

# *The Game between Shamanism and Sakya School: the Cultural Identity Significance of “Liangzhou Alliance” to Han, Tibetan and Mongolian Nationalities*

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**Abstract:** In the post-Genghis Khan era, the main way to maintain the regime of The Yuan Dynasty was no longer military conquest. With the increasingly close ethnic integration, the Yuan Empire was in urgent need of a religion that could be generally accepted by the people to promote cultural identity and maintain the unity of the multi-ethnic country. In 1247, the “Liangzhou Alliance” between Broadan, the third son of Ogodei, emperor Taizong of Yuan Dynasty, and Sakya Pandita, the religious leader of the later Tibetan region of Tibet, was not only a symbolic event that Tibet was incorporated into The territory of China, but also the beginning of the introduction of Tibetan Buddhism from The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau to the Mongolian Plateau through Liangzhou. This change is essentially the result of the game between Shamanism and Sakya. It is helpful to explore the cultural identity significance of “Liangzhou Alliance” to the Han, Tibetan and Mongolian nationalities by investigating the transformation process of the rulers' belief from Shamanism to Tibetan Buddhism (Sakya school) in the Yuan Dynasty.

## 1. Introduction

Regarding the definition of Genghis Khan culture, we cannot confine ourselves to Genghis Khan. Mr. Ge Menghe pointed out in the “Introduction to Mongolian Culture”: “The organic combination of native culture and foreign culture is a dialectic manifested in Genghis Khan’s cultural consciousness, and it also reveals the basic way to promote the enrichment and development of Mongolian culture. The three generations of Genghis Khan’s conquest practice pushed Mongolian culture to the stage of world history.... He also saw the defects and shortcomings of the national culture, so with a broad mind and an open mind, he proactively tolerated and absorbed foreign culture and formed it. The new situation of cultural exchange and integration is also very successful

in enriching and developing the culture of the nation. He respects the cultures of all nations, advocates and implements the ideas and policies of cultural equality..... Protecting religions for human culture, and for the world today The three major religions, namely Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, have created favorable conditions.” It is precisely because of this vision and courage that the culture of Genghis Khan has been enriched for thousands of years and has become more innovative over time. Mr. Chen Yuning defines the connotation of Genghis Khan culture in two aspects: “One is the various cultural phenomena produced by the great historical changes in Genghis Khan era, including ideology, social system, science and technology, religious art, classical writings, folk customs, etc. The second is the inheritance and research of these cultural phenomena, as well as the worship and sacrifice of Genghis Khan, etc. In fact, the research on these contents has been carried out for a long time, and many results have been accumulated, but as a specific 'Genghis Khan culture' The understanding and definition of the field is still preliminary, and obviously still needs to be explored and improved in depth.” The grand narrative and broad vision are in line with the spirit of Genghis Khan culture. “Why did Genghis Khan's actions and the historical influence it brought continue to this day, and have become the main content of the Mongolian historical tradition?” This profound historical phenomenon is a profound reflection, so we will examine the “Genghis Khan culture” today. We should not look at it. Only confined to Ordos; confined to the Mongolian plateau; confined to the Yuan empire of the year, but should look at the world and discover some of the problems that were born in the era of Genghis Khan that deserve our special attention but are often overlooked. This is what I learned from Shamanism and Sakya Sect. The starting point for thinking about the great historical significance of the “Liangzhou League” from the perspective of gameplay, without the unification movement launched by Genghis Khan on the Eurasian continent, there would be no such spiritual confluence of the later generations of Mongolia and Tibet.

## 2. Broad End and Saban: the Alliance of the Wise

Before explaining the world-renowned meeting between Kuo Duan and Saban, Liangzhou should be briefly explained as a medium of Mongolian-Tibetan exchanges.

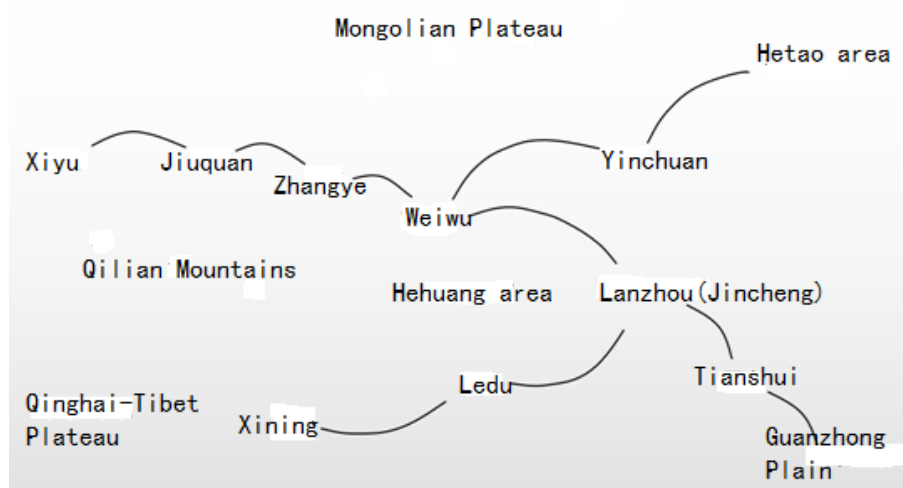


Fig.1 Schematic Diagram of Liangzhou and Surrounding Areas

As shown in the above picture, the hinterland of Liangzhou is in Wuwei City, Gansu Province. Its southwest is separated from the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau by the Qilian Mountains, and the

Mongolian Plateau is seen from the north. It is the intersection of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and the Mongolian Plateau. A historic change has taken place in the relations between Mongolia and Tibet. Professor Xu Zhaoshou of Northwest Normal University said that the “Liangzhou League” was “a major turning point in the history of the relationship between Tibet and the central dynasty. It is a historical testimony to Tibet's inclusion in the Chinese territory.” The issue of belonging has also promoted the political, cultural, and religious exchanges among the Han, Mongolian, Tibetan and other ethnic groups, which has affected the political and cultural patterns of China since then, and has written a strong mark in the history of Chinese ethnic relations. .” Praised the alliance between Saban and Broad Duan as “the alliance of the wise.”

### 3. Shaman and Sakya: the Result of the Game

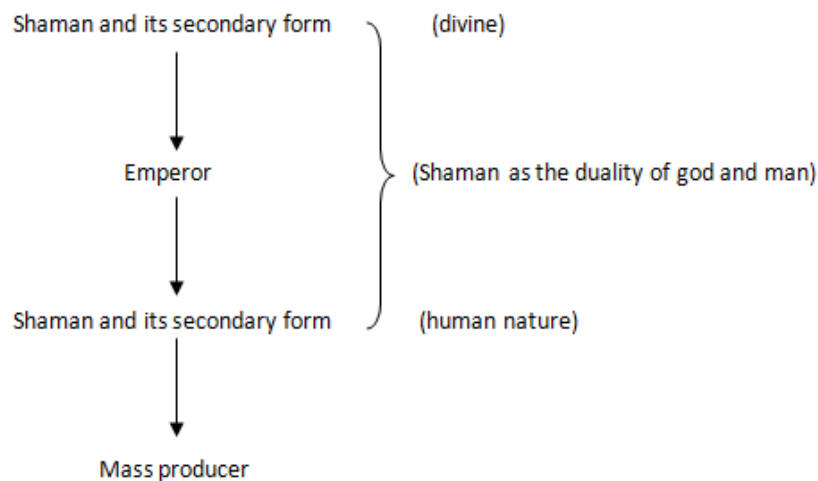
It is generally believed that the historical significance of the alliance between Sakya Panzhi and the broad-minded prince Liangzhou is that Tibet belongs to the Yuan Dynasty to complete national reunification, and it is a sign of Tibet's incorporation into the territory of China. This is its great political significance. But the cultural influence of Liangzhou Huimeng is even more profound and lasting. Saban cured the stubborn illness of the Mongolian prince Kuoduan and established a good relationship with the Mongolian royal family; the meeting between Kuoduan and Saban adjusted the relationship between Shamanism and Tibetan Buddhism, and Tibetan Buddhism began to influence Mongolia from top to bottom; The class teaching the Fa in Liangzhou was the first stop for Tibetan Buddhism to spread from the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau to the Mongolian Plateau. It was the beginning of the confluence of Mongolian and Tibetan spirits. Since then, Mongolia and Tibet have added a new common cultural foundation.

In essence, the transformation of Mongolian belief from Shamanism to Tibetan Buddhism is the result of the game. There are four main reasons for the change.

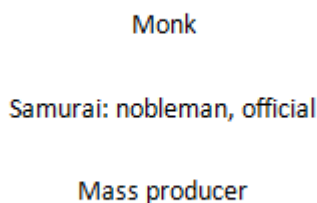
#### 3.1 Changes in the Social Structure Are the Root Cause

Shamanism is “a late form of primitive religion. It is named after the shamans of the various tribes of the Manchu-Tungus language group”. It was formed in the later period of primitive society. It has obvious tribal and tribal religious characteristics. Annihilation. It is believed that humans have three souls with different performances.” Shamanism, a religious form in primitive society, has caused various discomforts after Mongolia entered the feudal era. This point is the “Buddhism dispute” between Bon and Buddhism in Tibetan areas. , The two are quite similar, and in the end both ended up with the primitive religion as a cultural heritage withdrawing from the stage of history. The social relationship model of Shamanism is the “noble-serf” relationship; while the Tibetan Buddhism is the “donor-futian” relationship, which is obviously much more advanced. Mr. Zhang Yahui divided these two civilization modes into Indo-European mode and Shaman mode. He pointed out: “Iliad sees the witchcraft component of Lamaism more clearly as a connection with Shamanism. Regarding this point, Sammy Geoffrey Samuel also emphasized a lot. He said: 'Clerical Buddhism (Clerical Buddhism) is everywhere, but it must coexist with what I call Shamanic Buddhism (Shamanic Buddhism) and be attached to the latter in many ways. In Tibet In the context, Shaman Buddhism and Clerical Buddhism pointed out the two forms or two methods of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon Religion in teaching, rituals, and practice.' From the perspective of the structure of religious concepts, the insights of the above-mentioned scholars are beyond doubt. However, from the perspective of social structure, it should be emphasized that regardless of the morphological differentiation of Buddhism itself, a hierarchical structure based on the Fukuda-donor relationship has replaced the noble-serf structure before the dark period and has become the key to understanding Tibetan society. “In the deep social strata, the shaman civilization is expressed

as “imperial power, witch power and civil rights”; while Tibetan Buddhism is expressed as “monks-warriors: noble officials-producers and masses.” Mr. Zhang Yahui called it: “This It is a near-standard Indo-European triple-function structure” The schematic diagram of the model is as follows:



*Fig.2 Shaman Mode*



*Fig.3 Tibetan Buddhism Model*

### 3.2 The Territory of the Yuan Dynasty is Unprecedentedly Vast, and Multi-Ethnic Beliefs Are the Basis for Reality.

The territory of the Yuan Dynasty was the largest period in Chinese history, with many ethnic groups and complicated religious beliefs among the people. In the process of Genghis Khan’s conquest of other regions, he discovered that there were Islam, Christianity, Shamanism, Buddhism, Taoism, and other world religions. Shamanism was not the only one in the world. Shamanism did a lot of effort when it accompanied Genghis Khan to fight the world, but in Mongolian Khan. After the country was established, the contradictions became prominent. For example: “The great heroes who supported Genghis Khan's accession to the throne are wide...Because they are not satisfied with their own welfare benefits, they actually hold the special status of the shaman, and begin to expand their personal power, which poses a great threat to Genghis Khan's ruling regime. He often ranted to Genghis Khan, and even wanted to be equal to Genghis Khan. Genghis Khan was afraid to use his special position to instigate rebellion and usurp power in the name of God, and quickly found an excuse to kill him.” At the same time, Shu Mr. Erlin also pointed out: “Through the handling of these personnel, it can be seen that Genghis Khan clearly realized that if he wants to keep his throne, he cannot allow any shaman who “represents the word of heaven and gives orders

to others” to control him. Otherwise, once the shaman develops alienation in order to gain personal gain, then his “sovereign power” will face the danger of changing hands. Instead of being restricted by others, it is better to start first. So Genghis Khan began to gradually weaken the shaman in the court. The leadership status of the people, and some restrictions on the shaman. Although Genghis Khan imposed a series of restrictions on Shamanism, after all, this religion has a long history and has taken root in the hearts of the people. Therefore, Genghis Khan cannot completely get rid of it. Shamanism’s constraints on the political system. As the Mongolian cavalry continued to conquer and expand, Genghis Khan’s vision became wider and wider and he had contact with more religious sects. He gradually realized that shamanism is not the only way to rule the people. At the same time, this ancient religion is no longer suitable to serve as a spiritual weapon to control and rule the many nations under the control of the huge Mongol Empire, including its own nation.”

### **3.3 Under the Influence of Shamanism and Pantheism, It is Compatible with Multiple Religions and Has the Possibility of Converting to Other Ethnic Religions**

Affected by Shamanism and pantheism, from Genghis Khan to his descendants Mongolia and Kublai Khan did not reject other religions. Genghis Khan, the magnanimous grandfather, claimed to have been ordered by the “Eternal Heaven” when he went west. When he launched the attack on the gold, the extinction of the naiman, and the enlistment of the flower and the thornzimo, he used shamanism to pray to God to boost morale. Kuo Duan's father, Ogodei khan, is also a faithful believer of Shamanism. This is manifested in the fact that he invited shamans to heal during his illness. Affected by Shamanism and pantheism, Mongolia’s religious policies are more tolerant and basically treat all religions equally. As long as various religions pray for the Mongolian Khan King, they will receive the support of the Mongolian Khan King and enjoy generous treatment. The book “Light of Faith, Natural Totem, Shamanism History and Culture” also pointed out: “The Mongolian nation began to be influenced by Buddhist culture in the 13th century. According to historical records, after Genghis Khan unified the Mongolian plateau in 1207, he wrote a book on Tibetan Buddhism. The Nyingma sent monks and invited him to teach in the Mongolian steppe. During the Mong Khan period, Meng Ge and his royal family all participated in the Christian Muslim Buddhist ceremonies.” It can be seen that the beliefs of the Mongolian rulers at that time were diverse, not pure belief Shamanism.

### **3.4 Sacrificial Customs and Culture and the Acceptance Psychology of Farmers and Herdsmen**

Although the Sakya Sect was revered by the Kuo-duan royal family in Liangzhou, the nephew of Sakya Pandita, Basiba, became the master of Kublai Khan and was named the national teacher, but its influence has always been in the upper ranks of the official aristocracy. The Mongolian people still regard shamanism as the mainstream belief. The reason for the change is as pointed out by Mr. Shu Erlin: “The unification and development of the Mongolian nationality has made a qualitative leap in Mongolian society and economy. The process of transformation from slavery to feudalism was originally It is a process of productivity progress, so shamanism that adapts to the original society is a bit unable to keep up with the new situation, and has even become an obstacle to the development of social productivity. Lamaism is a new type of Buddhism based on the feudal economy, which is suitable for agriculture. The economic characteristics of the combination of animal husbandry can also meet the needs of the economic development of feudal lords. Moreover, Lamaism, which combines Indian Buddhism and Tang culture, is also more advanced than Shamanism, and the level of knowledge alone is much higher than that of Shamanism. It can be said that Shamanism still maintains a primitive civilization with little progress, while Lamaism has a

high level of culture and gorgeous religious rituals, especially they advocate the abolition of the backward customs of bloodshed sacrifices, and the slaughter of animals and human sacrifices. Changing to cheese, etc., is extremely beneficial to the development of agriculture and animal husbandry production, and it also meets the psychological requirements of the majority of farmers and herdsman, so it is easier to gain welcome and support. Therefore, Lamaism, which represents a new mode of production, quickly settled in the grassland. Spread and gradually occupy the ideological realm of backward shamanism and become the new belief of peasants and herdsman on the prairie.” This is also a process of nature as the “Buddhist Controversy” in Tibetan areas. It is essentially a process in which feudal religion replaces primitive religion. The bloody and barbaric sacrificial methods in primitive religions have become more civilized, easier to accept and protect production, which is a historical progress.

#### **4. Conclusion: the Significance of Liangzhou Huimeng’s Cultural Identity to the Han, Tibetan and Mongolian Nationalities**

The Liangzhou League is far more significant than its political significance to the history of cultural integration of the Chinese nation. It is manifested in: First, to promote the process of the pluralistic integration of the Chinese nation. From the beginning of the “Sakya Panzhida Report to the People of Tibet”, the central government of the Yuan Dynasty has completed the de facto rule of Tibet with the assistance of the Sakya faction. Tibet was officially included in China's territory since the Yuan Dynasty. At the same time, since the Ming and Qing Dynasties, this collision zone between the Indo-European model and the Shaman model has also become the most important geographic area for understanding the “Chinese nation's pluralistic unity pattern” from the perspective of religious anthropology; The story laid a good start for the Mongolian-Tibetan relationship. The two ethnic groups originally had similar production and lifestyles and a common nomadic cultural foundation. After that, the two ethnic groups merged in spirit. It was the Mongolian people who converted from Shamanism to Tibetan Buddhism. The beginning; thirdly, Sakya Pandita’s nephew Pasiba continued his story and became Kublai’s “Emperor Teacher”. He created the “Pasiba Script” for the Yuan Dynasty based on the Tibetan language and became a member of the Yuan Dynasty. The official text opened a new chapter in the history of Mongolian-Tibet relations.

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