgya ལུར་བརྒྱ། 'one hundred tents'
 Ha Mingzong 哈明宗, a person's name
 Haibei 海北 Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture
 Hainan 海南 Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture
 Haixi 海西 Mongol and Tibetan Autonomous
 Prefecture
 Haiyan 海晏 County
 Halazhigou 哈拉直沟 Township
 Haliqi, a place name
 Han 汉, an ethnic group in China
 Han 汉 Dynasty (206 BC-220 AD)
hanni, khan
 Haomen 浩门, a place name
 Hara Mongghul (Black Mongol), a term
 Mongghul use to designate Mongolians
 Hebei 河北 Province
 Hehuang 河湟, a place name
 Hexi 河西, a place name

¹ The meaning of *luhu* is unknown.

- Hgalazang Danzhu, skal bzang don grub སྐལ་བཟང་དོན་གྲུབ།, a person's name
hguara, skor ba སྐོར་བ།, during the fourth, fifth, and sixth months each year every Mongghul village has a designated date to march through or around their own fields or territory
- Hongyazigou 红崖子沟 Township
- hor go tan rgyal po ཧོར་གོ་ཏན་རྒྱལ་པོ།, Kuoduan 阔端, Godan
- Hu 胡, a surname
- Hualong 化隆 Hui Autonomous County
- Huangnan 黄南 Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture
- Huangshui 湟水 River Basin
- Huo'er 霍尔 (Hu'er 胡尔, hor ཧོར།), an ethnonym
- Hui 回, an Islamic ethnic group in China
- Huiqi 回讷, Yu gur ཡུ་གུར།, Yugu 裕固
- Huzhu 互助 Tu 土 Autonomous County
- Janba Taigai, a place name
- Ji Junde 吉俊德, a person's name
- Jiangjiazhuang 蒋家庄 Village
- Jiase, Jiaseduanyuequejijiacuo 嘉色端悦却吉嘉措, rgyal sras don yod chos kyi rgya mtsho རྒྱལ་སྐལ་དོན་ཡོད་ཚོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱམ་ཚོ།, a living Buddha's name
- Cing gir han ཅིང་གིར་ཧན། Chinggis (Genghis) Khan
- Jugui, a person's name
- Karilang, Tu 土族, Monguor
- ke rel thu ཀེ་རེལ་ཐུ།
- Koko Nor, Qinghaihu 青海湖 'Qinghai Lake', a lake located in Qinghai Province
- kuu*, son
- laghang*, lha khang ལྷ་ཁང།, *fokang* 佛康, deity room
- Lamusang, lha mo tshang ལྷ་མོ་ཚང།, a guardian deity
- Lanzhou 兰州 City
- lasizi*, lab tse ལབ་ཅེ། a stone pile with pieces of wood resembling spears and arrows stuck into the pile
- layaju*, make a life
- Ledu 乐都 Region
- Li Keyu 李克郁, a person's name
- Li Meiling 李美玲, a person's name
- Li Shenghua 李生华, a person's name
- Limusishiden, klu 'bum tshe brtan ལྷུ་འབུམ་ཚེ་བརྟན།
 Li Dechun 李得春, a person's name
- Limuzhunmaa, klu mo sgrol ma ལྷུ་མོ་སྐྱོལ་མ། a person's name
- Linja (Linjia 林家) Village
- Lü Jianfu 吕建福, a person's name
- Luobuji 罗布加, nor bu rgyal ལོར་བུ་རྒྱལ། a person's name
- Luusi Jansan, a person's name
- Ma 马, a surname
- Manzihun, a Mongghul folktale name
mashida, forget
- Maohebu 毛荷堡 Village
- Mengguzu 蒙古族, Mongol
- Menyuan 门源 County
- Ming 明 Dynasty (1368-1644)
- Minhe 民和 Hui and Tu Autonomous County
- Moluu Ula (Round Hills), a place name
- Mongghul (Tuzu 土族), Monguor, Mangghuer
muyiu (*miao* 庙), temple
- Narasirigu Sughua, a village name
- Ningxia 宁夏 Hui Autonomous Region
- niudaari*, a traditional headdress
- njasi*, plow

- npleenju*, develop
- padila*, suppress evil rite
- paotu*, a headscarf a Mongghul women wears when she marries and leaves her home to go to her husband's home
- Ping'an 平安 Region
- purghan*, a deity represented in the form of a sedaned image or a cloth-covered pole held by four men or a man, respectively
- Qi Tusi 祁土司, a chieftain's name
- Qiao Zhiliang 乔志良, a person's name
- Qighaan Mongghul, White Mongol, a term Mongols use to refer to Mongghul in the Mongolian language
- Qilian 祁连 County
- Qing 清 Dynasty (1644-1912)
- Qinggeertai, a person's name
- Qinghai 青海 Province
- Rgulang (Youningsi 佑宁寺, dgon lung dgon pa དགོན་ལུང་དགོན་པ།), a Tibetan Buddhist monastery in Huzhu County
- rgunba*, dgon pa དགོན་པ། monastery
- sa skya kung dga' rgyal mtshan ས་སྐུ་ཀུན་དགའ་རྒྱལ་མཚན།
- Salar, Sala 撒拉, an ethnic group
- Sanchuan 三川, a Mangghuer area in Minhe Hui and Tu Autonomous County
- Shaanxi 陕西 Province
- Shancheng 山城 Village
- Shanxi 山西 Province
- Shdara (rta ra རྩ་ར།, Dala 达拉) Township
- shge*, big
- Shijiawan 师家湾 Village
- Sichuan 四川 Province
- Sitan 寺滩 Village
- sog po lab tse སོག་པོ་ལ་བ་ཙེ།, 'Mongol Lab tse'
- Song 宋 Dynasty (960-1127 CE)
- Songbu 松布 Village
- Songduo 松多, sum mdo སུང་མདོ། Township
- Su 苏, a surname
- Sughua 索卜, place name
- Sughuangghuali (Suobugou 索卜沟) Village
- Sughuatang (sog po thang སོག་པོ་ཐང། Suobutan 索卜滩) Village
- Suhga, gsol kha གསོལ་མ།, a ritual focused on Lamusang
- Suhu, sog po སོག་པོ།, Mongolian
- Sunjia 孙家 Village
- Suo 索, a surname
- Suobugou 索卜沟 Village
- Suobutan 索卜滩 Village
- Suriguniu, a village name
- Szanghuali (Nianxian 年先) Village
- Taizi 台子 Township
- Tang 唐 Dynasty (618-907)
- Tang Longshuo 唐龙朔, a Tang Emperor Reign (AD 661-663)
- Tangchuan 塘川 Town
- Tangdarihgiima, the name of a Mongghul folksong
- tangka*, thang ga ཐང་ག།, a form of primarily Tibetan sacred representation consisting of an image panel that is painted, embroidered, or appliquéd. The image panel frequently depicts mandalas, deities, famous scenes, or prominent local religious personalities.
- Thu'u bkwan ཐུ་འུ་བཀྱའ།, a person's name
- Tianjun 天峻 County
- Tu 土 Monguor, Mongghul, Mangghuer
- tuan*, an administrative unit similar to a modern town or township seat
- Tudi 土地 Temple

Tughuan (Tuguan 土官) Village

Tuyuhun 吐谷浑, a nomadic people living in the region of the contemporary Qinghai, Gansu, and northwest Sichuan between the fourth and seventh centuries CE

ugona, language

Waliga, a place name

Warishida, a village name

Weijiabu 魏家堡 Village

Weiyuan 威远 Town, the seat of Huzhu County

Wughuangmiile, Amitabha, 'od dpag med འོད་དཔག་མེད།, an image of Bodhisattva Amitabha that was believed to have flown to the Huzhu Mongghul area from the Potala Palace

Wufeng 五峰 Town

Wulan 乌兰 County

Wushi 五十 Town

Wushi 梧石 Village

Xangshida, Shangshida 尚示大 Village

Xaraghuali, a village name

Xewarishidi (Shibadonggou 十八洞沟) Village

Xianbei 鲜卑, an ancient, Mongolic nomadic people residing in what became today's eastern Mongolia, Inner Mongolia, and Northeast China

Xiaoxia 小峡, a place name

Xining 西宁 City, the capital of Qinghai Province

Xinyuan 杏元 Village

Xin Zhuang 新庄 Village

Xiping Wang 西平王, Prince of Xiping

Xishan 西山 Township

xjiribu, comfortable

xjunwa, daughters

Xunhua 循化 Salar Autonomous County

Ya'er 崖尔 Monastery (Wushigou 吾释沟寺,

Yasi 崖寺, Maojiasi 茂家寺,

Wushizhihegongqinxiazhiqunkelin 梧石智

合贡钦夏智群科林, u shi brag dgon chen

bshad sgrub chos 'khor gling ལུ་ཤི་བླ་མ་དགོན་ཆེན་

བཀའ་བླ་མ་ཚེས་འཁོར་གླིང་།), located in Minhe Hui

and Tu Autonomous County

Yanchang 盐昌 Village

yejuari, a conical women's headdress; g.yu byu

ru གཡུ་བྱུ་རུ།

Yuan 元 Dynasty (1271-1368)

Yushu 玉树, yul shul ཡུ་ཤུ་ཡུལ། Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

Zangwa Ama, a village name

Zhao 赵, a surname

Zhou Weizhou 周伟洲, a person's name

Zhuashidi (Baizhuazi 白抓子; pra sti བླ་ཤི།) Village

Zhunmaasangqan, Speaking Tara, sgrol ma

gsung 'byon སྐྱོན་མ་གསུང་འབྲོན།, located in

Zhuashidi (Zhunmaasangqan) Village,

Danma Town

Zi Yun 紫云, a person's name