

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

MONGGHUL

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Mongghul, or Huzhu Mongghul, is, together with (Minhe) Mangghuer, generally referred to as ‘Monguor’ in the specialist literature. The Chinese nomenclature subsumes the two populations and their languages under the designation *Tu* or *Turen* ‘Local People’, and assigns only dialect status to the two varieties. Linguistically it is, however, clearly a question of two separate languages. The traditional name *Monguor*, which is nothing but a transformed shape of **monggol*, is, strictly speaking, not justified for Mongghul, since the syllable-final sound change **l > r* characterizes, apart from Mangghuer, only part of the dialects of the Mongghul language, notably the Naringhol (more exactly, *Narin ghuor*) dialect. The shape *Mongghul*, on the other hand, is based on the Halchighol (**Halqighul**) variant, which is territorially more widespread, has more speakers, and is the basis of a newly created literary language.

In more specific terms, the Mongghul speakers traditionally identify themselves as **Qighaan Mongghul** ‘White Mongols’, as opposed to **Hara Mongghul** ‘Black Mongols’, a name reserved for other Mongolic-speaking groups. To their Tibetan neighbours, the Mongghul and Mangghuer have been known as *hJahur* (Written Tibetan **rGya.Hor** ‘Chinese Mongols’) or *Karlung*. In earlier Western (especially Russian) literature, the generic name *Shirongol* was used, being applied to all the Mongolic groups of the Gansu-Qinghai region with the exception of the Shira Yughur and the Qinghai Oirat. Another traditional term is *Dolot* (with variants). The dialects of Mongghul are mainly labelled according to the river basins in which they are spoken, including the Halchighol and Naringhol, both of which are left tributaries of the Huangshui, which itself is a tributary of the Yellow River. Another dialect, of which little is known, is spoken along the Fulan Nuraghol, also a tributary of the Huangshui.

Administratively, Mongghul is mainly spoken in the Chinese province of Qinghai (until 1928 a part of Gansu), especially in Huzhu Tu Autonomous County, northeast of the provincial capital Xining. From here, the Mongghul population extends both westwards to Datong Hui and Tu Autonomous County, also in Qinghai, and eastwards to Tianzhu Tibetan Autonomous County, in (present-day) Gansu. Due to linguistic assimilation, there are very few Mongghul speakers left today in Datong, but the language is better preserved in both Huzhu and Tianzhu. There are indications that Mongghul, possibly in a special dialectal variety, has also been spoken (and is possibly still spoken) further north in what is now Menyuan Hui Autonomous County of Qinghai.

The current number of Mongghul speakers is not easy to determine. The 1990 census, which does not differentiate between Mongghul and Mangghuer speakers, gives a total of 191,624 members of the *Tu* nationality. This number includes at least 25,000 Mangghuer, as well as several thousand Qinghai Bonan and Wutun speakers, leaving perhaps a rough figure of 150,000 for Mongghul. Certainly, this can only be the number of *potential* speakers of the language, since information on the rate of first-language retention and/or linguistic assimilation is insufficient. The actual number of Mongghul speakers is likely

to be much below the total size of the ethnic population, and maybe as low as 50,000. Moreover, the number is probably decreasing, rather than increasing.

Even within Huzhu Tu Autonomous County, the majority of the local population is made up of Han Chinese, as well as Chinese-speaking Muslims (*Hui*). These, together with Amdo Tibetans, have exerted strong cultural and linguistic influence on Mongghul. As a result, Mongghul, like Mangghuer (and the other Mongolic languages of the Gansu-Qinghai complex), has undergone considerable restructuring in its typological make-up. Loanwords from both Qinghai Mandarin and Amdo Tibetan abound in Mongghul. The sources of the Tibetan items vary, but most of them seem to derive from the so-called dPa.ri (*Hwari*) and sBra.nag (*Panaka*) dialects, spoken northeast and southeast of Huzhu, respectively.

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 borderguards 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.

The dominant religion of the Mongghul is Tibetan Buddhism, with which the ancestors of the Mongghul seem to have been in contact since Yuan times. The Mongghul spiritual centre is the dGon.lung (*Ergulong*) monastery, founded in Huzhu in 1604 and representing the dGe.lugs.pa ('Yellow Hat') School. Despite their relatively small number, the Mongghul have at times played important roles in the Buddhist clergy of the region, as well as of China at large. At least two incarnations of the lCang.skya Khutukhtu lineage were probably of Mongghul origin.

DATA AND SOURCES

Mongghul is the most extensively studied Mongolic language of the Gansu-Qinghai region. Its speakers are first mentioned by nineteenth-century travellers, such as Évariste-Régis Huc (1850) and N. M. Przheval'skii (1875). The first collection of linguistic data (word-lists and a short sample of phrases) of any kind of 'Monguor' is found in G. N. Potanin (1893), though his materials, deriving from the so-called Sanchuan region (more or less identical with the modern administrative entity of Minhe), apparently represent an early variant of Mangghuer, rather than Mongghul.

In the twentieth century, the Belgian missionary-linguists Antoine Mostaert and Albrecht de Smedt, of the C.I.C.M. (Scheut Society for Foreign Missions), laid the foundation of 'Monguor' linguistics by publishing a detailed account of phonetics (1929–31), a grammar (1945), and a large Monguor-French dictionary with etymological remarks (1933). All of these works are based on the Naringhol dialect of Mongghul, which thus for several decades became by far the best-known 'Monguor' dialect. More specifically, the data were mainly collected in the village of Alima Hangshar, southeast of the county centre of Huzhu. Mostaert (1931) also published a more general account of the Mongolic languages of the Gansu-Qinghai region. No texts were published, but a comprehensive historical and ethnographic study of the 'Monguor' was prepared by another Catholic missionary, Louis M. J. Schram, C. I. C. M. (1954–61).

Another perspective into Mongghul was opened by Dominik Schröder, SVD, also a missionary-linguist, who published two short collections of texts, this time from the Halchighol dialect (1959–70), a grammatical sketch (1964), as well as a detailed description of Mongghul religious life (1952–3). The largest extant body of Mongghul texts published so far, a fragment of the Geser Epos running over more than 12,000 lines, was also collected by Schröder in 1948, though it was published in facsimile only much later by Walther Heissig (1980). Only a small fraction of this text was translated by Schröder himself. The linguistic material of the text has been studied in detail by Masayoshi Kakudo (1988, 1996), who has also worked on other questions of Mongghul dialectology and synchronic grammar (Kakudo 1987, 1989, 1997).

The Sino-Soviet joint linguistic expedition of the 1950s resulted in the ‘Monguor’ grammar (with texts) of B. X. Todaeva (1973), mainly based on the Halchighol dialect, though containing comparative data from other dialects, including Mangghuer. A brief synopsis of the same material is given in Todaeva (1997). Also based on the Halchighol dialect are the short grammar by Junast (1981), the materials of Chuluu (1994), and the three volumes of data published in Inner Mongolia, containing a collection of sentences and texts by Chingeltei *et al.* (1986), a vocabulary by Hasbaatar (1985), and a comparative grammar by Chingeltei and Li Keyu (1988). Individual issues of Mongghul grammar have been dealt with in specialized papers by Chingeltei (1989) and others.

The Mongghul language, like the other Mongolic languages of the Gansu-Qinghai complex, remains still largely unexplored in the diachronic framework. Apart from the comparative grammar of Chingeltei and Li Keyu, the most important diachronic contribution is the monograph by Andrés Róna-Tas (1966) on the Tibetan loanwords in ‘Monguor’, a work that was preceded by two phonological papers by the same author (Róna-Tas 1960, 1962). More recently, the Turkic loanwords of ‘Monguor’ have been examined by Hans Nugteren (1998).

In the 1980s, a practical orthography was created for Mongghul on the basis of the Pinyin Romanization of Mandarin Chinese. The orthography has been used in over twenty publications, including school textbooks, folklore materials, and various pamphlets, as listed in Limusishiden and Kevin Stuart (1999). The single most important publication is the practical Mongghul–Chinese dictionary of Li Keyu (1988). The orthography has required the creation of an increasingly unified normative literary language, which is based on the Halchighol dialect, but with the incorporation of some typically Naringhol features. It is true, in spite of the tendency of normalization, there are still many inconsistencies in the actual application of the orthographical principles, as discussed by Kakudo (1990).

The following treatment of Mongghul uses, as far as possible, the notational conventions of the standard language for all data, though the imperfection of the current orthographical practice makes it impossible to follow any systematic norm. Unless otherwise specified, the data reflect the Halchighol dialect. Data from other dialects, including the Naringhol dialect, are also presented in the standard orthography, which should not obscure the fact that they may in other respects be incongruent with the principles of the current literary language.

SEGMENTAL PHONEMES

Mongghul has five distinctive vowel qualities, which are orthographically rendered as **a e i o u** (Table 14.1). All the five qualities can also occur as long syllabic nuclei (double

TABLE 14.1 MONGGHUL VOWELS

u o	a	i e
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vowels), written as sequences of two identical vowel letters, e.g. **amu** ‘life’ vs. **aamu** ‘millet’, **bosi-** ‘to rise’ vs. **boosi** ‘flea’, **niki-** ‘to weave’ vs. **nikii** ‘fur’.

The low vowel **a** (*a*) is mostly realized as [a], but it has a fronted allophone [æ] after the palatal consonants **q j x**, as in **qabsar** [tʃ^hæbsar] ‘gap’. The unrounded mid vowel **e** (*e*) surfaces (in all syllables) as a diphthongoid [ie] after the labial and dental consonants **b m d t n l**, and as a schwa-like centralized vowel [ə] after velars and **r**, cf. e.g. **beri** [pieri] ‘wife’ (also **beeri**), **mengu** [mieŋgu] ‘silver’, **dere** [tierə] ‘pillow’ (also **dire**), **te** [t^hie] ‘that’, **ne** [nie] ‘this’, **gule-** [kulie] ‘to speak’, **ken** [k^hən] ‘who’. The high unrounded vowel **i** (*i*), too, surfaces mostly as a centralized [ə], but the realizations of **e** and **i** remain phonetically distinguishable. The genuine palatal quality [i] occurs only word-initially and after the palatal consonants **q j x y**, e.g. **qiree** [tʃ^hire:] ‘face’, **jidaa** [dʒida:] ‘lance’ (also **jiidaa**), **xira** [çira] ‘yellow’, **ayil** [ajil] ‘village’.

The rounded vowels **o u** (*o u*) are mostly stable, but **u** is fronted to [y] after palatals, as in **xuroo-** [çyro:] ‘to wish’ (also **xiroo-**). After the postvelar consonant **gh** the opposition between short **o** and **u** is neutralized in favour of a surface vowel [ʊ], intermediate in height between the qualities [o] and [u], but orthographically rendered as **u**. An additional marginal phoneme is the retroflex vowel [ɤ], which occurs in Chinese loanwords, e.g. (Chinese spelling:) **erliuzi** [ɤ-liu:dzə] ‘lazybone’.

As is also the case in the other Mongolic languages of the Gansu-Qinghai complex, the Proto-Mongolic background of the Mongghul vowels is not always easy to determine. The most stable vowels are **a *e*, which are mainly preserved as such, e.g. **ala-* > **ala-** ‘to kill’, **alda* > **alda** ‘fathom’, **bari-* > **bari-** ‘to take’; **ger* > **ger** ‘house’, **bergen* > **bergen** ‘sister-in-law’. Labialization of both **a* and **e* into **u** (*u*) is, however, often observed after a labial consonant, e.g. **baraxa-* > **buraa-** ‘to finish’; **mede-* > **mude-** ‘to know’, **mergen* > **murgen** ‘clever’.

The rounded vowels **o *ö *u *ü* are all represented as **o u** with no clear contextual preference, e.g. **boro* > **boro** ~ **buro** ‘grey’, **mori/n* > **mori** ‘horse’, **ol-* > **uli-** ‘to find’, **kota/n* > **kudu** ‘house’; **öndür* > **undur** ‘high’, **böś* > **bos** ‘cotton’; **uran* > **uran** ‘dexterity’, **udaxan* > **udaan** ‘slow’; **küci/n* > **kuji** ‘power’, **ükü-* > **fugu-** ‘to die’, **küli-* > **koli-** ‘to tie’. In general, it seems that the reflexes of the original high vowels **u *ü* are more often than not high, while the development of the mid-high vowels **o *ö* is considerably more variegated. Irregular developments are present in **bol-* > **boli-** ~ **bali-** ‘to ripen’, **tobci* > **tebjji** ‘button’, **jula* > **jila** ‘lamp’. The distinction between **ö *ü* vs. **o *u* is occasionally revealed by the different behaviour of adjacent velar consonants, cf. e.g. **nökör* > **nukor** ‘friend’, **mukur* > **moghur** ‘blunt’. An exceptional velarization has taken place in **ög-* > **ughu-** ~ **ghu-** ‘to give’.

The high unrounded vowel **i* is basically represented as **i**, e.g. **ciki/n* > **qigi** ‘ear’, **imaxa/n* > **imaa** ‘goat’, **jida* > **jidaa** ‘lance’ (also **jiidaa**), **sira-* > **xiraa-** ‘to roast’. There is no evidence of actual breaking in Mongghul, but prebreaking (or later regressive vowel assimilation with a similar effect) is attested in several items, e.g. **jiru-* > **juuri-** ‘to write’, **(x)ildü* > **uldi** ‘sword’, **mika/n* > **maha** ‘meat’.

Most long vowels in Mongghul represent the result of contraction, i.e. the elision of the intervocalic velar spirant **x*, e.g. **naxad-* > **naadi-** ‘to play’, **temexe/n* > **timeen** ‘camel’, **toxa* > **too** ‘number’, **böxe* > **boo** ‘shaman’. Some synchronic long vowels, however, have been claimed to continue original (primary) long vowels. In spite of suggested parallels elsewhere in Mongolic (Dagur and Moghol), the evidence remains inconclusive, and it is most likely a question of secondary lengthening of original short (single) vowels, as in **moodi** (also **moodu**) ‘tree; wood’ < **modu/n*. Although counterexamples exist, it deserves to be mentioned that unetymological lengths seem to occur particularly frequently before liquids, nasals and (sometimes) **s**, e.g. **daalii** ‘shoulder’ < **dalu*, **gireel** ‘light’ < **gerel*, **aamu** ‘millet’ < **amu/n*, **oosi-** ‘to grow’ < **ös-*, **aasar** ‘building’ < **asar*. On the other hand, Mongghul displays, in some cases, a short vowel instead of an expected length, as in **dire** ‘above’ < **dexere*, **qirag** ‘strong’ < **cixirag*, **ula** ‘mountain’ < **axula/n*.

A few examples of contracted vowels are reflected as diphthongoid sequences of two different vowel qualities. The synchronic paradigm of diphthongoid sequences occurring in native words comprises **ai au iu ui**, e.g. **sain** ‘good’ < **sayin*, **bau-** ‘to descend’ < **baxu-*, **niur** ‘face’ < **nixur*, **diu** ‘younger brother’ < **dexü*. The sequences **ia iau ua uai** are mainly present in Chinese loanwords, e.g. **liang** ‘measure’: **liang.la-** ‘to measure’, **hua** ‘picture’: **hua.la-** ‘to draw (a picture)’, though there are also occasional native examples, such as **guai-** ‘to run’ (Common Mongolic **güyü-*). The representation of the diphthongoid sequences in native words is often inconsistent, and cases of monophthongization are common, cf. e.g. **hghai** ‘pig’ < **gaka(y)i* vs. **dalii** ‘sea’ < **dala(y)i*, **huino** ‘after’ < **koyina* vs. **noor** ‘sleep’ < **noyir*, **kuiden** ‘cold’ < **küyiten* vs. **suuge** ‘earring’ < **süyike*. Many items are represented as dialectal doublets, e.g. **sau-** ~ **suu-** ‘to sit’ < **saxu-*, **niu-** ~ **nuu-** ‘to hide’ < **nixu-*. note also **jaliu** ‘young’ < **jalaxu*. The original sequence **e(y)i-* appears mostly as **ii** or **ee**, e.g. **kii** ‘wind’ < **kei*, **neele-** ‘to join’ < **neyile-*.

The Mongghul consonant inventory comprises twenty-five segments (Table 14.2). These may be divided into seven vertical series: the labials **p b f m w** (*p b f m w*), the dental non-sibilants **t d l n** (*t d l n*), the dental sibilants **c z s** (*ts dz s*), the retroflexes **ch zh sh r** (*tr dr sr r*), the palatals **q j x y** (*c j sh y*), the velars **k g ng h** (*k g ng x*), and the postvelar **gh** (*gh*). On the other hand, there are six horizontal classes: the strong obstruents **p t c ch q k**, the weak obstruents **b d z zh j g gh**, the fricatives **f s sh x h**, the liquids **l r**, the nasals **m n ng**, and the glides **w y**.

The segments **c z ch zh**, realized as affricates, occur mostly in Chinese and Tibetan loanwords, e.g. **cangku** ‘storehouse’, **zauha** ‘hearth’, **zandan** ‘sandalwood’, **chun** ‘spring’, **zhuxi** ‘chairman’. Occasional examples are, however, also present in a few irregular Mongolic etyma, e.g. **cizida-** ~ **qisida-** ‘to bleed’ < **cisuda-*, **zinginee-** ‘to make

TABLE 14.2 MONGGHUL CONSONANTS

p	t	c	ch	q	k	
b	d	z	zh	j	g	gh
f		s	sh	x	h	
	l		r			
m	n				ng	
w				y		

sound' < **senggene-*, **zongnaa** 'gadfly' (cf. Common Mongolic **sono*), **zhuzhuan** ~ **jujaan** 'thick' < **jujaxan*. In medial position, the segment **z** is relatively common also in native words, cf. e.g. **ghazar** 'bridle' < **kajaxar* vs. **ghajar** 'place' < **gajar*. The retroflex sibilant **sh** occurs in prevocalic position mainly in Chinese loanwords, in which it is often confused with the (alveo)palatal sibilant **x**, e.g. **shong** ~ **xong** 'pair'.

The contrast between the velar **g** and the postvelar (uvular) **gh** is only marginally relevant in Mongghul. The distinction is, however, consistently made in the modern orthography. Genuine minimal pairs do not seem to exist, but both sounds contrast, at least potentially, before the vowels **a o u**. Before **a**, the velar **g** normally only occurs in Chinese and Tibetan loanwords, e.g. **gang** 'steel' (from Chinese), **gaara** 'sugar' (from Tibetan), while native words have the postvelar **gh**. Before **o u**, native words have **g** if the vowel derives from **ö *ü*, and **gh** if the vowel derives from **o *u*. The vowels **e i** can only be preceded by **g**.

The diachronic relationship of **g** vs. **gh** is paralleled in the class of strong obstruents by that of **k** vs. **h**. Thus, original **k* is reflected as **k** before original front vowels, e.g. **kile** 'tongue; language' < **kele/n*, **kurdeen** 'son-in-law' < **kürgen*, **kungon** 'light (of weight)' < **könggen*. Before **i*, however, **k* has been palatalized into **q** (*c*), e.g. **qimusi** 'claw/s' < **kimusu/n*, **qiruu** 'saw' < **kirüge*, **Qidar** 'Chinese' < **kita-*. Before original back vowels, **k* is reflected as **h**, e.g. **hamdu** 'together' < **kamtu*, **huidu** 'behind' < **koyitu*, **huja** 'ram' < **kuca*. Since no opposition between a laryngeal [h] and a velar [x] has been reported from Mongghul, the segment **h** can phonetically freely vacillate between these values.

Another source of initial **h** is Proto-Mongolic **x*, which is preserved as a segment in Mongghul, e.g. **halgha** 'palm (of hand)' < **xalaga*, **haran** ~ **harwan** 'ten' < **xarba/n*. Before **i*, this segment has developed into **x**, as **xinee-** 'to smile' < **xiniye-*, while before rounded vowels it is represented as **f**, as in **funi-** 'to ride' < **xumu-*, **fulaan** 'red' < **xulaan*. Traditionally it has been assumed that the value **f** is a direct trace of the original labial quality of **x* < **p*, but this assumption is wrong. The fact that **f** is simply a combinatory development of **h** < **x* is illustrated, for instance, by the etymon **xilexü* 'much, more', which is reflected in the Mongghul dialects variously as either **xiliu* > **haliu** or **xiliu* > **xuliu* > **fuliu**. The latter shape shows that the development **x* > **f** took place only after the (apparently) late regressive assimilation of the following vowel.

An important taxonomic characteristic of both Mongghul and Mangghuer (and possibly of the Gansu-Qinghai complex, in general) is connected with the development of stop obstruents (including affricates). In initial position, the two classes of obstruents in Mongghul are phonetically distinguished by aspiration, the strong segments (*fortes*) being voiceless and aspirated, while the weak segments (*lenes*) are equally voiceless (or slightly voiced), but unaspirated. In medial position, however, the weak segments can be fully voiced and spirantized. The historical perturbations affecting the obstruents may be summarized as follows:

- (1) If the original consonantal skeleton of a word involves a combination of a word-initial strong obstruent with a word-internal (syllable-initial, and most often intervocalic) strong obstruent, the latter segment is weakened into its weak counterpart, e.g. **tudargha** 'rice' < **tuturga*, **huja-** 'to bark' < **kuca-*.
- (2) If the original consonantal skeleton involves a combination of a word-initial weak obstruent with a word-internal strong obstruent, the strength relationship weak + strong is reversed to strong + weak, e.g. **tijin** 'forty' < **döci/n*, **pujig** 'book' < **bicig*.
- (3) If the original consonantal skeleton involves a combination of two weak obstruents, the strength relationship remains unchanged, e.g. **bughun** 'low' < **bogoni*.

The spirantized reflex of intervocalic **b* has normally developed into **w**, as in **taawun** ‘five’ < **tabu/n*, occasionally also into **y**, as in **tayin** ‘fifty’ < **tabi/n* (palatal environment), **yerle-** (also **urle-**) ‘to grow horns’ < **eberle-* (secondary initial position). There are also examples of the loss of internal **b*, as in **suuli-** < **sübele-* ‘to thread’, **deesi-** < **debis-* ‘to spread’, note also **kidee-** < **kebte-* ‘to lie down’.

If aspiration is taken to be the relevant feature on which the distinction between the strong and weak obstruents is based, the situation in Mongghul can be reformulated as follows: Mongghul allows at most one aspirate consonant per stem, and only in initial position. As a parallel case, it may be noted that a similar principle is operative in Ordos and some southern Mongol dialects, but in these idioms the aspirate segment occupies the medial position. The assumption concerning the relevance of aspiration in Mongghul is supported by the fact that a zero anlaut (initial vowel) in words containing an original strong obstruent in medial position is reflected as a prothetic **h** in Mongghul, as in **haldan** ‘gold’ < **altan*. In these words, there was no original **x* in Proto-Mongolic; instead, the Mongghul **h** represents the ‘aspirated’ counterpart of the initial zero.

Another unusual diachronic process in Mongghul (though attested sporadically also elsewhere in Mongolic) is the occasional development of initial **n* into **l**, as in **labji** ‘leaf’ < **nabci*. In some cases, it seems to be a question of nasal dissimilation, as in **lom** ‘scripture’ < **nom*, **numu** ~ **lumu** ‘bow’ < **numu/n*. In normal cases, **n* is preserved as **n**, as in **nara** ‘sun’ < **nara/n*, **nige** ‘one’ < **nige/n*. Initial **l** is most often attested in Chinese and Tibetan loanwords, e.g. **lagxii** ‘towel’ (from Tibetan), but it also occurs because of initial vowel elision, as in **lii** ‘not’ < **ülü*.

The development of final **l* is one of the most salient differentiating characteristics between all varieties of ‘Monguor’; it yields **l** in Halchighol Mongghul and **r** (with a variety of phonetic realizations, but mainly a retroflex approximant of the Chinese type) in the Naringhol dialect as well as in Mangghuer. Diagnostic examples are: **gal* ‘fire’, **köl* ‘foot’, **dexel* ‘garment’ > Halchighol **ghal**, **kol**, **deel** vs. Naringhol **ghar**, **kuor**, **deer** vs. Mangghuer **ghar**, **khuer**, **dier**.

WORD STRUCTURE

The word accent in Mongghul is strongly centralizing and falls invariably on the last syllable, a circumstance which has diachronically led to the frequent loss of initial-syllable vowels, or, sometimes, of whole initial syllables, as in **aduxula-* > **dulaa-** ‘to tend cattle’, **eljige* > **jige** ‘donkey’, **emüs-* > **mosi-** ‘to dress’, **unaga* > **nagha** ‘foal’. This loss of vowels and syllables has had several important phonotactic consequences, one of them being that vowel harmony has collapsed, as is also the case in the other Mongolic languages of the Gansu-Qinghai complex. Stem-internally, some restrictions governing the cooccurrence of vowels can still be discerned in Mongghul, but suffixes do not any longer conform to the harmonic class of the preceding stem. Synchronically, all suffixes have a fixed vocalism.

Another consequence of the loss of initial vowels and syllables has been that the consonant structures occurring in initial position have been greatly diversified. On the one hand, there are some individual consonants which have secondarily expanded their distribution to the initial position, notably **r** and **w**, as in **ire-* > **re-** ‘to come’, **ebüsü* > **wesi** ‘grass’. On the other hand, there has appeared a considerable number of initial consonant clusters, a feature basically alien to Mongolic but well attested in Amdo Tibetan. In native Mongghul words, the first component of these clusters represents diachronically either the original initial consonant of the word, as in **sghal** ‘beard’ < **sakal*, or the first

TABLE 14.3 MONGGHUL INITIAL CLUSTERS

preinitials	clusters					
<i>N</i>		nd		nj	ng	ngh
		nt				
s	sb	sd	sz		sg	sgh
	sm					
sh	shb	shd	shz		shg	shgh
x				xj		
r		rd	rz		rg	rgh
	rm					
h					hg	hgh

component of an original medial cluster, as in **nghuasi** ‘wool’ < **unggasu/n*. Initial clusters are also common in Tibetan loanwords, such as **rgomba** ‘temple’.

There are more than twenty different initial clusters attested in native Mongghul words (Table 14.3). In their synchronic system, the first component (the preinitial) is always either an archiphonemic nasal (**n**) or a continuant consonant (**s sh x r h**), while the second component (the initial) may be either a stop (**b d t z j g gh**) or a nasal (**m**). Tibetan loanwords increase the number of actual initial clusters considerably. From the phonological point of view, it should be noted that the orthographical system of the initial clusters, based mainly on the phonetic substance, involves several kinds of complementarity. In a more technical approach, the system could be reinterpreted in a variety of ways.

Examples of the initial clusters in native words: (nasal preinitial:) **ndee** ‘here’ < **ende*, **njasi** ‘plough’ < **anjisu/n*, **ngo** ‘colour’ < **öngge*, **nghusi** ‘body wind’ < **ungusu/n*, **ntiraa-** ‘to sleep’ < **untara-*; (**s** as preinitial:) **sbai** ‘barley’ < **arbai*, **sza-** ‘to repair’ < **jasa-*, **sgil** ‘thought’ < **sedkil*, **sghur** ‘blind’ < **sokor*, **smeen** ‘monastery’ < **süme/n*; (**sh** and **x** as preinitials:) **shbuzi** ‘fibre’ < **sirbüsün*, **shdi** ‘tooth’ < **sidün*, **shzin** ‘nine’ < **ysisün*, **xjuur** ‘origin’ < **xijaxur*, **shge** ‘big’ < **xike*; (**r** as preinitial) **rдем** ‘virtue’ < **erdem*, **rzii-** ‘to show one’s teeth’ < **irja(y)i-*, **rgon** ‘wide’ < **örgen*, **rmeen** ‘scum on boiled milk’ < **örüme/n*; (**h** as preinitial:) **hghai** ‘pig’ < **gakai*.

WORD FORMATION

Both nouns and verbs are derived from base nouns and verbs by means of suffixes. Since most of the Mongghul derivative suffixes have cognates in other Mongolic languages, and since many of the actual derivatives were also present already in Proto-Mongolic, it is not always easy to make a judgement of the productivity of the derivational categories. Some examples of the four main classes of derivation are listed below:

Denominal nouns: **.qi** (Naringhol also **.qin**) [occupation, involvement], e.g. **huni** ‘sheep’: **huni.qi** ‘shepherd’, **nasba** ‘ill’ (from Tibetan): **nasba.qi** ‘a permanently ill person’; **.bqi** (Naringhol **.xji**) [cover of or for an object], e.g. **qigi** ‘ear’: **qigi.bqi** ‘cover for the ears’; **.han** ~ **.haan** [diminutive], e.g. **bee** ‘body’ (also **buye**): **bee.haan** ‘small body’, also used with qualitative nouns to moderate the degree of the quality [moderative], e.g. **shge** ‘big’: **shge.haan** ‘rather big’; **.du** [possessive adjectival nouns], e.g. **kuji** ‘strength’: **kuji.du** ‘strong, possessing strength’; **.dii** (Naringhol **.dee**) [id.], formally identical with

the possessive case ending, e.g. **ula** ‘mountain’ : **ula.dii** ‘mountainous’; the suffixes **.du** and **.dii** are used without any discernable difference in function, cf. e.g. **ama** ‘mouth’ : **ama.du** ~ **ama.dii** ‘having a mouth’ > ‘human being’.

Deverbal nouns: **.uur** [instruments], e.g. **kishgi-** ‘to step’ (also **gixgi-**) : **kishg.uur** ‘stair/s’, **.uuri** [abstract qualities], e.g. **xj.ee-** ‘to be ashamed’ : **xj.uuri** ‘shy; shyness’; **.r** [instruments], e.g. **ghadi-** ‘to mow’ : **ghadi.r** ‘sickle’; **.si** (Naringhol **.ze**) [instruments, products], e.g. **ghada-** ‘to drive in’ : **ghada.si** ‘nail’, **nimpu-** ‘to spit’ (also **numpu-**) : **nimpu.si** ‘saliva’; **.g** [results], e.g. **budi-** ‘to paint’ : **budo.g** ‘colour’; **.dal** (Naringhol **.dar**) [processes, results], e.g. **bagha-** ‘to hit’ : **bagha.dal** ‘blow’, **gi-** ‘to do’ : **gi.dal** ‘action, deed’; **.long** [state], e.g. **qadi-** ‘to eat one’s fill’ : **qadi.long** ‘full, satiated’; often, this suffix is combined with the futuritive participle marker **-gu**, e.g. **losi-** ‘to be hungry’ : **losi-gu.long** ‘hunger’; **.xi** [objects], e.g. **ide-** ‘to eat’ : **ide.xi** ‘food’; **.ng** ~ **.ngii** [qualities], e.g. **diuri-** ‘to be full’ : **diuri.ngii** ‘full’; **.mal** (Naringhol **.mar**) [resulting states], e.g. **guru-** ‘to plait’ : **gul.mel** ~ **gul.mal** ‘plaited, plait’.

Denominal verbs: **.la-** [general verbalizer], e.g. **fuuda** ‘sack’ : **fuuda.la-** ‘to put into a sack’, **mori** ‘horse’ : **mori.la-** ‘to ride’, (Chinese **dafa** ‘to send’) : **daafu.la-** ‘to send’, **dasba** ‘faith’ (from Tibetan) : **dasba.la-** ‘to confess a faith’; **.da-** (Naringhol also **.de-**) [general verbalizer], e.g. **sumu** ‘arrow’ : **sumu.da-** ‘to shoot arrows’; no generally predictable semantic difference between **.la-** and **.da-** is discernible, but, with some roots, both suffixes derive verbs with slightly different meanings, cf. e.g. **dau** ‘voice, song’ : **dau.la-** ‘to sing’ vs. **dau.da-** ‘to call’ (both probably lexicalized already in Proto-Mongolic); **.di-** [possession of quality, or change of state, mostly from adjectival nouns], e.g. **purge** ‘difficult’ : **purge.di-** ‘to be/get difficult’, **sulaa** ‘loose’ : **sulaa.di-** ‘to be/get loose’; **.ja** [translative], e.g. **bayaan** ‘rich’ : **bayaan.ja-** ‘to become rich’; **.raa-** [id.], e.g. **haujin** ‘old’ : **hauji.raa-** ‘to get old’; **.qile-** [essive: ‘to act or be like’], e.g. **mongghul**. **qile-** ‘to act like a Mongghul, to speak Mongghul’; **+ki-** ~ **+gi-** [verbalizer, especially frequent on loanwords, including foreign verbal roots], e.g. (Chinese **pa** ‘rake; to rake’) **pa** **+gi-** ‘to use a rake’, (Chinese **laa** ‘to carry away’) : **laa+ki-** ‘to carry’.

Deverbal verbs: **.gha-** ~ (more frequently:) **.lgha-** (Naringhol **.rgha**) [causative], e.g. **uje-** ‘to see’ : **uje.lgha-** ‘to make [somebody] see, to show’, **sau-** ‘to sit’ : **sau.lgha-** ‘to make/let [somebody] sit; to set’, **bosi-** ‘to stand up; to rise’ : **bosi.lgha-** ~ **bosi.gha-** ‘to make [somebody] stand up; to raise’; **.Jdu-** ~ **.Jdi-** ~ **.di-** (Naringhol **.rdi-**) [reciprocal], e.g. **turgu-** ‘to push’ : **turgu.Jdu-** ‘to push each other’, [also used in a cooperative function:] **ala-** ‘to kill’ : **ala.di-** ‘to kill together [with others]’, **.qaghaa-** [pluritative], e.g. **yau-** ‘to go’ : **yau.qaghaa-** ‘to go [of many subjects]’.

All the valence-changing deverbal suffixes are highly productive, but it is noteworthy that the Common Mongolic passive suffixes are absent in Mongghul (as well as in the other languages of the Gansu-Qinghai complex with the exception of Shira Yughur). This may be another manifestation of Tibetan influence, since the neighbouring (morphologically ergative) Amdo Tibetan dialects do not have passives. However, Mongghul does not seem to show any further traces of actual ergativity.

NUMBER AND CASE

Nominal words (nouns and pronouns) in Mongghul take morphological (inflectional) suffixes for number, case, and possession (in this order). A morphologically distinct class of adjectives does not exist; adjectival words follow the regular nominal declension.

Apart from the plural, the singular is also marked by a special suffix, which has the shape **-nge** (= *ngge*, after vowel stems) or **-ge** (after consonant stems), deriving from the

numeral **nige** ‘one’. Though not obligatory, this singular (singulative) marker is normally used in cases where singularity has to be emphasized, e.g. **bulee-nge xelalji honi-nge tuusan yuuguna** ‘a boy went along, sad, driving a sheep’. Functionally, the singular marker is close to an indefinite article. In some cases, especially in combination with the preposited numeral **nige** ‘one’, it can also refer to a contextually definite (specific) object, as in **te yuuji nige ula-nge daaji iiguna** ‘she went and crossed one [particular] mountain’.

The singular suffix can also occur in a second function that could perhaps be characterized as emphatic. In this function, the original singular reference seems to have been obscured. There is also a morphological difference, for while the singular suffix is normally placed immediately after the nominal stem, in the emphatic function it can follow clitically other nominal suffixes, including markers of case and possession. It is even compatible with inherently uncountable (mass) nouns, as in **tani aaguni sze-ni=ngge jujaan** ‘your daughter’s hair is thick’.

For the plural, there are basically two alternative markers: **-sge** ~ **-sgi** ~ (Naringhol) **-hgi** (the latter shape being also common in the written language), and **-ngu** (= *-nggu*) ~ (more commonly:) **-ngu.la** (*-nggula*). No difference in function is discernible between these markers. A further number marker is **-mange**, which indicates a generic plural (‘and other such things’), e.g. **dereni sgee.mange haaji iiguna** ‘he covered himself with felt and some other stuff’. As in other Mongolic languages, countable nouns which are already determined by a numeral or quantifier are not marked for plurality, cf. e.g. **te ger-shdi ghoori yiizi yiina** ‘there are two chairs in the room’ (with **ghoori** ‘two’); **xiree dira ahangi yan yiina** ‘there are some cigarettes on the table’ (with **ahangi** ‘some’).

The case paradigm in Mongghul comprises, apart from the unmarked nominative, seven suffixally marked cases, which may be identified as: connective, dative, locative, ablative, comitative, possessive, and directive (Table 14.4). In this system, the connective represents the syncretized merger of the original genitive and accusative cases. The dative, ablative, comitative, and possessive are likewise of Common Mongolic origin. The directive is shared with Mangghuer, while the locative has a somewhat uncertain cognate in Santa. Some of the case endings have slightly different shapes in the Naringhol dialect. The sources also differ on the vowel of the genitive, dative, and locative endings, which is written as **i** in the literary language, but which also appears as **e** [ɛ] in non-standardized materials. For the locative, a variant with **a** is also attested, though it is not easy to determine its dialectal status.

There is very little morphophonology in nominal stems preceding the case suffixes. However, the unstable */*n* of Proto-Mongolic occasionally appears in some stems in the

TABLE 14.4 MONGGHUL CASE MARKERS

	function	marker	Naringhol
conn.	genitive-accusative	-ni	
dat.	dative-locative	-di	-du
abl.	ablative-comparative	-sa	-za
loc.	locative	-ri	
com.	comitative-instrumental	-la	-ra
poss.	comitative	-dii	
dir.	directive (rare)	-ji	

dative and ablative, e.g. **nara/n* > **nara** ‘sun’: dat. **naran-de**, **terge/n* > **terge** ‘cart’: dat. **tergen.de** ~ **terge-de**: abl. **tergen-se** ~ **terge-se**. Example of a regular paradigm: **imaa** ‘goat’: conn. **imaa-ni**: dat. **imaa-di**: loc. **imaa-ri**: abl. **imaa-sa**: instr. **imaa-la**: poss. **imaa-dii**: dir. **imaa-ji**.

The nominative is the case used for subjects, direct unspecific objects, adnominal attributes and nominal predicates (with a copula), e.g. (subject) **te ghoori caagangzire qa yiina** ‘[there] is tea in these two cups’, (object) **ndee ghal tuleewa** ‘here [they] lit a fire’, (attribute) **funige arasi** ‘fox skin’, (nominal predicate) **ne muni pujig wa** ‘this is my book’.

The connective (genitive-accusative) marks, in its genitival function, various types of adnominal relationship, including possession, e.g. **aawa-ni ger** ‘father’s house’. In its accusative function, the connective indicates a direct specific (in most cases definite) object, e.g. **gan tenge Yinyii pujig-ni muxina** ‘he is reading that English book’.

The dative (dative-locative) is typically used to denote the recipient with verbs of giving or transferring, e.g. **ne bayan kun Niima-di seeri ghuguna** ‘the rich man will give Niima some money’. It also marks the possessor in the *habeo*-construction, e.g. **gan-di taawun bulee yiina** ‘he has five children’. To indicate the location of an action in space or time, both the dative and the locative (proper) can be used, e.g. (dative of place) **bu nenge ayil-di shge ulesanni** ‘I grew up in this village’ (literally: ‘I became big in this village’), (dative of time) **bu maghaxin-di lisse warinii** ‘I do my work in the morning’; (locative of place) **buleengula malse-ri hamdarina** ‘the children are skating on the ice’, (locative of time) **te ghoordi muxigu sara-ri buleenge ireja** ‘the two had a baby last month’ (literally: ‘a baby came to the two last month’). More rarely, some uses of the dative can also be replaced by the directive case.

The ablative indicates the source of a movement, or, in stative expressions, the spatial point of reference, e.g. **tehgi Gansuu-sa resana** ‘they have come from Gansu’, (pronominal example) **nderee-sa darong hulohaana waina** ‘it is still rather far from here’. In the comparative construction, the ablative (ablative-comparative) is used to mark the base of comparison, e.g. (pronominal example) **bu qimi-sa ghoori nasi shge wa** ‘I am two years older than you’.

The Proto-Mongolic instrumental has been lost in Mongghul, but its functions have been taken over by the comitative (comitative-instrumental), e.g. **budahgi tenge fulaan moodan-la naadinii** ‘we are playing with that red ball’. The comitative is also used in its original function to denote co-subjects, e.g. **bu Dorijinsu-la naadinii** ‘I am playing with Dorijinsu’. More rarely, the comitative function is expressed by the possessive case, based on the denominal derivative suffix of possessive adjectival nouns, cf. e.g. (poss. refl.) **mori daaha-dii-naa fugua xija** ‘the horse died together with its foal’. In adnominal use, the possessive derivatives are common, but need not be analysed as case forms, e.g. **tash.dii ula** ‘rocky mountain’.

Double declension is a marginal phenomenon in Mongghul. The only somewhat more common accumulation of two cases is the locative-ablative in **-ri-sa** ~ **-ra-sa**, as in **qi dunsinaa terge-ra-sa buulgha** ‘unload your things from the cart!’.

NUMERALS

The ‘literary’ shapes of the cardinal numerals of the first decade are: **1 nige**, **2 ghoor** ~ **ghoori**, **3 ghuran** ~ **ghuraan**, **4 deeren** ~ **deeran**, **5 tawun** ~ **taawun**, **6 jirghoon** ~ **jirighun**, **7 duloon** ~ **duluun**, **8 naiman** ~ **niiman**, **9 shzin**, **10 harwan** ~ **haran**. The

corresponding decades are expressed as: 20 **hurin**, 30 **hujin**, 40 **tijin**, 50 **tayin**, 60 **jiran**, 70 **dalan**, 80 **nayan**, 90 **yerin** ~ **yiran**, 100 **jong** ~ **jang**. The items for the higher powers of 10 are: 1,000 **menhen**, 10,000 **tumun**, 100,000 **mbun** (from Tibetan), 1,000,000 **sayaa** (likewise from Tibetan). The Naringhol dialect has slightly deviating shapes for 5 **taawen**, 7 **doloon**, 8 **neeman**, 9 **shzen**, 20 **horin**, 30 **hojin**, 40 **tejin**, 1,000 **minghen**, 10,000 **tumeen**, 100,000 **mben**. The intermediate numerals are formed by simply juxtaposing the items for the decades with those for the digits, e.g. 11 **haran nige**, 47 **tijin duloon**.

Diachronically, it may be noted that all the native numerals from 3 **ghuran** ~ **ghuraan** upwards preserve the original stem-final unstable */n/. This segment is, however, not preserved in 1 **nige** < *nige/n ~ *nike/n. In 100 **jong** < *jaxu/n, apparently due to the secondary monosyllabicity of the stem, an exceptional development */n > ng has taken place. The items 2 **ghoor** ~ **ghoori**, 4 **deeran**, and 5 **taawun** are taxonomically important, since they presuppose original shapes different from the Common Mongolic ones: *koxar instead of *koyar, *derbe/n instead of *dörbe/n, and *ta(x)abu/n instead of *tabu/n. The origin of these special shapes remains unexplained, but they are shared (as far as documented) by all the Mongolic languages of the Gansu-Qinghai complex.

Ordinal numerals are formed by the suffix **.dar** ~ **.dari**, before which the final nasal of the numeral stems is preserved, e.g. **deeran.dar/i**, ‘fourth’, **niiman.dar/i** ‘eighth’. Other numeral derivatives include the diminutives in **.han** (with the final nasal preserved), e.g. **ghuraan.han** ‘only three’, and the collectives in **.la** (with the final nasal dropped), also used as distributives, e.g. **ghuraa.la** ‘three together; by threes’. Simple juxtaposition of consecutive numerals results in an approximative meaning, e.g. **deeran tawun** ‘about four or five’.

PRONOUNS

The personal pronouns (Table 14.5) show certain deviations from the usual patterns of nominal inflection. Most of these deviations, including phenomena such as heteroclisism and suppletion, are of Common Mongolic origin. There are, however, also some regionally more restricted secondary innovations peculiar to the languages of the Gansu–Qinghai complex, or even more specifically to Mongghul alone.

TABLE 14.5 MONGGHUL PERSONAL PRONOUNS

		1p.		2p.
sg.	nom.	bu	ndaa	qi
	gen.	mu-ni	ndaa-ni	qi-ni
	acc.		ndaa	qimu
	dat.		ndaa	qimii
	abl.		ndaa-sa	qima-sa
	com.		ndaa-la	qimu-la
	obl.		ndaa-	qimi-
pl.	nom.	buda(sge)	ndaa(sge)	ta(sge)
	gen.	budasge-ni	ndaa(sge)-ni	ta(sge)-ni
	acc.	budasge-ni	ndaasge-ni	tasge-ni
	obl.	budas(ge)-	ndaas(ge)-	tas(ge)-

Perhaps most importantly, the genitive is preserved as a distinct form in the declension of the singular pronouns, as well as, facultatively, in the second person plural. On the other hand, there is a tendency to merge the accusative and dative forms of the singular pronouns. In the first person singular, the dative form **ndaa** (< **nama-da*) is used as a new nominative, from which an entire paradigm, both singular and plural, can be formed. The second person singular stem follows more closely the Common Mongolic pattern, but shows irregular alternations in the final vowel of the oblique stem **qima-** : **qimu-** : **qimi-**.

The plural pronouns contain, though not obligatorily, a plural marker, which is most often **-sge** (in inflected forms occasionally shortened to **-s-**) or **-hgi**, but also **-ngula**. There is no distinction between an exclusive and an inclusive form in the first person plural; etymologically, the pronoun **buda** represents the inclusive stem (< **bida*).

Among the oblique forms of the personal pronouns, the directive is exceptionally based on the dative (double declension: dative-directive): sg. 1p. **ndaa-ji** : 2p. **qimi-ji** : pl. 1p. **budasge-di-ji** ~ **ndaasge-di-ji** : 2p. **tasge-di-ji**. A locative form, based on the genitive stem (genitive-locative), is only attested in the Naringhol dialect: sg. 1p. **mu-ni-ri** : 2p. **qi-ni-ri** : pl. 1p. **ndaa-ni-ri** : 2p. **ta-ni-ri**. Another feature of the Naringhol dialect is the use of the second person singular dative stem **qimii** also in the function of the accusative, and as the basis for the whole oblique paradigm: acc. dat. **qimii** : abl. **qimii-za** ~ **qimi-za** : com. **qimii-la**.

For the third person, the demonstrative pronouns **ne** ‘this’ : pl. **ne-sge** and **te** ‘that’ : pl. **te-sge** are generally used. However, the written language also makes frequent use of a special third person personal pronoun, which has the shape **gan** ‘he, she’. This pronoun has regular cognates in Shira Yughur and Mangghuer, and it seems to derive from the Common Mongolic regular noun **irgen* ‘people’, though the details of the pronominalization process remain unclear. Possibly, it could have first developed into an indefinite pronoun (‘somebody’). In earlier sources on Mongghul the word appears as **rgen** ~ **rgan**, glossed as ‘[the] other [one]’.

Morphologically, the demonstrative stems **ne** : **te** are inflected like nouns, except that they have the oblique stems **nen-** : **ten-** in all case forms other than the comitative. The directive forms are based on the corresponding datives. The full singular paradigm may be illustrated as: **te** : conn. **te-ni** : dat. **ten-di** : abl. **ten-sa** : com. **te-la** : poss. **ten-dii** : dat. dir. **ten-di-ji**. The plural forms have no idiosyncracies.

Other pronouns include the interrogatives **ken** ‘who’, **yaan** ‘what’, and **ali** ‘which’, all of which have a regular nominal paradigm. The function of a reflexive pronoun is filled by **njeen** (< **ejen* ‘master’), e.g. **bu njeen honinaa daaldini** ‘I will sell my sheep myself’.

POSSESSIVE SUFFIXES

A third person possessor, with no differentiation between the singular and plural, may be marked on nouns by means of the Common Mongolic suffix **-ni**, which follows the case endings. The possessor itself is in the connective case, which, incidentally, also ends in **-ni**, e.g. (conn. + px 3p.) **tehgi-ni honi-ni meelaji yuuma** ‘their sheep keep bleating’, **te bayan kun-ni zanjin xjun-ni jiilaxjiiguna** ‘the rich man’s beautiful daughter is angry’.

The possessive suffix can also be attached to the connective case ending, which then may take the shape **-nii-**, as in (conn. px 3p., with the connective in the accusative function) **te te bawog deel-nii-ni xraijinguna** ‘she burns the frog’s clothes’ (example taken from the written language). However, the possessive suffix does not seem to be

compatible with the predicative markers **-na** (objective) or **-ni** (subjective), indicating nominal predicates. Nominal predicates are, thus, unmarked for the category of possession, as in (pred. obj.) **ne budahgi-ni ayili-ni zhopen-na** ‘this is a photograph of our village’.

For the marking of reflexive possession, with reference to the subject of the sentence, the reflexive marker **-naa** (sometimes shortened to **-na** in the literary language) is used, e.g. (dat. refl.) **qigulong bu aaga-de-naa gesnenge jurwa** ‘last night I wrote a letter to my uncle’. The connective ending (in both the accusative and the genitive function) is omitted before the reflexive marker, e.g. **ne bawog bawog deelhgi-naa tiilisza** ‘the frog took off its frog clothes’. The reflexive marker can also be attached to postpositions, e.g. **bu gesnen turo-naa jauxang da kede qigiji xjilghawa** ‘I sent a few pictures in[side of] my letter’. Furthermore, a reflexive form can be preceded by the reflexive pronoun **njee-**, in which case the pronoun can also receive the reflexive marker, e.g. **njee-naa luusa-naa tani kudi geewa** ‘I left my *own* mule in your house’.

Exceptionally, the reflexive marker can be attached to a noun that is not possessed by the grammatical subject, as in (abl. refl.) **teni hurire-sa-naa qisi gharaja** ‘his fingers are bleeding’ (literally: ‘blood is coming out of his fingers’). This could superficially indicate an incipient conflation of the categories of direct and reflexive possession in Mongghul. Another possible interpretation – pending further investigation – is that it is not the syntactic subject, but, rather, the pragmatic topic, that controls the use of the reflexive marker in Mongghul.

FINITE VERBAL FORMS

In accordance with the Common Mongolic pattern, verbal forms in Mongghul can be divided into imperatives, participles, converbs, and finite indicative forms. Imperatives and finite indicative forms can only occur as predicates of main clauses. Participles can also be used as finite predicates, but their basic function is to modify nouns. Converbs indicate predications subordinate to that of the main clause.

Altogether, Mongghul has five suffixally marked finite forms (Table 14.6), three of which belong to the imperative (modal) sphere, while the other two are indicative (temporal-aspectual) forms. Additionally, there is the basic zero-marked imperative, indicating straight commands directed at the second person (both singular and plural), e.g. (sg.) **(qi) maha ide** ‘(you) eat meat!’, (pl.) **tasge ndeexi re** ‘you, come here!’. A wish or determination referring to the first person is expressed by the Common Mongolic voluntative in **-ya**, e.g. **bu qimu kile-ya** ‘let me tell you!’, **amadi sagha-ya** ‘let us ask mother!’. For the third person, an innovative form in **-la(h)gi** is used, e.g. **te yausa, yaulahgi** ‘if he goes, let him go!’. The origin of the suffix **-la(h)gi** remains unclear, but it

TABLE 14.6 MONGGHUL FINITE VERBAL MARKERS

	function	marker
vol.	voluntative 1p.	-ya
	concessive 3p.	-la(h)gi
dub.	dubitative	-gu(i)jee
narr.	non-past tense	-m
term.	past tense	-wa

obviously consists of two elements, the first of which (**-la-**) is formally identical with the final converb marker (or also the Common Mongolic confirmative marker), while the second (**-hgi**) might represent the permissive marker **-gV* otherwise unattested in Mongghul (but present in Mangghuer).

The last form of the imperative sphere is the dubitative, which seems to be connected with the Common Mongolic form with the same function, e.g. **nohui jau-gujee** ‘the dog may bite!’ (or: ‘let it not happen that the dog bites!’, ‘I hope the dog will not bite’).

The two finite indicative forms represent the Common Mongolic narrative and terminative. In Mongghul, these forms may be characterized as temporal. The narrative functions as a present tense and refers to actions occurring either at the time of speaking, actions going to occur in the immediate future, or general facts, e.g. **budangula ayildi xji-m** ‘we are going to the village’, ‘we shall now go to the village’, **tingere mude-m** ‘heaven knows’. The terminative, correspondingly, expresses the past tense and refers to actions that have taken place before the moment of speaking, e.g. **te mori funiji re-wa** ‘he came riding on horseback’, **bu tene aabaneni tani-wa** ‘I recognized his father’.

NON-FINITE VERBAL FORMS

The system of non-finite verbal forms in Mongghul (Table 14.7) comprises three participles and eight converbs, all of which have counterparts in other Mongolic languages. In particular, very similar systems are present in the other languages of the Gansu-Qinghai complex (with the exception of Shira Yughur). The differences between the Halchighol and Naringhol dialects are confined to minor phonetic details.

The three participles are formally identical with the Common Mongolic futuritive, perfective, and agentive participles, respectively. The widest range of uses is characteristic of the futuritive participle, which in Mongghul basically represents the imperfective aspect. When used before a noun, this form functions as an adnominal attribute, e.g. **uro-gu ude** ‘a door by which one enters’, **qi fugu-gu oolija** ‘it is time for you to die’. When used independently, it functions as a substantival head noun, which can take case endings. The accusative ending, for instance, indicates an embedded clause in object position, e.g. (Naringhol) **noyoon re-gu-ni bu yii mudem** ‘I don’t know when the prince will come’.

TABLE 14.7 MONGGHUL NON-FINITE VERBAL MARKERS

		function	marker	Naringhol
part.	fut.	imperfective	-gu/n	
	perf.	perfective	-san	-zan
	ag.	habitive	-jin	
conv.	mod.	modifying	-n	
	imperf.	anterior	-ji	
	perf.	anterior	-aa	
	cond.	temporal-conditional	-sa	-za
	conc.	concessive	-sa=da	-za=da
	term.	simultaneous	-delaa	
	fin.	final	-la	
abtemp.	progressive	-saar		

Two quasiconverbial forms based on the futuritive participle, but synchronically already distanced from it, are the obscured reflexive dative in **-gun-da** and the comitative in **-gu-la ~ -gu-laa**. The former comes close in function to the final converb ('in order to'), e.g. **bu bazar uje-gun-da rewa** 'I have come to see the village', while the latter is identical with the Common Mongolic 'successive converb', e.g. **nara ghari-gu-la te kun rewa** 'as soon as the sun rose, that person came'.

The perfective participle is mainly used adnominally, e.g. **fugu-san kun** 'a dead person', (Naringhol) **bu honi-zan mori kujiduwa** 'the horse I rode was strong'. The same is true of the agentive participle, which functionally corresponds to the habitive aspect, e.g. **lisgesa ayi-jin kuun** 'a person who shies away from work'. Independent use is, however, also possible, though rare, e.g. (Naringhol) **ndaa dagha-jin oluona** '[those who] follow me are numerous'.

In the converbial system, the basic triplet is formed by the modal, imperfective, and perfective converbs. The modal converb encodes contents that may be seen as modifications or specifications of that of the main verb, with both actions taking place at the same time, e.g. **aama suulghani wari-n gharaa xjiwa** 'mother went out, holding the bucket'. Often, the modal converb is close in function to a mere adverb with verbal semantics, and its meaning can be intensified by reduplication, e.g. **ayi-n ayi-n xjiguna** 'he will go in full fear' (literally: 'fearing, fearing').

The imperfective and perfective converbs indicate usually, but not invariably, an action temporally preceding that of the main verb, e.g. (conv. imperf.) **bu ghari-ji lisse warwa** 'I went off and started to work', (conv. perf.) **qi morini fuy-aa ger dooro re** 'attach the horse and come into [literally: 'under'] the house!'. From such examples, it appears that the two forms are more or less synonymous, with little left of the original aspectual difference between them. Also without any obvious functional difference, the marker of the perfective converb is frequently expanded by the element **-nu**, e.g. **aama lantunaa urgu-a[a]-nu, ghajir baghala gharaa xjiwa** 'mother took the hammer and went to break stones'.

The conditional converb functions as a true conditional ('if') only when combined with a main predicate in a non-past form, e.g. **hura uro-sa budangula ayildi lii xjim** 'if it rains, we will not go to the village'. In combination with a past tense form it marks a temporal clause ('when'), e.g. (Naringhol) **hariji re-za kudi dexini wara geja** 'when they came back, there was a meal [waiting for them]'. When expanded by the particle **=da**, the conditional converb assumes the role of the concessive converb ('although'), e.g. **nohui huja-sa=da kuni lii juum** 'although the dog barks, it will not bite people'.

The terminative converb indicates an action that is performed at the same time as that of the main verb ('while'), but by a different subject, e.g. **bu ndee re-dela te gharua xjiwa** 'while I was [on my way] coming here, he went off', **bu ide-dela noyoon re-wa** 'while I was eating, the prince came'. A progressive action performed by the same subject as that of the main verb is expressed by the abtemporal converb (originally a quasiconverb), e.g. **kuu bulee qigharaa-saar yuuna** 'the boy keeps crying while walking'; also with an auxiliary, e.g. **ghada kii tuu-saar wa** 'outside the wind keeps blowing'. There are, however, also examples of subject change after the abtemporal converb, e.g. **nara gar-saar hura urona** 'when the sun rises, it rains'. The final converb, which indicates a goal or purpose, seems to be used in same-subject constructions only, e.g. **kuu bulee buruu yeri-la xjiwa** 'the boy went off to look for the calf', **aadee uje-la xjija** 'grandfather went to have a look'.

From the diachronic point of view, it may be noted that the conditional converb in **-sa** (**-sa**) and the final converb in **-la** (**-la**) are typical regional features of the Gansu-Qinghai

complex, though they very possibly have Common Mongolic connections. The form of the perfective converb in **-aa** (irregularly shortened from **-xAd*) and the functions of the abtemporal converb in **-saar** (< **-gsA-xAr*) are also likely to involve specific innovations which either areally or genetically unite Mongghul with the other languages of the Gansu-Qinghai complex.

THE CATEGORY OF PERSPECTIVE

Another areal feature characteristic of Mongghul and some of its neighbours (notably Mangghuer and Bonan, as well as Amdo Tibetan) is the category of perspective (also known as ‘evidentiality’). This is a discourse-related category in which finite predicates are divided into two formally distinct series, representing the so-called subjective and objective (or ‘conjunct’ and ‘disjunct’) perspectives. The distinction concerns copulas/existentials, finite indicative forms, and participles in finite use.

In Mongghul, the marking of the two perspectives is formally very consistent, in that the subjective forms all end in **-i**, while the objective forms end in **-a**. This pattern also embraces the copulas/existentials. It is therefore possible to speak simply of **i**-forms (subjective) and **a**-forms (objective), both of which are, in principle, opposed to forms unmarked for the category of perspective. In practice, the marking of perspective is obligatory in the copulas/existentials, since they have no corresponding unmarked forms. It is also obligatory in finitely used participles, since the unmarked participles cannot be used as finite predicates. In the finite indicative forms, perspective marking is optional.

In spite of its basic consistency, the system of perspective markers (Table 14.8) involves some formal complications. Most importantly, the indicative forms marked for perspective do not correspond materially to the unmarked narrative and terminative forms. Thus, the marker **-m** of the narrative is replaced by **-n-** in the corresponding perspective-marked forms, while the marker **-wa** of the terminative is replaced by **-j-**. The diachronic origin of the elements **-n-** and **-j-** is rather obvious, for they are likely to represent the Common Mongolic finite durative and resultative endings (**-nA-* and **-ji-*), which were secondarily adapted to the general pattern of the perspective-marked **i**-forms and **a**-forms. Alternatively, they might derive from a combination of the modal and imperfective converb markers (**-n* and **-ji*) with the copulas **ii** and **wa**.

In earlier treatments of Mongghul and other relevant languages of the Gansu-Qinghai region, the category of perspective was mostly misinterpreted as a system of personal agreement of verbs. Thus, we find **i**-forms and **a**-forms, like part. ag. subj. **sur-jin-i** of **sur-** ‘to learn’ and part. fut. obj. **xji-gu-a** of **xji-** ‘to go’, classified as ‘first person’ and

TABLE 14.8 MONGGHUL PERSPECTIVE MARKERS

	unmarked	subjective	objective
cop./exist.		ii	wa
exist. neg.		gu-i	gu-a
narr. (dur.)	-m	-n-ii	-n-a
term. (res.)	-wa	-j-i	-j-a
part. fut.	-gu/n	-gu(n)-i	-gu(n)-a
perf.	-san	-san-i	-san-a
ag.	-jin	-jin-n-i	-jin-n-a

‘second and third person’, respectively. Indeed, it is true that **i**-forms are most often used in reference to the first person, while **a**-forms are used in reference to the second or third person. However, both groups of forms can be found with all persons, as in (subjective with 2p. sg.) **qi xji-gun-i** ‘you will go’, (objective with 1p. sg.) **bu xji-gu-a** ‘I will go’. One syntactic context in which **i**-forms are routinely used in reference to second person participants is formed by interrogative sentences, e.g. **shdaaghu yerla xjigun-i, qi anji xjigu-i** ‘I am going to fetch firewood, where are you going?’.

The functional core of the differentiation between the subjective and objective perspectives may roughly be described as the declared presence or absence of complete knowledge concerning the content of the predication on the part of the speaker. The fact that speakers are prototypically aware of their own actions, including the motivations which led to them, accounts for the frequent use of subjective forms in combination with the first person. Even so, objective forms may also be used, for instance, when the speaker wishes to convey that s/he only at the moment of speaking realizes or remembers having carried out some particular action, e.g. **bu te pujigni mox-j-a, mox-j-a** ‘this book, yes, I read it’, cf. also the existentials in **ndaa seer ii** ‘I have money (and I know it very well)’ vs. **ndaa seer wa** ‘I have indeed money (rather surprisingly for myself)’.

The speaker may also use objective forms of his/her own actions when they are unintentional or uncontrolled, e.g. **bu shdoo ool-j-a** ‘I have become old (and I cannot do anything about it)’. An exact translation of a sentence like **bu xji-gu-a** ‘I will go’ would therefore be something like ‘I will go willy-nilly’, ‘I will go, but it is not my decision to do so, I have to go’. Another possible interpretation would be ‘I will perhaps go’, adding a shade of uncertainty to the predication.

The use of subjective forms with a non-first-person reference is common in sentences containing a reproach, as in **qi ab-san-i** ‘you did take it (contrary to what you assert yourself)’, **qi shge dendergiinge-ii** ‘you are a big idiot’. A subjective form may also indicate that the speaker regards him/herself as being in control of someone else’s actions, e.g. **qi xji-gun-i** ‘you will go (willy-nilly), I decide that you go, I order you to go’. In some cases the use of a subjective form is apparently conditioned by the presence of a first-person modifier to a non-first-person subject, as in **muni ama fulaan deelge mos-j-i** ‘my mother wears a red dress’.

SYNTAX

The order of the basic constituents in Mongghul clauses follows a rather rigid subject–object–verb (SOV) pattern. Modifying elements always precede their heads, and sentences always end in a finite verb, while subordinate clauses end in a non-finite verbal form.

Negation and interrogation are expressed by particles. The negative particles precede the verb which they negate. Imperative forms are negated by **bii**, e.g. **mahani bii ide** ‘do not eat [the] meat!’, while for participles, converbs, and finite indicative forms, the particle **lii** (Naringhol **yii**) is used, e.g. (part. fut. obj.) **lii uro-gun-a** ‘it will not rain’, (conv. cond.) **qi teni lii durala-sa** ‘if you do not like this’. Finite verbs can, however, also be negated by placing the negative existential subj. **gu-i** : obj. **gu-a** after them, e.g. **bu Gashijunni sgeja gu-i** ‘I have not seen Gashijun’.

General questions are formed by means of the question particle **uu**, e.g. **ne pujig qini uu** ‘is this book yours?’. This particle also appears in the cliticized shapes =**nuu** and (after copulas) =**yuu**, e.g. **tani beeri qidar ugo mudena=nuu** ‘does your wife know Chinese?’, **seen shdag ii=yuu, muu shdag ii=yuu** ‘is it a good sign, [or] is it a bad sign?’.

A special type of syntactic bond exists between postpositions and their head words. Most postpositions can simply follow the unmarked nominal stem (nominative), but they can also govern one of several other cases. The most common postpositions (with the cases they govern) include: (nom. or conn. +) **dere** ‘[up]on’, **dooro** ‘under’, **madu** ‘as, like’, **taada** ‘near, beside’, **xjaghaadi** ‘on [top of]’, **xjiidi** ‘between’; (nom. or conn. or abl. +) **huino** ‘behind, after’, **turo** ‘in[side of]’; (nom. or dat. +) **kurdelaa** ‘until, up to’; (nom. or conn. or poss. +) **dali** ‘like, as much as’; (conn. +) **ghada** ‘outside of’, **kamaandi** ‘instead of’, **sdaar** ‘according to’, **urondi** ‘instead of’; (abl. +) **holo** ‘far from’, **mendi** ‘apart from’; (poss. +) **hamdu** ‘together with’. Although synchronically most postpositions may be regarded as invariant particles, some of them (originally nominal words with a case paradigm) may take case endings themselves, cf. e.g. (abl.) **tash dooro-sa** ‘from under the stone’.

LEXICON

The lexicon of Mongghul contains, apart from an inherited stock of native Mongolic etyma, a considerable number of loanwords, especially from Tibetan. Tibetan loanwords have been entering the language for many centuries, and most of them show peculiarities of the surrounding Amdo Tibetan dialects. The Tibetan loanwords may also be seen as responsible for introducing to Mongghul (as well as to most of the other Mongolic languages of the Gansu-Qinghai complex) new phonotactic patterns, including the initial clusters.

The Tibetan layer in the Mongghul lexicon is by no means limited to the religious sphere, but comprises terms for many other kinds of cultural and everyday concepts as well, e.g. **marghu** ‘butter’, **nangsaa** ‘breakfast’, **smanba** ~ **smambaa** ‘(medical) doctor’. There are even a few basic words borrowed from Tibetan. e.g. **yer** ‘summer’. It may be noted that, because of secondary divergent phonological developments, many Tibetan loanwords in Mongghul are already formally different from the corresponding words in the local Amdo Tibetan dialects. The knowledge of Tibetan as a second language has probably never embraced more than a fraction of the Mongghul-speaking population.

The influence of Chinese on Mongghul is also of a considerable age and depth, though it is much more pronounced in Mangghuer. More recently, Chinese has largely replaced Tibetan as the main source of lexical innovation, especially in spheres relating to modern technology and urban life. The knowledge of Chinese, both local Qinghai Mandarin and standard Mandarin, seems to be spreading rapidly among the younger generation of Mongghul speakers.

There are also a few Turkic loanwords in Mongghul, notably **tash** ‘stone’, apparently received from an ancestor of the nearby Salar language. Additionally, part of the Mongghul lexicon still remains diachronically obscure and may derive from yet other, unknown languages. Even so, the bulk of all Mongghul words, especially in the realm of culture-independent basic vocabulary, but also in a field like agricultural terminology, has a Common Mongolic background. In many cases, it is only the drastically altered phonological shape of the words that makes them difficult to identify with their regular Mongolic cognates.

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