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Across the Red Steppe: Exploring Mongolian Music in China and Exporting it from Within

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ACROSS THE RED STEPPE: EXPLORING MONGOLIAN MUSIC IN CHINA
AND EXPORTING IT FROM WITHIN

by

Thalea C. Davis

A thesis submitted to the Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
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Mongolian music culture as it exists in China is a unique entity unto itself as it features a base of traditional Mongolian practice and also includes aspects of Chinese music and culture. As the world becomes more interconnected and as China continues to display a markedly Han society to the world at large, Mongolian musicians and Mongolian-music enthusiasts in China maintain and evolve their musical culture in a nebulous middle-ground between Mongolian and Han-Chinese culture. How Mongolian music culture in China came to be and its ultimate function in global society are the key questions being investigated in this thesis. Using historical evidence, hands on interactions with local peoples, and first-person interviews with persons immersed in the music culture (both professional and amateur), this research concludes that the best outlet Mongolians in China (and Mongolians in Mongolia) have of preserving their music is exporting it to the world through the auspices of the People’s Republic of China. Thus, Mongolian music culture in China acts as both a buffer and a bond between Mongolia and China while bringing foreign interests in to gain a closer look and a deeper appreciation for Mongolian culture.
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Thalea C. Davis
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the last half-century, the People’s Republic of China has seen a whirlwind of change in many aspects of its government, economy, and culture. China has seen the political unification of many different ethnic minority groups under a centralized government that brands itself as a united nation of many; although, several ethnic minority groups disagree with this sentiment. One such ethnic minority is that of the Mongolians. Ethnic Mongolians in China proudly claim and maintain their ancient culture and customs. Simultaneously, they acculturate to Chinese society and incorporate Chinese and foreign influences into their own culture. One key area of Mongolian culture where this phenomenon is demonstrated, that is, the Mongolians maintaining ancient culture while embracing and incorporating new influences, is the music. Thus, one can affirm this cultural relationship of past and present through the study of ethnic Mongolian music-culture.

Thesis

Mongolian music, both traditional and modern, is unique in its performance practice\(^1\) and its subject matter (about what sort of topics the songs are sung and/or

\(^1\) Vocal styles (throat-singing) and instrumental performance style (instruments played to imitate vocal styles of throat-singing).
played), specifically as it relates to life on the grasslands. The grasslands of Mongolia and the Autonomous Region of Inner Mongolia (in China) support a harsh climate that is affected by its great distance from large bodies of water. Summers are very hot and winters are bitterly cold, dry, and long. As part of a nomadic family, a Mongolian living on the grasslands would not have a settled home and agriculture. Rather, the family roams the grasslands herding sheep, cattle, horses, and other livestock in search of fresh grasses as food for the herd. This roaming is continuous throughout the seasons, and because of the winter conditions, life on the grasslands can be dangerous to not only the herd but also the family. However, such a life makes family bonds and cooperation critical, and such a life inspires heartfelt odes to nature’s beauty and cruelty, to family members, to loved ones, to the herd (especially the horses), and to ancient Mongolian deities.

In the context of Chinese society, however, Mongolian music-culture is also distinctive in its adoption and incorporation of Chinese musical characteristics and its evolution from Mongolian music-culture in Mongolia. What is even more compelling is that Mongolian music-culture has evolved to such a form even in the face of an overwhelming Han majority and as well as Chinese-government oppression of socio-cultural expressions that do not fit the “party line.”

As the world becomes more interconnected and China continues to display a markedly Han society to the world at large, Mongolian musicians and Mongolian-music enthusiasts in China maintain and evolve their musical culture in a nebulous middle-

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2 That is, a message of complete unity among all of the peoples of China under the supreme direction of the Communist Party.
ground between Mongolian and Han-Chinese culture. How Mongolian music-culture in China came to be and its ultimate function in global society are the key questions being investigated in this thesis. This thesis research illustrates: how Mongolian music-culture in China has evolved away from that in Mongolia; the Mongolian sense of self in China; and the true desires of Mongolian peoples in China to prevent their music-culture from becoming stagnant in China by presenting it to the world. Using historical evidence, hands-on interactions with local peoples, and first-person interviews with persons immersed in the music-culture (professionals and non-professionals alike), the research concludes that the best outlet that Mongolians in China (and Mongolians in Mongolia) have of preserving their music is exporting it to the world through the auspices of the People’s Republic of China. Thus, Mongolian music-culture in China acts as both a buffer and a bond between Mongolia and China while bringing in interested parties from foreign nations to gain a closer look and a deeper appreciation for Mongolian culture.

Literature

There is an existing body of literature within academic circles that spans several different fields of study, including musicology, ethnomusicology, anthropology, educational studies, and political science, all of which most of which circles around the topic of this research. For instance, Carole Pegg serves as the leading ethnomusicological authority on Mongolian music, although her expertise focuses mostly on Outer Mongolian music. Pegg has contributed to various encyclopedias as well as having
written several books detailing her research on Outer Mongolian music, one such book being *Mongolian Music, Dance, & Oral Narrative: Performing Diverse Identities* (2001).

Also, Colin Mackerras serves an authority on ethnic minority performing arts research in the People’s Republic of China, where he has spoken on Mongolian music and dance on many occasions. In “Folksongs and Dances of China’s Minority Nationalities: Policy, Tradition, and Professionalization” (1984), Mackerras argued that ethnic minority folk music and dance in China has seen a definite rise in popularity among Chinese citizens. Mackerras credits this rise to the Chinese Communist Party whose interests in maintaining and developing ethnic minority musics and thus complying with some of the core elements of the Chinese constitution. However, Mackerras also points out that the support given to ethnic minority song and dance is a double-edged sword in that, in the Chinese government’s interest in standardization and mass-marketing, government-sponsored minority folk music and dance undoubtedly will incorporate Han-Chinese influences.\(^3\) Mackerras seems to evaluate the resulting Hanicization of these minority performing arts as a net good over the alternative of no government support of these arts, and vehemently rejects the notion that this resulting Hanicization of ethnic performing arts is a deliberate tactic begin employed by the Chinese government to suppress ethnic minorities.\(^4\)

This view, however, is contrasted by other scholars, such as Nimrod Baranovitch, who present evidence that argues just the opposite. In “Between Alterity and Identity:


New Voices of Minority People in China,” Baranovitch uses first-person interviews and musical and political analysis of various songs to argue that the Chinese government has indeed been using their top-down support of ethnic minority music as a front for suppression tactics against said minorities in the past. Moreover, he argues that, in recent times, the government has significantly backed away from such approaches (mainly due to its loss of much control over mass media, especially the internet), allowing ethnic minorities in China to express their cultural pride with less directly inserted Chinese influence.5

Frederick Lau contributes research on music practices in China post-1949, especially the evolution of those practices during and after the Cultural Revolution in China. In “Forever Red: The Invention of Solo Dizi Music in Post-1949 China” (1996), Lau highlights the fascinating phenomenon whereby professional practitioners of the Chinese dizi (a pan-flute instrument) are essentially creating a new foundation of standard musical practice. These professionals are writing and making new methods of study of the instrument by incorporating newer and foreign elements with popular folk songs that existed during and before Mao’s China. As a result, Lau posits, many younger-generation students of the instruments are unable to identify the older origins of these songs and practices.6 Never-the-less, Lau illustrates that this trend of evolution of music culture is not limited to ethnic minorities in China.


What these and other contributions to the body of literature surrounding minority music in China suggest is that there is a process of musical evolution and cultural assimilation due mainly to Chinese-government support of these musics through various Chinese government institutions. In “Traditional Mongolian Performing Arts in Inner Mongolia” (1983), Mackerras asks an extremely important question: “Can Inner Mongolia retain what is good in the Mongolian tradition and at the same time build up a new and modern, but distinctively Mongolian culture?”\(^7\) What is clear by the research regarding this subject is that this specific question has lingered unanswered in a direct fashion. Scholars have implied trends and have offered suppositions, but due to the time at which many of these scholarly works were completed, scholars were unable to definitively predict the projection of Mongolian music-culture in China. My research in this area stands as an answer to this critical question in the affirmative. Mongolians in China have proved to be surprisingly resilient in retaining their culture and pride in their culture while simultaneously evolving their music that appeals to audiences within and outside of China. Inner Mongolians have come closer to achieving this milestone through the development and marketing of key Mongolian music-cultural icons (which will be discussed later), through Chinese-government support, and by appealing to foreign music researchers, professionals, institutions, and enthusiasts. My research stands alongside the greater body of established authorities as an update of the progress made regarding Mongolian music-culture in China.

Methodology

In Autumn 2012, I embarked on a four-month research trip to gather first-hand experience, knowledge, and interviews to substantiate my thesis project: exploring Mongolian music-culture in the People’s Republic of China as it exists today and its many unique dynamics within Han-Chinese society.

My research topic for this trip was to examine closely Mongolian music-culture as it exists today in China, document any key differences existing between it and Mongolian music-culture in Mongolia proper, and qualitatively analyze the dynamics of Mongolian music-culture as it relates to Han-Chinese society. I hypothesized that traditional Mongolian music-culture in China would most likely be similar to that in Mongolia proper with the exception of how lyrics were devised in vocal music in order to satisfy the Communist Party’s agenda of ethnic unity. I also hypothesized that Mongolian music-culture would prove to be resilient and prominent, particularly in China’s Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (Inner Mongolia) due to the relatively large Mongolian population as well as sensitive geopolitical structures that exist between China and Mongolia. My goals were to document thoroughly my research topic and to glean evidence to support my hypotheses. I utilized several techniques to facilitate my research: I resided in the city Hohhot, Inner Mongolia; I took music classes relevant to my research topic at Inner Mongolia Normal University (IMNU);8 I learned to play a traditional Mongolian instrument (the matouqin in Mandarin, morin khuur in Mongolian, “horse-head fiddle” in

8 A local university in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia.
English; this instrument is a two-stringed instrument played with a bow, where the strings and the bow-hair are made from horse hair; the instrument also has a distinct aesthetic quality in that the scroll of the instrument is carved decoratively in the shape of a horse’s head. This instrument, by far, is the most popular instrument featured in traditional Mongolian music); I conducted first-person interviews; and I attended several live musical performances, professional and amateur alike, that featured Mongolian traditional or modern music or Mongolian musicians.

The data that I gathered during this research trip not only describes broadly an aspect of Mongolian culture in China in an anthropological light, it also highlights specific aspects of this culture from a musicological standpoint. The combination of initial research, first-person interviews, and technical musical study has allowed me to create a picture of Mongolian music-culture with great depth, although arguably biased towards music professionals rather than average persons who listen to Mongolian music.

My first-person interviews, by far, contain the most important information that I gathered during my research trip. I interviewed twelve individuals:

- Four were Inner Mongolian music students (Interviewees Two and Three, early 20’s in age, studied beat-boxing, Interviewee Eight studied Mongolian short-songs,\(^9\) and Interviewee Eleven, early 20’s in age, studied Classical violin).
- Two were Inner Mongolian music educators (Interviewee Ten, early 30’s, was my morin khuur instructor and Interviewee Nine, mid 70’s, was a retired composition...

\(^9\) A kind of Mongolian vocal genre that maintains a steady beat-structure and usually entails light-hearted subject matter in the lyrics.
professor who is very famous for his compositions being featured in Mongolian-interest films in Inner Mongolia).

- Two were Inner Mongolian music professionals (Interviewee Four, mid 20’s, was a professional *morin khuur* player and Interviewee Twelve, mid-30’s, was a female professional *khoomeii* singer\(^9\)).

- Interviewee Five, mid 30’s, was an Outer Mongolian music professional.

- Three were Americans (Interviewee One, early 50’s, has taught English classes in China for several years and has spent most of that time in the northwestern areas of China, including China’s Xinjiang province and Inner Mongolia; Interviewees Six and Seven, early 50’s, were a married couple of retired teachers who taught English in Inner Mongolia as volunteers).

In addition to my interviews with the twelve individuals, I was also invited to speak with two groups of Inner Mongolian high school students.\(^11\) The high school at which they attended was a special institution that primarily focused on Mongolian fine arts. Those two groups of high school students were all musicians, most of whom studied traditional Mongolian music.

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\(^9\) *“Khoomeii”* is a Mongolian style of singing also known as “throat-singing,” in which the performer manipulates his vocal chords to sound two separate pitches simultaneously: one low or medium-pitched sub-tone and one high-pitched overtone. It is also worth noting that, in both Inner and Outer Mongolia, female *khoomeii* professionals are extremely rare. The vast majority of *khoomeii* practitioners are male.

\(^11\) Because the high school students were all under 18 years of age, transcriptions of my talks with them are not included in this work.
In order to appreciate fully the cultural dynamic that exists between Mongolians both in China and Mongolia, a fundamental historical knowledge of the area and the Mongolian peoples in the area is required. The ancient and modern histories of these two nations are critical to understanding the cultural dynamic among Mongolians currently living in China, how those Mongolians are perceived by Han Chinese and how those Mongolians are perceived by Mongolians in Mongolia proper, thus creating the framework for how the culture of ethnic Mongolians in China has been preserved, maintained, presented, and received not only by China and Mongolia, but in East Asia and the world at large.

The nation known as “Mongolia” today is composed of peoples whose recorded history spans hundreds of years and whose culture can be found intermixed in many different societies around Asia, Europe, and even North America. Similarly, the history and culture of People’s Republic of China is ancient and arguably influences smaller nations that surround its borders. In a study about Mongolian music as it exists in China, a broad yet brief introduction to the separate and combined histories of these two nations will set the foundation for a more detailed examination of the subject at hand. This section will first outline the general histories of these nations separately, then it will examine and display the nations’ corroborative histories.
Mongolia (see Figure 1) is a landlocked nation that sits between Russia to the north and China to the south. The terrain of Mongolia is mostly terraced with sparse vegetation. The arid Gobi desert is within its border to the south, and there are several mountain ranges to its north. Like much of Central Asia, the majority of Mongolia’s terrain is barren. Mongolia’s climate is typically very hot in the summer and extremely cold in the winter, with extreme day to night temperature changes as well. Throughout the year, the territory receives little rainfall. The capital city of Mongolia is Ulaanbaatar. The country can be divided geographically into three main sections: eastern, central, and southern Mongolia.

Humans have been living in the area of Mongolia for many tens of thousands of years. However, it was only about 2200 years ago that Mongolia began to truly see organized societal groups in the form of tribal warfare. Various tribal nomadic warlords in Mongolia dominated the grasslands and conducted various successful raids on early Chinese empires (Qin and Han). These raids were so widespread and numerous that early Chinese empires created a series of stone walls to serve as a deterrent against these early Mongolian tribes, such as the Xiongnu (commonly known as the Huns). While these walls were the foundations of China’s Great Wall, they were mostly ineffective against the Mongolian roaming bands. Over the course of time, the Xiongnu gave way to the Xianbei in today’s Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in China, and because of an increased elitist and sedentary lifestyle of the Xianbei, the Xianbei eventually fell to sub-tribe within the Jujuan tribe (who were, in fact, the first to use the word “Khan” as titles for their rulers). This sub-tribe was known as the Turks, and they commanded a large territory and maintained a large empire that eventually contributed to the legendary Mongolian empire of Genghis Khan.\(^\text{13}\)

Genghis Khan, originally named Temujin, rose to power barely a teenager by succeeding his great-grandfather (who had died in battle) within the Kereit Mongol tribe. He became a vassal of the tribe’s leader, but his prowess and success as a military leader caused a rift, separation, and eventual conflict between Temujin and the Kereit Khan,

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\(^\text{13}\) Timothy Michael May, *Culture and Customs of Mongolia* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2009), 4-9.
where Temujin emerged as the victor and was given the title Genghis Khan, meaning “Universal Leader,” which replaced his original name. With this new title and victory, Genghis Khan was the de facto leader of the Mongol people. After his being declared ruler, Genghis Khan swiftly embarked on a campaign to unite the myriad warring Mongolian and Turkic tribes throughout the country. His exploits are known all over the Western and Eastern world. With his brilliant leadership and the help of his loyal sons and military generals, Genghis Khan united the Mongol peoples and established a Mongolian empire which Mongolian people today revere on a near religious level. (see Figure 2)

14 The name “Genghis Khan” is also spelled “Chinggis Khan” as well as “Jenghis Khan”. This discrepancy in the spelling of his first name is due to cross-cultural and cross-language translations. However, the most common spellings of his name, among Western researchers, are “Genghis” and “Chinggis”.


Genghis Khan died in the early thirteenth century, leaving his sons and grandsons to eventually fragment his once united empire. One of his successive grandsons, Kublai Khan moved the capital of the empire to northern China and presided mainly over China as the rest of the Mongolian empire splintered and dissolved. Thus, the first distinction between “Inner Mongolia” and “Outer Mongolia” was officially made: that is, “Inner Mongolia” refers to the section of the Mongolian empire seated closer to Kublai Khan’s new capital in China whereas “Outer Mongolia” refers to the remaining section of the Mongolian empire far removed from the new Chinese capital. Kublai Khan’s rule was

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known as the Yuan Dynasty in China (see Figure 3), and it lasted for nearly a century (1279-1368).

Figure 3: The Yuan Dynasty\textsuperscript{18}

It was during this time in particular that China began to see a true melding of Mongolian and Chinese culture in Northern China:

Moving the capital from Mongolia had a deleterious effect on the country. Quite simply, without the capital, Mongolia became a backwater. Kublai and his successors did attempt to maintain support [in the formal capital Karakorum] simply because it remained an important troop reservoir—the importance of Mongol cavalry did not diminish...As time passed, the ruling dynasty increasingly assimilated aspects of Chinese culture as well as Buddhist influences, consequently appearing very un-Mongol to the Mongols in Mongolia.\textsuperscript{19}


\textsuperscript{19} May, 10.
Eventually, the Yuan Dynasty was overtaken by the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), and the Ming Dynasty was taken over by the Manchus in China and established the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: The Qing Dynasty

Mongolian tribes in Outer Mongolia did not recognize Manchurian rule, and thus found themselves in opposition to the Mongolians in Inner Mongolia.

The Manchus proved to be formidable to the Mongolian tribes, successfully invading and taking over Mongolia as a whole and weakening the remaining vestiges of the Mongolian empire. The Manchus also “garrisoned the border with Russia with watch posts to curtail Russian trade and contact as much as possible...While there were negative

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aspects of Qing policy, the Qing attempted to prevent economic exploitation of Mongolia, particularly by the Russians, but also, they prevented ethnic Han Chinese colonization.”

Under Qing rule, by the 20th century, Mongolia had become devastatingly destitute and barren, as the country was used as little more than a military reserve and yet was forced to pay tribute to the Qing empire at extremely high interest rates.

As the Qing empire began to fall in the early 1900s, Outer Mongolians began to vie for independence from Chinese rule. Concurrently, Russia took interest in Mongolia as the Chinese empire weakened but did not necessarily aid the Mongolians in their struggle for independence out of fear of warring with China, weakened though it may have been. However, in 1921, as the Russian empire collapsed, Outer Mongolians solidified the sovereignty they had initially declared at the fall of the Qing Dynasty (1911). The Mongolians instituted Communism as their form of government and established the Mongolian People’s Republic in 1924. Mongolia became a democracy in 1992; although the Communist Party continued to maintain political control in the multi-party system.

These new political changes proved to be equally tumultuous for Inner Mongolians. As the Qing Dynasty fell in 1911, there was a power struggle between two major political groups, the Nationalists and the Communists, until World War II, where China was devastated by famine and even more so by brutal Japanese occupation. The

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21 May, 12-16.
22 Ibid.
Chinese, however, were eventually able to defeat and expel the Japanese out of China. The original power struggle between the Nationalists and the Communists continued, which led to the Chinese Civil War at the close of World War II. Under the leadership of Mao Ze Dong, the Communists defeated the Nationalists, the latter retreating to Taiwan. The People’s Republic of China was established in 1949. Mao’s Communist China saw the “Great Leap Forward,” which brought most of rural China into a more unified state as a nation. Mao’s Communist China also saw the Cultural Revolution, an era of social and economic reforms that focused entirely on the greatness of the Party, outlawing and banning anything that came before the Party (or what was the “old way” of China) and suppressing any outward expression of ethnicity other than Han. The cultural revolution proved to be disastrous for China’s economy as well as for the morale of its people.24

After Mao’s death (September 9, 1976), and about a decade after the implementation of the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping took the reins, put an end to the Cultural Revolution, and instituted reforms to move China out of abject poverty and, very slowly, back out on the international stage. Under Deng, China embraced a capitalistic economy and a fervent ambition to gain strong political and economic ties with key nations around the world (such as the United States and Germany) so that its economy would catch up to and eventually surpass the dominant world superpowers in strength and speed.25


In modern times, Mongolia has been a slowly emerging economic power, particularly as it relates to its booming mining economy, especially in the mining of coal. While Mongolia still holds a tenable relationship with Russia, it holds a very shaky relationship with China due to its long history of oppression by the Chinese during the Qing Dynasty and culture of mistrust of the Chinese. China now is a nation well on the rise to being a superpower itself with its strong economy and military capacity. Although still controlled strictly by the Communist Party, China has become increasingly more involved in world politics and trade. Today’s China is made up of nearly 1.4 billion people, over 90% of whom are ethnically Han. The rest of China’s population consists of “ethnic minorities,” of which there are 55 officially recognized by the Chinese government, including Mongolians living in China.

Because of the long shared history between today’s China and Mongolia, Inner and Outer Mongolians share fundamental cultural aspects, such as their reverence for the grasslands and horseback riding. However, both of these groups have been influenced heavily by outside actors due to geo-political events: Inner Mongolians have been influenced by China and Chinese culture and Outer Mongolians have been influenced by Russia and Russian culture. Although there exists a shared base of culture, this geo-political divide stands also as a narrow cultural divide between Inner and Outer Mongolians. The following maps show present-day Inner Mongolia (see Figure 5) and the Republic of Mongolia (in between China and Russia) respectively (see Figure 6).

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27 Ibid., 225-230.
Figure 5: Map of China Highlighting Inner Mongolia in Red

Figure 6: Map of Modern-Day Russia, Mongolia, and China


CHAPTER II

FINDINGS

Statement of Findings

The most important observations and conclusions that I have come to through my research are threefold: Mongolian music of Inner Mongolia often has Chinese influences, be they through the harmonic progression of the music itself, the lyrics in the music, or the format in which the music is presented (for several socio-political reasons); institutions owned and sponsored by the Chinese government, such as universities, performing arts organizations, and media outlets serve as primary exporters of Inner Mongolian music on a large scale; and the Mongolian singing-style of “khoomeii” and the traditional Mongolian instrument “morin khuur” are the key actors in Inner Mongolians’ attempt to establish and maintain a uniquely Mongolian music-culture in the face of societal and governmental influence by the Chinese. These findings support my initial hypothesis of Mongolian music-culture having Chinese influences as well as partially support my hypothesis of Inner Mongolian music not being deeply appreciated by general Chinese audiences.

A plurality of my interviewees (Interviewees Two, Three, Four, Eight, Nine, and Twelve) were introduced to me by Interviewee Eleven with whom I had made an acquaintance through Inner Mongolia Normal University’s symphony orchestra. I had
known Interviewee One through a previous research project, and Interviewee Ten was my *morin khuur* instructor. I had met Interviewee Five through Interviewees Six and Seven whom I had met previously at a Thanksgiving party. My interview subjects were chosen because of their Mongolian music professions or their deep familiarity with Mongolian culture and Mongolian music.

The perspectives gained from the interviews are truly priceless in that each perspective is unique and yet related to the others as a whole. The younger interviewees, such as Interviewees Two, Three, Eight, and Eleven, had optimistic outlooks about the future of Mongolian music in China. The older and more experienced interviewees, such as Interviewees Nine and Twelve, viewed Mongolian music as being stagnant in China currently and being lost from the younger generations, appealing to foreign musicians and music enthusiasts for the continued evolution of Inner Mongolian music. Younger interviewees had almost mythical views of Outer Mongolia as a major safe-haven for Mongolian music and culture while older interviewees did not mention Outer Mongolia very much when referencing Mongolian music as a whole. The Americans had different takes on Inner Mongolian music (Interviewees One, Six, and Seven), expressing how enthralled they were with the music and the historical foundation of it, but also lamenting the situation in which younger Inner Mongolians must endure; that is, being an ethnic minority in China and therefore having to sacrifice some of their cultural heritage (such as their ability to speak the Mongolian language) in order to live a successful life in China.
Interviewee Five, the Outer Mongolian music professional, had a somewhat adversarial attitude towards Inner Mongolian music: before the interview started, she emphasized her intent to make clear that she wholly prefers Outer Mongolian music to Inner Mongolian music and that Inner Mongolian music is not ‘real’ Mongolian music. However, when she was pressed to give more details about differences between Outer Mongolian and Inner Mongolian music, she had a difficult time outlining specifics. It could have been that, because her native language was not English, it was too cumbersome for her to find the correct words to describe these differences. However, I suspected it was more that she felt great nationalist pride for Outer Mongolia and Outer Mongolian music. It was more about being ‘true’ Mongolian and opposing Chinese influences in ‘true’ Mongolian music-culture than objectively identifying specific differences in Outer and Inner Mongolian music-culture. Nearer the middle and end of the interview, she had progressively relaxed her tone and submitted that both Outer and Inner Mongolians are all part of the Mongolian family, and that there are only a few cultural differences between the two groups. All of the Inner Mongolians who were interviewed expressed pride in their Mongolian heritage and music completely apart from their lives in China. All of them stressed that their music should live on, and that the only way to achieve this, besides existing in Outer Mongolia, is for their music to be heard and appreciated outside of China and Chinese audiences.
Inner Mongolian music can generally be split into two encompassing categories: vocal music and instrumental music. In Inner Mongolian vocal music, there are three kinds that are featured regularly: khoomeii, Long-Song, and Short-Song. *Khoomeii* in Mongolian, or *humai* (呼麦) in Mandarin Chinese, is a style of throat-singing, where the performer manipulates his vocal chords to sound a low sub-tone while simultaneously sounding a high over-tone. *Khoomeii* has four basic kinds: low-range sub-tone with harmonic overtone (*kharihiraa shaar*), medium-range sub-tone with harmonic overtone (*shahaal shaar*), low-range sub-tone without harmonic overtone (*kharihiraa*), and medium-range sub-tone without harmonic overtone (*shahaal*). According to Carole Pegg, a leading scholar on Mongolian music and dance traditions, while the underlying foundations of *khoomeii* are common among the various Mongolian tribes and sub-ethnic groups throughout Inner Mongolia and Outer Mongolia, many groups tend to apply variations of the basic techniques that make their particular style of singing *khoomeii* distinct from other groups’ stylings.\(^\text{30}\) Inner Mongolian *khoomeii* is usually used to imitate sounds in nature as well as used to give dramatic ornamentation to the song itself.

*Urtiin duu* in Mongolian, or *changdiao* (长调) in Mandarin Chinese, literally means “long song.” What gives this vocal style its name is that, in this sort of song, each syllable of each phrase is extensively improvised and ornamented. It is not that the lyrics in the song itself are comprised of many stanzas. Rather, the song might only contain two

stanzas, but the singer applies great lyrical and melismatic embellishments to each syllable of each phrase, making the song very long. Another element of Long Song that separates it from both *khoomeii* and Short Song is the different kinds of ornamentation applied to various notes. Oftentimes in Long Song, dramatic, long-held notes are sung in a straight fashion, meaning that there is no vibrato applied to the note at all: these notes are clear and bold, like that of a confident horn-player projecting a single note across a wide field. While this technique is actually a lack of ornamentation, it is a deliberate lack of ornamentation juxtaposed against other, shorter, and, most times, relatively softer notes. Another technique used often in Long Songs is the kind of trills applied to certain notes. At the beginnings of some of the long, straight notes, a kind of trill is applied that sounds more like the clearly distinct trills on instruments with keys (like the piano or the xylophone) than strings (like the violin). In essence, within this kind of trill, two notes are clearly heard (usually a Western tonal interval of a major second or minor third) moving back and forth between the two in rapid succession for a very short period of time (the trill is only held for a fraction of the duration of the note). The trill usually does not sound like one note moving in rapid succession to a slight variation of the original note (as is common with instruments without set note placements, such as string instruments). Finally, Long Songs almost always follow a common musical shape, what Carol Pegg calls “the melodic hill.”

*Bogino duu* in Mongolian or *duandiao* (段調) in Mandarin Chinese literally means “short song.” Short songs are “strophic and syllabic in form,” progress to a steady

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beat, and tend to be much shorter in duration than long songs as a consequence, as the name suggests.\(^32\)

The subject matter sung in Long and Short songs usually incorporates nomadic life on the grasslands, herded animals (especially horses, sheep, and cattle), and strong familial unity and bonds. While Long and Short songs are cultural descendants of Mongolians, especially Outer Mongolians, relatives of these vocal stylings can be found among several northern and western ethnic groups within today’s China, including the Uighur ethnic group in China’s Xinjiang Province, and the Hui ethnic group in China’s Ningxia Province. One such example is the popular vocal style of the Hui called *hua’er* (華兒), which upon listening employs many of the same common lyrical techniques of Mongolian Long and Short Songs. *Khoomei*\(^33\), however, is the only vocal form of the three major Mongolian vocal forms that is uniquely Mongolian: there is no Chinese counterpart for *khoomei*.\(^33\)

In Inner Mongolian instrumental music, there are three instruments that are key to the Mongolian instrumental ensemble: the *morin khuur*, the *yatga*, and the *yoochin*. The Mongolian *morin khuur*, or *matouqin* (馬頭琴) in Mandarin, is translated to English as the “horse-head fiddle.” According to the Hornbostel-Sachs instrument classification system, the *morin khuur* (see Figure 7) is a bowed-chordophone, specifically a necked-box lute, like the Western violin.\(^34\)

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\(^{32}\) *Ibid.*, 49.


The instrument and bow is made almost entirely of wood, with the exception of the metal tightening pin on the bow of the modernized Inner Mongolian *morin khuur*. The body is trapezoidal-shaped with carved openings (much like the so-called “f holes” on Western violin-family instruments) on the top of the instrument. The top of the body is usually sanded wood, although some versions of the *morin khuur* are ornamented with snake skin on the top of the body. The *morin khuur* has two strings connected from the

scroll at the top of the instrument, across the bridge (which is usually set on the upper half of the body), and to the tailpiece at the bottom of the instrument. Carole Pegg makes an important cultural and historical note regarding the noticeably Western features of the modern _morin khuur_ in general, saying, “the [morin khuur]...was ‘westernized’ and standardized during the [Outer Mongolian] communist period so that the body has two _f_-shaped sound holes on either side of the bridge on a wooden belly, a sound-post inside, and a tailpiece.”\(^{36}\) The strings are usually tuned in an interval of a fourth with many variations of the tuning (with B-flat and E-flat, G and C, A and D being some of the common tunings within Inner Mongolia), although some Mongolian groups tune the instrument in an interval fifth. The scroll (the very top) of the instrument is ornately carved in the shape of a horse’s head, this giving the instrument its name. Sometimes, the scroll of an Inner Mongolian _matouqin_ is carved in the shape of a dragon’s head, in which case it is called a _longtouqin_ (龙头琴) meaning “dragon-head fiddle” (see Figure 8).

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\(^{36}\) Pegg, 70.
It is also important to note that the strings of the instrument and the hair on the bow of the instrument are made of horse hair.

The instrument is played by drawing the bow horizontally over the strings with the player’s right hand (using an underhand bow position) and stopping the strings with the player’s left hand, similar to the Western violin. Interestingly, and unlike the Western violin, the strings of the morin khuur are stopped underneath the strings with the first two fingers from the thumb (using the cuticle of the fingernail as the main point of contact), and are stopped on the string with the remaining two fingers (using the area of skin

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underneath the fingernail as the main point of contact) by applying light pressure, as opposed to pressing the strings down completely onto the fingerboard of the instrument (as is done with the Western violin).

According to *morin khuur* professionals within Inner Mongolia, there are a few slight differences between the Inner Mongolian *morin khuur* and the Outer Mongolian *morin khuur*. The Inner Mongolian *morin khuur* tends to be smaller in size than its Outer counterpart. This is said to accommodate more virtuosity in the playing of the instrument, but this notion could not be confirmed within the limits of this research. Also, in areas further west and south of Inner Mongolia, the top of the body might be made of snake skin (as referenced earlier), a similar – and probably related – style of instrument-making to the Uighurs of Xinjiang. The dragon-head scroll carving is suspected to be an adaptation to Chinese tastes, as the dragon is the most revered mythical creature among Chinese culture (see Figure 9), whereas the horse is looked upon with the same amount of reverence in Mongolian culture (see Figure 10), although, of course, the horse is not a mythical animal.
Figure 9: Giant Dragon Puppet at a Chinese New Year Parade Eastern China, 2010\textsuperscript{38}

Figure 10: Giant Statue of Genghis Khan Riding a Horse, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia \textsuperscript{39}


The Mongolian yatga, or guzheng (古筝) in Mandarin Chinese, is a heterochord (meaning that the strings are made of different material than the body of the instrument itself) half-tube zither according to the Hornbostel-Sachs instrument classification system (see Figure 11).\(^{40}\)

![Figure 11: Yatga\(^{41}\)](image)

With the body commonly made of wood or bamboo, this instrument has a series of many strings, each string having its own movable bridge with which the player can adjust the pitch. The Outer Mongolian yatga is positioned, in modern times, either on a stand or with the narrower end of the instrument on the on the player’s lap. However, the Inner Mongolian yatga or guzheng is typically positioned on a low stand on the floor and played from a lower seated position. The strings of the instruments are plucked by the player using a variety of methods, ranging from the player’s own fingernails to plastic

\(^{40}\) Hornbostel and Sachs, 22.

plectra worn on each finger. Regarding the composition of the strings of the instrument, “Some Mongol groups made strings from a goat’s small intestines, after stretching, boiling, and drying ... Others used horsehair ... In Inner Mongolia, horsehair was replaced by silk, and, more recently, metal wound around gut or metal.”

It is important to note the use of silk strings to the Inner Mongolian yatga, as silk was and is a highly respected material in ancient and modern Chinese culture and was used on all traditional Chinese string-instruments.

The Mongolian yoochin, or yangqin (扬琴) in Mandarin, is a hammered dulcimer instrument that would be classified as a board zither in the Hornbostel-Sachs instrument classification system (see Figure 12).

42 Pegg, 89.
43 Hornbostel and Sachs, 22.
As with Western hammered-dulcimers, the *yoochin* is primarily made of a wooden frame and metal or gut strings. The strings are struck with small wooden hammers (like the mechanical hammers used to strike the strings in the body of a Western piano), one hammer held in each hand of the player. The strings are supported with many adjustable bridges, each of which separates the strings into two or more pitches. The instrument body itself is usually placed on a stand and played in a seated position.

All three of these instruments are featured in both Inner and Outer Mongolian music, and the *yatga* and *yoochin* have Chinese counterparts, meaning that there are variations of these instruments that exist in what is commonly considered to be traditional

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Chinese music. However, although the *morin khuur* has Inner Mongolian and Outer Mongolian versions of the same instrument, it, like *khoomeii*, has no Chinese counterpart. It is categorically Mongolian. Interestingly, the *morin khuur* is primarily used to accompany and imitate the particular sounds and lyricisms of *khoomeii*.

*Contexts in Which Inner Mongolian Music is Played*

Traditional Mongolian music in Inner Mongolia (that is, the musical stylings of Mongolians that persisted relatively unchanged until the introduction of mass media and especially Chinese Communist propaganda after World War II) is played in many different contexts, much like in many Western countries. Some venues and mediums in which traditional Inner Mongolian music is played include: Mongolian music bars, which are night clubs in Chinese cities, particularly in major cities that cater specifically to Inner (and sometimes Outer) Mongolians living in China through the kinds of food served and music played that are of Mongolian culture; professional concerts that feature either Mongolian pieces of music (such as concertos or folk song medleys) or professional Mongolian musicians; at religious or formal (i.e. wedding) functions, this is notably the case as it relates to Mongolian Buddhist and shamanistic ceremonial rituals, although the latter is more commonly performed in Outer Mongolia rather than Inner Mongolia; as master classes taught by experienced Mongolian or Mongolian-musical performers in educational institutions to aspiring musicians in the field of Mongolian music; in public by amateur musicians such as at restaurants for ambience, on the street
for leisure, or even for friends at a casual social gathering; and on widely-broadcasted television programs with a wide variety of themes ranging from game shows to historical and dramatized documentaries. It should also be noted, in the interest of demographics, that traditional Inner Mongolian music is performed across age ranges and genders. Both men and women have popularized traditional Mongolian music, especially in its adaptation of Chinese musical styles (which will be touched upon later). However, traditional gender roles have been mostly maintained in terms of musical instruments and vocal genres: men usually play the *morin khuur*, women usually sing Long Songs, and men usually sing *khoomeii* where women very rarely sing *khoomeii*: those women who do sing *khoomeii* are typically very famous and widely respected. These assertions are based upon my personal day-to-day observations during my stay in Hohhot and first-person interviews.

That Inner Mongolian traditional music can be played and marketed in so many different contexts is a remarkable phenomenon. In many cultures around the world, traditional music is only allowed to be played in religious or ceremonial contexts. Although Mongolian music likely came about mainly for the purposes of accompanying sacred rituals, it has evolved and proliferated to a point where it can infiltrate different interest groups within the Mongolian population, a development that is not unlike that of Western European classical music.

Perhaps the most critical point of the malleability and marketability of Inner Mongolian music is that it is showcased to the widest audiences when sponsored by the

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45 Pegg, 89.
Chinese government of Chinese governmental institutions. These institutions, such as universities, performing arts centers, and special cultural delegations to foreign countries generally act as mediums through which the Chinese government can export its “pan-China” ideal to the wider world as form of cultural diplomacy. The Chinese government uses these institutions to showcase “Chinese” culture, “Chinese” diversity, and “Chinese” unity. By incorporating its display into these various institutions, Inner Mongolian music rides on the tide of Chinese soft power throughout greater China and the world. Here, what is meant by the term “Chinese” is the P.R.C. governmental ideal that there exists only one unified China which is comprised mostly of the Han ethnic group and partly (yet still significantly) of 55 other ethnic groups. The ideal is that all of China’s people work together harmoniously and in solidarity in support of the Chinese Communist Party to build a better and stronger China. Inner Mongolian popular music is also played in many contexts, but usually it is not played in religious or formal ceremonial contexts. Oftentimes, Inner Mongolian popular music contains significant and evident “traditional” elements, especially the inclusion of instrumental selections on morin khuur, or lyrical embellishment using khoomeii.

**Influences**

Both traditional and popular Inner Mongolian musics contain various Chinese influences. Common harmonic progressions of many Inner Mongolian songs strongly reflect those of traditional Chinese songs (particularly the common thread of traditional
Chinese songs ending most major phrases on a dominant chord within a pentatonic tonal system). Frequently, traditional and popular Inner Mongolian vocal songs are sung in Mandarin Chinese or a combination of Mongolian and Mandarin. One such song is a traditional Mongolian song of the Orchin Mongolian ethnic sub-group. The song is titled Gao Xiao Jie which is Mandarin for “Tall Miss” or “Tall Young Woman.” Notice that the title of the song is in Mandarin. However, upon listening to the lyrics, one will discover that the song is sung mostly in Mongolian with some insertions of Mandarin Chinese. Also, the song frequently employs the dominant phrase-endings referenced to earlier. Oftentimes, the subject matter of Inner Mongolian songs is limited to glossy depictions of life on the grasslands rather than outright statements of Mongolian pride or superiority (such expression would be quickly suppressed by the Chinese government). The songs would generally stay away from controversial ethnic subjects and hover mostly around safe and serene descriptions of pleasant nomadic life on the grasslands or love interests, the former being entirely opposite to the real harshness of nomadic life on the grasslands and the ancient Mongolian cultural aesthetic as strong warriors and strong people.

In addition to “Chinese” influences, Inner Mongolian traditional and pop musics have taken on “Western” influences, “Western” being qualified as American (United States) and Soviet. American popular culture has been, especially over the last ten years,


a formidable force in cultural adaptation within many countries around the world. With the help of the internet, aggressive international sales campaigns, and, in China’s case, the ignoring of American copyright laws, the United States has taken a position of visible dominance in international markets and exportation of culture. In one of the first-person interviews conducted, the interviewee (an American woman teaching English in Baotou, Inner Mongolia) commented at length about how American culture tends to “eat everything else up” when I mentioned a particular DVD store in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia (see Appendix A). This store contained and sold much merchandise, and I had remarked my surprise that the amount of Mongolian merchandise was equal in volume to Chinese merchandise. However, what was even more notable was that, for all of the Chinese and Mongolian merchandise in the store, there were at least three or four times as much American merchandise. Just as American cultural influence, China was easily distinguishable in the aforementioned DVD store, so it is in Inner Mongolian popular music. Inner Mongolian popular music often mimics the Chinese pop model of importing American rhythmical beat structure and standard American pop harmonic progressions (i.e. I-IV-vi-IV-I, or I-IV-vi-IV-V-I, etc.). American electronic and hip-hop music has also made interesting inroads in Inner Mongolian popular music. One set of interviewees was composed of two Inner Mongolian young male students in Hohhot who were studying American-style beat-boxing. During the interview, one of the students cited such hip-hop and rap icons as Tupac Shakur, Biggie Smalls, and Ludacris as some of his inspirations for studying music (see Appendix B). When asked to demonstrate his techniques, he began to use careful workings of his vocal chords, lips, tongue, and teeth to mimic
common American hip-hop and electronic musical bass and drum beats. Upon close listening, it was determined that he used elements of Mongolian throat singing as a technique to making the beat-boxing sounds. With saturation of local media markets in China, adoption of American-style harmonic progression and rhythm patterns, and a melding of traditional Mongolian vocal techniques with standard American beat stylings, the influence of American music in popular (and sometimes even traditional) Mongolian music is a palpable force.

Inner Mongolian music also contains Russian influences due to its historical proximity to and contact with Russia; although this phenomenon is quite limited in frequency. It is reasonable to suspect that Russian influences are more prevalent in Outer Mongolian music in a similar way that Chinese influences are prevalent in Inner Mongolian music. The reasoning for this deduction is based on Outer Mongolia’s mostly friendly international relations with Russia in the past, its closer proximity to Russia, and its relatively brief period of domination and political control by the Soviets in the early to mid twentieth century. Some Russian influences include Western-European classical four-part harmony and harmonic progression, as well as a general tone of the music that harkens to Soviet cultural propaganda that emphasized an ethnically unified state, again, similar to China in its ideal for an ethnically unified China. During the discussion with the first group of Inner Mongolian high school students, at the end of the session, the students performed a traditional Mongolian song. It was not mentioned whether or not the song was traditionally Inner Mongolian or Outer Mongolian. However, the song itself

48 Pegg, 253-262.
contained Western-European traditional four-part harmony and harmonic progressions. One of the students was conducting the other group of students in the standard fashion a conductor would lead a classical orchestra. The tone of the song had the sort of melancholy stillness that is common to Eastern-European folk and religious music, even though the song was not religious in nature. The song was most likely Outer Mongolian in origin. However, the fact that these Inner Mongolian students were singing this song, had been trained, ultimately, by the Chinese government to sing this song, and had competed in national competitions with this song in their repertoire suggests that Russian influence in Mongolian music is not limited to Outer Mongolia. Russian influence in Mongolian music, however small in incidence, can also be found in Inner Mongolian music.

During my research, there were instances where I found distinctly Mongolian instruments being used in conjunction with non-Mongolian instruments (such as a modern Western drum-set, electric keyboard, etc.), mostly in Mongolian music bars. There are also musical groups in existence that mix Mongolian instruments and music with non-Mongolian instruments and musical styles, such as the band Hanggai, a group of musicians (mostly Mongolian) who often mix Mongolian music styles with other styles (like Western rock or jazz). I have often found that the relatively younger music students professionals (Interviewees Two, Three, Four, Five, and Eleven) tend to be very open to these musical mixes.
In several of the preceding passages, technical distinctions have been made between Inner Mongolian music and instruments and Outer Mongolian music and instruments. Some of the main distinctions appear in the forms of influences by outside forces (U.S. American influences, Han-Chinese influences, and Soviet Influences, political influences, etc.) upon Mongolian music and instruments. However, while there are slight, but key, differences between Inner Mongolian and Outer Mongolian musics, the differences between “Mongolian” music as a whole and “Chinese” music as a whole are even greater. These differences, while broad and generalized, highlight cultural markers belonging to Mongolians and Han-Chinese respectively, and serve as clear identifiers to distinguish “Mongolian” music from “Chinese” music.

Perhaps the most key difference between “Mongolian” music and “Chinese” music is what I refer to as the Mongolian concept of two tones, one sub-tone and one overtone. For instance, this concept is demonstrated in both the singing of khoomeii and the playing of the morin khuur. As alluded to earlier, the morin khuur is most often played to mimic the stylings of a person singing khoomeii. The instrument has two strings, and when playing, one string is usually constantly played as a bass pedal while the other string is used to play a singing melody above the pedal. In fact, there are several other instruments in the Mongolian instrumental ensemble that have only two strings and demonstrate this same concept. Similarly, in khoomeii, the most embellished areas of a song are those highlighted by the low or medium-pitched sub-tone with a high overtone.
above the bass tone. Carole Pegg makes an extremely critical observation regarding the two-tone concept as it relates to *khoomeii*. Before the widespread practice Tibetan Buddhism in Mongolia (during the reign of Genghis Khan), most Mongolians practiced shamanistic religions, and *khoomeii* was an integral tool for communicating with various spirits. In fact, this two-tone religious tradition can be found in Tibetan Buddhist ritual music. Figure 13 (below) is a transcription of a Tuvan long song that clearly illustrates the two-tone concept.

![Figure 13: Selection from a Transcription of a Tuvan Folk Song “Alash”](image)

In a general sense, and especially when applied to Mongolian music ensembles containing multiple instrumentalists and multiple vocalists, the effect that the two-tone concept achieves is depth in sound. Because there are different voices sounding simultaneously, but at wildly different ranges and with many intertwining harmonics, Mongolian music attains a kind of fullness of the sound.

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49 Pegg, 295-296.

50 Tuva Republic is a small nation wedged in between The Republic of Mongolia and Russia, sitting on the northwestern border of Mongolia. Ethnic Mongolians who live in Tuva are renowned for their virtuosic throat-singing, which is closely related to *khoomeii* in Outer Mongolia and Inner Mongolia. Thus, while Figure 13 is not a traditional Outer or Inner Mongolian song, it is demonstrative of the two-tone concept in Mongolian music.

For traditional “Chinese” music, especially in ensemble performances, the two-tone concept is non-existent. It is almost always the case, for most of the time throughout any given musical ensemble performance, that all of the instruments and voices are playing or singing the same melody in close ranges. There usually is hardly any significant harmonic movement between the voices because all the voices are sounding the same pitch (albeit in different octaves). Thus, while there may be clearer melodic definition in traditional “Chinese” music, there is little to no harmonic depth to the music compared to traditional “Mongolian” music. For example, the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* describes a typical musical ensemble set-up in southern China. When the description details the non-percussion instruments and their respective roles, every single non-percussion instrument plays the same melody, sometimes at different octaves and sometimes with minor embellishments that add lyricism to the melody but not substantial harmony.\(^{52}\)

These differences between “Mongolian” music and “Chinese” music, specifically how they relate to the traditional forms of the musics, illustrate a fundamental cultural understanding of “music.” From these differences, one can surmise that “Mongolian” music is more likely to focus on the depth of sound and emphasize harmonic overtones, while “Chinese” music is more likely to highlight the melodic counter of a given song with multiple instruments with varying timbres playing in near-unison. This understanding allows a music enthusiast or scholar to differentiate between “Mongolian” music and “Chinese” music at a glance, and, especially as it relates to this research,

determine music to be “Mongolian-Chinese” when the clues given by the music selection at hand do not clearly point to either “Mongolian” or “Chinese” music exclusively.

**Perspectives**

Inner Mongolians have deep and specific views of how they think others feel about their music. The following claims regarding differing groups’ perspectives are being made from the Inner Mongolian point of view.

Inner Mongolians feel that Han-Chinese people like Inner Mongolian music on a superficial level, especially if the music features elements of traditional “Chinese” music. However, Inner Mongolians feel that Han-Chinese people do not truly understand the deeper and historical bases of the music and are therefore unable to fully appreciate the music. During the first-person interviews, many Inner Mongolians have intimated that Han-Chinese people view Inner Mongolian culture in a romanticized fashion, and this only applies to the relatively few Han-Chinese people who are regularly exposed Inner Mongolian culture. Interviewee Twelve, the female *khoomei* specialist, had a pointed opinion regarding how Han-Chinese people experience Mongolian music, saying essentially that they are only able or willing to appreciate the music and the culture in a very superficial manner (see Appendix J). When it comes to the Han-Chinese experience of the music, Inner Mongolians feel that, beyond the Hanicized forms of traditional and popular Mongolian music, the Han can only understand and promote Inner Mongolian music-culture to a very limited degree.
Inner Mongolians feel that Outer Mongolians look condescendingly upon Inner Mongolian music-culture because it supposedly has been corrupted by Chinese influences and is therefore not ‘real’ or ‘pure’ Mongolian music-culture. Interviewee Eleven, the Inner Mongolian student who was majoring in Classical violin, voiced this view during her remarks. She described that, throughout her childhood, she was constantly being pushed by her immediately family to study Mandarin Chinese to such a degree of mastery that other peoples, Han and Mongolian alike, are unable to discern that she is ethnically Mongolian based on her language capabilities. She expressed hopes and desires to form significant social bonds with Outer Mongolians and to study more in reading and writing Mongolian language (as she is currently unable to read and write Mongolian, and she claims that her spoken Mongolian proficiency is not where it should be being ethnically Mongolian). However, she also expressed fears in approaching Outer Mongolians to form friendships because she perceived an exclusive aura about the Outer Mongolians toward Inner Mongolians. Although this interviewee was not the only one who expressed such ideas, she was the only one who exposed this tension in such clear terms. In my own observations living in Hohhot, I encountered both Inner and Outer Mongolians during my stay. When I became accustomed to distinguishing the differences in language and behavior between Inner and Outer Mongolians, I noticed that the two groups did often segregate themselves.

It was not until I interviewed an Outer Mongolian music professional that I came to understand that this cultural tension might have been more than just suspicions,

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53 Interviewees Seven and Eight, as well as Inner Mongolians whom I spoke with on a casual basis, also hinted at these ideas.
perceptions, or rumors. When I was preparing to interview her, Interviewee Five, just before the interview began, she stated clearly and in an almost adversarial tone her position: she wanted to make absolutely clear that she wholly preferred Outer Mongolian music to Inner Mongolian music, and that Inner Mongolian music was not ‘real’ Mongolian music. Although I was somewhat taken aback by her forthrightness, I was equally fascinated by this qualitative new development. As I interviewed her, I asked broad questions about Mongolian music in general, her area of expertise, and her opinions about her life in Inner Mongolia. Soon, however, I pressed her with specific questions about the differences between Inner Mongolian and Outer Mongolian music and music-culture. Given the opportunity to talk at length, the language she used to describe Outer and Inner Mongolian music was tinged with pride and slight dismissiveness respectively, but she offered up very few concrete differences. This lack of solid detail may very well have been due to the language barrier that existed between us. Although she had been living in Inner Mongolia for several years, she did not speak (and I suspected that she abjectly refused to learn) Mandarin Chinese. Because I could speak neither Mongolian nor Russian (her native and secondary languages respectively), the interview was conducted in English, which was her third and lesser developed language. Thus, it is possible that it was too difficult to provide terminology specific to the musical profession in what was her third language. However, based on previous observations and comments made in passing by Inner Mongolians, I believe that her inability to produce hard factual differences between the two music-cultures had more to do with Outer Mongolian nationalist pride. It is my assertion that she was of the opinion
that Outer Mongolian music was greater and purer for no other reason than that it was in existence first. I did not provoke my interviewee by asking her to comment on Russian influence in Outer Mongolian music, but it was truly a remarkable interview in terms of observing and experiencing first-hand the cultural divide that exists between Inner and Outer Mongolians. Towards the end of the interview, she had relaxed her tone quite a bit and suggested that both Outer and Inner Mongolians were all part of the Mongolian family, and that there were only a few cultural differences between the two groups. This admission of hers was the most surprising part of the interview, insomuch that it seemed that she had become comfortable talking to me about Mongolian music-culture. It seemed that she may possibly have had to defend and distinguish Outer Mongolian music-culture from Inner Mongolian music-culture. When she had determined that I was an objective observer trying to create a non-threatening environment, she was able to talk more freely about the music itself instead of the national differences between the two groups and the superiority of one group over another. These interviews (with the female Inner Mongolian violin student and the female Outer Mongolian music professional) point to a mutual expectancy of misunderstanding and mistrust that keeps the two groups apart, and yet an underlying cultural bond that constantly pushes the two groups together.

Despite how they think Chinese or Outer Mongolians feel about their music, Inner Mongolians are very proud of their music-culture and want it to evolve and stand in its own right as authentic Mongolian musical and artistic expression in China. Every Inner Mongolian I interviewed expressed great pride in their music and their music-culture. While not all of the Inner Mongolians interviewed enjoyed Mongolian pop music as
much as traditional Mongolian music, all of them held a level of respect and reverence for traditional Inner Mongolian music. Also, many of them made pointed distinctions between ‘Chinese’ Inner Mongolian music and ‘real’ Inner Mongolian music: they all held some level of dismissal for Inner Mongolian music with Chinese influences while contending that their ‘real’ Inner Mongolian music was worthy of praise and admiration.

Finally, Inner Mongolians feel that foreigners, such as Japanese, (United States) American, or European peoples are more open to accepting different cultures and are therefore more likely to appreciate Mongolian music-culture on a deep level. Many of the Inner Mongolian music professionals were equally surprised and thrilled that I, as an American music student, had taken a serious professional interest in Mongolian music and had traveled and prepared so much to study the music first-hand in China. They were eager to share as much information and deep, personal thoughts and opinions (regarding their music) as possible with me, not because they saw me as more worthy to receive the knowledge than others. They were eager because they truly wanted their music-culture to be understood and appreciated outside of China, and they see Europeans, Americans, Japanese, and Koreans being the most likely enthusiastic receptors of their music.

Interviewee Twelve, the Inner Mongolian khoomeii specialist recounted briefly the many different countries that she had travelled to performing her music. She intimated to me that, upon hearing that I wished to interview her, she was at first wary because she had assumed that I was Han-Chinese. According to her, she had conducted so many interviews with Han-Chinese people in Inner Mongolia and believed that her efforts in the interviews were wasted because she felt her interviewers and the potential audiences
of her interviews would not fully appreciate her work. However, upon hearing that I was actually American, she was eager to bring me in to interview her, because she saw me as an opportunity to export her music to a willing and appreciative audience. The Japanese, Korean, American, and European audiences, in her opinion, were the most receptive peoples of her performing traditional Mongolian music. Similarly, I was given the chance to interview a highly acclaimed and revered Inner Mongolian composer, Interviewee Nine, during my stay in Hohhot. After researching about his career, I had discovered that he had written scores for major feature films in Inner Mongolia, had taught Mongolian music and composition at various universities in China, had traveled the world presenting his research on the Mongolian Jew’s harp, and had received high honors from the University of Mongolia for the same research. I felt especially privileged that he allowed me to interview him. However, he felt even more excited for me to conduct this interview for my specific area of research. His reasoning was that, through his many decades of experience and many travels around the world, he found that Americans were specially keen to accepting different cultural arts. He felt that I, as an American graduate student, would be able to expose and export Inner Mongolian music in a truer and clearer fashion than most other people in Inner Mongolia. From the Inner Mongolian perspective, foreigners are more likely to appreciate Inner Mongolian music and accept it deeply.

As stated earlier, these perspectives are stated from the Inner Mongolian point of view and have been formulated based on the insights gained from my first-person interviews. Moreover, while only twelve individuals were interviewed, the range of demographic differences (gender, age, professional specialties, relative experience, etc.)
allows for a reasonable amount of generalization to larger populations of Inner Mongolians. This is especially supported by the fact that most of the opinions about Mongolians and Mongolian music in China were similar, if not the same, among the interviewees despite their demographical differences.
CHAPTER III

RECURRING THEMES AND CONCLUSIONS

Recurring Themes

Throughout the collection of data during my stay in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, with the day-to-day personal observations and first-person interviews being particularly critical, several common themes continually occurred that permeated the research gathered. The following assertions, like the preceding “perspectives”, are made of and from the Inner Mongolian point of view, and are separate from my own true conclusions based on my research.

First, Inner Mongolians hold great pride for their music, often disavowing overt Chinese influences in their music (such as the language of the lyrics being partly or mostly sung in Mandarin Chinese). An intriguing aspect about this theme was that Inner Mongolians would sometimes neglect to mention underlying Chinese influences in their music (such as certain harmonic progressions or gestures in melodies), in their vocal styles, or even their musical instruments. This phenomenon harkens back to the Outer Mongolian musical professional who stated boldly her preference for Outer Mongolian music, but could not produce much in concrete differences of it from Inner Mongolian music. It is reasonable to ask whether or not the lay-Inner Mongolian knows the deeper histories and historical and modern Chinese influences on Inner Mongolian music-
culture, or if that is usually the prerogative of Inner Mongolian music historians or performance professionals.

Second, while Inner Mongolians may be restricted in the extent to which they are allowed (by the Chinese government) to express their Mongolian pride, they still have several outlets for their music, including music bars, educational institutions, and media forums. As mentioned throughout this paper, the Chinese Communist Party had set a cultural agenda several decades ago that still thrives in modern times. The Chinese government is constantly attempting to present to the world a Chinese state that is ethnically, culturally, and harmoniously unified under the Communist Party. Not all of the minority ethnic groups in China wish to be part of China or agree with the ideals and actions of the Chinese Communist Party. Two groups that prominently fit this constituency are the Uighurs in Xinjiang and the Tibetans in Tibet and other western areas of the country. While the Mongolians, in recent history, have not been as violently demonstrative of this view, Mongolians in China hold a deep pride for their ethnic group and would like to identify more with Outer Mongolians than with other minority ethnic groups, or the majority ethnic group for that matter, in China. Thus, when Inner Mongolian music artists aim to create and produce a song about Mongolian culture, they must be wary not to imply any sort of overt ethnic pride in their music, lest they incur the swift suppression of the Chinese government.\(^54\) That said, Inner Mongolians still have means within China to produce, share, and experience their music in non-threatening environments. The school at which the high school students I had interviewed attended is

one institution, as well as music bars (catering specifically to Mongolian culture and interests), and television and radio. Even though they are limited in what they can express through music, they are not as limited in what mediums they can express that music.

Third, Inner Mongolians want their music-culture to be gradually more recognized and appreciated by larger audiences outside of Inner Mongolia. They feel that their music is stagnant and under-appreciated in China outside of Inner Mongolia. They also feel, however, that presenting their music to foreign audiences, especially American and European audiences, will allow their music to evolve and subsequently become more renown. When asked whether or not they thought Mongolian music was popular in Inner Mongolia and China as separate questions, most of the Inner Mongolian interview respondents (Interviewees Two, Three, Four, Eight, Ten, Eleven, and Twelve), and the American respondents (Interviewees One, Six, and Seven), replied “yes.” Most of the Inner Mongolian interviewees felt that their music had its largest following in their home province. However, outside of the northwest, they suspected that most people in China hardly knew what Mongolian music or culture entailed, let alone appreciated it on a profound level. When asked whether or not Mongolian music would become more popular in China and the world in the future, most of the respondents could not definitively answer the question. Most cited multiple variables that made it unclear whether or not Mongolian music could increase growth in popularity in China. One of the key points made, though, during this specific discussion was that it is vitally important that Inner Mongolians export, grow, and evolve their music by presenting it on the global stage and by adapting it to modern or popular trends to appeal to larger audiences.
Fourth, even though Inner Mongolians may feel that their music-culture is stagnant in China, they believe that they can thoroughly rely upon Outer Mongolia as a fundamental homeland and a safe-haven for their music-culture, a sort of cultural mecca for all Mongolians in the world. For those interviewees that were less than optimistic about the future of Mongolian music in China, they firmly cited Outer Mongolia as a kind of motherland in which their culture could safely reside, thus making the future of Inner Mongolian music irrelevant. It should be noted that this viewpoint was more prevalent among the younger Inner Mongolians. For those Inner Mongolians who had traveled the world and have gained several decades of experience (such as the khoomeii professional or the renowned Inner Mongolian composer), they held a slightly less hopeful view. They seemed to suggest that, even with Mongolia proper in existence and preserving Mongolian culture at the extent to which they are focused on that priority, Outer Mongolia cannot be completely trusted to maintain and export Mongolian music and culture around the world. The viewpoint of the more experienced interviewees (Interviewees Five, Nine, and Twelve) pointed to foreign observers and enthusiasts and ambitious Mongolians able to venture outside of China and Mongolia as they key actors in preserving and presenting Inner (and Outer) Mongolian music onto the world stage.

Conclusions

With all of the data that I collected before, during, and after the research field trip, I have come to several key understandings. Inner Mongolian music is significantly
influenced by Chinese society and government, and while many Inner Mongolians lament this interference, the music is in reality best served by Chinese society and government in terms of its exportation to the wider world. Inner Mongolians want their music to be appreciated by larger and more receptive audiences outside of China. However, it is exceedingly difficult for individual Inner Mongolians to live comfortably within Han society, let alone leave China and develop their professional careers abroad. Because of institutional discrimination and cultural self-segregation from Han-Chinese people, Inner Mongolians tend to fall behind their Han counterparts in school and are subsequently less likely than their Han counterparts to find quality employment to sustain a middle-class lifestyle. Because most Mongolians vie to live a pleasant and healthy life, there are very few among the population who are thoroughly concerned with evolving and exporting their music culture. Therefore, when it comes to maintaining or evolving Inner Mongolian music-culture and exporting it worldwide, the Chinese government and greater Chinese society act as major vehicles through which Inner Mongolian music culture can survive and thrive. The Chinese government trains and develops top-tier professional Mongolian musicians to contribute to its showcase of ethnically unified cultural treasures. Also, through the Hanicization of Inner Mongolian music, average Chinese people outside of Inner Mongolia can gain an introductory, albeit romanticized or superficial, experience with Inner Mongolian music-culture. It is through adaptations of their iconic musical symbols, the *morin khuur* and *khoomei*, to whet Chinese palettes (as well as to attract the attention of foreign observers) that Inner Mongolians are truly able to define and establish their music-culture as a stand-alone entity.
In spite of the views of younger Inner Mongolians, I agree with the views of the older Inner Mongolians regarding the role of Outer Mongolia in the preservation and exportation of Mongolian culture. As Mongolia received recognition as an independent nation and economic power on the world stage relatively recently, it remains to be seen whether or not preserving and exporting its culture is a major priority of the Mongolian government. Presently, and ironically, it is the People’s Republic of China that is proving to be the world’s largest and most powerful sponsor of Mongolian music-culture. In order for Inner Mongolians to export their music-culture to wider audiences beyond China, they must go through Chinese governmental institutions, such as universities, government-sponsored performing arts troupes and venues, national competitions, and state-sponsored radio and television programs, in order to access even larger markets across seas. Using and adapting their iconic cultural symbols (nomadism, grasslands, horses, khoomeii, morin khuur, etc.) throughout China is their clearest path out of China.

It is the curious combination of top-down Chinese suppression and acculturation of their music and adaptation of their key Mongolian symbols to gain wider audiences that makes Inner Mongolian music truly distinct. Inner Mongolian music is an entity that is constantly evolving. It has been shaped by the shared history between Mongolia and China as well as the Chinese-government’s “pan-China” policy. Inner Mongolians hold pride in their Mongolian heritage and often disavow Chinese influences in their music. However, it is, in part, because of Chinese influences and Chinese-government policy that they are able to achieve their main aspiration for their music, which is for it to become well-known and deeply appreciated by larger audiences within and outside of
China. Most importantly, Inner Mongolians’ use and adaptation of cultural icons puts a strong Mongolian cultural stamp on their product, making their musical-culture instantly recognizable and yet particularly distinct from both Outer Mongolian music and Chinese music. These elements define Inner Mongolian music and outline its paths towards either obscurity or world renown.

Future

If I were to conduct more research on this subject, I would expand my area of study to more population centers in Inner Mongolia, such as the cities of Chifeng, Hulunbir, Erdos, and Hailer. I would also extend the duration of the study to at least one or two years, and interview many more people, especially laypersons. To gain a more thorough understanding of the relationship between Outer and Inner Mongolians, I would place a special focus on peoples who live on the political border between China and Outer Mongolia. I would also interview more Outer Mongolians. Finally, I would learn to sing khoomei, if possible, at a fundamental level to obtain a personal knowledge of the genre.

Whether or not Mongolian music in China will become more or less popular in the country and in the world has been a key unanswered question throughout this research project. While the popularity of traditional “Chinese” music is increasing worldwide through mediums such as Chinese-government-sponsored Confucius Institutes, there are no such bodies that showcase, promote, and develop understanding and amicable relations (internationally) for Mongolian culture. The strongest avenue for the export of
Mongolian culture throughout China and in the world is the Chinese government, but even this product has been heavily influenced by Han-Chinese culture. All of these factors combined suggest that Mongolian music-culture will continue to exist as it is in China as long as the Chinese government is willing to use it for diplomatic and propaganda purposes.

Mongolians in China have been relatively successful, more so than other ethnic minorities in China, in promoting their musical culture. Their success is mainly due to the fact of a clear sense of solidarity among Inner Mongolians in combination with relatively low levels of violence and antagonism towards Han-Chinese. This is especially evident when placed against other relatively large ethnic groups such as the Uighurs, who do not have a guiding leader or nation and who have had several recent violent interactions with the Han, or the Tibetans who, although they have a guiding leader, have also had violent interactions with the Han. Although Mongolians in China may have a thin wall of cultural separation from Outer Mongolians, Mongolians in China still feel a common bond with their Outer Mongolian brethren. Because they feel that they have safe haven in Outer Mongolia, they have had relatively few violent or antagonistic interactions with the Han, because of their relatively large population and their long historical interaction with China, Inner Mongolians have an advantage. They, as an ethnic minority in China, have more leverage to showcase and export their music culture in China and around the world.

However, it will take the interest and scholarship of foreign observers for Mongolian music, especially Inner Mongolian music, to be recognized and appreciated in the wider world. Perhaps, as Outer Mongolia continues to grow and develop, it will one
day seek to regain its mantle as the prime standard-bearer and exporter of Mongolian culture. Until then, Inner Mongolian music will maintain its current existence in China and the world.
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Appendix A

Transcription: Interviewee One
Forward

This interview was conducted with a thoroughly experienced teacher who has taught for many years in various places in China, most notably in Urumqi, Xinjiang, Haile’er, Inner Mongolia, and Baotou, Inner Mongolia. During this interview, I was accompanied by an acquaintance while in the city of Baotou who shall be hereby labeled as “Guest.” This interview is fully transcribed.

To allow for confidentiality, Interviewee One will be denoted as “I1.”

Interview

Me: Ok. Thank you, [I1], for allowing me to interview you for my thesis project. Would you state your name?

I1: My name is [Interviewee 1].

Me: Ok. And as I talked about before, this is for my thesis project, which is studying Mongolian music as it exists in China. Do you live in Inner Mongolia?

I1: Yes I do. I live in Baotou.

Me: Baotou. And Baotou is actually very close to where I live right now, which is Hohhot.

I1: Right, it’s only a two-hour train ride.

Me: Do you have any friends or relatives who are Mongolian?
I1: I have a friend who is Mongolian, not Chinese-Mongolian. And I have a number of students who are Chinese Mongolian.

Me: Could you talk about the friend who is Mongolian? From Outer Mongolia?

I1: Ok. I met her in Urumqi. We taught at the same school. She taught Russian, because in Mongolia, Russian...Russian and Mongolian are pretty much equal in speakers. Pretty much everybody speaks both languages.

Me: It’s interesting that she was in Urumqi. Had she...do you know if she had been to Inner Mongolia before, or was she in Urumqi just because, or...?

I1: She was in Urumqi for two reasons. One to teach: she’s a rather independent woman. And her husband also has an ongoing relationship with Urumqi dealing in jade.

Me: Oh really?

I1: Yeah.

Me: Ok. Would you like to elaborate some on your Chinese-Mongolian students?

I1: Ok. My Chinese-Mongolian students are very different from my Han students. They are much more outgoing, much more open, and active in class. Sometimes, they are too active because they only want to speak Mongolian. They are generally at a lower level than the Han students. But I think the biggest reason is they don’t start to learn English until they’re much older than the Han students, so they’re at a disadvantage. As to why they learn later, I’m not really sure.

Me: Ok. Can you tell the difference, just by looking at...between your Chinese-Mongolian students and you Han-Chinese students?
I1: After I had been in Inner Mongolia for about two or three months, I could generally tell who was Mongolian and who was Han. But at first, it was a little more difficult.

Me: Do you have any thoughts about why the Mongolian-Chinese students were– are more outgoing?

I1: Oh this is the culture. They’re– the Han students are taught to be quiet, and to not express they’re real feelings, always be polite. And the Mongolian society is more, I think, I hate to say “honest,” but I’m going to say honest, much more open, because if they don’t like something, they’re going to tell you. Not...they’re not rude, but they’re just much more demonstrative with their feelings.

Me: Ok. Have you lived in other places in Inner Mongolia besides Baotou?

I1: Yes, I lived one year in HaiLe’Er, which is in the far north.

Me: And, would you describe a little bit about your life there, in HaiLe’Er?

I1: Ok. I was in a small town, well, a small city, and, there are many, many more Mongolians there. So the architecture, music, and Chinese language, everything is different as far as Mongolian...and I noticed that in Urumqi, their Chinese had a Uighur edge to it, and I noticed in HaiLe’Er, [it] has a Mongolian edge to it. Here, Baotou, is totally different. It’s hard to understand, and so now I have to get used to another accent. And do you mind if we go back to the how I can tell the difference? I can tell that they’re Mongolian?

Me: Sure.
I1: Mongolian students dress differently than Chinese students. They wear their hair differently, the girls wear make-up, sometimes, the boys wear earrings. And so, even the clothing is different than the Han students. It became very evident to me after I observed for a while.

Me: Just the way, their appearance...like, how they do their hair, or the clothing?

I1: Mm hm. Yeah. They all dress very modernly.

Me: Right now I’m living in Hohhot, and when I first arrived in Hohhot, I was assigned a dorm room with three other Mongolian girls from Outer Mongolia, and I noticed they all wore heavy make-up, and they were very flamboyant in how they dressed. And, later on, a few weeks later, I was with a Chinese friend who had a Mongolian friend, but he was Mongolian-Chinese, but he had these earrings that weren’t just sort of dangling down. They were actually sort of small discs in his earlobes, so the earlobes were expanded, a lot like some Southeast Asian cultures or some African cultures, where they put these flamboyant earrings in. And I just thought that was so interesting because it was so different from the relatively conservative way that I think a lot of Chinese men dress or Chinese women would dress. Even some of the younger Chinese girls who like to wear really frilly clothes and stuff, it was almost...it did not compare to the roommates that I had. They would spend an hour doing make-up. And then they would choose their clothes carefully, and then go to class. It wasn’t as if they were going to, like a dance club, they were just going to school, and then they would come back and change their clothes for something else, like going to the gym, or
actually going out to do something. So I think that expressive nature is quite
different form what I’ve gotten used to being around and making friends with
average– the average Chinese person...Han-Chinese girl or guy.

I1: Also, the Mongolian-Chinese young men often long hair, and often they have
tattoos, which you never see on Han-Chinese boys.

Me: Really?

I1: Usually, they do not have tattoos. But I noticed a lot of the Mongolian boys
have...my students don’t have a lot of tattoos, but I did see others that which–
students who had lots of tattoos, and they were nice. Maybe not as nice as
American– the ones you see in America with the beautiful artwork, but they were
good tattoos. So, I was very surprised. And very, kinda of like “Yes!”

Me: I want to touch upon something that you mentioned earlier about your Mongolian
friend that you met in Urumqi. You said that she taught Russian, and I’ve done my
own preliminary research about the subject that I’m studying, and I’ve often come
across a really close connection between Mongolia and Russia, and that’s for very
obvious reasons. Before and after World War II, there was that Soviet connection.
Do you think you can...is...have you noticed any...I guess any sort of cultural
behaviors or something to that effect that makes you think “Russian” or “Eastern
European” that you’ve observed from any of your Outer Mongolian friends or
students or Inner Mongolian friends or students?

I1: I just thought of your last roommates because the Russian women I met,
generally, wore tons of make-up to the point of looking stupid [laughter].
Me: [laughter]

I1: I mean it wasn’t becoming at all. It was too much. And really short skirts, really short skirts, and quite flamboyant. Amar’s [the Mongolian woman in question] is not like that. But a lot of Mongolian women were very hard-looking, just like Russian women.

Me: What do you mean “hard-looking”?  

I1: Too much make-up, maybe a hard life. Though I don’t think the Mongolians were quite as bad as the Russians. Amar and her husband were quite...I don’t know if I want to say “religious,” but they were followers of the Buddhist group, and they didn’t drink, or smoke, and Amar never wore make-up. She was a beautiful woman, she didn’t need it. And so, that– they are probably not the norm of what I saw. So it was a little hard, I think, you know, research subject of one doesn’t quite tell you. But I was only there for five days, so that part’s kind of limited, and I didn’t meet any other Mongolians. Just Amar and her husband, and they’re lovely people. One thing. One thing about Mongolian culture, though, it’s...it’s crazy giving. It’s over-the-top with giving presents. With Amar, we would come back from Ulaanbatar, and she would come back with things, full of presents for everybody, and then you’re embarrassed! [laughter] So when I went there I just got gifts for the kids because I didn’t know what to do, I’d always give to the kids. But I always got the feeling I didn’t give enough! [laughter] But that’s just one little cultural thing.

Me: Interesting.
I1: [speaking to a different person in the room] I don’t like that! [laughter] I don’t like people bringing me gifts! [laughter]

Me: What about when you were in HaiLe’Er? Was it...was there...more...obvious or evident Russian influence there?

I1: Yes. I mean, everybody...there were a lot of Russian people there.

Me: Ok.

I1: Not so many teachers, but Russians there for business, I guess. Everybody thought I was Russian, so they would speak to me in Russian. And I’d look at them and go, “Oh, ting bu dong [Mandarin for “I don’t understand”]!” [laughter] Yeah, I think there is Russian influence there, but I think the Mongolian influence is much stronger.

Me: Ok.

I1: Even the architecture. It was a beautiful little city. The architecture, the colors, the buildings are very colorful. They have a lot of, you know, the little curly q’s...I liked that part a lot.

Me: Ok. You commented a little bit about your friend you met in Urumqi. You said they were followers of Buddhism. Do you know anything more about that, or is it just...is that peripherally?

I1: It’s a small group... They showed me online, the leader of the group. So I really can’t say, I don’t know if it’s Tibetan, a branch of Tibetan Buddhism, that’s prevalent in Mongolia. So I’m not really sure if this is like an off-shoot or a totally cult-like thing! [laughter] Not sure.
Me: I would probably go out on a limb and say that it’s probably a branch of Tibetan Buddhism because the link...

I1: Like, it’s not any...like they weren’t giving all of their money to their leader, or...they were really serious about it. And they wanted to live accordingly.

Me: Ok. Alright, let’s get into more specific details. Do you listen to music?

I1: Yes.

Me: What kinds of music do you typically like to listen to?

I1: I love rock music! So I just downloaded Neil Young’s last two– he just put out two albums. And I like blues. So I listen to that stuff a lot.

Me: Have you ever listened to traditional Mongolian music?

I1: Yes, but I don’t like to listen to that kind of music, like, just a recording. I prefer, like if it was life, I would be there for the whole thing. The same thing goes for Uighur music. I don’t have any Uighur recordings, but live music, I’m there.

Me: Ok. What about modern Mongolian music? Have you ever listened to that or ever heard of it?

I1: Just the little bit that my students play. But the students like to break out into song and play what sounds like traditional Mongolian music, and it was lovely, and when they start singing, it’s like, “Go for it!” [laughter] I’m not stopping them, I’m loving it! That’s what I love: Han students would never start singing! [laughter] But the Mongolians, something would get them all thinking the same way and they would start singing. And one would start and then another one would take it up, and then everyone was singing. I like that spontaneity.
Me: Do you like Mongolian music?

I1: Yeah, I do, I enjoy it, very much. It makes me feel like the grasslands...when they sing, I can almost feel, like the wind blowing, and that feeling of someone traveling a long way, because there’s nothing in the way, and yeah. Yeah, I like that a lot. It’s a little sad sometimes, sometimes I feel, when I listen to it on a recording, and I don’t want to feel sad. [laughter]

Me: Why do you say sad?

I1: I don’t know, because the sound goes a long ways and there’s nobody around. Maybe “lonesome” is a better way to...

Me: That’s interesting that you say “lonesome”. Sometimes when I listen to traditional Mongolian music, especially what they call the “long songs” where they...almost like a melismatic...where a person is singing, maybe one syllable for a really long time, and then another syllable, these long songs, for whatever reason, it makes me think of country music in the States, but really slow ballads, not country-rock music. So when you say “lonesome,” it does make me think of American country music, and think the sentiment behind both musics tends to be very similar, because you’re just by yourself herding some sort of animal, be it sheep or cows, and it could be just you, and you see nothing but grasslands, or nothing but dry, sort of desert-y kind of environment; I find that connection really interesting. And sometimes I wonder, for other cultures, besides American or Mongolian, and where there’s a distinct culture of a group of people herding animals through a
wide plain, I wonder if there are similar musics to express how they feel on the plains.

I1: That’s another research topic! [laughter] There’s always another research topic, it never ends! [laughter]

Me: Now, you said that you enjoy the traditional music. Of the modern music that you’ve heard from your students, what did you think of that?

I1: Pop music. [laughter] Yeah, I didn’t find it to be as interesting as the traditional music.

Me: Why do you say that?

I1: Well, because pop music is not interesting. It’s just the same thing over and over. It just doesn’t seem so musically...to me. So, I just don’t like anything pop music. I hate Justin Beiber, I want to slap him! [laughter] [speaking to the guest] Do you like Justin Beiber?

Guest: Ta shuo... [Mandarin: she said...]

Me: Ta shuo ta bu xihuan pop. [Mandarin: she said she doesn’t like pop]

Guest: Ta xihuan quantong yinyue? [Mandarin: she likes traditional music?]

Me: Yes.

Guest: Yes, traditional music. [nodding her head, she is indicating that she prefers traditional music]

Me: I was actually telling her [referring to the guest] in the taxi, when we were going back to the hotel, that I actually dislike Justin Beiber, a lot. [laughter] And I don’t understand why so...why he’s so popular. So interesting that you say that, we just
had this conversation only a couple of hours ago. Would you say that the pop that you heard was distinctive? Could you, if they weren’t speaking Mongolian, could you tell the difference between it and maybe American pop or European pop?

I1: Chinese pop.

Me: More like Chinese pop?

I1: Yeah, more like Chinese pop, except the language is different. But if you place it, I think all pop is similar, so that’s just pop music.

Me: Generally, it tends to be based on American style. Well, I guess we already covered a couple of these questions, but, could you elaborate more on how you feel about traditional Mongolian music? How does it make you feel? What does it sound like to you?

I1: It sounds strong. I always think of strength when I hear it. Strong people. People who are...who can live in the elements and, you know, they’re not city people who would die if the electricity goes off. I think they’re self-sufficient, self-reliant, self-sufficient people. And a strong tradition. This is our life, this is the way we live, and this is the way we want to live. And we’re happy about it. Yeah, I always get that feeling, and especially when they do the “ahhh-ahhhhh-ahhh,” it’s almost like...a happiness. I really like that sound. It gives me a good feeling.

Me: And sometimes a lonesome feeling.

I1: Yeah, but it’s not a sad lonesome feeling. You know? None of it makes me feel like the person is sad. Just maybe missing the family that...they’re doing their job, then they get together again. Yeah, so it’s, it’s not a sad lonesome.
Me: Missing.

I1: Yeah, missing lonesome. Yeah, I don’t feel any negatives when I listen to that music. I feel that the people singing it are very happy with their lives and the way their lives are. I don’t suppose all traditional music is like that.

Me: Now the modern music: how does that make you feel?

I1: If I want to listen to it. [laughter] I don’t consider it anything. I just...me, it’s just somebody saying Justin Beiber’s music in a different language. [laughter] So, I really don’t...I tune it out. I don’t...can’t elaborate on it.

Me: Ok.

I1: I tune out the Chinese pop music too because I don’t like it. Can you tell that I don’t like pop music? I don’t even like American pop music! [laughter]

Me: Ok. Do you think Mongolian music is popular in Inner Mongolia?

I1: Yeah. Well, I will say in the north, yes, I’ve heard it a lot. But here, I have not heard any Mongolian music. I’ve only heard one student, well two students together, speaking Mongolian, because I just haven’t seen any Mongolian people here. But, it may be because I haven’t gone off campus that much. So...

Me: That’s interesting. In Hohhot, it is quite popular. There’s a DVD store a little ways away from where I live, and almost everything, if there’s a Chinese version of it, there’s a Mongolian version of it too, and the amount of material is almost equivalent. So, it’s not like you have the Chinese section and then you have like a small, little Mongolian corner here, it’s a Chinese shelf and a Mongolian shelf. By far, there are more American things in there! [laughter] If there’s a Chinese shelf
and a Mongolian shelf, there are three rows of American shelves in this DVD store!

I1:  Wow.

Me: But I did find it interesting that the balance of the cultures between the Mongolian culture and the Han culture is almost equal in Hohhot, even if their population isn’t...isn’t that way. I’m sure there are far more Han Chinese people in Hohhot than Mongolian or Mongolian-Chinese people in Hohhot. Now, I may be wrong, I’ll have to go back and look at this, but I was almost certain there were more Mongolian people in Baotou than in Hohhot, which is why I was really looking forward to coming here, to see if there’s more presence of Mongolian culture here, but of the little that I’ve seen here, I see a lot of Western influence, and Han-Chinese influence. Very very little Mongolian influence. The much...the most that I would see are people that I could recognize as being Mongolian on the street, or seeing the signs—street signs or store signs that are in Chinese and then have Mongolian writing next to it. So when I got here and noticed these things, I thought it was very interesting that there wasn’t more of a presence of Mongolian culture here, even though I read that there are more Mongolian people here. I’m going to have to go back and look at that and make sure if that’s actually the case.

I1:  Well, it could just be the area that we’re in. But I say, there are two of my colleagues who are Mongolian that I met, he owns a restaurant and he invited us to go to his restaurant, and so his dad was with him and his dad was Chinese. So I thought that was interesting! [laughter] So, he spoke some English. But we
haven’t been there yet. We were going to go, it’s not too late, because they were going to have a grand opening, so I’m hoping that will open the door to meeting some Mongolian people, at least get me out, out and away from the school to meet some more people. Because I want to meet some locals, I wanna meet, where are these Mongolian people?! [laughter] I fell in love with Mongolian culture, just like I did with the Uighur culture but they’re nothing alike. They are cousins. [laughter] But, yeah, you know, the cultures are very different, but they’re just so lovely and open, and different from the Han.

Me: You said that the Mongolian— you felt that Mongolian music was popular in the north, as in HaiLe’Er?

I1: Yeah.

Me: Could you describe a little bit about what it was like there as far as the music scene is concerned, as much as you know?

I1: Well, not much. [laughter] Basically, I knew what my students did, what they listened to. And when they— they did have a couple of performances but it was pretty equal Chinese and Mongolian and also Mongolian performances were all in Mongolian so if you didn’t speak Mongolian, you were at a disadvantage. At least, the Han students don’t speak Mongolian so they just gotta get through it. And one really interesting thing I observed, they had a welcome presentation for the freshmen. The sophomores put that on. And the— every time the Mongolian announcer spoke, all the Mongolian students cheered. Which, of course when the Han announcer spoke, they wouldn’t cheer. And I think they had it in English too,
but nobody cared. [laughter] So there was a real solidarity between the
Mongolians. But for the music, it was probably half and half.

Me: You mentioned solidarity. Could you elaborate that—on that a little bit more in a
general sense as it applies to Mongolians in China, Mongolian-Chinese, or
Mongolians from Mongolia the country who live here?

I1: Well, I only know Amar, the one [Outer] Mongolian, so I can’t really comment on
that because she surrounded herself with the Russian teachers who had moved in
from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kurdistan, so I’m not a good reference, but
students always were segregated, and they were segregated—the school
segregated them because we have Mongolian classes, only Mongolian students,
and the Han classes had the Mongolians in them, so the classes were totally
segregated. And of course, this is only the English department. I don’t know how
it was in the other departments. And the Mongolian students only spoke
Mongolian, unless they had to speak to Han students or to a teacher. They could
all speak Chinese just fine, but they choose to speak Mongolian.

Me: That’s interesting.

I1: Yeah, I thought that, and it was really strong thing I noticed, when they were all
walking together, rarely did you see a Han friend, it was almost always
Mongolians, and they always spoke Mongolian even though I told them to speak
English.

Me: I’d like to ask—make a comparison and then ask your opinion about something.

When I was coming up in school, especially in terms of going to lunch or who
your friends were or what have you, the White students and Black students segregated themselves. Segregation is no longer existent in the United States! [laughter] Of course, we don’t have classes where there are just Black students and then there are just white students. The students tended to segregate themselves. Even just, like I said, eating lunch. Now, for me personally, because my parents were in the military, and I lived in lots of places, I didn’t grow up in that kind of environment. I didn’t spend my early years in that environment, so I just either hung out with whoever I wanted to, or I was just to myself all of the time. But I did notice this self-segregation and I think it continues even into college or in the workplace, in adult lives, although it’s less...less evident. I would venture to say that the students segregated themselves partly for– or mostly for a commonality in culture, but it’s probably partly also due to the history of...American race-relations history between White-Americans and Black-Americans. So when you mentioned that the Mongolians segregated themselves and also in the education system, they are segregated from the Han classes. Do you think that it’s more for cultural sake, or is it a language-barrier kind of thing, or is it– is there an actual animosity between these two cultures? Are they butting heads, per se?

I1: Ok, well, there’s no language barrier between them, because they all speak Chinese. So, you know, there’s no problem with that. I think it’s a cultural animosity that’s a part of it, all I heard from the teachers were that, “well, the Mongolians aren’t as smart, aren’t as advanced...” Really. And I was shocked at
how open they were about...they were quite rude about it! They [the Mongolians] were a “lower-class” of students. There were two campuses at the university. And West campus was 100% Mongolian, and they were, the buildings were in disrepair. And all of the classrooms were just lower-quality, it was a very old campus, the buildings were very old. And, so they even got equipment, buildings there were lower quality. They were supposedly the lower– the students with the lower grades in the *gao kao* [Mandarin: a sort of national high-school graduation exam that all high-school seniors in China must take and pass in order to gain acceptance into a Chinese university]. But they were also put into a teaching environment where they weren’t expected to do much. So they lived up to expectations.

Me: That...and you know, as well as most Americans, that that situation goes on back in the States, especially for Black Americans and Latino Americans that that situation is very prevalent.

I1: I know that part of it is economics in the States, but here it’s total discrimination.

Me: Really?

I1: As far as I, you know, what I saw and heard. It was total discrimination. It wasn’t that they couldn’t afford, because, you know, they can...supposedly they lived on that campus. So yeah, it was outright discrimination and a lot lower expectations for the Mongolian students. And in regards to...when they were freshman, they did not have a foreign teacher until their second semester when the Han students had a foreign teacher right away. Honestly, I don’t know about anything else.
Me: I’m going to ask a personal question and you don’t have to answer if you don’t want to. Have any of your Mongolian students confided in you or even have suddenly...how to say...hinted at that situation and what their feelings were toward that situation, especially being Mongolian in Inner Mongolia and trying to go to school and improve their lives through education? Have any of them hinted at what it was like for them and how they feel about it?

I1: They more than hinted. [laughter] Two of the girls in my Mongolian class became quite close [to me] and they were very open about their feelings. And they absolutely feel the discrimination, and that just pushes them farther into the Mongolian culture. It has the opposite effect of what I think the government thinks they’re doing. [laughter] They try to integrate so that they feel very much like others within their community. Also they told me how the young children, the Mongolian children, you know, who live out in the countryside...there’s a lot, there’s a large rural population up there, they’re being taken away from their families and being forced to in small cities in dormitories because they’re closing all the schools. And then we have regional schools instead of local schools, so the children were taken, were actually taken from their families and taken to these larger schools when they’re about five or six years old, and they’re indoctrinated because the families aren’t there to have influence on them. So, they were very upset about that. And of course, I haven’t done any research on that, but they told me.
Me: I’ve actually done a little bit of research on that, I was writing a paper, I think on Mongolian music or I think I was writing a paper on Chinese-language education in the United States and I had read that there is a policy of taking children from very rural areas, and especially ethnic minority children, and bringing them to cities where they get a better education, and from what I read in some of the articles that talked about the subject, they...a lot of the students, I guess, adapt and acclimate to Han culture but at the same time, they feel– they still feel a connection to their ethnic– their original ethnic culture.

I1: What’s happening is a lot of the families are hiding their children and they’re not getting educated, except at home, you know, home-schooling. In China, that’s, you know, you’re not going to pass the gao kao with that. I mean they disappear, the kids just disappear, pretty much. And so, this is going to be a problem when they get older. But, yet, can you imagine giving up your five-year-old? And have them go into a dorm with some dorm mother? It’s awful. The students are angry about this. Like I said, it pushes them into their culture even more, because they really feel like there is an attack on their culture, which it is. They’re right.

Me: Now that, I wanted to ask about. The question keeps popping in my head and then slipping away. These students: are they Mongolian-Chinese? And what I mean by that, not just nationally Chinese but actually half ethnically Mongolian and half ethnically Chinese or something to that effect? Are these students that way, or are they just ethnically Mongolian and nationally Chinese?
I: I can’t be 100% sure about all of them, but with my best guess, nobody ever talked about being...having a Han mother or father, so I would guess that the students that I had were 100% Mongolian...Mongolian-Chinese [that is, ethnically Mongolian but nationally Chinese]. In fact, there is a lot of disdain– a lot of...disdain for the government and Han culture, so it’s not much different from the Uighurs actually, in their feelings. They’re [the Mongolians] just more acclimated because they speak Chinese. They’ve been part of China longer.

Me: Yes. While living in Hohhot, I have known a lot of Chinese people and a lot of Mongolian people, and a lot of nationally-Chinese-ethnically-Mongolian people, and a few nationally Chinese and ethnically mixed Mongolian-Chinese people. And what I find is that those that are Chinese-Mongolian, ethnically– nationally speaking, they tend to remind me more of the Mongolians from Outer Mongolia whereas those who are a mix between ethnically Han-Chinese and Mongolian, it’s extremely difficult for me to tell that they’re Mongolian unless if they have a distinct facial feature, or if I catch them speaking Mongolian out of the...out of my periphery. It’s very hard for me to tell that they’re actually even ethnically partially Mongolian because they have fully– almost fully acclimated and adapted and acculturated to modern Han culture. So I will actually, hopefully, be able to interview one of these people, a friend of mine and to gain her perspective on my real goal which is learning about the music, but learning about these cultural differences and these cultural clashes...is...it directly affects what kind of fine art comes out of peoples’ expressions. People always put how they’re feeling into
fine artistic expressions. Do you know what I mean? Usually I find an art isn’t just random stuff. Sometimes, there is a definite meaning. And I think if the person is feeling some sort of conflict or some sort of strong feeling, that it will come out in their art. So, being here in Inner Mongolia and living in Hohhot, I’ve heard and listened to and attended music performances, music CDs, DVDs, what have you, and I find that a lot of the CDs that I’m able to get my hands on are...they remind me of those people who are ethnically mixed. Because, when I look at the CD, it reminds me of when I go to KTV [the most popular karaoke chain in China], karaoke, and I see Chinese pop, those Mongolian CDs remind me of Chinese pop karaoke, even if the person is singing a traditional song, they usually have some sort of cheesy Yamaha underlying beat to it [laughter] and it does make me think of a lot of Chinese pop on karaoke that I see. But then, when I attend my Mongolian music classes, and the classes are taught by Mongolian people, like I can say for sure that they are 100% ethnically Mongolian, the materials that they bring into class, it’s really authentically anthropological, and it really is Mongolian-style, even some of the modern stuff, it’s– there’s a slight difference than what I’ve seen out of that kind of medium in Han-Chinese music. But anyway, I’ve blabbed on long enough...

I: I have to say, in Urumqi, my Han friends at KTV like to sing Mongolian songs, but they’re all in Chinese. [laughter] They [the performers in the karaoke songs] don’t sing– they obviously don’t sing Mongolian, but they are Mongolian songs sung by Mongolians but in Chinese, and they love that music.
Me: Yes. I’ve noticed in one of my classes, it’s Mongolian– Traditional Mongolian Music class. Introduction to Traditional Mongolian music, and some of the songs are actually a mix of Chinese and Mongolian, the language.

I1: Oh, wow!

Me: Yes, one song is called “Gao Xiaojie” [Mandarin: Tall Young Woman], and it’s...it is– the name of the song is Chinese and when I listened to the song, the man was singing in Mongolian and I could hear little splatters of Chinese. It’s almost like Chinglish but...Mongolianese...and that mix was so interesting. Not just the linguistic mix, but the musical mix. Because I’m a music major, I could hear subtle differences or subtle hints of, “this is definitely traditional Chinese style and this is definitely Mongolian style.” I’ve been able to start picking up on that. So there are actually songs like that and they’re considered traditional songs. I have two more questions.

I1: Ok.

Me: Do you think Mongolian music is popular in China proper?

I1: No, I don’t think so. As a matter of fact, I would guess that outside of neimenggu [Mandarin: Inner Mongolia] and xinjiang [Mandarin: it refers to the province west of Inner Mongolia, which is Xinjiang], and maybe a little a bit in Gansu province, that there wouldn’t be anyone who even knows what Mongolian music is.

Me: Now, that I wonder...
I1: Because I’ve lived in Xinjiang and neimenggu, you know I’ve been exposed to
it...but I haven’t learned– and, I mean I’ve been to Beijing, but I would’ve
understood it was Mongolian. So I can...my observations may not be correct.

Me: And one more question. Do you think Mongolian music will be more popular in
the future?

I1: Oh wow, that’s a hard one. With trying to assimilate the young children into Han
culture, it’s kind of a toss up. It depends on how strongly the Mongolians hang on
to their culture. On one hand, you have the assimilation...the attempt to assimilate.
On the other hand, that just makes Mongolians want to be Mongolian more, you
know, and not give up their culture. So, I really can’t answer that. [laughter] I
guess it’s one of those “we’ll have to wait and see who wins”. If the young
children are turned to the dark side [laughter], but no, of course there’ll be a lot
less traditional music. See, I don’t think they’ll enjoy it that much if it’s just the
old folks music, you know? So...they wouldn’t see– they wouldn’t grow up with
it, so they wouldn’t feel part– it’s part of their lives. They’ll see it as their
grandparents music.

Me: Based on these few weeks that I’ve been here, I think I would agree with you in
that it seems like it’s a toss-up because the– there are just three distinct cultures in
Hohhot. There’s Mongolian culture, there’s Han culture, and there’s Mongolian-
Han culture, and they... [unclear dialogue, laughter] it’s just these three distinct
cultures, and they’re all coexisting at the same time, and it’s almost like they’re
battling for dominance, and I can’t work out in my mind which one would

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actually come out on top, mainly because they all have their ups and downs just like any culture. But this particular—this particular...how to say...situation is unique in and of itself. When I was here last year, and I was visiting you in Urumqi, it was very hard for me to find traditional Uighur music, but that’s because of the nature of how they see music, how they understand their music.

I1: I remember you talking about that. I didn’t realize that.

Me: So, if I— if someone were to ask me do I think that Uighur music will become more popular in the future, I would say no, actually I think it’s something that’s dying out, and it’s in danger of going into obscurity unless the Uighurs themselves do something to hold on to that. But that’s just the nature of what they think of music. Whereas, the Mongolians, they think of music in almost the same way that we [Americans] do, that it’s a source of entertainment, but it’s also an outlet for expression and an underlying fundamental part of their religion for those of them who are strict Buddhists. Some traditional Mongolian Buddhist music is a lot like Tibetan music and then, I remember doing research on that some time ago in that the music cannot be separated from the religious practice at all, it’s actually part of it, it’s not there for entertainment. So, in that case, I can’t really predict right now. I’d have to continue to do more research and really think on it, what’s going to happen to traditional Mongolian music. I think as long as there are Mongolians who feel like they are being pushed into a culture against their will, they’re going to hold on to that. But at the same time, as long as there is a government who is trying to push them into a culture against their will, they’re going to have to fight
really hard for that, and what’s going to— I think what’s going to happen is that, eventually, Mongolian-Han music will probably come out on top, and I say that because it’s the kind of music that appeals to the most people, that’s why it’s called “pop” music. [laughter] And the traditional music is held on to...those within Mongolian society who have been entrusted to hold on to it, that is the older generations and the younger ones who really want to hold on to it. But I can’t say that I foresee traditional Mongolian music becoming popular outside of Inner Mongolia or the Northwest.

I1: I think, it’s also under attack from globalization.

Me: That’s true too.

I1: And Justin Beiber started it! [laughter] In Inner Mongolia. [laughter]

Me: That is also true.

I1: So, that’s going to hurt the traditional music too.

Me: It reminds me of what I said about that DVD store. There’s a shelf of Chinese music, a shelf of Mongolian music, and three rows of shelves of American stuff. So, we’ll see.

I1: Sometimes I think our [American] culture, you know, could be the worst thing for them. [laughter]

Me: Well, it tends to eat up everything else.

I1: Yeah, it does. It does. My gosh, I remember when the Soviet Union was still going strong, and I met a Russian, being in Muskegon [in Michigan] of all places, and he wanted to buy books to take back to Russia because there were no books. His
wife wanted him to bring back blue jeans. [laughter] Forget the books, bring back jeans. It doesn’t matter what size, we’ll make them fit! [laughter] And I thought, “Aw, that’s terrible! American culture!” [laughter] So even, you know, here you get a guy who gets a once-in-a-lifetime chance to be in a America, all his wife wants are blue jeans. [laughter]

Me: Well, I will say this about American culture, and we touched upon this in our own conversation last night, is that it’s unique in that it’s an amalgamation of so much, even though it has the potential to eat everything else in its path. Because of the way Americans inherently are, I could foresee even Mongolian culture being safe somewhere inside America. There is going to be some sort of cult that will keep holding on to Mongolian culture.

I1: And that’s why it [American culture] has spread all over the world so easily because you will find everyone of your culture in it. Something comfortable that everybody likes. Yeah. Yeah, we’re pretty cool! [laughter]

Me: Ok, well that was my last question, thank you so much for doing this for me, I really, really appreciate it!

I1: Oh yeah, it was fun!

Me: Was there anything else that you wanted to add to this...anything?

I1: No, other than those couple of things. Yeah.

Me: Ok. Well, I guess, this is the end. Thank you so much!
Appendix B

Transcription: Interviewee Two and Interviewee Three
Forward

This interview was conducted concurrently with two Inner Mongolian music students. The majority of the interview is conducted between myself and Interviewee Two, although Interviewee Three does contribute intermittently. I suspected at the time that Interviewee Three’s Mandarin was not as fluent as Interviewee Two’s.

I was assisted in this interview by a Mongolian friend who speaks Mandarin Chinese, Mongolian, and some English, as I cannot speak Mongolian myself. She shall be denoted as “Assist” in this transcription. Assist had introduced me to the interviewees prior to the interview having taken place and had informed me beforehand that the two students studied hip-hop and beat-boxing professionally.

The following is a transcription of the interview that was conducted, and it has been directly translated and paraphrased from Mandarin Chinese to English, although there are points in the interview where Interviewee Two attempts to speak some English, which shall be denoted by encompassing apostrophes, as such: ‘example’. To allow for confidentiality, Interviewee Two will be denoted as “I2”, and Interviewee Three will be denoted as “I3.”

Interview

Me:  [ Trying to ascertain the correct pronunciation of their actual Mongolian names and not the Mandarinization of their names ] Can you two perform khoomeii?
I3: I cannot.

I2: I can a little bit.

Me: Could you give me a demonstration?

Assist: Don’t worry about that, I have another friend who sings * khoomei* very well, so you don’t have to worry about that tonight.

Me: Ok, hip-hop then?

I2: Ok.

Me: Now, why do you like to listen to hip-hop?

I2: ‘I think hip-hop is a very...very big cultural system.’ That is, I think hip-hop is a very big cultural system. It is a culture that has existed from the 1990s to the present and many young people all over the world know it and want to be part of that culture. For us in Inner Mongolia, we began to integrate hip-hop around 2007 and 2008. When I first began listening to hip-hop, my favorite part of the music-culture was “breaking” [also known as “break dancing”]. Then I liked “beat-box.” Then I liked “rap.” When I first saw “breaking” on TV, I thought it was so cool, very cool! And then, I’d try to learn it by myself in my house! [laughter] After I entered high school, I joined a professional “breaking” group and studied with them. The first thing I studied was “popping” and it was a little difficult for me because I was a little bit fat. After “popping,” I decided I wanted to study “beat-boxing”. So I’ve studied beat-boxing and breaking professionally. And I also learned the so-called “hip-hop beat,” how to do the “hip-hop beat”. Now, there’s not a lot of time to do so many things, so I have a small group with my friends,
it’s called “HB,” and it stands for “Hulunbir” [a popular Inner Mongolian city]. We have about 20 people in the group. You know, the first time I listened to hip-hop, I felt really amazed.

Me: Ok. So, you both live in Inner Mongolia, is that right?
I2: Yes.
Me: What city?
I2: I live in Hulunbir.
Me: [Speaking to I3] You also live there?
I3: [Nods his head in the affirmative]
Me: Are you both ethnically Mongolian?
I2: [Nods his head in the affirmative]
I3: [Nods his head in the affirmative]
Me: I’d like to ask: are your parents also from Hulunbir? They are not Outer Mongolian?
I2: That’s correct.
Me: So you’ve lived your whole life in Inner Mongolia?
I2: Yes.
Me: Have either of you been to Outer Mongolia?
I2: No.55
Me: Really? Do you want to go?
I2: Yes, I want to go. [laughter]

55 Here, I2 might be speaking for just himself.
Me: Have either of you been to other places within Inner Mongolia or outside?
I2: No. We’ve only used the internet to look at the world. [laughter]
Me: In addition to hip-hop, what kinds of music do you like to listen to?
I2: Pop. He [referring to I3] likes pop, rock.
Me: And you?
I2: Dubstep. [laughter] And jazz, and blues.
Me: Blues?
I2: Yes.
Me: Really?! I am a bass-player. My bass teacher plays European classical and jazz music. He teaches jazz. So, I can play jazz. He plays [jazz] extremely well. Maybe, after we finish this, I can give you some of his CDs.
I2: Yes! [laughter]
Me: Now, how about traditional Mongolian music. Do you like it?
I2: Yes.
Me: [Speaking to I3] How about you?
I3: [Very softly] I like it.
Me: You don’t like it?!
I3: [Louder] I like it. [laughter]
Me: For a moment, I thought you didn’t like it, I would’ve been very surprised, like “Really?!” [laughter] Now, how about European classical music? She [referring to Assist] studies European classical music. Do you like European classical music?
I2: She plays violin, right?
Me: Mm hm.

I2: We both like it.

Me: Really? [laughter]

I2: Yes, we like it. [laughter] When I first began to study beat-boxing, I had to listen to a lot of different kinds of music to gain a foundation.

Me: [Speaking to I3] How about you?

I3: [Nods his head in the affirmative] [laughter]

I2: [Speaking to me] You live in America, right? Where do you live?

Me: Michigan.

I2: Michigan?

Me: Yes. My family lives in Atlanta.

I2: Is that in the West?

Me: It's in the South. Atlanta, Georgia. In 1996, I believe, the city held the Olympics.

I2: Ok...now, what is the most northwestern state?56

Me: Northwest...Washington.

I2: But that is northeast.

Me: No, it's not.

I2: That is northeast.

Me: I am American! [laughter]

I2: Now, in the northeast, what is that city? It's Justin Beiber's hometown?

Me: Justin Beiber? He is Canadian.

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56 At this point in the interview, I believe I2 is thinking of Alaska when I say “Atlanta,” but it does not occur to me during the interview.
I2: Yes, Canada, but there is an area, a part...how to say...

Me: I believe that he is from Toronto...I think the most well-known city in the Northwest is Seattle.

I2: Seattle! Yes, I think I got these two cities confused. [laughter]

Me: [Using my hand as a map of the US] This is America. Here [my thumb] is Florida. Atlanta is right here. Here is New York. And Seattle is here.

I2: Ah.

Me: Now! I’d like to ask, why do you both like hip-hop so much? You said earlier that it was “cool”, yes?

I2: That was my first impression...In this country, in China, not very many people like to listen to hip-hop, so it was something that was not mainstream. It is also very personal. You can study and make raps on your own to express yourself.

Me: Hip-hop has many different...kinds...do you understand my meaning.

I2: I understand.

Me: Which kind of hip-hop to you like the most?

I2: Gangsta [rap].

Me: Really?!

I2: Yes. [laughter]

Me: [laughter] That is amazing!

Assist: These kinds of musics are very popular among young people, among current generations, but the older generations do not understand these kinds of musics.

Me: How old are the two of you?
I2: We’re both 21...or 22?

Assist: What year were you born? 1991?

I2: Yes.

Assist: [Speaking to me] Here’s the thing. In China, oftentimes people can be one of two ages. How old are you?

Me: 23.

Assist: Because you were in your mother’s belly for about one year, you could be considered either 23 or 24. But really you are 23. This is what they [referring to I2 and I2] meant by that.

Me: Ok. So...how old are they? 21 or 22?

Assist: 21...or 22.

Me: Ah hah! I want to ask another question, but it’s not about hip-hop. Do you personally feel that Mongolian traditional and popular music is popular in China? Do you think people in China like these musics?

I2: I think they feel it is weird. I think that they don’t really understand it but when they see or hear it they think, “Wow! This is strange!” This is what I think. They don’t understand, they are very amazed when they hear it but they don’t really understand. They just think it’s strange. They really have only heard of the harsI3head fiddle or some vocal songs.

Assist: [Referring to I2] He also studied harsI3head fiddle originally. [laughter]

I2: I play very badly! [laughter]
Me: Every time I go to my horsehead fiddle class, my teacher says, “Oh Dai Li\textsuperscript{57}, you are playing very badly, come on, try again...so bad!” But, I think the horsehead fiddle is extremely interesting. The first time I came to Inner Mongolia was in 2009. I went with friends to the grasslands. I had a very terrible time, because at that time, it was [China’s] National Day holiday\textsuperscript{58}, so it was cold, very cold. It was very bad. But, the second time I came to Inner Mongolia was during a summer. During the summer, I was doing my Bachelor’s thesis project. I was studying traditional musics of ethnic minorities in China. So, I’ve been to many places in China. One place was Hohhot. At one point, I was with some Mongolian people, they could sing *khoomeii*, they could play the horsehead fiddle, and it was like, “Wow! What is this?! This is so amazing!” I really wanted to know what kind of music was it. So, when it came to my Master’s thesis, I already knew I wanted to study Mongolian music. And so, I am here, studying Mongolian music and the horsehead fiddle. My horsehead fiddle teacher is a very good teacher. But I play very badly. [laughter] I really must practice more. [laughter] Now, let’s go back to hip-hop. Now, there are many places in the world that their own styles of hip-hop. Do you know this? America, Canada, Europe, Africa, etc. Many places. Even Russia. They have their own kind of hip-hop. What kind do you like the most? From where?

I2: American.

Me: American...why?

\textsuperscript{57} My Chinese name; what I ask people in China to call me.

\textsuperscript{58} Which is held in early October for about one week.
I2: When you really like something, you need to know where it originally came from, appreciate where it began.

Me: Ok. Now, I’d like to ask another question. I am a black person. Hip-hop music is part of my culture as well as other musics. This question is a bit more expert, although I am not an expert on hip-hop music, so you probably know more about hip-hop than I do. Do you understand my meaning?

I2: Yes.

Me: Because I am not a hip-hop professional, I am a European classical professional, but because I am a black [American], I of course know at least a little. Do you know that before hip-hop there was rap, and before that soul, and before that funk, and before that disco.

I2: And before that was blues.

Me: Mm hm. So, these kinds of music came from American Black culture. You know this, of course. What do you think of Black American culture?

I2: ‘Very nice’.

Me: [laughter]

I2: You know, we Mongolians have our own culture. Many people like Mongolian culture. But I think hip-hop is the same. Many people like hip-hop culture.

Me: [Speaking to I3] How about you?

I3: [Silent]

I2: [Referring to I3] He doesn’t speak Mandarin very well.

Me: Ok...could you ask him and then translate what he says for me?
Ok. ... He and I have been classmates since elementary school. However, he knows a lot more about rap than I do. He started listening to it when he was about 3 or 4 years old. He heard it in a mall in Outer Mongolia. He really liked it growing up, and he feels very familiar with the culture.

Me: Ok. So who is your favorite hip-hop artist or rapper?

I2: Tupac, B.I.G., Nas.

Me: Ok. What about E?

I3: Ice Cube.

Me: I like DMX.

I2: DMX, yeah!

Me: And Ludacris.

I2: Luda...?

Me: Ludacris. I also like Outkast.

I2: Outkast? “Heeey yah, heeey yah.”

Me: Mm hm. [laughter] Now, could you talk a little about famous Mongolian hip-hop artists?

I2: Inner Mongolia has Ontseg.

Me: How do you spell it?

I2: O-N-Q-...

Assist: [Speaking to me] Do you know the meaning? Do you remember what we were talking about when we were watching Spongebob? That word...

59 Here, he is referencing the popular Outkast song “Hey Ya!"
Me: Corner?

Assist: I think so...yes yes yes, that’s the meaning. Corner.

I2: Yes, it is a Mongolian name, but the meaning is “corner”.

Me: Ok. How do you spell it?

I2: O-N-C-...no no no, O-N-T-S-I3G. Cross. Also, City Crew. Now for Outer Mongolia, there is Click Click Boom. Also, Ice Top, Gangsta Service...Vanquish, and Opposite.

Me: Which is your favorite?

I2: My favorite is Click Click Boom.

Me: Do you think they’re the most famous?

I2: I think they’re the most popular, yes.

Me: Do you think [Outer] Mongolian hip-hop is popular in China?

I2: No, not in China.

Me: What about in [Outer] Mongolia?


Me: Do you think Mongolian music could become more popular in the future in China?

I2: I think, right now, there are already a few people who like Mongolian hip-hop, and a few people who already like other Mongolian music. I think among ourselves, we Mongolians will continue to like our own music, even though it will probably change in the future. What’s most important is that we Mongolians...
preserve and promote our own culture rather than worrying about what others think about our culture.

[At this point of the interview, the interviewees proceed to give an oral demonstration of their style of beat boxing and finish the this portion of the interview thusly.]
Appendix C

Transcription: Interviewee Four
Forward

This interview was conducted with an Inner Mongolian music professional. He plays cello and the *morin khuur* in professional and amateur arenas (such as at concerts or music bars respectively), and he also sings *khoomeii*.

I was assisted in this interview by a Mongolian friend who speaks Mandarin Chinese, Mongolian, and some English, as I cannot speak Mongolian myself. She shall be denoted as “Assist” in this transcription. I was introduced to Interviewee Four through this friend as they both play in a professional symphonic orchestra in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia.

The following is a transcription of the interview that was conducted, and it has been directly translated and paraphrased from Mandarin Chinese to English, although there are points in the interview where Interviewee 4 and Assist attempt to speak some English, which shall be denoted by encompassing apostrophes, as such: ‘example’. To allow for confidentiality, Interviewee Four will be denoted as “I4.”

Interview

Me: Thank you for coming here to speak with me. Let’s begin.

I4: Ok.

Me: I’m apologize, for I have a cold right now, so I might speak unclearly or incorrectly.
I4: No problem at all!

Me: So, the first question: what is your name?

I4: [Interviewee 4].

Me: [I attempt to pronounce his name]

I4: ‘Yeah yeah. Very good!’

Me: Ah, no. [laughter] I said it very badly! [laughter] In my opinion, studying Mongolian languages is a bit difficult, because I think the pronunciation is hard. Chinese-language pronunciation is easy for me. [laughter] Even still, I think Mongolian-language is interesting. Now, the second question: do you live here in Inner Mongolia?

I4: Yes, I live in Inner Mongolia.

Me: Now your family...where is your hometown?

I4: Ulanhadhot.

Me: Is this a city?

I4: It’s not a city, it’s a prefecture-level city.

Me: Where does your family live? What’s the name of the place?

I4: Chifeng.

Assist: Chifeng. ‘Red City...Red Mountain City.’ This is essentially the meaning in English.

I4: It’s in ALuKe’ErQin Qi. Ar Khorchin.

Me: A-la...

I4: Ar Khorchin.
Me: How is it pronounced in Chinese?
I4: A-Lu-Ke-Er-Qin Qi.
Me: Ok...Have you ever been to Outer Mongolia?
I4: I’ve never been, but it is a place I can feel comfortable going to, I have family who live there. For example, my ‘brother’ lives in Outer Mongolia. The reason I would feel comfortable going there is because the language is the same, so I would feel comfortable there.
Me: Ok. Do you like to listen to music?
I4: ‘Yeaaah!’ I very much enjoy listening to music, how to say in English? ‘Very very...’
Assist: ‘Very very much’.
I4: ‘Very very much’.
Me: What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I4: Bach.
Me: Really?! 
Me: He is my favorite composer!
I4: ‘I love him!’
Me: Anyone else?
I4: Tchaikovsky.
Me: I also like Tchaikovsky. Do you like ‘pop music’?
I4: ‘Pop...rock’?
Me: No, ‘pop’.

Assist: Pop music.

I4: Pop music. Sometimes I like it. We sing it often at the bar. Some time, I’ll take you there. Tomorrow evening? Tomorrow evening, I’ll take you there and you can see me sing!

Me: Ok-

I4: It’s mostly Mongolian pop, it’s very good, you can listen, it’ll be great!

Me: Ok-

I4: Very great!

Me: And what about other pop? Do you like it?

I4: Well...I understand it and can sing along with it, I like it a little. A little.

Assist: He likes [European] ‘classical’ more.

Me: ‘Classical’? Wow!

I4: Do you like it? You? Because I really love it! [laughter] ‘Rock’...I love it all! I also like this...‘da da da da da da, da da, da da,’ [singing the well-known theme from “Waltz of the Flowers” Tchaikovsky’s The Nutcracker]. Because, you know, we are a ZhuChuShanGan ethnic group.

Assist: Zhuchusangan. It means...

I4: It means, our ethnic group is...relatively harmonious. You know, Mongolia, it is relatively united and harmonious. What it means is that no matter where we are, we can all really understand the music, we can all understand the songs.

Me: Ok. Now, ‘rap’ or ‘hip-hop,’ what do you think?
I4: I also like this. There is a group called *Khooch*.

Assist: Do you remember last time, with my brother [Interviewee Number 2], his friend?

Yes.

I4: Yes, his friend, we are in a group.

Assist: My brother and his friend, they are all in a group called “HB,” altogether seven people.

I4: Yes, I really like it!

Me: So you like traditional Mongolian music?

I4: I like it very much. The reason is because the people in my family are professional musicians in Mongolian music.

Assist: His family, his grandfather, father, mother, brother, sister, they’re all music professionals in Mongolian music.

Me: That’s very interesting. Now, you just said that you like traditional Mongolian music. How about Mongolian pop music?

I4: I’ll say it this way, whether or not I like it. People should change. People should change the music to their own expressions, be it this song or that song. You’re studying Mongolian music, right? There’s *khoomeii*, and there’s also rap and rock and hip-hop, and then there’s pop, pop is reflective of today’s times. People have been developing music for a long time from cello to rock, people should renew the music.

Me: Can you tell me who is, in your opinion, the most famous traditional Mongolian music professional?
I4: My grandfather. [laughter]

Assist: [Explains in Mongolian my question]

I4: My brother. Na’ErSu. ‘His name is “Anda Band NaRiSu.”’


Me: Any others?

I4: These are the people I think are famous from the kind of musics that I like.

Me: I’d like to ask this question: Since I’ve been here in Hohhot, I’ve heard the word “Buryat.” What is this? Are you Buryat?

Assist: No, but the area we live there are many Buryat...

I4: This is a Buryat area...

Me: Around September 4th, I went to a music concert, and the performers were from so-called “Buryat University.”

I4: Oh, ok! That is, for example, we are...there is Mongolia, Chahaar, Buryat, ‘Inner Mongolia,’ Mongolia, and Afghanistan, Kijarat Mongol, and also Russian Mongolians, [etc.] and also Turkistan, there are many Mongolians. I am Borjigin Mongolian. There are many many Mongolians. Even, Tuva. Do you know Tuva? Tuva music? Yes. Also Altai...‘Mongolian music, very very good!’

Assist: The Buryat is a clan within the whole Mongolian ethnic group. Russia has a Buryat population. They mostly come from there. But in China’s Inner Mongolia, in Hulunbeir, you know, where my family are from, there are many Buryat people. There are quite a few Buryat people here [in Inner Mongolia].
For example, there is Mongolia, Russian Buryat Mongolia, China Inner Mongolia, Tuva Mongolia, Altai Mongolia, Mongolians in San Francisco, Mongolians in India - the Taj Mahal is Mongolian, Mongolians in Beijing - The Forbidden City in Beijing is also Mongolian, even Marco Polo said Mongolians were the most amazing people! [laughter] This is what I believe. We are a nomadic people, open-minded people.

Me: So you are...

I4: Borjigin. You know, because of the rolling “r,” Mongolian language is somewhat difficult. For us Mongolians, learning other languages is fairly easy! [laughter]

Me: Next question: In your opinion, what kind of feeling do you get from listening to traditional Mongolian music?

I4: My first feeling is this: when it comes to Long Song, I have a different feeling singing it than I do listening to it, and every person’s feelings about it are different. Another kind is khoomei. Khoomei is about natural sounds and animal sounds, like horse and lamb...and jaguar, water...

Me: How long have you been studying music? How long have you been studying khoomei and matouqin [morin khuur]?

I4: I started cello when I was 11, matouqin when I was 15, and khoomei when I was 18.

Me: You know, I started playing bass when I was 12.

I4: Oh bass! I really like it!

Me: You like everything! [laughter]
I4: The music, I like all kinds of music, I just love music!

Me: Now, two more questions. Do you think traditional Mongolian music is popular in Inner Mongolia? Do you think Inner Mongolian people like Mongolian music?

I4: Do you mean its development?

Me: Yes.

I4: This development issue is a difficult one, in my opinion. Definitely difficult for the music to develop. I think because of the language, it is hard to build a relationship among the people. Mongolian music really like it, definitely.

Me: The final question: oh, sorry, two more questions. In China, do you think Mongolian music is popular?

I4: I think it is popular on the surface, superficially. I think it’s like this: as soon as people hear *khoomeii*, they think “Oh my God, that’s amazing!”

Me: Do you think that in the future Mongolian music can become more popular?

I4: I’ll say it this way. In China, there will be some people who like the music. In our country, Mongolia, there will be people who will like the music, of course. Because it is Mongolia, it is our own music, so it will be liked in [Outer] Mongolia. It doesn’t matter what happens to our music in China, I don’t need to worry, because I will definitely have Mongolia. It’s different for the other ethnic minorities in China, like in Xizang, they have their ethnic group but they don’t have their own country, it’s just the ethnic group in China. We Mongolians have

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60 He implies with physical gestures that Chinese people like the music superficially but it is unclear whether they can appreciate it on a deep level.

61 He is referring to the Uighurs in China’s Xizang Province here.
our own country. So even if there is no Mongolian music in Inner Mongolia, we still have [Outer] Mongolia, we have our own country and other Mongolian places: Buryat, Tuva, Kelmut, [etc.].

Me:  Ok. Thank you very much, thank you!

I4:  No problem!
Appendix D

Transcription: Interviewee Five
Forward

This interview was conducted with an Outer Mongolian music professional who lives in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia. She teaches the flute to Inner Mongolian music students as well as participates in other professional musical activities with her husband.

As the interviewee does not speak Mandarin, and I do not speak Mongolian, this interview was conducted in English.

This interview is being conducted in the home of one of Interviewee Five’s neighbors to whom she asks for assistance with some questions. This particular neighbor will be denoted here as “Assist”.

To allow for confidentiality, Interviewee Five will be denoted as “I5.”

Interview

Me: Ok. Thank you so much for doing this interview. First off, could you tell me you name please?
I5: [Interviewee 5]
Me: Ok. I’m getting a little better at saying Mongolian words. [laughter] Do you live here in Inner Mongolia?
I5: Yeah. I live here for almost three years, yeah...three years with my family.
Me: Three years. Is your...are you from here?
I5: No. I come from Outer Mongolia.
Me: Ok. Where in Outer Mongolia?

I5: It’s in between Russia and China.

Me: Oh, no, I mean where in Outer Mongolia? What city?

I5: Ahh, what city. Ulaanbaatar. [laughter]

Me: Ok. What languages can you speak?

I5: Hmm, I can speak Mongolian. [laughter] English just a little bit.

Me: I ask because...I might be wrong, I think I hear a little bit of Russian influence.

I5: Yeah. Because I can speak Russian too, because when I was little, I studied [Russian for] ten years.

Me: Ok. See, that’s why. [laughter]

I5: Yeah, I have that kind of accent. [laughter]

Me: This is a strange question, I know, but what sort of Mongolian are you? What is your ethnicity?

I5: Ethnicity? Borjigon.

Me: Bor...

I5: Borjigon. B-O-R-J-I-G-O-N.

Me: Ok. I’m learning a little bit about the different ethnic groups. I know Buryat. That’s the one I know. One. [laughter] But I know there are lots of different ethnic groups.

I5: Maybe you should write Khalka. The center of Mongolia.

Me: Ok. Oh yes, I’ve seen this. I see this a lot actually. So, you are a musician?

I5: Yes. I am a flutist.
Me: Flautist, yes. How long have you been studying the flute?

I5: Studying my flute? I studied almost 16 years on my flute.

Me: 16 years. What kind of music on the flute?

I5: “Blowing Wing Blow”...

Me: Well, I mean traditional European? Mongolian?

I5: No no no. It’s a real flute. Flaut. You know? Have you ever seen it?

Assist: Well, it’s a traditional silver, metal flute.

Me: Yes, but what I mean is, what sorts- what kind of music?

I5: Ahh, classic, and many kind of music. Because I...my husband and I, we work at our country state musical ensemble. We had a group. And so I play some jazz and some classic and traditional, many kinds.

Me: Ok. That was my main question. When you started studying, were you studying, when you were playing the flute, were you studying traditional European music or were you studying Mongolian music for the flute.

I5: Traditional European music.

Me: Ok. But you play all sorts of different musics?

I5: Mm hm [affirmative]

Me: Can you sing?

I5: Hmm nope. [laughter]

Me: Me too. I just play. [laughter] Let’s see...I guess...I would probably guess you’ve been studying or learning about or listening to traditional Mongolian music since you were little. Is that right?
I5: Yeah. Because I am Mongolian. When I was a little girl, my mom, I mean...there was a very a old horse-head fiddle, it’s not the same as just regular horse-head fiddle, and she use it and also she dance it [sic], and we called this special...[unclear]. Yeah, when I was little.

Me: Ok. Let’s get some more specific subjects. You seem to be very...very proud. Very proud of Mongolian music.

I5: Yes. Also, the horse-head fiddle is very united. Because I am Mongolian, when I heard the music, I just, my feeling is just like full of energy and it’s incredible.

Me: Because, you corrected me when I said “horse-head violin.” You said “horse-head fiddle.” [laughter]

I5: Yes. [laughter]

Me: Well, it’s just, the different...it doesn’t translate well into English. So that’s just the main English translation that I hear [in China].

I5: Yeah, all fiddle music is, just, like a fiddle. And so it’s “horse-head fiddle.”

Me: Yes, I understand. I don’t think it’s like the violin at all, but that’s just the translation that I heard, so, that’s just what I call it in English.

I5: Yeah, it’s fiddle music. There’s cello, violin, they use a bow, just as a fiddler. That kind of music it’s also called the fiddler. Violinists- violin fiddler, horse-head fiddler...

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62 Here, I am referring to a brief conversation that I’d held with Interviewee Five just before the interview. I had mentioned to her that I played the “horse-head violin,” and she had swiftly and strongly corrected me saying that it was a “horse-head fiddle.” Oftentimes, as it occurred to me later in the interview, when I talk to Chinese persons, they translate the morin khuur into English by saying “horse-head violin,” thus my accustomed usage of the term. Interviewee Five had also staked her fervent preference of Outer Mongolian music over Inner Mongolian music: she had made a point of making sure I knew that she preferred Outer Mongolian music before the beginning of this interview.
Me: Hmm. I would say, though, with violin there...fiddling and playing violin are two different techniques, so that’s why there’s a distinction there. You can fiddle on cello, it’s not easy though.

I5: Yeah but, horse-head fiddle is difficult too.

Me: Yes.

I5: Violin and cello is a little bit easier than horse-head fiddle. Yes. You agree? Do you agree? When you know you are studying horse-head fiddle?

Me: Well, being that I don’t play violin or cello, I can’t really say. I play bass, so there’s no fiddling on bass. There is classical bass-playing, and then there’s also pizzicato, different techniques in jazz, and in country and bluegrass music. But, you don’t fiddle on bass. It’s just kind of impossible. [laughter] So, I really can’t say. I can’t make a comment on that. I would say that “horse-head fiddle” is a much more accurate translation than “horse-head violin,” because playing the violin and playing the fiddle are two different things. So, I actually will begin to call it “horse-head fiddle.” I don’t understand why it’s called “horse-head violin.” [laughter]

I5: Yeah, and because my husband and I, we worked, we travelled to many countries, many...more than ten countries, they translate it as, and we all call native language morin khuur, they translate...when we have an application and many kind of, that kind of thing, they write it as “horse-head fiddle.” Fiddle is the meaning, they use the bow, that’s why they call it “horse-head fiddle.”
Me: Hm. That’s so interesting. I think it might be the Chinese translation, I think it might be a Chinese thing, the “horse-head violin” thing. I think it might be a Chinese thing.

I5: You may be right.

Me: Because if you take the *matouqin* to the United States, and have Americans listen to it, more Americans, more often than not, they would associate it with like bluegrass music or country music. They wouldn’t call it a violin. They’d probably call it a fiddle. So...I think that’s just the Chinese translation. [laughter] Anyway, that’s beyond the point. Tell me the difference between playing the horse-head fiddle here [Inner Mongolia] and playing the horse-head fiddle in [Outer] Mongolia.

I5: Yeah, the first thing is, in here horse-head fiddle is a little bit smaller than ours. And second, the sound is very high-toned and ours is very low-toned, that translates the best. When hear our *morin khuur*, our *matouqin*, the full sounds, that here [Inner Mongolia] little bit high sounds. I mean,...

Me: I understand. The range- the pitch is high.

I5: Yeah. The sound is so different, and made a little bit different, and the playing technique is also different.

Me: How so?

I5: Well, because our *matouqin* is a little big, we need to use more...more power, and here, it’s, maybe, a little bit easier than playing our horse-head fiddle.

Me: Hm. Ok.
I5: We just think about, it’s Outer Mongolians opinion maybe, it’s just we are real traditional horse-head fiddle, we have. But in here, they’re changing the horse-head fiddle because, maybe they’re closer to the Chinese musical instruments that’s why they changed their horse-head fiddle. Many years ago, it was the same as what we have, they were both the same kind of morin khuur, but now they’re changing. They are a little bit small. They have a very good thing, because, technical, quick sound is [much] easier when they play that horse-head fiddle. But ours, very difficult. We have a big...we really have to...for instance, here when you play do-re-mi-fa, it’s very easy. But it in our, very hard.

Me: Really. That’s interesting. I have a question and a comment. The question: you were mentioning the change between Outer Mongolia and Inner Mongolia, for the horse-head fiddle in terms of the size and the pitch. Has that change been recent?

I5: I guess I’ve heard about 1960 years, they changed size...

Me: 96...?

I5: 1960 years, almost, about...that years. 50 years ago, 60 years ago they changed the size.

Me: Ok. Hm. I’m learning matouqin at ShiDa63. Do you know [the name of my morin khuur instructor]? He is one of the teachers there of matouqin. I haven’t interviewed him yet, so I don’t know if he’s Inner Mongolian or [Outer] Mongolian. I’m pretty sure he’s Inner Mongolian because he speaks Chinese very well.

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63 INNER MONGOLIA NORMAL UNIVERSITY, IN MANDARIN “NEIMENGGU SHIFAN DA XUE” (内蒙古师范大学).
I5: When I heard his name, [I thought] he is Inner Mongolian.

Me: But, the way he’s teaching me my instrument, it’s actually rather large, I think it’s because I have big hands and also they way it’s tuned, he has me tune it F and B-flat instead of C and G. I’ve heard from a different person, Mongolian, that the tuning system is typically F and B-flat in [Outer] Mongolia, and G and C here. Is that true?

I5: Yeah.

Me: Ok. That’s interesting. I wonder why he has me tune it in F and B-flat. That’s a little strange. Do you know him?

I5: No, no. When I heard his name, I knew he was Inner Mongolian.

Me: How can you tell?

I5: Because [his name], we don’t use that kind of name. [laughter]

Me: Hm. Now, I might be pronouncing it badly. I don’t speak Mongolian. [laughter] But he also has a Chinese name, so I really suspect that he’s from Inner Mongolia. But that’s my comment, about that. He’s actually really, really good teacher. Very patient. I play...very badly [laughter] The first two weeks, it was really bad. I couldn’t stand listening to myself [laughter] Now, I’m a lot better, so I’m really happy. Playing the bass helps a little because the hand position is very similar. But this [referring to the right-hand position] is not similar at all, so there’s no help. I guess, with bass, you can play the bow two ways: French [overhanded] and German [underhanded]. But even German, it’s still different from matouqin bowing. So, there’s no helping that. So I just have to practice. Anyway, the next
question: so tell me a little bit about the difference in musical style between
Mongolian music here and Mongolian music in [Outer] Mongolia. There are
times when I listen to music, and I have a friend is nationally Chinese, but
ethnically Mongolian. She says, “Oh, that’s from Outer Mongolia, oh, this is from
Inner Mongolia,” and I’m wondering how can she tell, because I don’t know.
Unless they put Chinese words in there, then I know that it’s from here. How
would I be able to tell? What are some differences?

I5: Yeah. We have many Russian cultural through our country. That’s one thing.
Another thing is, our music is more ethnic, I think so, than here. In here, ethnic
music, I’ve heard many times, heard many groups, the ethnic music-playing, and
it’s so different because they have very close Chinese music. That’s why I told
you before, they have a very high-tone, a high-sound, and ethnic...it’s a little
difficult...when you hear...I’ll give you two kinds of ethnic music, here and in our
country. Our country’s, for instance, is very big and their’s is very small. They
have...they have their own style, we have our own style, yeah? [laughter]

Me: Well, I guess, tell me some things, like say, if I had a song from Inner Mongolia
and a song from [Outer] Mongolia, and someone said to me, “How are these two
different?” What certain kind of characteristics...

I5: Yeah. Have you ever heard Long Song?

Me: Yes.

I5: In ours, Long Song is very long, it’s in the name, Long Song. But here, it’s not a
Long Song. They use...we, for instance, the long-singer uses a very long, very
high technique, they use it, and they also use it here, but their [Inner Mongolian] song is not long. Just the “middle” song, and ours are very long and very...full sound. And I like here Long Song, but it’s my opinion our Long Song is better than here, because this is the real Long Song. But in here, Long Song, yes, Long Song...I don’t think so. We have many kinds of Long Song: the small, middle, and big. In here, it’s like small or middle Long Song, just like in our country. But real Long Song is so much different. Also, it’s all the Long Song. The music is...because we have a lot of Russian and European cultural things, and in here they have a lot of Chinese cultural things, and that’s maybe a difference. We use notes and they use numbers. Many differences. But I want to say, in here, Long Song is very beautiful, very amazing, I like it, but the real Long Song is in our country.

Me: Hm. Well, I guess, I’d have to listen to more music.

I5: Listening to the music is better. You can understand the Outer Mongolian’s music and singing and many things.

Me: Well, what I mean is I’d have to listen to more to be able to tell the difference. Right now, it’s not that I think there’s no difference at all, it’s just I want to be able to sit down without having heard the piece before and just, “Oh! That’s from Outer Mongolia.” Do you understand what I mean? But right now, I can’t say it. I just know it’s Mongolian music. Now, there are some times where I think my mind is playing tricks on me, because I’m listening, and it’s Mongolian so I don’t

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64 Here, she is referring to the standard musical notation systems. Where Western European classical music uses the staff-notation system, the Chinese use a system of numbers, lines, and dots to write and read music.
understand what’s going on, and then I hear splatterings of Chinese and I think that’s definitely Chinese, I know it’s not Outer Mongolian, it’s Inner Mongolian. Traditional music, I’ve come to learn that there’s actually a significant history of traditional Mongolian music that exists in China. And you can tell because there is a lot of Chinese influence in it, and I’ve studied Chinese music enough to know what those indicators are. But I haven’t studied Mongolian music enough to know the difference yet between here and there. So, that’s what I’m wondering, if you can tell me, like you mentioned, the Long Song tends to be longer in Outer Mongolia, or the tones tend to be lower in [Outer] Mongolia than here, the tones tend to be higher here. Any other differences? Any other things?

I5: I want to say, we are Mongolian nations, Inner, Outer, we are the same humans but we have a different culture, that’s why our music is a little bit different, but the inside we are human, we are Mongolians, we know about cultural habits and lifestyle, there may be some cultural differences.

Me: Ok. I know you probably have to go really soon. Can you tell me a little bit about Mongolian pop music, modern Mongolian music?

I5: We have many kinds of pop music, R&B, and...we have our own pop music. For instance, in America, Beyonce, someone who sings the pop and R&B music, but it’s very close. The melody is different, but the arrangement is the same.

Me: Is it that way with Mongolian pop music?

I5: Yeah.

Me: Ok. Basically, it sounds the same.
I5: Yeah, the melody is a little different, but the arrangement is almost the same.
Me: I think that’s common for all pop music everywhere. Even Chinese pop music. I can’t tell difference between most of the songs, they all sound the same to me. [laughter] American pop music is quite similar, I think. There was one time, I think, I was listening to the radio and Lady Gaga was playing, and two of her songs were playing, they had a mix. It was hard to tell what was from which song because they were almost exactly the same, and I thought how could she get away with that, making two different songs that sound the same. [laughter] So tell me, you’ve lived here for three years. Have you lived in other places in Inner Mongolia?
I5: No, just here [Hohhot].
Me: Why here?
I5: Because my husband works at the school, that was the first time I come with my husband and my brother. The next time, I teach in this school.
Me: Ok. Do you think Mongolian music is popular, or even well-known in China.
I5: Well, do you mean Inner Mongolian music or just Mongolian music?
Me: In general, Mongolian music.
I5: Mongolian music. I don’t know exactly, the Chinese people, they aren’t...some of the people...they want to hear some Mongolian music, also they think it’s a very unique music...I don’t know...I don’t have any information about that. [laughter]
Me: That’s ok. Do you think that Mongolian music over time is becoming more renown, more well known in China and the rest of the world?
I5: Yeah, I think, because when, maybe 20 years ago, our ensemble went to Japan for a performance. They think about that, because we are Mongolian, we ride a horse, we live in a yurt, they don’t know our lifestyle, they think about a lot of people riding a horse on stage! [laughter] But now they understand our things, and then next we play the concert, “Wow! It’s incredible! Because we thought you guys were riding a horse on stage, bring white things.” But we played the concert, we had horse-head fiddle and contrabass and cello and flute and piano and some drums, it was a mixed ensemble, and they asked, “In your country, do you study any classic music?” Yes. “No, it’s impossible, we didn’t know that.” Now they understand, because we traveled in Japan or any country lots of times, they understand, “Ah, it’s Mongolian and this is the traditional music and they have their own culture,” and they understand it.

Me: Ok. I have two more questions. Number one: tell me about your band. Tell me about the band.

I5: Our band, this year, we celebrated 20-year anniversary and our ensemble is very mixed, and we have a horse-head fiddle and piano and flute, drums, cello- well, it’s not a cello. We changed it, it’s a kind of cello, yes, we changed it and we have a special name [for it]. And, do you know yatga? Guzheng?

Me: Yes.

I5: Yes, we have that. And, our ensemble- plenty of people [in it]. And we play traditional and some classic, some modern kind of music we play.
Me: Ok. Last question, and I want you to expand on this as much as possible. What do you think of Mongolian music? What is Mongolian music to you? I know this is a really broad question, and that’s why I want you to say whatever you want. What is your opinion? How does it make you feel?

I5: I feel...sing a Long Song, play a horse-head fiddle, when I watch a concert, my feeling is full of energy, for me it’s unique because I’m a Mongolian, and I grew up inside that music. And now, it’s changing. Many years ago, horse-head fiddle was just home music. People usually use it in their home, but now on the stage, they use many high-technique process. Before, maybe 30 years ago or 40 years ago, the playing of classic music on horse-head fiddle was impossible. But nowadays, they play the violin and cello very famous composers, they can play it, they can improve it, the process. First, they just play traditional music, and now, being well-known people, it’s a little bit famous- not famous, it’s outside it. They, the fiddlers are very [much] improving because they play many classic music, some jazz music, you know Astor Piazzolla?

Me: Mm hm [affirmative].

I5: Yes, it’s very...improving. And the horse-head fiddle, we have traditional music, [like] guzheng, horse-head fiddle, khoochin, yoochin, many kinds of music, but horse-head fiddle is our main current [sic] in all of the world, about music. “Horse-head fiddle? Ah! This is Mongolian music!” They know you are Mongolian.

Me: What do you think about when you listen to Mongolian music? Traditional music?
I5: Traditional music...I understand I am a Mongolian, because it’s, for me, it’s very unique, very amazing. I can understand that music very well. And, I want to say, Inner Mongolia, Outer Mongolia, we are one nation, you know? We have a lot of Russian culture and in here there is a lot of Chinese culture. But our music, many things, I think, is the same. They have a little cultural thing that’s a difference. But I like a lot of Inner Mongolian musics and culture, when you go to countryside, they are...their life is just like real. I like it.

Me: Is there anything else that you want to say? Anything else you want to add?

I5: You already...[laughter]

Me: Well, as a foreigner who grew up in American culture and has studied traditional European music for 11 years, what should I take back with me to America about Mongolian music? What are some of the important things that you think I should know, so that I can tell other people, “Oh this is Mongolian music,” or “I studied Mongolian music for a little while, just a little bit, but I learned from a really amazing person, a really interesting woman, she said, ‘this is the most important thing.’” You know?

I5: Hm...I know it’s Mongolian but I can’t explain out...[laughter] I think the first [thing], you hear- listen music [sic] a lot about Mongolian music then you understand what [that is]. Second...second what? [laughter] [speaking to Assist] Can you help me? I want to say...maybe [if] you just know music, it’s not a full thing. You have to really know about...

Assist: Culture.
I5: Culture. Yeah, that’s maybe good for you.

Assist: Yeah, that’s kind of what our students were saying too. That when you...the music either presents the grassland, the nature, the family, whatever’s in the music really is your culture.

I5: Yeah, when you’re sitting in your room and you hear that music, maybe you understand maybe 20 percent, when you go to outside, go to countrysdie or see some picture about lifestyle, when you saw [sic], when you listen to the music, it’s very close for you.

Me: You know, that’s my major. Right now, as an undergraduate student, I was a performance major so that’s all I did, I was performance. But now, I’m ethnomusicology, which is a really long word, it means music of other cultures. So it’s basically anthropology and musicology put together. I study the culture and study the music, and then I put those two together and I study the music-culture. So that’s really what I’m actually doing. But what you said is really important.

I5: [Speaking to Assist] Do you understand a lot about Mongolian music?

Assist: Well I don’t understand the language, but when I hear the music, the students tell me what the song’s about.

Me: In that case, what about the culture? What’s one thing that I should know about Mongolian culture? Or the main things?

I5: Main things...I can say it’s a lifestyle. We live in ger...you know that?

Me: Mm hm [affirmative]

Assist: A yurt, they call it ger.
Me: Ok.

I5: Yeah. We are huntsmen, and we live in grasslands, we live in wild, natural...now it’s many things change, we live in house or apartments or high buildings. When you go to countryside, the real lifestyle, we live in ger, we are huntsmen, we live in grassland, that’s why our eyes are very good, our hearing is very good, because we live in very big...space?

Assist: Mm hm [affirmative]. Yes. Without pollution, with very clean air...

I5: That’s why maybe Mongolians sing a song, Long Song is beautiful, it’s amazing. It’s really the countryside. Usually singers come from the countryside. I also want to say again: Inner Mongolia and Outer Mongolia music, it’s not a lot of difference. It’s kind of a cultural influence. It’s China, it’s Russia, that sort, but we have one kind of music. But some of it is changing, because sometimes when you hear our music and you don’t say anything it’s Mongolia or mixed, many Russian things put in, it’s always just music and lifestyle, many things. It’s a bit difficult. Sometimes in here, in China, play a lot of Chinese style and have some Chinese things in Mongolian [music], that’s the difference. But the music is...I can’t say...it is a difference...it’s close things. My husband maybe speak better than me because he is a horse-head fiddler and he knows a lot of things though.

Assist: But he doesn’t speak English or Chinese. [laughter] That’s why I said [Interviewee Five] is our best person to talk to! [laughter] But you’re right, your husband is the expert on the horse-head fiddle.

Me: Ok. Well, I think that should about do it, you probably have to go really soon.
I5: Yeah, I have to go. [laughter]

Me: Thank you!

Assist: Thank you so much!

I5: Yeah, it’s my pleasure.
Appendix E

Transcription: Interviewee Six and Interviewee Seven
Forward

This interview was conducted with two retired American educators in their home in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia. These two teach English at Inner Mongolia University School of the Arts, a high school institution for Mongolian fine arts officially affiliated with Inner Mongolia University. These two interviewees are neighbors with Interviewee Five, and I was allowed to observe and interact with two of the high school classes by the permission of Interviewee Six.

To allow for confidentiality, Interviewee Six will be denoted as “I6” and Interviewee Seven will be denoted as “I7”. The following is a full transcription of the interview.

Interview

Me: Thank you both for doing this interview for me, I really appreciate it. Could you state your names please?
I7: [Interviewee Seven]
I6: [Interviewee Six]
Me: Ok. And you both live here in Hohhot, is that right?
I6: Yes.
I7: Yeah.
Me: Where else have you lived? Have you lived in other places in China besides here?
I6: Yes, in HuLunbe’er, which is very close to the Russian border, in the northeast, but still in Inner Mongolia.

I7: HaiLe’Er City.

Me: Ok. How long have you lived in China?

I6: Since 2006.

I7: This is about seven years, but the first two years we were three months in, three months out, three months in, three months out.

Me: Why is that? If you don’t mind me asking?

I7: Well, we were three months working at the camp and then we go home to recruit moneys and teachers to work at the camp. And then we would come back and forth. It was part of the job.

Me: Ok. So altogether, this is year six.

I6: Yeah, I think that’s about right.

Me: So, why have you both come to China?

I6: It started off because we were retired teachers doing teacher training, actually. Teaching English.

I7: And we wanted to go some place where we could make a difference, where they didn’t understand who Americans really were. Not all movies and TV people.

I6: And we found that Inner Mongolia has fewer foreign English teachers than other parts of China.

Me: I’ve come to discover this myself [laughter].

I6: Yeah. We thought the need was greater here.
I7: The English level was definitely lower here than in many places.

Me: You mentioned a camp...

I7: It was an English camp.

Me: Ok. Can you tell me more about this?

I7: Well, the English camp now is no longer running. But it was a place where kids could come, live in a mengubao65 with one American teacher and one translator, and do...it was a poor man’s immersion program. And the kids stayed a week, usually. Some of them stayed a couple to three weeks, but most of them stayed one week.

I6: It was basically for children, for junior high, high school students, elementary, and then we also had a chance to do some teacher training, actually at the camp. And it was an immersion, where teachers would study a week or two weeks, or they would change it later on, where they would just live and eat and everything was in English.

Me: Hm. Ok. What languages do you both speak?

I6: I speak Spanish, German, English, a tad of Chinese [laughter]...

I7: And for me, English, baby-talk, German, baby-talk, and Spanish – nouns and verbs. And very very very little Chinese.

Me: Do you mind if I ask why Spanish and German?

I6: That’s what I taught. I have my Master’s in Spanish. German was my mother’s language where we grew up. My ancestors, my people all spoke German, but

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65 Mandarin for the traditional Mongolian grassland home, a circular tent/hut known as ger in Mongolian or yurt more colloquially.
living in South Dakota. So it was a German community. So I learned it as a child, but it was dialectal, so I had to study formal German in high school and in university.

Me: Ok.

I7: And I learned it to survive her family. [laughter] And the Spanish, just, she was a Spanish major, and for me, we went to a lot of Spanish-speaking countries, so I had to pick it up.

Me: Ok. Do you both, I know this question may sound strange, but it’s true that some people don’t, do you both listen to music?

I6: Yes, we hear it everyday going around the school! [laughter] Because this is the practice building, that’s where the kids live, yeah.

I7: Music starts around 6:30 [AM], stops around 10, 10 or 11 [PM], and if it’s test time, it ends around 11:30.

Me: Could you describe this school?

I6: Yes. It’s a special fuzhong. The word fuzhong means a junior high and high school on a college campus. ShiDa\(^66\) has one, but this one belongs to NeiDa.\(^67\) And, even though we’re on a college campus, we don’t have interaction with the college students themselves. Our focus is strictly this particular choir, which I had told you, the conductor had recruited them from the grassland.

I7: And this fuzhong that we work at is completely separate from the other fuzhongs.

The other kids are normal kids. Our kids are much more intense, they’re kept

\(^{66}\) Inner Mongolia Normal University, NeiMengGu ShiFan DaXue in Mandarin (内蒙古师范大学).

\(^{67}\) Inner Mongolia University, NeiMengGu DaXue in Mandarin (内蒙古大学).
under strict control, supervision all of the time. So it’s a very different place, and
of course YiXiao is the Art College segment of NeiDa.

I6: It’s the Inner Mongolian Youth Choir. [showing me a booklet about the school] So these are the kids that you met today, this is the president, this is our conductor, she’s the one who recruited all the kids from the grasslands. Actually, she’s quite famous in China, she’s the first woman conductor. And these are our horse-head [fiddle] players...

I7: But our kids are all hand-recruited.

Me: Could you tell me more about the recruitment?

I7: She goes out, goes to school, she does have contacts in all the different Mongolian-concentrations within Inner Mongolia, and then she chooses the kids, the parents, they have to try out. So...other than that...

I6: She’s the conductor, director, he’s [referring to another person pictured in the booklet] our composer. Inkbeir. She teaches this particular instrument...what is this, an erhu?

I7: No, it’s not erhu, but it’s the thing like the erhu that the Mongolians play.

I6: Yeah. That’s her instrument, it’s not the erhu, I want to say it’s erhu...

I7: No, it’s not erhu, but it’s the thing like the erhu that the Mongolians play.

I6: Have you ever seen her before?

Me: I haven’t. But, this one does have a horse-head on it.

I6: Yeah. But then, it’s not a horse-head fiddle.

68 Here, she is probably referring to the traditional Mongolian instrument Khuurchir, a two-stringed instrument that looks and is played with extreme similarity to the Chinese erhu.
Me: Not quite *matouqin*.

I7: No. It’s a different instrument. Again, the three different things that I see them play that are string instruments all have horse-heads on them.

I6: And she [another person in the booklet] teaches Long Song. And I’m not sure what she [another person in the booklet] teaches, but these are all the famous professors. Ulaanbaatar, Ukraine, so our teachers...husband-wife, I had mentioned they– he was one of the conductors in Ulaanbaatar. And this is [Interviewee Five] who you just interviewed, another gal who teaches piano.

I7: They’re not just teachers. Some of them have played in Carnegie Hall, in international orchestras...we’re [referring to himself and his wife] the peons of the bunch. [laughter]

I6: Our school is very international in that our president, the president of the college, has connections with...Norway, I think it is...the USA, Vermont, Illinois...so we always have foreigners coming here to visit and have interaction–

I7: Usually with the college.

I6: Yeah, with the college, although they do sometimes come to visit us too because they tend to show off our kids to foreigners.

Me: Well, back to the question...the music, what kinds of music do you like to listen to?

I7: I’m a little eclectic in that I like gospel, I like classical music, I like old rock and roll, and I like country.

I6: Me, Christian and classical, and I enjoy listening to Mongolian music.
I7: Yeah, Mongolian music too.

I6: More-so than with Chinese music, I don’t care for Chinese music. Ah, Thalea, what instrument is this [referring to the booklet]?

Me: Ah, it looks a lot like the banjo. This body and the neck. I’m not sure. Now I do know of an [string] instrument where the circle [of the body] was quite large and the neck was short, and it’s called the *yueqin*.

I7: Almost looks like a lute?

Me: Yes.

I7: Yeah yeah yeah.

Me: Now that, I do know. But the ones with the long necks and the circular bodies...

I7: Yeah, we see all kinds of things here! [laughter]

I6: You know, when I went to visit [Interviewee Five], and she was teaching college, I saw all kinds of instruments I’d never seen before. I don’t know if she has pictures of some of those instruments or not.

Me: What about Mongolian music? What is it about Mongolian music that you all like?

I7: The feels...

I6: The earthiness of it.

I7: Yeah, it always has a...what do I want to say...it’s not forlorn, it always has a heartfelt feeling in it. And when they sing grassland songs, it doesn’t just come

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*Mandarin, literally “moon instrument” (月琴).*
from the throat, it comes from all the way down in here [gesturing to his chest and abdomen].

I6: Yeah. And you know the kids, some of them from the class, they brought that up when they were talking...

I7: Yeah. Even in when you go to a restaurant with people, a bunch of guys, they start having a few, that kind of thing, they start singing.

I6: Have a few...you mean drinks?

I7: Have a few drinks, that kind of stuff that goes on. And they start singing, and it just comes from the bottom of their souls.

I6: And often it’s very emotional, I mean, we’ve seen people singing, men singing, with tears in their eyes singing about the grasslands. And it’s very emotional.

Me: I guess for me, when I listen to it, especially some of the Outer Mongolian traditional music, the farther west or northwest that you go, I would describe it as...real...it just feels...real.

I7: Well, it’s like home. It’s part of home.

Me: Even though I’m not Mongolian, I’ve never grown up in the grasslands, I’ve only spent six months in North Dakota, it just feels...it’s almost like...it makes me feel like I am Mongolian, like I do live there. I don’t know. It’s a strange feeling.

I7: They do. I know exactly what you’re saying.

Me: Have you ever listened to Mongolian pop music?

I7: I’m not sure...I’m not sure...I don’t think so. Any pop music I have is probably Chinese. Just because it’s been given to me or something like that, most of it’s
Chinese. And just like I said this morning about the Mongolian music, the Chinese-Mongolian [music] for these kids is not real Mongolian music, because it’s been doctored by being sung in Chinese. Even though some of them may sing in Chinese, it still gives them more feeling, but it’s a...polluted form.

I6: Yes. And they’re very sensitive to that.

I7: Very sensitive.

I6: I kind of want to say they have a persecution complex, that they sense that, as Mongolians, they are regarded as the inferior people when the Han students...

I7: Well, that’s real.

I6: It’s real. It’s a real thing. I know when I got here, I was...I guess...I was sitting the cafeteria, and my students rushed over to tell me, “Oh, you should sit over here with us, the Chinese sit over there.”

I7: It’s prejudice, it works both ways. Very much so.

I6: Yeah.

Me: Could you tell me, could you expand a little bit more on this dynamic...this sort of conflict between the Mongolian students and *hanzu*\(^{70}\), the Han-Chinese students?

I6: Well there are several things. Even when I was in Outer Mongolia, the Outer Mongolians rely on the Chinese migrant workers. The Mongolians themselves in Outer Mongolia are really quite lazy. They don’t want to work.

I7: The Mongolians say that.

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\(^{70}\) Mandarin for the Han ethnic group (汉族).
The Mongolians will even tell you that. But yet they resent the Chinese who work very hard and they’re doing all the construction work. Likewise— so when the Chinese are in Outer Mongolia, they feel they’re being persecuted, they’re being looked down on. And when the Mongolians from Outer Mongolia come down here, the Chinese look down on them, so there definitely is racial bias. Very much so.

But it also is the Mongolians who are native-born Chinese. It’s also there...

Ok, yeah. Even for Mongolians born here in China, they look down on the Outer Mongolians. So, there is definitely an air of superiority.

You’d hear them say, “Oh, I’d never let my daughter marry a Mongolian.” A Chinese person would say that.

Chinese people, even Mongolian women, have told us that the Mongolian men are difficult as husbands. They’re given to alcoholism, they can be quite violent.

Well, they tend to be much more violent than the Inner Mongolians.

Some of them are like the Native Americans in the USA when they have alcohol, they can be vicious and ugly to their wives, and a good number of our students, actually, they have lost their fathers from accidents, drinking-related accidents...

In our class of forty seniors, what did they say, seven?

You know, some of kids had already dropped out, but many of them are fatherless.

Out of forty, there were seven that didn’t have a father, and it was lung cancer, liver cancer, liver failure, car accident...
I6: The alcoholism is a real issue. And so our director is as death on the kids and if she ever found out that they were drinking or something, she would just go ballistic, because she does not want these kids following in the footsteps of their parents or their grandparents. But that is a real issue. The heavy smoking and drinking, so many of the men die young. So that’s something, ok? Another issue is Inner Mongolia is supposed to be governed autonomously by the Mongolian people and yet Beijing sends out, and this is also true in Xinjiang where you have your Muslims, the Uighurs, and also Tibet, you have the hanzu who are handling the governmental decisions, and they’re really the ones governing and ruling these autonomous regions. This is greatly resented by any ethnic minority group, whether they be Uighur, whether they be Hui, whether they Tibetan, or Mongolian. We’ve got a real crisis here, Thalea. It’ll be two years in May. We had a crises where, out on the grasslands, the government has discovered coal. And so, they’re letting these coal companies drive in to the grasslands where the herdsmen are raising their sheep and their cows, and these big trucks come in there driving on land that supposedly belong to the herdsmen.

I7: Well, the thing is, in China proper, nobody owns land.

I6: Mm hm. Ok, but the herdsmen have their animals there, so they are leasing or using that land. So we had an incident where the herdsmen were getting sick and tired of these trucks driving in there and accidentally killing some of their animals or disturbing the environment, not to mention leaving ruts and things across the grassland, and so some of these herdsmen decided they were going to have a
standoff, they were going to have a...like a demonstration. Yeah, they stood in the path of the trucks saying, “Hey, you’re not coming any farther.” Well, a *hanzu* driver, there were two in the truck actually, just kept on driving and actually killed a herdsman. And this caused a real uproar. Usually, the Mongolian people, although underneath they seethe at the injustice of the Chinese government, at this point, they decided enough is enough. And students in the schools in that area were out in the street and they were demonstrating saying, “this is not right,” they had riots, this happened away from Hohhot. But, the movement then came to Hohhot. Now this happened in May, over a year ago now, a year and a half ago. And, the police were out in force, the Mongolians were not allowed to get on buses or trains to travel especially to come here because they were going to have some major rioting in our city, and–

I7: It wasn’t just Hohhot, though [Interviewee Six], it was all over Inner Mongolia that was shut down.

I6: True. But what I’m trying to say is, this is where they wanted to come to do their big demonstrations, we’re the capital city of Inner Mongolia. So, at the university campuses, things were shut down. University students were in lock-down. They could not leave their campuses. Internet was shut off. We couldn’t get any news from the outside. And, students were locked in but they didn’t know why they were being locked in. So I mean, this was evidence of the country’s fear. Well, they’re afraid of the Uighurs, they’re afraid of the Tibetans, anybody–

I7: Or, revolution period.
I6: They’re afraid of revolution. Ok? And so there was a lot of hostility towards the Mongolians at that time. I mean, you may already know this story, I don’t know...

Me: Well, I was here when that was going on.

I6: Here? In Hohhot?

I7: Oh, you were?!

Me: I was here.

I6: You were here in May?

I7: When all the soldiers were out?

I6: Oh, so you know what we’re talking about!

Me: Mm hm [affirmative]. It was creepy. Because, I was here, if you remember, I was here doing research for my Bachelor’s thesis. At that time, by the time I got here, I had just came [sic] from Yinchuan, and I came here. And, like, the day after I got here, all this stuff exploded, and I’m like, “What’s going on?!?” [laughter] I had just got out of the Tibet situation where I’m used to seeing soldiers with machine guns and full riot gear, and then I come to Hohhot and I’m like, “Oh, it should be kind of relaxed,” and then I see it and I’m “What’s going on?!?”

I6: Many people had no idea. But that’s...that’s the thing. The government’s afraid of the Mongolians, the Mongolians are a strong people, and like I say, they’ve been keeping, you know...they’ve been controlling themselves. But they’re to a point that, when that incident happened, [speaking to I7] just a moment darling, [speaking to me] when that incident happened, where the herdsman was killed, the government immediately made available to the people of that city money-
payment, compensation...everybody got money all of a sudden from the government trying to pacify them by giving them money! Yeah.

I7: Also, two days later, a hanzu worker killed a Mongolian with a forklift. Do you know what I’m talking about?

I6: In a coal-mining area.

I7: Yeah, killed him with a forklift. Ran over him.

I6: So there were two cases–

I7: Two cases.

I6: Where there were hanzu killing Mongolians. And of course, we’re aware of it because some of our students are from that area. And they’d call home, and they’d come here and say...

I7: Well, and one of our teacher friend’s husband lived in that town.

I6: Yes. She was the one who told us how all of a sudden they were getting money from the government to pacify the people– the Mongolian people. But it wasn’t just the Mongolians, the way I understood it, everybody in the town got some money.

I7: Well, the reason for the Mongolians, you probably know that they’re not as docile. They’re much more aggressive.

Me: Mm hm. Now this I do know. [laughter]

I7: Well, if you’ve been here that much, you know. They’re much more aggressive. You get in their faces, they’ll get right back into it.
Me: I live, at ShiDa, because I’m not on scholarship, I’m here by myself and paying by myself, so I’m not allowed to live in the foreign students hotels that are for scholarship students. I’m in the foreign students dorm, and most of the foreign students are Outer Mongolian. So, every night, I hear all this fighting and carrying on, and loud ruckus, etc.

I6: Oh yes. When they go to bars and drink, and then fights break out...

Me: Yes. It’s crazy! Now, being that I’ve had training, I’m not afraid of anybody, but at the same time, I don’t get involved, because I’m thinking, “All of these guys are just crazy, they’re nuts!” They go out, and I know they get drunk, because by the time they come back, it’s just all kinds of commotion.

I6: In Outer Mongolia, it’s even worse. The foreigners who live there, I mean a lot of thievery, robberies, pickpocketing, yeah. I mean, I was out there with my friends, they were with me at all times, they protected me. Yeah, because it is dangerous.

Me: Right. And that’s why I didn’t go myself.

I7: Yeah, it was smart.

I6: Yeah.

I7: Ok.

Me: [Speaking to Interviewee Seven] Yeah, I know you’ve gotta run.

I7: Yes.

Me: Well, I’ve asked you most of the main questions...

I7: Well, I’ve got time, I’ll take time to do this. Don’t worry about it.
Me: Ok. Do you think that Mongolian music is popular in China? I know it’s popular in [Outer] Mongolia, because that’s their music, but is it popular in China?

I6: I don’t think anywhere else. No. I mean, y’know, at New Years or when they have Spring Festival\(^1\) on television, oh, they’ll play Mongolian music, all the ‘ethnic’ music. And for the Olympic Games, I mean every ethnic group was there, I mean it’s just for show. Yeah. They [the Chinese government] try to give the image of, “We are very multicultural and we respect all cultures,” but when it comes down, yeah, there’s a lot of racism, I mean that’s true of any culture. It doesn’t matter what country you go to, you’re gonna see that anywhere, right? Yeah.

I7: Because, I’ve had students, who were college students when I taught there, who reflect the [Chinese Communist] Party line: “Oh, there’s no prejudice in China!” And I say there’s prejudice everywhere I’ve ever been. And, two weeks later after we talked about what prejudice is, [they would say] “I was wrong. The fruit merchants try to cheat me when they hear my accent.” [laughter] Because he’s from the Northwest.

Me: I find a common theme. After studying, doing my research last year, and going to Beijing, there’s a tourist area in Beijing called the Ethnic– National Ethnic Minorities Museum. It’s a huge park. Imagine Six Flags but multiply that times five. This place is humungous. It’s an outdoor park, and there are exhibits of all of the ethnic minorities in China. And having just spent the last three months in China talking– really talking to actual ethnic minorities, and the common theme

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\(^1\) Occurring at the same time as the Chinese New Year, the Spring Festival is a week long holiday in China and among Chinese people around the world where they celebrate the beginning of the New Year with family, friends, food, and travel.
among them was that they wish that the world knew about their culture but because of...sort of suppression tactics by the Chinese government, what most people know is just things that you would–

I6: Official.

Me: Yeah.

I6: Just pictures of pretty costumes and their dance.

Me: Yeah.

I7: Too, and I think they think it’s very true, just like here in Inner Mongolia, well they do a lot of good things, they give Mongolians special privileges and that kind of thing, they’ve allowed them to keep their language in schools, in Mongolian schools...but you see, I don’t think that’s the reason they do it. I think the reason they do that is because it keeps them...

I6: Pacified.

I7: It pacifies them, it keeps them held back! They can’t integrate into society as quickly and easily. It looks good on one side, but I don’t think that’s the real purpose. The Chinese are really good at that, make it look this way, but actually it’s this way.

I6: Well you know, it’s kind of the same as in the USA. We put the Native Americans on reservations. I mean, it’s kind of the same thing, “you put them in their place,” so-to-speak, y’know? And look what’s happened.

I7: They’re much, it’s much craftier than that.
I6: Than the Americans, they’re are much craftier than that. For example, I was teaching the Mongolian English class at the university, which is close by here, and those kids had to go to school for five years. The first year, they were learning Chinese. And then they had to do four years, so it was a five-year program. It puts them behind. Yeah. And I heard, when we were doing some of the teacher training, some people telling us that it’s hard for Mongolian people. They’re competing with the *hanzu* for a job, the interviewers and different things make it difficult. They’ll be speaking Chinese in the interview, where the person probably doesn’t have very good Chinese. I mean, the candidate who is Mongolian. And so they’re at a disadvantage rather than allowing them to take the test in Mongolian, they’re forced at that point to do it in Chinese, even though they’ve been allowed to go to Mongolian schools. So they do feel they’re at a disadvantage when they’re looking for jobs. I’ve heard different people say that.

Me: Well, can you see the...you can definitely feel and see the Party-line suppression techniques on Mongolians in their lives and in their education. Can you, are you able to notice Chinese influence in their music, even, in their culture, in Mongolian culture?

I7: No.

I6: No. That would not be our...

I7: I don’t think we’re qualified. Because here, what’s really hard here in Inner Mongolia, in some place like Hohhot, it’s hard to separate *hanzu* from Mongolian in the ordinary population, because there are so many mixed, y’know, Mongolian
and *hanzu* same family. You know what I mean? There’s a lot of mixing here. You think of the teachers and that kind of thing...

I6: The kids can answer that better than we can, yeah. We don’t have a handle on that one.

I7: No.

Me: Ok. That’s ok. It’s interesting...part of the reason why I ask that is because you can really tell the assimilation of one culture into another.

I7: Through music first.

Me: Through music, through expressive art forms. People put a lot of their lives into expressions of art. Nine times out of ten, someone’s not going to draw a picture just because. There’s some sort of meaning there, and oftentimes you can see, or you can hear, or you can feel other influences besides what’s there on the outside. So, even though you can see these sort of techniques that are used on Mongolians in their lives, in their professional lives and educational lives, I’ve interviewed a few Chinese-Mongolians or Mongolian-Chinese, people who are ethnically Mongolian but nationally Chinese, on the one hand, they’ve assimilated enough to be able to function very well in *hanzu* society. But, at the same time, it’s almost like they’ve compartmentalized their culture, meaning that they keep it completely separate from their...

I7: Daily life?
Me: Their daily life. They’re very protective and very proud of their culture, and they’ve...it’s almost like they don’t allow that to be mixed with Chinese influence, even though the rest of their entire lives is being mixed like that.

I6: Well, I know we have some of our art colleagues who see the art that the students do, and you see a lot of really Mongolian art, I mean the grasslands...

I7: Of course this is a Mongolian college. I mean, even though it’s not only Mongolian art, but there’s strong...

I6: But we see a strong influence in the art and the music here. But it doesn’t speak out, as you say, as NeiDa Art College...

Me: Ok. Well I do have one final question: based on what you’ve seen here and how you’ve lived in Inner Mongolia, do you think that Mongolian music is becoming more or less known in China/the world?

I7: I don’t know if I can answer that even...

I6: Well I think that the Mongolian students are given...what’s the word...renown than perhaps beforehand. I know that the Koreans, my Spanish friend’s boyfriend is Mongolian, and in Korea, Mongolian music is very popular right now, she says. Yeah. The Koreans, and the Japanese love the Mongolians. So in that part of the world, Mongolian culture...

I7: Is expanding.

I6: Yes, is expanding. And I know that our director takes the kids to international competitions. I don’t know what countries were all represented, but I’m sure that there many of them in Beijing this summer. And it was their Mongolian music
that won the gold medals. And so, I mean, there is some appreciation by whomever the judges are. And also, Mongolians likewise are very good at learning Japanese language, and Korean, there’s an affinity there. They don’t like learning Chinese, but they like learning Japanese.

Me: The grammar between Mongolian and Japanese is the same.

I6: Oh, that’s probably a part of it.

I7: But, I would say, if you talk 30 years ago, I’d say it have to be expanded over what it was then. And primarily, I think, because of the opening up of China. I think most of the expansion is probably– maybe comes more from here than from Outer Mongolia. But yet, in Outer Mongolia, they’ve sent Light Horse Run\(^2\) and those guys out on tours throughout the world, that 50 years ago would not have been sent when Russia was a dominant force there. So I would say that, probably I would have to say “Yes.”

I6: And this school has a– they’ve done exchanges with various places in the USA, cultural exchanges all the time, they send students to Vermont, and to Utah, and to Illinois, and Hawaii, [laughter] different places...So, in that sense, their culture is being disseminated throughout the world. But it’s still a lower level than some other cultural music, I’m sure, but it was better than it was, like what he [Interviewee Seven] said.

\(^2\) It is not clear of whom he is speaking. However, by the context of what he was saying, it is probably reasonable to guess that he is referring to an Outer Mongolian music group of some sort.
I7: And I think it’s primarily due to the opening up of Outer Mongolia because of Russia vacating it, and here in China, China opening up and showing the world who they are for the last 30 years.

Me: That’s an interesting point, I’ve never heard anyone make that point, and I’ve never considered it myself, actually.

I7: What’s that?

Me: That their culture, despite being suppressed as it is, is actually being put on the world stage.

I7: Yeah, because if it has anything to do with “it shows how good of a group we are”...

Me: That’s so...ironic.

I7: Yeah.

I6: It reminded me of when you were talking to [Interviewee Five], their group has been to Canada, I mean many countries, not only in the lower– Inner Mongolia, Europe, Italy, all over the place. Switzerland, performing their music.

Me: I imagine that it will, there’s a high likelihood that it could actually become more popular faster because of coal being discovered in [Outer] Mongolia.

I7: Probably yeah, because of more people being...more monies. But, the thing of it is, China’s the one pouring most of the money into it. So it’s going to be within a Chinese influence. There’s very little European or Western money coming in to [Outer] Mongolia.

I6: Because of the coal, we don’t have a real need for the coal like China does.
I7: So, actually, the Chinese influence will increase tremendously in Outer Mongolia in the next ten years.

Me: That’s fascinating.

I6: You know out in the countryside, out near the mountains you see all of these wind generators because China wants to let the world know that they are very modern now and they have this new energy, y’know, clean energy, and yet at the same time, there is more coal mining going on now than ever. New mining fields are being opened, and you can find this in the internet too, and I have several students who are majoring in energy over at GongDa, their frustration was, “Ok! So we’re studying about wind energy, but the thing is, trying to get a job, because the jobs are more with coal mining than the are with wind energy!” [laughter] Whatever that’s worth to you off the record but it’s true.

I7: Well, whatever China says shows on the outside has no resemblance to what’s going on on the inside.

Me: That...that is something that I think most foreigners learn when they come to China and stay here longer than, I think, a few weeks. That’s...that was one thing that I think I learned rather quickly living in Beijing. Living in Beijing...by the first month, you already know that that’s the case. But, I’m so thankful for the trip that I made last year, traveling to all those places around China, actually talking to different ethnic groups, it’s really interesting to see.

I6: Have you read the book *China Road*?

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73 Inner Mongolia Polytechnic University, NeiMengGu GongYe DaXue (内蒙古工业大学).
Me: No.

I7: Oh! You definitely should read it.

I6: Yeah, it’s called China Road, I forget the artist— the artist...the writer. He’s a journalist.

I7: Was it in the 80’s?

I6: Ah...oh no the 90s honey.

I7: Yeah, right after the opening.

I6: In fact...anyway...when we had our training to come over here to be teachers, we had to read that among others, but that one...again, this guy traveled from Shanghai on, I forget what they called that road, but it took him over to in Kazakhstan...

Me: The Silk Road?

I6: Not the Silk Road...

I7: It wasn’t the Silk Road...

I6: But it’s a major highway where the trucks and so forth go, and he interviewed people in the different areas and just got into all the social issues and problems and how the different people viewed about the government and blah blah blah. It really is interesting. China Road. That’s a must read.

I7: That’s a book to read at home, though.

Me: Ok. I’ll probably include it among my bibliography.

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I6: Yeah, if you get a chance to read it. I don’t have a copy of it here...MSN.com, you can probably get it. It was a good read, it was just entertaining because this guy has met the most interesting people and had the most interesting stories. Now, he didn’t get into Inner Mongolia...he didn’t...

I7: Well, he did come through it...

I6: No...he went out West...I don’t remember him talking about Inner Mongolia as much. But it was very interesting.

I7: He went through Chengdu, didn’t he?

I6: Hm...I don’t remember, it might’ve been Chengdu, I don’t know...

Me: Well, I just– my last question: what is your main takeaway from having lived here in Inner Mongolia for six years, going on?

I7: Just that...it just served as a reinforcement that, realistically, all people are the same basic core people of human beings, but how culture has shaped this group of people so very very firmly. I mean, we have culture too. But the Chinese...they say, “We have freedom” when you hear them talk about it, how suppressed they really are, how controlled they really are and submissive. I don’t say that to everyone, but...

I6: I think there a lot of secrets that go on in this culture. People are not always aware of things–

I7: Or they don’t talk about it.

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75 The capital city of Sichuan Province in China.
I6: Yeah, for example, I mean, there are a lot, a lot of Christians in this country, but often, they’re afraid to let that be known, especially in the workplace and especially if you have a government position. I remember being in two cities over in HuLunBei’Er, the first one I was a guest and we lived the headmaster of this high school, and I said, “Well, I would love to see the church.” “Oh, we’re so sorry Ms. [Interviewee Six], we know that you’re a Christian but we don’t have a church, we’re sorry, there’s no one here.” And I returned two years later, and finally found out, “Oh! There is a church here!” And when we finally got to that church, they had been in existence, they had been there for over two years. But no one in town knew that church was there. And there’s a lot of house churches, and even that you have to, y’know, do a lot of investigating to find out–

I7: And we as foreigners can’t go.

I6: Yeah, right, although I did get to go one actually in DaiYangShu. Now, the mother city, was it YaKeShi...ChaGaTai Qi, it was ChaGaTai Qi. And, again, this college student, and I was Christian, and I said, y’know, “I would love to see a church in this town.” “We don’t have any churches here. No Western churches. We’re all Buddhists here.” I got into a taxi cab, and I get in, and I had a person with me, and I asked where the church is, “Oh my gosh, we have five churches, which one do you want to go to?” But, the college student who had grown up in

76 What she says here is not clear, but it is presumed that this is a local suburb of HuLunBei’Er.

77 A county-level city in Inner Mongolia under the HuLunBei’Er prefecture.

78 I have been unable to locate the proper name of this administrative district (possibly a small town), but it is likely related to the ChaGaTai banner in northern China.
that city: “We don’t have any churches here,” so, I mean it’s just, they don’t really know a lot about their own cultural city, they’re just secrets and stuff, I don’t get it sometimes.

I7: I don’t know if I’d call it secrets. That’s what I was talking about, being compressed, molded, because whatever they’re told: “Ok.”

I6: Yeah. “We don’t have churches.” Someone once told him that. They don’t on their own seem to find out what’s going on. I’ve had a lot of people tell me, “Oh [Interviewee Six], you come from a Christian country. We don’t have any Christians here.” I mean, [B], [S]’s husband, when [B] first came here, and also [G], they were both Christians in Ulaanbaatar who were teaching here, they both were convinced that there were no Christians here. And one morning, they knocked on my door and I wasn’t here because I had been at church. Came back, and they were saying, “[Interviewee Six], I was going to visit you, but you weren’t home.” “Oh, I went to church.” “To church?! Where did you find a church?!” “Well, I mean there are five churches, Christian churches in this city,” not to mention two Catholic churches, y’know, but it just…and so the information about what’s really happening in China, people just aren’t aware of what’s going on.

Me: I think that’s a critical thinking issue.

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79 He is implying here that people in Chinese society often accept what they’re told without question.

80 These three are acquaintances of Interviewee Six’s and Seven’s. To maintain anonymity, their names have been shortened to the first initials.
I7: Oh, there is no critical thinking, in the class. I’ve often found a group of college teachers– college students you can tell them anything, and they’ll say, “Ok.” Tell them something like, “You’re a boy.” “Oh, I am? Oh, ok.” [laughter]

I6: Not quite that bad. [laughter]

I7: Well, no, that’s being facetious a bit.

Me: But I do know that critical thinking is almost sort of beat out of them since they’re really little.

I7: It is. Anything different or disagreeing or not being part of the...

I6: Well, there’s only one answer on the test, y’know. You’d better have the same answer as the teacher’s been giving to you, y’know, whatever she spits out you’re going to put down.

I7: Even if it’s wrong.


Me: Well, thank you, thank you both so much. I really, really appreciate it. This is, like I said, this is a gold mine. This has been an amazing day. I really, really appreciate it.

I7: No problem! I know research for a paper can sometimes be frustrating, especially how you’re doing an active research in the field.

I6: But, I guess the main thing you asked, what’s the main thing taken away, actually, the main thing is, the people have been good to us, oh my goodness! The people appreciate anything you do for them. [Interviewee Seven] and I are here only as
volunteers, we don’t take a salary from the school. But they give us this apartment, and they give us trips back and forth to the USA.

I7: We’re too old to accept money! [laughter]

I6: But they treasure us, they love us...the day of Thanksgiving, the president of the college came into our classroom with two large bouquets of flowers and some coffee and some chocolates, teachers did who came over with us, the president of the college, mind you. And that wasn’t the case at the university, but the people have been so good. We had a party on Friday night, I mean the place was packed with teachers from the university! I mean, they’re loyal, they can see that you have a heart for them, the Mongolians, they know that you appreciate them. They’ll just...shower you with love, they really appreciate people who really, really love them and love their culture. Yeah. We’re very welcome here, it’s gonna be hard for us to leave just because of the people connections we have.

[At this point in the recording, the interview with Interviewees Six and Seven is, for all intents and purposes, completed, and a general discussion of unrelated topics continues.]
Appendix F

Summary: Interviewee Eight
Forward

This interview was conducted with a male Inner Mongolian music student who was studying Mongolian Short Songs.

I was assisted in this interview by a Mongolian friend who speaks Mandarin Chinese, Mongolian, and some English, as I cannot speak Mongolian myself. I was introduced to Interviewee Eight through this friend.

The following is a detailed summary of the interview that was conducted, and it has been directly translated from Mandarin Chinese to English. To allow for confidentiality, Interviewee Eight will be denoted as “I8.”

Interview

The interview began with introductory information. I8 stated his name in both Mandarin and Mongolian. His hometown is in the Hexigten Banner (in Mandarin: KeShiKeTengQi, 克什克騰旗) under the administration of the Chifeng Prefecture-level city. All of his family lives in Inner Mongolia: he has no family members in Outer Mongolia, and he is ethnically Mongolian.

I8 likes to listen to music, and some of his favorite genres include Mongolian Long Song, popular Mongolian ethnic folk music, jazz, Western European classical opera, and Beijing Opera to an extent. When asked if he likes traditional Mongolian music, he responded thus: “Of course I like it, I am Mongolian. [laughter] I like it
because I can deeply understand it.” I8 also likes Mongolian pop music, but prefers Outer
Mongolian pop music to Inner Mongolian pop music.

As a student, I8’s major area of study is Mongolian Short Song. I8 gave
introductory information about Mongolian Short Song. For instance, Mongolian Short
song is “much, much shorter than Long Song. In Long Song, because it’s so long, the
performer can add their own personality to the song [improvisation]. Short Song is not
this way.”

When asked how traditional Mongolian music makes him feel, I8 responded, “it’s
my own thing, it’s my people’s music, it makes me feel excited. Very excited.”

I8 has never been to Outer Mongolia. Although he hopes to go some day, he does
not have any plans or means to go to Outer Mongolia.

When prompted, I8 provided two Mongolian vocalists whom he considered to be
famous. The first was an Inner Mongolian vocalist with the Mandarin name of LaJiaFu.
The second name he provided was Norovbanzad, an Outer Mongolian vocalist who
brought great notoriety to Mongolian Long Song throughout her life and career.

I8 speculated that Mongolian music is not very popular in China. “Foreigners like
it [Mongolian music], but it’s not very popular in China.” According to I8, foreigners are
“very accepting and welcoming of the music.” I8 believes that Mongolian music could
very well become more popular in the future because of universal access to the internet.

After clarifying his age (I8, at the time interviewed, was 23-years-old), I8 sang
two different Mongolian Short Songs.
Appendix G

Summary: Interviewee Nine
Forward

This interview was conducted with a male Inner Mongolian composition professional. This interviewee, in his late 70’s in age, is famous in Inner Mongolia for composing music for various Inner Mongolian films. He has been recognized with an honorary academician certificate from Mongolia University in Ulaanbaatar for his extensive research on the Mongolian mouth harp. He taught Mongolian music and composition at Inner Mongolia Normal University for many years, as well as having taught at various music colleges in China.

I was assisted in this interview by a Mongolian friend who speaks Mandarin Chinese, Mongolian, and some English, as I cannot speak Mongolian myself. I was introduced to Interviewee Nine through this friend.

The following is a detailed summary of the interview that was conducted, which took place over the span of two days, and it has been directly translated from Mandarin Chinese to English. To allow for confidentiality, Interviewee Nine will be denoted as “I9.”

Interview

The interview began with I9 stating his name in both Mandarin and Mongolian. His hometown is Xilingol in Inner Mongolia. When asked why he lived in Hohhot, he exclaimed, “that’s a very long story.” During World War II, Japan had invaded China. In
addition to this aspect of the war, China had two main factions warring against themselves: the Kuomintang and the Communists. As a young teen, I9 had fought in the battles against the Kuomintang. After the end of World War II, when he was 15-years-old, I9 entered middle school. During that time, many people fled Inner Mongolia because of the Kuomintang. The Kuomintang looked down on ethnic minorities, including Mongolians, so many Mongolians fled his hometown. The situation “wasn’t exactly like the situation between Blacks and Whites in [Civil Rights Era] America, but it was similar.” I9 eventually left his hometown. “Where could I go? Where could I go to school?” After World War II and the end of the Chinese Civil War, there were not any sufficient schools in the area. He participated in the Communist “revolution.”

Because he did not attend school, I9 cultivated his interests elsewhere. He played music: he played the Western violin and the accordion. He participated in a music group that performed in public places and factories. Eventually, the group went northeast and came upon the city of Ulaanhot. At that time, his group had no money, no income, and hardly any food. “And yet, we were still happy!” because, he intimated, they were playing music.

Then the group went to Beijing after the rise of Mao’s “New China.” Even though the group members were all Mongolian, they sometimes sang in Mongolian and sometimes sang in Mandarin because most of their audience members were Han-Chinese. After the group’s stint in Beijing, they “went to many, many places.”
Eventually, the group came to Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, because the seat of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Regional government had been established there. The group went to Hohhot in 1951. I9 has lived in Hohhot cumulatively for about 50 years.

I9 no longer played violin after some time. He began music composition while living in Hohhot. He composed new songs. I9 composed his first song when he was 19-years-old. It was written in the Korean War. The song was about how Inner Mongolians had helped fight in the Korean War and how they would carry small amounts of dried meats in their pockets while traveling to war. It brought the soldiers together. “People told me that I wrote music well, and that I should be a composer of Mongolian music. And so I said ‘Ok.’”

I9 studied European classical music and theory on his own, studying composers such as Beethoven, Mozart, and Bach. In 1954, I9 went to the Music Conservatory of Shanghai and studied music there for five years. After graduating, he worked as a professor at that music conservatory for eight years. He eventually missed Inner Mongolia and wanted to return. So he left Shanghai and returned to Inner Mongolia. His goal was to create a space for Inner Mongolians to learn about Western European and Mongolian music, as such institutions did not exist at the time. He went to the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Regional government with his idea, and while he was supported in enthusiasm, the government would not support him financially. He established a school on his own that was named the Mongolian Arts School, located in Hohhot. Over time, that school became the Arts College of Inner Mongolia. His hope was that, in 50 years or so, Mongolians could have great composers and musicians as Russia has Tchaikovsky
and Glinka, or Germany has Beethoven. Many famous Inner Mongolian musicians graduated from that school, such as DeDeMa. He taught there for 24 years, and in the time that I taught at that school, about 3000 students had graduated from there.

He was the principal at the school. His days were usually about 16 hours long: eight hours were used teaching classes, four hours were used for sleep, and the rest of his time was used to further his own learning through reading, composition, and researching Mongolian music. He researched Mongolian folk music, modern Mongolian music, and traditional Mongolian music. On September 28, 2011, he held a concert in Hohhot where many of his famous compositions were performed.

In 2012, I9 was invited to Ulaanbaatar in Outer Mongolia, where he received an honorary certificate as an academician from the Mongolian Academy of Sciences for his extensive research. “I was very happy! I hope that I can receive something like this from the U.S. I left Shanghai, where I lived well and ate well to return to Hohhot! [laughter]” According to I9, his decision to leave Shanghai and return to Hohhot was a good one.

At this point in the interview, I9 retires for the day and promises to go into great detail about exactly why his research was so highly regarding in Outer Mongolia. He previewed the next interview with the phrases “cultural doughnuts.”

The next day, I return to continue the interview with I9, who presents me with a copy of his research book on the Mongolian mouth harp. He begins by repeating “doughnuts” and insists that when he finishes the lesson I will definitely understand his meaning. I9 proceeds to give me a lecture as follows.
In northeast China, there is a desert area called XinAnNing, and ethnic minority groups live there, including the Daur, Ewenki, and Oroqin. The Oroqin are famous for archery, the Ewenki are famous for their herding of reindeer.

The Daur have a mouth harp instrument, and their word for the instrument in their language is mukulian. One day, a long time ago, I9 read in a book, possibly an American book, about the Eskimos [sic] in Alaska, and that they also have this mouth harp instrument, and they also call it the mukulian. From this revelation, I9 had nine questions:

1. Was what he was reading real? His first impression was that it was impossible: the two groups are so far away. Yet, he saw this information in a book.
2. Why do the Alaskan Eskimos have this instrument that comes from the XinAnNing area in Inner Mongolia?
3. Were the Daur people and Eskimo people once one ethnic group?
4. How did they separate into two distinct ethnic groups? I9’s supposition was that maybe part of the group stayed in the XinAnNing area and others went to the Alaskan area. In today’s times, these two groups have different lives and different languages, and yet the name of this instrument is the same.
5. From where did the group split? Did Eskimos go to Inner Mongolia and those there became the Daur, or did the Daur go to Alaska and those there became Eskimos?
6. Says I9, the ancient Mongolians were Shamanistic and worshipped the sun. Did ancient Mongolians follow the sun and walk east?
7. When did this split happen?
8. Why haven’t science academies studied this phenomenon anywhere?

9. Why is it that the name of the instrument is the same between these two groups but nothing else is?

I9 has had these questions since he was a young person, and to this day, “I haven’t received any answers to these questions.” I9 went to XinAnNing and asked the Daur these questions, asked them about Alaskan Eskimos.

Next, I9 went to a nearby area where there was a population of Ewenki and asked them if they called the mouth harp *mukulian* as well. The Ewenki told him that they do not call their instrument a *mukulian*, they call it a *phomliskam* [I9’s spelling]. Furthermore, their mouth harp has two prongs in the middle, not just one prong.

Finally, he travelled to another nearby area with a large population of Oroqin people, about 200 kilometers from the Daur, according to I9. This group also had the mouth harp instrument, but they called it a *korgowan*.

“How could the Daur, Ewenki, and Oroqin, who are relatively close in distance from each other, have three different names for the same instrument, and yet, the Daur and Alaskan Eskimos, who are thousands of kilometers from each, have the same instrument and the same name for the instrument?!” I9 pondered. I9 thought about the problem, and came up with a theory. Maybe, originally, these three relatively close ethnic groups’ language was not the same. Perhaps, in ancient times, these three groups did not live near each other, but rather came from different places to the area in which they now live. I9 then wondered when did these groups come to that area. He guesses that the
Ewenki possibly came from Siberia about two or three hundred years ago. He still has yet to find the answer to these questions.

He also wonders why this has not been studied. “It’s weird! Otherwise, maybe research professionals don’t care about this subject. Maybe they look down on the people in this area.” I9 then presented four more problems.

1. In Japan, and in Korea, there is a certain drum with a special design on it. The design is of three fish: one yellow, one red, and one green. “The Japanese say that it [the drum] is an ancient Mongolian thing.” According to I9, the Mongolian people do not know anything about this. “How can this be?” I9 asked. Then he answered his own question by explaining that this cultural relic is ancient and that the ties were probably lost thousands of years ago. The Chinese have a drum like this where the symbol is of two fish, one white and one black [the yin yang symbol] and the Mongolians have a drum with the three-fish design. “Why do Japanese and Koreans say this drum is Mongolian? Mongolians do not know.”

2. There is a song that was written for pipa in the Tang Dynasty called Lan Ling Wang. According to I9, it was written for an emperor’s birthday. Today, regular performers of the pipa in China cannot play this song. “Nobody knows how the song goes anymore. Where did it go?” I9 states that in the ancient Japanese city of Nara, there is an area called Dong Da Si where people there can play the ancient

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81 There is in exist this type of symbol in Japanese culture, and it is called mistudomoe. The symbol can sometimes be found on Japanese taiko drums. Similarly, this symbol is called the sam-taegeuk in Korean and can be found on some temple drums in South Korea.

82 A traditional Chinese plucked-lute instrument.

83 This is a Buddhist temple complex in Nara, Japan called todaiji in Japanese, dongdasi in Mandarin (东大寺).
song and dance the ancient dance that accompanies the song. “Why is it that people in Japan still know this song, but China is so large yet nobody knows the song anymore?” asks I9.

3. In 2005, I9 was invited to Austria by a friend who told him that he really needed to see something. I9 went to Vienna with his wife and traveled about 100 kilometers away from Vienna. There, they were shown a factory where the owners make Mongolian-style mouth harps. The factory is called Wimmer Maultrommel. According to what I9 was told, the factory was about 550-years-old. The people at the factory told him that the mouth harps were Mongolian in style, and that the factory was established 15 generations ago to produce the Mongolian mouth harps. “How could the Mongolian mouth harp get to Vienna?” I9 was astonished by the discovery.

4. I9 also discovered that a teacher of Beethoven’s, Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, wrote a concerto for the mouth harp in the early 1700’s [Concerto in F Major for

- Also, in Mongolia, “no Mongolians play the mouth harp!” In Ulaanbaatar, mouth harp is not found among Mongolian musicians. Found all around Mongolia but not in Mongolia. Beethoven’s teacher, (Johann Georg Albrechtsberger wrote a mouth harp concerto in 1722 (Concerto in for Jew’s Harp in F Major).

I9 asked aloud, “Why do Mongolians no longer play mouth harp? How did mouth harp get to Germany?”
I9 researched and many books in the pursuit of answering these many questions. He read many biographies. Then he came across a biography of Alfred Nobel and his research on explosives. I9 summed up one of the core concepts of an explosion in this way: when a bomb is released, it detonates right before hitting the ground. The explosion makes a kind of hole in the atmosphere. Earth, debris, and fallout come up through this hole and then out over the sides. When one looks on the top-side of this phenomenon, would would see it as a doughnut shape.

This where I9 came up with the idea of “cultural doughnuts.” He uses this metaphor to explain why other places in the world have Mongolian cultural relics yet Mongolia no longer has these cultural aspects.

During his research, I9 came across a group in an area of Finland called Lapland. While researching it, he came across the claim that there is an ethnic group in Lapland that claim ancestry from Mongolians. He learned that this group [the Saami people in Lapland, formerly known as Lapps; there is intense academic debate about whether the Saami were descended from Mongol people millennia ago, but some genetic evidence seems to suggest that it is indeed the case that the Saami had originally come from Mongolians\textsuperscript{84}], lived a lifestyle almost identical to the Ewenki people in northeastern Inner Mongolian, especially in relation to the herding of reindeer. I9 could hardly believe this himself, but it was information given to him from other people. “I didn’t read this in a book. I don’t trust the books. I trust my own first-hand research, I trust my ears. It’s important to find out the answer for yourself!”

Thus, this is the essence of I9’s cultural “doughnuts.” These cultural aspects that have traveled far from the initial cultural center but are no longer in existence at the cultural center. This research was the reason why I9 received the certificate as an academician from the Mongolian Academy of Sciences.

I9 displays a collection of mouth harps that he has collected from all over the world, mainly from Central, South, East, and Southeast Asia. Then I9 goes into a discussion about the discrepancy in the name of the mouth harp in Mongolian language. In Mandarin, the instrument is called *kouxian* (kubectl) which literally means “mouth string.” Currently, Mongolians call the instrument *amon khuur*, where *amon* means “mouth” and *khuur* means “instrument.” However, as I9 explains, this was not the original name in Mongolian language for this instrument. In order for I9 to find out the original name for the instrument, he went to areas surrounding Mongolia and Inner Mongolia that had large Muslim populations (such as Kazakhstan, Xinjiang, Afghanistan, etc.). I9 posits that Mongolian language and Turkic languages have common roots, and that when one travels from Inner Mongolia, one will find that there is a gradient in pronunciation in words that have the same meanings across different but related languages. When I9 traveled west, he found that the mouth harp in that area was called *kotz* or varying gradients of the word. However, when he asked people in those areas what the meaning of the word, no one knew. The common answer he received was that it was just a word that was passed down through history. When I9 tried to trace the word back to Mongolian language, he came across the Mongolian word *khomus*, which means “thumbnail” in Mongolian. As, according to I9, the mouth harp is played with the
thumbnail among Mongolians, I9 concluded that the original Mongolian name for the mouth harp was *khomus*. This is another example “cultural doughnuts.”

I9 then described the five situations that cause the “cultural doughnuts” phenomenon.

1. War and invasion. “When war happens, people flee in all directions. People don’t all just run in the same direction. Some people run this way, some people run that way.”

2. Inner conflict due to royal succession which leads to internal power struggle.

3. Natural disasters

4. Plague or epidemics

5. Nomadic lifestyle. “Right now, Mongolians have a country. But in ancient times, Mongolians didn’t have a country...They were constantly walking, herding cattle/reindeer/sheep, following herds, walking all the way to Canada, walking all the way to Finland.”

I9 states that these situations cause people to flee from their cultural centers in all directions, taking aspects of their culture to areas where those aspects had not previously existed. Also, when people would flee, some groups flee faster and farther than others depending on the situation. “For example, when Genghis Khan went to [Central Asian] Islamic countries, the Muslims fled to North Africa...So why does Africa have Muslims? Because of Mongolians! [laughter]” There are Mongolian historical and cultural remains all over the world because of cultural doughnuts.
“In China, the Han-Chinese say they have 5000 years of history. They looked down on ethnic minorities, saying they don’t have any history. China has a long written history. But for ethnic groups that don’t have written history, they still have long histories, and you can find out what those histories were with cultural ‘doughnuts.’”

I9 finished his lecture with a few remaining thoughts. “Right now, it’s very hard for Mongolian culture to thrive in China. Because, in China, Mongolians must learn Mandarin and learn Han-Chinese culture, otherwise, they won’t get into good schools, won’t have a good life. Right now, many Mongolian young people aren’t very willing to learn Mongolian language. Because if they don’t study Mandarin, they won’t have a life...But researching Mongolian history, Mongolian culture, will raise the Mongolian people.” I9 uses the Manchu ethnic group in China as an example of a group that has so thoroughly assimilated into Han-Chinese culture that they are nearly indistinguishable from the Han. I9 feels that this level of cultural erosion is not right, that it should not be this way. “But at the same time, people should be free to choose what they want to do. If you don’t like matouqin, then go play erhu. [laughter]” Ultimately, I9 feels, people should have the freedom to choose what they like and what they want to do.

The interview finishes with light-hearted joking about whether or not I might pick up I9’s research sometime in the future.
Appendix H

Summary: Interviewee Ten
This interview was conducted with a male Inner Mongolian *morin khuur* specialist who taught the instrument at Inner Mongolia Normal University. Interviewee Ten was my *morin khuur* instructor during my stay in Hohhot.

I was assisted in this interview by a Mongolian friend who speaks Mandarin Chinese, Mongolian, and some English, as I cannot speak Mongolian myself.

The following is a detailed summary of the interview that was conducted, and it has been directly translated from Mandarin Chinese to English. To allow for confidentiality, Interviewee Ten will be denoted as “I10.”

**Interview**

The interview began with I10 stating his name in Mandarin and Mongolian. His hometown is in the Baarin Right Banner (Mandarin: *BaLinYouQi*, 巴林右旗) which is under the administrative jurisdiction of Chifeng. He has studied and worked in at Inner Mongolia Normal University (Hohhot, Inner Mongolia) since 2001. He studied the *morin khuur* and is one of the resident *morin khuur* instructors.

I10 began studying music as a child in elementary school. However, he began studying the *morin khuur* in 1992 when he entered high school. The high school he attended was a combination high school-college campus where the high school is under
the jurisdiction of a sponsor university but the high school students do not interact with college students.

When asked why he studied music, I10 responded that everyone studied music in the school a structure part of their education, although when asked why he chose the *morin khuur*, he gave an interesting explanation. It turned out that he did not choose the instrument himself. Rather, his music instructor chose it for him. He did not have a deep conceptual knowledge of the *morin khuur* before he began studying it. After graduation, in 1996, he worked with the ChiFeng Folk Song and Dance Troupe (Mandarin: *ChiFengShi Mingzu GeWuTuan*, 赤峰市民族歌舞团).

I10 has been playing *morin khuur* for about 20 years. He “loves” playing the *morin khuur* because of the culture and the history surrounding the instrument, and he feels that Mongolians have a duty to “develop it,” referring to Mongolian music and culture.

I10 then goes into a deeper discussion about the *morin khuur*. There are different kinds of bodies for the instrument depending on the area in which it is played (i.e., Outer Mongolia versus China’s Xinjiang Province. One kind of *morin khuur* that I10 displays is the *Chao’Er*. The scroll of the instrument was a carving of a dragon’s head rather than a horse’s head. The top of the body can be covered in either sheep skin or cow skin. Another feature is the technique with which this *morin khuur* is played: all four fingers of the player’s left hand are placed on top of the strings in order to stop the strings rather than standard *morin khuur* left-hand position where the index and middle finger are placed on top of the string and the remaining two fingers are placed under the string using
the cuticles of those fingernails to stop the string (the thumb is placed behind the neck of the instrument in both cases).

I10 also notes that there are two main styles of playing the *morin khuur*. The first style primarily employs the use of harmonics on the instrument for melodies. The second style uses a mixture of stopped notes and harmonics to construct the melody. According to I10, the development of the second style is much more prevalent.

When asked how he felt about traditional Mongolian music, I10 stated how the music was about life and nature, about nomadism and the grasslands. He feels that every song has its own story, its own individuality to it. Playing traditional Mongolian music allows the player to feel the music and allows the listener to feel it as well. It is very personal.

I10 has traveled to Outer Mongolia and Japan performing on the *morin khuur*. I10 believes that Mongolian music has influence all over the world because of technology and because of Mongolians who travel to perform the music. When asked to comment on the relative popularity of Mongolian music, I10 reasoned that there are many places in China where there are significant populations of Mongolians, so Mongolian music is popular in those areas in a way. However, I10 pointed out that there are still many Chinese people who do not know much about the music or the culture. I10 stated that Mongolian music is especially popular in Japan. According to I10, “The Japanese themselves say that they are descendants of Mongolians.” I10 believes that Mongolian music could become more popular in China and the world in the future because, he feels,
“culture is always developing,” it is always evolving, so there is opportunity for Mongolian music to have greater presence outside of Inner Mongolia in the future.
Appendix 9

Transcription: Interviewee Eleven
Forward

This interview was conducted with an Inner Mongolian music student who majored in Western violin. This interviewee acted as the assistant for my interviews conducted with Interviewees Two, Three, Four, Eight, Nine, and Twelve.

Interviewee Four is fluent in Mandarin Chinese and Mongolian, and she is moderately proficient in English. The following is a transcription of the interview that was conducted, and has been directly translated and paraphrased from Mandarin Chinese to English. There are times during the interview where English is spoken, and these instances shall be denoted with encompassing apostrophes, as such: ‘example’. To allow for confidentiality, Interviewee Eleven will be denoted as “I11.”

Interview

Me: Thank you, [Interviewee Eleven], for allowing me to interview you! Let’s begin.
I11: Ok.
Me: Could you please state your name?
I11: Mongolian? Pinyin?85
Me: You can spell it in pinyin.
I11: [Interviewee Eleven spells her name in pinyin with expert Chinese pronunciation]
Me: How about your Mongolian name?

85 Pinyin (拼音) is the standard Romanization system of Chinese characters. For example, the word “hello” in Chinese characters is 你好. In pinyin, the characters would be spelled “nǐ hǎo.”
I11: [Interviewee Eleven says her name in Mongolian]

Me: Do you live here in Hohhot?

I11: Yes, I live here now.

Me: Why do you live here?

I11: For study. I go to school here.

Me: What do you study?

I11: I am in college, in a college program.

Me: What is your major?

I11: Violin. ‘Violin.’

Me: Where is your home town?

I11: HuLunBei’Er. Hulunbir.86

Me: Now, why did you come here, to Hohhot, to go to college?

I11: Because, it’s still in ‘Inner Mongolia.’ I didn’t want to be too far from my family.

   [laughter]

Me: Oh.

I11: This place still has Mongolian people. If I went to a different place, they’d all be Han-Chinese.

Me: Hm. In your opinion, is this a very important thing to you?

I11: Yes. Because, the food I like to eat, Mongolian food, is all here. If I went to a different place, it probably wouldn’t exist there, I wouldn’t be able to get used to it.

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86 This is the Mongolian spelling and pronunciation of this city. The preceding word is the Mandarin spelling and pronunciation of the city.
Me: I’d like to ask: have you ever been to Outer Mongolia.

I11: No.

Me: Do you want to go?

I11: Yes! [laughter]

Me: Why?

I11: There, it’s all Mongolian people. The culture is the same. As I’ve discussed with you before, a long time ago, about 280 years ago, my ancestors came from Russia to here. Part of those ancestors were the same as the Bulun Mongolians, so I want to go and see those people. I think they’ll be the same as me [ethnically].

Me: Ok. Now, you just said that your major is music, correct?

I11: Yes.

Me: What kind of music?

I11: Traditional European classical music.

Me: Could you speak a little louder please?

I11: Ok! [laughter]

Me: ‘European classical...’ Why do you study this kind of music?

I11: When I was very little, my [paternal] grandmother and my mother decided that I should study this. But when I was about six-years-old, that’s when I began to seriously study it, about eight-years-old. There are very few [Inner] Mongolian people who study this music. There are more Outer Mongolians who study it, but Inner Mongolians are very few. There are few of them who understand the music.
But my [paternal] grandmother and my mother thought this kind of music sounds really great! They are the ones who helped me decide to study it.

Me: Have you studied Mongolian music before?

II1: I studied *matouqin* for a little while.

Me: For how long?

II1: For about a year and a half.

Me: Now, how long have you been studying ‘violin’?

II1: ‘Violin...’ about 11 to 12 years.

Me: About as long as me. Now, when you listen to traditional European classical music, what kind of feeling do you get?

II1: How to say...I really, really like it. My feeling is like this: hearing the sound...is like this [she uses body language to express her meaning], it’s this kind of feeling.

The melody.

Me: Well, I mean, what is “this?” [repeating the body language] Because this only record audio, I cannot record your movements...

II1: ‘Yes.’ The ‘melody’ is...it’s hard to describe...it’s like this [making more physical demonstrations]

Me: Please describe the movements you’re making right now. Do you understand what I mean?

II1: Not quite...

Me: It just, my pen [an audio-recording pen] can’t see you. It can only hear you.
I11: [laughter] Ok, I understand. It’s like this: when you hear a melody, you may think, “Oh, it’s very beautiful,” but when I hear a melody, every note is important...it’s a very strange feeling.

Me: Every note...what?

I11: Every note is...hard to say...it’s easy for me to remember music, it’s easy for me to remember the sound. When I hear it, it is forever in my mind. I always remember it.

Me: So, is what you’re saying is that it’s not just the ‘melody’ that’s important, it’s that the ‘melody’s’ every single note that is really important?

I11: ‘Yes.’

Me: Is this what you’re saying?

I11: That’s right. When my ears hear each note, they stay in my mind as their own individual musics.

Me: Ok. I think I understand now.

I11: You understand? [laughter] Probably if other people were to describe music, they’d probably say it’s “pleasant” or “enjoyable”, well not “enjoyable,” it’s more “delicate.” I think what I said was very strange. [laughter]

Me: It’s no problem! Now, what kind of feeling do you have with traditional Mongolian music? When you listen to traditional Mongolian music, what do you think of? What kind of feeling do you get in your heart?
I11: I think, when I sing Mongolian songs or play Mongolian songs, I have a good sense of the music. Do you know this word? YueGan.87

Me: Now this I don’t quite understand.

I11: Hang on, let me look it up...‘ear for music.’

Me: Hm?

I11: ‘Ear for music.’

Me: Oh, ok! So, could you say that again?

I11: Sense of the music. It’s a Mongolian sense of the music. Although I’ve studied violin for a long time, my Mongolian sense of music is very good. But I’m not at all like Yo Yo [Ma].88 [laughter] Because I’ve always played Mozart, Beethoven, Haydn, Bach, these things have made a great impression on me. So, I’m very weird...[laughter]

Me: But, I do understand. Now, have you listened to modern Mongolia music before?

I11: I have.

Me: How do you feel about it?

I11: It’s a little too simple. [laughter] Mongolian things have a ‘mix.’ They’ve added many things. My main feeling is that it’s ‘pop’ music. There are many Mongolian ‘rappers’ these days, very many in Inner Mongolia.

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87 Mandarin: sense of music (乐感); at this point in the interview, I did not understand the meaning.

88 Before this interview, I had had a conversation about Yo Yo Ma with Interviewee Eleven.
Me: I’d like to ask: sometimes, when I’m at any given place, like a restaurant, you or other people would tell me, “Oh, this is Outer Mongolian music.” But right now, I really cannot...

I11: Separate the two?

Me: Yes. Modern Outer Mongolian music and modern Inner Mongolian music have what kinds of differences? How do you know that this is Outer Mongolian music?

I11: In the first place, they way Outer Mongolians speak Mongolian [language] and their pronunciations aren’t the same as ours [Inner Mongolians]. They tend to roll their “r”s much more, it’s very obvious. Ours is not that much. It’s probably because, in China, Han-Chinese people do not have the rolling “r” in their language. So it’s this way. It’s like this in wester Inner Mongolia, like Tongliao, Chifeng...it’s like that in all of these places. The second reason...Inner Mongolian ‘pop music’ sometimes uses a little bit of Mandarin Chinese.

Me: Now this, I do know.

I11: From the melody, to the lyrics, it’s all like this. So Mongolian people are probably better able to tell the difference. In Inner Mongolia, there is a style of song called “grassland song,” do you know this? It’s like, for instance, when we were in the car and we heard that CD, that kind of song.89 The melody was a Mongolian melody, but the lyrics were almost completely in Mandarin Chinese, so even a lot of Inner Mongolian Han-Chinese people like to listen to the song. Now, there is a famous Inner Mongolian singer who only sings these kinds of songs. She’s an

89 Here, she is referring to an instance earlier that day where we were in a taxi cab and heard a song on the radio about the grasslands.
older person, her name is De De Ma. She is a student of [Interviewee Nine]’s. Now, she can sing Mongolian songs, but she usually sings two kinds of songs: one kind is in Mongolian, the other kind is in Mandarin, but the Mandarin songs are relatively more wide-spread.

Me: Now, I’d like to ask: when seeing your face and hearing you speak Mandarin, I’d guess that many people would incorrectly assume that you are Han-Chinese. But, you are completely ethnically Mongolian. I think it might be...this is a special kind of life. How is it that people can think you are Han-Chinese? When did you realize that people can mistake you for Han-Chinese? Do you understand my meaning?

I11: I understand. It’s because when I went to kindergarten in my hometown, it was a Han-Chinese kindergarten. Some people say to me, “Why do you speak Mandarin?” It’s because Mongolians speak Mandarin very badly. They will sometimes say things but people will understand less than half of what they say. For example, when I was at the hospital, my mother said to me, “I want you to learn Mandarin. There are important instances when you’ll need to be able to speak Mandarin, like if you get sick and see a doctor, you can tell the doctor where something hurts and the doctor will understand you. This is in ‘China,’ not ‘Mongolia.’ If you were in [Outer] ‘Mongolia,’ then you can just speak Mongolian. But in China, you need to learn it well. Then, I learned really fast. My Mandarin-Chinese proficiency is relatively high, and I used my Han-Chinese classmates as the standard. So, if I don’t say my name or don’t tell my ethnicity,
people will mistake me for being ethnically Han-Chinese. But, my family members are all Mongolian and at home, I speak Mongolian. So it’s this way. Do you know that the dispositions of Mongolians and Han-Chinese are different? Han-Chinese people...are very huishuo...do you understand what I mean?

Me: I don’t understand...

111: It means, they’ll say something’s good but really they think something’s bad.

Me: Oh, ok.

111: It’s this. They’ll say very beautiful words, very pretty. But Mongolian people are a little bit stupid, unless they’ve done a lot of advanced study like [Interviewee Nine]. But the average Mongolian person speaks very directly. Oh! I don’t like this, I really don’t like this! In my dorm room, there are eight people living together. Seven of these people are Han-Chinese, I’m the only one who is Mongolian. So, I think when I’m with them, on the inside I’m thinking, “I’m Mongolian, I’m Mongolian,” and my way of life is also Mongolian. But it’s probably, because I’ve lived too long alongside Han-Chinese people, that I’m afraid my way of life has changed to Han-Chinese. The way Han-Chinese people work is relatively ‘clear.’ But Mongolian people are...maybe...give me this kind of feeling. This is only my opinion. My younger brother [Interviewee Two] is much better than this. Much better.

Me: I’d like to ask: is this something that’s happened to you before? That is, a Mongolian person mistakes you for being Han-Chinese? Has this ever happened to you before?
I11: Do you mean, the first time they meet me?

Me: Yes.

I11: If I don’t speak Mongolian, some of them will say “hello” to me in Mandarin. But if I start speaking in Mongolian, “Oh! This is a Mongolian person.” I’ve lived a long time alongside Han-Chinese people. My temperament is very much Han-Chinese. Because I fear that other Mongolians will see those qualities. I’ve told you before, I really want to go home. During this holiday, I will definitely go back home, see my sheep, my little dog, these kinds of things let me know that I still have Mongolian qualities, that I’m not the same as Han-Chinese. I’ll back and ride horses, I’ll eat Mongolian food, go back to my hometown. Also, I’ve studied Mongolian script before, but I’ve forgotten it. [laughter] But I want to go back and relearn it. Right now, Mongolians in many large cities, like Nanjing, Xi’an, Shanghai, Beijing, and like cities in America, cannot right Mongolian script. I can still speak Mongolian language, I speak it very well, a dialect, not standard Mongolian. But many people I want to meet study Mongolian. I hope if I have time, I want to study. This is my greatest dream. Because...I didn’t understand Mongolian language, when I was little and it was time for me to go to sleep, I would listen to a Mongolian-language story or a Mongolian-language legend, and I thought it sounded very beautiful. It’s because it’s something of my people, it’s something that I can understand quickly. Han-Chinese people feel that Mongolian peoples have...a heart of “suffering”. Do you understand?

Me: No.
I11: Very ‘large’ heart, their hearts are very big. Because their lives are spent on such a large grassland, they don’t have many exchanges with other people, they’d have to ride their horses very far to have face-to-face contact. So, they’re hearts are very ‘pure,’ very clear. So their poetry is especially beautiful. This is why I want to study Mongolian language so I can read some of the Outer Mongolian poems, and Inner Mongolia also has many amazing written articles...because they’re very, in Mandarin, juanyong. I don’t know if you know that word, I can look it up in the dictionary...‘yes...meaningful.’ Do you understand?

Me: Mm hm [affirmative].

I11: I can understand the spoken language so I can understand the deeper meaning. But I don’t understand the written language, so I definitely should study it. [laughter]

Me: Do you have any Outer Mongolian friends?

I11: I don’t have any.

Me: Why is that?

I11: Because I don’t have much contact with Outer Mongolians. There’s not that much. So my Mongolian friends are very few because I’ve always lived my life with Han-Chinese people. From the time I was young to college, my Han-Chinese friends were relatively many. The Mongolian friends that I do have are friends that I knew when I was very, very little, my parents’ friends’ children. But at school, it’s not just one, at home it’s not just one. But in my life, there just wasn’t much contact.
Me: This is a little bit strange.

I11: Well, I’ll say this. When you interviewed [Interviewee Two] and you met my Mongolian friend, she is my ‘best friend.’ Because, when I was little I also had a ‘best friend,’ but lived very far away from each other. I was always studying Mandarin, or music, or even religious music, not Mongolian music, but we did have some contact. She is my Mongolian best friend, because from the time I was young, she understood me and she knows I am not Han-Chinese, she understands I am Mongolian. Many people probably think her way of life is Han but her way of life is Mongolian.

Me: You know, this dormitory, the vast majority of the people here are Outer Mongolian. Although the name of this dorm is “Foreign Students Dormitory,” I’m the only non-Mongolian person who lives here! [laughter] I think all of the students who live in this dorm are Outer Mongolian, Outer Mongolian students. So I’d like to know: are you willing to make friends among these Mongolian students?

I11: I’m very willing. But I don’t know if they’re willing. [laughter] You understand, I’ve told you before, they don’t really like us, they think we’re Han-Chinese. Because there are those of us [Inner Mongolians] who haven’t studied Mongolian language, so they think we’re Han-Chinese. I think you should understand. So I really want to make friends with them...if Outer Mongolians come here to study Chinese but they don’t understand it very well, I could help them. For example, there was one time I was outside trying to catch a taxi, and I saw an Outer
Mongolian guy trying to catch a taxi, and the cab driver was trying to overcharge him, and the Mongolian guy tried to get the taxi driver to lower the price. The guy knew the taxi driver was trying to overcharge him but he couldn’t say correctly what he was thinking so the driver didn’t understand. So I spoke to the taxi driver in Mandarin and asked him why he was doing that kind of thing and the driver just had nothing to say. When I spoke Mandarin, he understood. So I really want to help them because my Mandarin proficiency is very good. I think they probably think I’m very strange! [laughter] Because I’m Mongolian and I speak like a Han-Chinese person. [laughter] There are many people I know who feel the same. My ‘cousin’ also feels the same. Her spoken Mongolian is not as good as mine, she speaks very badly. Other relatives look at the two of us and say my spoken Mongolian is very good, but my cousin, she’ll say, “Eh...eh...” She wants to speak but the words don’t come out. You understand? When, I was little, my mother was a ‘teacher.’ When we lived in HaiLe’Er, we had a very big house. In this house, there were about ten older brothers. Because their parents were all in the grasslands herding sheep and doing their own jobs. They were going to school in HaiLe’Er, they didn’t have homes, so my mother brought them in and got many beds [for them]. 10 Mongolian older brothers doing Mongolian things. [laughter] I lived with them for about five years. They spoke Mongolian very fast, and when

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90 It should be noted that it is common among people in China to refer to close relatives, particularly cousins, as older and younger “sisters” and “brothers” mainly because most Chinese citizens are only children due to China’s one-child policy. Thus, Interviewee Eleven’s “younger brother” is most likely her cousin, and the “older brothers” that she speaks of here are most likely cousins. There were times where she used the term “cousin” and “sister” interchangeably when referring to the relative of hers who spoke Mongolian language very badly.
they were interacting with me they couldn’t speak Mandarin, so I was very lucky to learn Mongolian from them. If I went to see my older sister, there wouldn’t be that many Mongolian sisters, brothers, or friends. I’ve always lived with many Han-Chinese people.

Me: Now, you also study English.

I11: ‘Yes.’

Me: Why?

I11: In the first place, all [nationally] Chinese people study English from elementary school. English is...many countries in the world study English, it’s a major language. What’s more, Outer Mongolians study English very well. Their English is extremely good. I thought wrongly that their Russian was good, it’s their English that’s good! [laughter] It really is very strange! What’s more, their are many more Outer Mongolians who speak English well than Inner Mongolians. Inner Mongolian children’s English is very bad.

Me: Really.

I11: Yes, very many.

Me: This is...

I11: It’s that all Inner Mongolian kids’ [regardless of ethnicity] English is very bad!

Me: Why do you think this is? Why do you think it’s like this?

I11: There’s no huanjing⁹¹.

Me: Huanjing? What does that mean?

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⁹¹ Mandarin: environment.
There aren’t many foreigners around for the kids to speak English with regularly. The teachers here teach them Chinese-English. It’s very weird. You know, when you speak with me I often say very weird words. There are many foreigners in Beijing and Shanghai. They have this environment. Some foreigners would say, “Oh, foreigners, I must study English, I must learn English.” But in China, it’s “Oh, I must take the test. Oh, I must memorize these vocabulary words.” It’s like this in Inner Mongolia. So, my English is very bad! [laughter] But right now, I’m still studying English because I want to go to the U.S. I’ve discussed with you before, I want to go to the U.S. because there are many ethnic minorities, the U.S. is very inclusive, I think meeting these people, they won’t look at me and say, “Oh, you’re very weird.” Right? They’ll be more like, “Oh! You’re great!” That’s the kind of feeling that I get from Americans. In Inner Mongolia, there are many people who are very weird. They are this way: “Huh? You are [ethnically] Mongolian?...You study violin?!” No matter Mongolian or Han, they’re all this weird. When I entered college, my relatives thought I should study matouqin, but I auditioned in violin, they were this way: “Huh?! Why are you studying violin? What is that?!” The people there don’t understand. They think here is too far away, because there the violin-majors are very, very bad. In HuLunBei’Er, they say this: “There is only one relatively good violin teacher here,” and that was my teacher. [laughter] The other violinists there are all...very bad. Their teaching is also very bad. They only teach HuLunBei’Er kids, they invite them to study, but they don’t really teach them anything. My teacher was very good. So...but...Inner
Mongolia has many, many composers. For example, [Interviewee Nine]. There are many, many, and they’re all Mongolian composers. For violinists who are equally highly skilled, there are very few. There are many for *matouqin*.

**Me:** Of course.

**I11:** Yes. There are many skilled *Matouqin*-players. Some of them are in Japan. My mother has told me this before, there’s another reason she wants me to study violin...to continue to study the violin, she has another reason. Mongolian violinists are very few. But, studying the violin is very selective. There are a select few Mongolian violinists who play very well. She hopes that I will apply Mongolian music to the violin and make very beautiful music. That’s her hope. Not just with the *matouqin*. Do you know, that originally, the relationship between Outer Mongolia and Russia was very good. Many composers in that area were very amazing, very famous, like Tchaikovsky. There are no such famous composers in Inner Mongolia, not among Mongolian people, only among Chinese people. So, I think if I can combine Western European classical music with traditional Mongolian music, it will be even more pure, more unique! Because my [current] teacher is Han-Chinese, she teaches me to imitate her, not to do my own interpretations. But in Outer Mongolia, it’s directly with Russia, directly...it’s this kind of reception...

**Me:** I think this historical relationship is very interesting, very important. Do you know this? For instance, [drawing on lined paper] this is the world, this area is Outer Mongolia, this is Russia, and then this is China. It’s only the difference of
this two lines [political borders] that makes two totally different yet powerful countries [referring to China and Russia]. And Mongolian people are in the middle. There are so many different places, so many different ways of doing things. So, Outer Mongolian music and Inner Mongolian music of course have a relationship, of course have similar areas about them, but the differences between them are extremely important. Very, very important. Because, as you just said...

I11: It’s like this. Europe and Outer Mongolia are like that. Outer Mongolia has influences from Russia. Inner Mongolia has influences from China, although there are some in China who are not typical Chinese people...My Beijing violin teacher learned violin in places like Vienna and Italy, so she’s not the same. It’s a strange thing...[laughter]

Me: I’d like to ask: do you think that traditional and modern Mongolian music in China is popular?

I11: I think for traditional music, the matouqin is very popular, but my feeling is that it is a sudden thing, it suddenly became popular. I think because there are now many famous people who might play it, so people recognize them, and it’s suddenly become popular. But, people generally don’t understand the matouqin is of the Mongolians [and Mongolian culture] so in this way it’s not popular. But, if there is a really proficient player and they go to many places in China, then people will know it and appreciate it. This is my opinion. But it’s not like it’s always been popular or it’s never been popular. It’s like from time to time. For instance, right now, it’s popular. After two years or so, it won’t be popular. Like this. But, for
‘pop music’, like Short Songs, they’re always popular in Inner Mongolia. Also, right now, there are many skilled Mongolians...like BuRenBaYa’Er, Buren Bayaer, this person is very famous. He is a Long Song ‘singer.’ His wife is also a Long Song singer. His wife is Ewenki. He is from the same city I’m from, from HuLunBei’Er. He is very good at incorporating foreign and Chinese music into Mongolian music. He doesn’t just sing Long Song. He does many different kinds of songs, he’s just famous for Long Songs. He is nationally Chinese. For instance, he will sing traditional Mongolian songs, but he might incorporate modern instruments, like the guitar or drums, not just the matouqin. His a very bright person, he mixes the music. Right now, his daughter is in the U.S. studying composition at Berkley College of Music. He’s very famous, everyone in China knows him. It’s not like just Inner Mongolian people recognize him and beijing people don’t, everyone in China recognizes him. His songs are very popular. His songs have been popular for about three or four years. If a Han-Chinese person speaks any Mongolian words, it’s because of his songs. You know, he has many songs that he sings as duets with his daughter. In one song, he uses the Mongolian word for father, which is awa and the word in Mongolian is said with tones [like in Mandarin Chinese; the tones demonstrated by Interviewee Eleven are similar to an upward inflection at the end of a question in the English language], and in the music, he puts that word to the do-mi tones in Western music. He’s very bright! [laughter]

The Ewenki are one of the 55 ethnic minorities in China. They live primarily in northeastern China and their population is relatively small compared to other ethnic minority groups.
Me: And what is his name?

I11: BU-REN-BA-YA-ER.

Me: Now, the final question: do you think Mongolian music will be more popular in the future?

I11: Yes.

Me: You think?

I11: Yes.

Me: How so?

I11: Because of technology. People can go on the internet and see videos, before it was CDs and that was slow to spread, but now everything is fast with the internet. People can see Tuvan music [for example]. I also go on the internet to see Tuvan khoomeii. Also, outside of China, foreigners can look inside and become interested. China can also do this. China has a competition called the QingGeSai: qingnian geshou dajiangsai.93 It’s broadcasted on television. It’s a singing competition. For example, pop, or opera, and there’s also a section for native songs and this is where many Mongolians sing, and also people from Yunnan, Tibet, etc. There are many Mongolians who sing in this section. Many people watch the show on TV and say, “Wow! This is Mongolian music! It’s amazing! It’s unique!” Also, they’ll play matouqin and sing Long Song. There are many who sing opera, and many who sing Long Song. Also, the Mongolian children will see people singing opera or playing violin and will become interested in

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93 Mandarin: Young Singers Competition (青年歌手大奖赛).
Western European classical music, like I was with violin, or like [Interviewee Four] with cello. I hope they will want to study piano, violin, etc. So, Chinese people want to study these different things, but what about Mongolian people? They still want to study Mongolian things. I hope they will deeply study these things so foreign people can see it and say, “Wow, this is Mongolian music, these are Mongolian instruments, etc.” This is my opinion. [laughter]

Me: Ok. Is there anything else you’d like to tell me? And also, could you please speak a little bit slower? [laughter]

I11: [laughter] Ok! It’s because Han-Chinese people speak very fast, Mongolian people don’t do this. I speak very fast because the things in my mind move around very fast! [laughter] I think, although I am Mongolian, because I speak Mandarin, I understand Han culture very well. Han-Chinese people are very complex. I hope that Mongolian people can become more complex, because if not, not many other people will be interested in them, Mongolian music won’t progress. They must allow Western European music to help them bring the [Mongolian] music out. Not just have only Long Song, *khoomeii, matouqin*, I think this isn’t good. So, I personally don’t like it when other people say, “You are Han-Chinese,” or “You are not Han-Chinese,” I want every Mongolian group to be Mongolian. Even though I am not of Han-Chinese culture, I understand it very well. For the music, I don’t really like Chinese music, I prefer the violin, I think it is the best. But for literature, or other things, I really do like it, I can understand it. So I think, and you said the history is very important, I think if I didn’t know Han-Chinese
culture, if I only knew Mongolian culture, I’d probably not be able to recognize much else besides Mongolian things. If in Outer Mongolia, I’d probably know Russian culture. But in China, there are also many things to learn and know. There are many, many aspects of Han-Chinese culture. Moreover, I hope my children will study Mongolian language. Definitely study Mongolian language, I hope to find a Mongolian boyfriend to marry, because I’ve already studied many things. I can tell him, “They [the kids] must study Mongolian language because if they study Mandarin, they’ll be completely Han-Chinese.” So, you know, both of my parents are Mongolian. My kids would be ethnically Mongolian, but on the inside they’d be Han-Chinese. I don’t want that to happen. I’ve studied many Han-Chinese things. So I want them to study Mongolian language and I can tell them myself of the many good aspects of Han-Chinese culture, and they won’t want for knowledge, and they won’t know just Mongolian things or change into Han-Chinese. These are my thoughts. [laughter]

Me: Ok. Well, let’s stop here. Thank you!

I11: You’re welcome!
Appendix J

Transcription: Interviewee Twelve
Forward

This interview was conducted with a female Inner Mongolian khoomei specialist. The incidence of women who perform khoomei is extremely low compared to their male counterparts.

I was assisted in this interview by a Mongolian friend who speaks Mandarin Chinese, Mongolian, and some English, as I cannot speak Mongolian myself. She shall be denoted as “Assist” in this transcription. I was introduced to Interviewee Twelve through this friend.

The following is a transcription of the interview that was conducted, and it has been directly translated and paraphrased from Mandarin Chinese to English, although there are points in the interview where Assist speaks some English, which shall be denoted by encompassing apostrophes, as such: ‘example’. To allow for confidentiality, Interviewee Twelve will be denoted as “I12.”

Interview

Me:  Let’s begin.

I12:  Ok.

Me:  Thank you for allowing me to interview you, really, thank you, thank you very much!

I12:  I also thank you! [laughter]
Me: Could you please tell me your name?

I12: I am [Interviewee Twelve states her name in Mandarin].

Me: How about your Mongolian name?

I12: Oh. It’s the same [pronunciation in both Mandarin and Mongolian].

Me: Oh, ok.

I12: [Interviewee Twelve states her name in Mongolian, the pronunciation is nearly the same].

Me: Do you live here in Hohhot?

I12: Yes.

Me: Where is your hometown?

I12: Erdos.

Me: Why do you live in this city?

I12: Because I work here.

Me: Do you teach khoomei at this school? [Inner Mongolia Normal University]

I12: No. I work at the Inner Mongolia Song and Dance National Theatre.

Me: Oh, ok!

I12: Yes. I’m also a substitute teacher here at Inner Mongolia Normal University.

Me: Oh, could you repeat the name of the theater [in Mandarin]

I12: NeiMengGuMinZuGeWuJuYuan.94

Me: Ok. When did you begin studying music?

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94 Mandarin: Inner Mongolian Song and Dance National Theatre (内蒙古歌舞剧院).
I12: Oh wow...I started studying music very early. About 5 or 6 years old. I started studying *khoomeii* in 2006.

Me: 2006?

I12: Yes.

Me: I think this was the year of my first trip to China.

I12: Really? It was actually my first time in [Outer] Mongolia. [laughter] I went there to study.

Me: You just mentioned that you went to [Outer] Mongolia. Where?

I12: In Ulaanbaatar.

Me: So, there you studied *khoomeii*?

I12: Yes.

Me: For how long?

I12: Two years.

Me: And afterwards? Did you continue to study?

I12: I came back here for work.

Me: Now, why did you learn to sing *khoomeii*?

I12: Because I am Mongolian. Also, this is something of ours that we should give to people because it is [of our culture].

Me: I’d like to ask, but I don’t quite know how to say...you sing *khoomeii*. Can you sing other kinds of songs as well?

Assist: Like Long Song...

Me: Long Song, Short Song, etc.
I12: I see, yes, I can. Folk songs, yes. I am also a professional sanxian player.95

Me: Now, [referring to Assist] she studies traditional European classical music for example. Can you sing classical European opera?

I12: I can, but my specialty really is khoomeii. The techniques used between khoomeii and other kinds of singing are not the same.

Me: Now, I know that female khoomeii-singers are very few. Why is this?

I12: Because khoomeii requires great strength in breathing. You must practice it every day. It requires a lot of air pressure. For example, if one were practicing khoomeii, it is like laying on the ground and someone pressing down on your chest. It requires a lot of air pressure.

Assist: It requires a lot of strength.

I12: Yes.

Assist: If you don’t have enough ‘power,’ you won’t be able to sing it.

I12: Correct.

Me: Now, when you sing khoomeii or listen to khoomeii, what kind of feeling do you get?

I12: Very uplifting. Because I like it myself. Then, when I listen to other people perform it very well, or hear some performances of more ancient songs, of course I’m very moved, so very uplifting.

Me: Now, could you give me an introduction of khoomeii?

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95 Mandarin: literally means “three-strings.” This is a traditional Mongolian plucked string-instrument (shudraga in Mongolian) that is found in China as the sanxian (三线) and in Japan as the shamisen (三味線).
I12: Yes, the different techniques. Now this, I like!\(^96\) [laughter] Mongolian *khoomeii* has four kinds. First, there is low-pitch to high-pitch. Then, there’s *shahaal–kharihiraa* to *shahaal* [in Mongolian]. These are the most important four. There are actually many kinds, but these four are the most important. First I’ll sing *kharihiraa*, it’s called low-pitched *khoomeii*.\(^97\) [Interviewee Twelve demonstrates low-pitched *khoomeii*] That was low-pitched *khoomeii* called *kharihiraa*. Now, [I’ll sing] *shahaal*, high-pitched *khoomeii*. [Interviewee Twelve demonstrates high-pitched *khoomeii*] That was *shahaal*, high-pitched *khoomeii*. Then, with high-pitched *khoomeii*, there is *shaar*, which means “whistle.” It is whistle *khoomeii*. [Interviewee Twelve demonstrates (high-pitched) whistle *khoomeii*].

Next is the *kharihiraa* with the whistle on top. [Interviewee Twelve demonstrates (low-pitched) whistle *khoomeii*] These are the four kinds of *khoomeii*.

Me: Now, I know that singing *khoomeii* is imitative of...

I12: Yes!

Me: Imitative of...for example, natural things, like water, or...

I12: Yes, yes, yes, and being on the grasslands, cattle, sheep, things like that. Things on the grasslands.

Me: Could you sing a song?

I12: Sure. This instrument is called the *hubisi*. This is a traditional Mongolian music. [Khubis in Mongolian, this is a four-stringed lute instrument that looks and is

\(^96\) Here, Interviewee Twelve takes out a guitar-like instrument and begins to explain *khoomeii* and sing.

\(^97\) Here, Interviewee Twelve is speaking Mandarin, saying that *kharihiraa khoomeii* is *diyin humai* in Mandarin (低音呼麦), which means “low-pitched throat-singing.”
played very much like the Western guitar. This ancient instrument was popular in
the area of modern Inner and Outer Mongolia but fell out of common use after the
Yuan dynasty.98 Today, performers of the khubis are extremely rare and, as a
likely consequence, research and document of this research is extremely sparse.
Therefore, the fact that Interviewee Twelve is female, performs khoomeii
professionally, and plays the khubis professionally makes her an especially and
exceedingly distinct individual.]99 Now, Inner and Outer Mongolia are not the
same. The Inner Mongolian [hubisi] is like this [one]. [Interviewee Twelve
proceeds to sing a song that demonstrates all four basic kinds of khoomeii].

Me: Great! Now, I know that every area in Inner and Outer Mongolia has their own
techniques when it comes to songs...here, it’s Inner Mongolian, and there’s also
Outer Mongolia, Tuva, etc...I know that [the Tuvan vocal technique] is extremely
famous.

I12: Yes, yes.

Me: Could you tell me any differences between the Tuvan khoomeii and the Inner
Mongolian khoomeii?

I12: Here, right now we Inner Mongolians don’t have such a special or famous, there
are two particularly famous groups: the large majority of Outer Mongolians, and
the Tuvans. Now for Mongolian and Tuvan khoomeii, I’ve studied both of these.

I’ve been to both of these areas. Tuvan khoomeii is very modern. Very, very

98 “Biivaa,” The Center of Native Heritage, Culture, and Customs of World Nomads, accessed

99 “Ancient Mongolian instruments used in the ‘Universe’ album,” Bro’s Records Mongolia,
modern. Their method of singing *khoomei*i is not the same as the vast majority of [Outer] Mongolians’. [Outer] Mongolian style is very old. They have their own unique style, very ancient...[at this point in the interview, an unknown person interrupts by entering Interviewee Twelve’s office]...in any case, Tuvan *khoomei*i is very modern, very new, and is popular among many places, like in Africa, many countries. Then, [Outer] Mongolian *khoomei*i contains a lot of very ancient and historical things because the history is very old.

Me: Do you know any modern songs? Could you sing a modern song?

I12: Modern? Ok, I will sing a modern [Outer] Mongolian song. [Interviewee Twelve sings another song].

Me: I believe I’ve heard this song before.

I12: That one was traditional. Everyone knows that one. [laughter]

Me: Now, do you know any ancient songs?

I12: Ancient...I’ll sing this one, this song was popular during Genghis Khan’s era. [Interviewee Twelve sings the song; during this song, she positions the *khubis* at an angle such that the neck is positioned more in line with her shoulder rather than in line with her lower arm or wrist as is with normal Western guitar-playing].

Me: Now, why did you change your holding position?

I12: This instrument was originally played in this position [with the neck of the instrument in line with the player’s left shoulder]. Then this position is more like the...guitar. [laughter] It’s modern.
Me: Ok. I understand. Your change of the position made me think about how I used to study the *pipa*.\(^{100}\) I know that it is positioned like that, so it made me think, “Oh! Very similar.”

I12: Yes. This *khubisi* ethnic playing style is this kind [neck positioned up]. This style [neck positioned down] is modern. [laughter]

Me: Now, do you have a favorite song?

I12: Yes, the first song I sang, because that song features all for of the basic techniques of singing *khoomeii*. That song was called “*Te Si He.*” Also, I’d like to say that if you go to Baidu.com and type in my name, you can find all of these things. You can find my songs, my manager, biography, etc.

Me: I’d like to ask, do you think Mongolian music is popular in China?

I12: Are you saying, is Inner Mongolian music popular in China?

Me: Yes.

I12: Very little. Not very popular. Because we are of a different peoples’ country. Most [Han-Chinese] people feel, “It’s not our music. It’s not important for us to listen to. It’s not ours.” But in the past few years, it’s been better. There are many Mongolians in China, so it stays popular among the Mongolian population.

Me: So, you think that Mongolian music in China could become more and more popular?

\(^{100}\) A traditional Chinese plucked-lute instrument; the general shape of the instrument is that of a pear, and the instrument has wooden raised frets; the instrument is plucked and strummed with the right hand. The instrument is positioned with the bottom of the body on the player’s lap and the neck of the instrument more in line with the player’s left shoulder.
I12: Most definitely. *Khoomeii* came from Outer Mongolia, Tuva, etc. into China. *Khoomeii* in China is one of the greatest cultural treasures in the world. So it definitely could become more popular. Because, China is not Mongolia. China is not full of Mongolian people. And yet *khoomeii* is well-known. Mongolian music has three main parts: Long Song, *matouqin*, and *khoomeii*. There must be one. In my opinion, *khoomeii* is very simple. I can talk freely and very clearly about *khoomeii*. Now, people in other countries come to China for economic and cultural purposes, this is how the Chinese feel. But for Mongolians, people come here for Mongolian fine arts and history. The history of Mongolians is very amazing, longer than China’s history. The whole world knows about the Mongolians. The Mongolians feature their history and their fine arts. So at this university, and I’ve taught at three universities, this university, He Lian College of Music, and He Lian Normal University. At this university, I taught for a while as a *khoomeii* instructor, and I was very excited to teach. Why? For this reason. I hadn’t realize the kind of money was involved in teaching students. I decided not to charge them. I just wanted them to study well. As long as they learned well, that was good enough. Why? People can only live once, and then it’s over. What should I do? Life for my house? Live for my car? No. I must live for the betterment of my community. Not for myself, but for my [ethnic] group. [At this point in the interview, Interviewee Twelve and Assist begin speaking to each other in Mongolian] [Referring to Assist] What she was saying was that it’s so that

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101 There is a city in southeastern China with the name of HeLian, but it is unclear if Interviewee Twelve is referring to this city or a different area.
foreigners can understand Mongolian people, it’s not about understanding. It’s Chinese people who don’t understand this. People from other countries have no problem at all understanding [Mongolian people] if you go out and sing khoomeii. Say, if you go to southern China to sing, or this place in China and sing, or northern China to sing, they [the Han-Chinese people] ask me, “Are you male or female? You look female but your voice sounds male.” It’s so...bad! But if you go to foreign countries, as of now, I’ve been to 17 countries, and then sing, other people are like, “Oh! Amazing!” as soon as I finish singing. I have this kind of feeling. When I myself finish singing a song, I have this feeling. Why do I like this interview this much? When [Assist] gave me a call and said, “Oh, I have someone who would like to interview you,” I was at first, “Sorry, I don’t have time, I don’t have time.” But then when I understood who you were, I was, “Oh, we must do it, how can we work this out, what can we do to get this done?” Why? Because I like singing khoomeii to people who will really appreciate, really understand, really take it to heart. When I went to sing on CCTV,\textsuperscript{102} who would see me sing? Would they understand the music? But it’s not like this with you [here, Interviewee Twelve is more referring to foreigners in general rather than me specifically]. You will understand it. You will truly appreciate it. And I say to you, you asked whether or not if Inner Mongolian music was popular in China. This is a very complicated question, I don’t know how to answer. Because at first, I thought, “I can’t answer this question,” but then I thought, “I can,” because you

\textsuperscript{102} China Central Television, China’s main government-sponsored television station.
can understand and appreciate the music-culture. You wouldn’t suddenly ask whether or not I was male or female. I really fear being interviewed by Han-Chinese people.

Assist: Because sometimes, you cannot say...

I12: You cannot say these kinds of things.

Assist: Yes, for Han-Chinese people if they ask this question, the average Mongolian person would probably say, “Uh, I can’t say...” but you understand.

I12: Right. Earlier today you asked if Inner Mongolian music was popular in China. I would give a Chinese person a very unclear answer. China has many ethnic minorities. All of them live under the Chinese. For example, the Tibetans. The Mongolians are also one group.

Me: Now, this question of whether or not Mongolian music is popular in China, I’ve interviewed a lot of people. Every person–

I12: What did the Mongolian people say?

Me: The Mongolians...some of the younger ones said, “Well...maybe, but it’s getting better and better.” But then, some of the relatively older ones would say things to the affect of what you said. That there a lot of Han-Chinese people and that they really don’t understand this music. They just hear it and think it’s nice but don’t really understand it themselves. So, this popularity issue, this “people understanding the music” issue, they probably really do like to listen to the music, but they really cannot–

I12: I understand. They just have a so-so feeling towards it.
Me: Yes. If you go to Europe or America, some Americans will say, “Oh! It sounds nice!” But, I believe for certain that people like me and my classmates and my teachers all have my feeling towards the music. That is, “Ah! This music! What exactly is it? I must really learn to understand it, to know it. Who are these people? What’s their history?” It’s not just, “Oh, it’s nice.”

I12: Exactly. I know. I know. I’ve been to 17 countries, I know. [laughter]

Me: So, my thesis is Mongolian music in China because I feel this situation is extremely interesting. It’s not that it’s a very good thing, it’s that it’s a very interesting thing. Why is Mongolian music in China like this? Why is Mongolian music in [Outer] Mongolia like that? Why do these people have this feeling? I want to know what kind of feeling Mongolian people in China have, because, if China has ten people...rather, if China has 100 people, then two of those people are Mongolian. This is my meaning: that Han-Chinese people make up the vast majority in China, and Mongolians only make up this percentage. So, what kind of life do Mongolians in China have, especially in Inner Mongolia, with there being far many more Han-Chinese people? What kind of feeling do they have? Then, what are their fine arts like? So this is why I asked that kind of question [whether or not Mongolian music is popular in China]. I know this question is very difficult to answer. But, I really want to deeply understand Mongolians in China. That’s what I really want. So, that’s why I asked such a question. [laughter] I’d like to ask: you mentioned you’ve been to many different countries. Such as?
I12: I’ve traveled to Russia, Outer Mongolia, Tuva, Singapore, Japan...[some of the countries listed are unclear by their names in Mandarin]...I’ve been to 11 countries. I’ve been to all of these countries, singing *khoomei*. Before I began working, I was the same as you, trying to learn many things. What can I know about *khoomei*. For you, if you watch TV, you can find out. For me, at that time, there were no such television shows. It was all in my dreams, imaginations, ambitions that I found out. When I became able to sing *khoomei*, I knew what it was about, I knew the culture, and that’s when I began traveling. There are still many places that I want to see. Now, I have a child, so I cannot travel as much. I live a much more simple life. If I didn’t have a child I would still be out finding people and traveling. [laughter] I got married and had my child, my child is two-years-old. If it was just me, I would bring the child with me. But I also have a husband, so I cannot just leave.

Me: Now this, about Japan, what kind of feeling do you think Japanese people have about Mongolian music?

I12: Especially good.

Me: Because, I’ve heard before that Japanese people really like it. Really like it.

I12: Yes. Why is it like this? Because the vast majority of people in Inner Mongolia are Han-Chinese. And very few Han-Chinese from Inner Mongolia go to Japan.

Assist: Do you understand? The people who are from the small villages are Mongolians, and when they to Japan, they display Mongolian culture, ‘this is Mongolian music.’
I12: Yes. When the Japanese see the Chinese citizen’s [from Inner Mongolia] passport, most likely that citizen is Han. But if that person is Mongolian, they are excited to learn about real Mongolian culture from Mongolian people [as opposed to Han-Chinese people who live in Inner Mongolia]. And so they’re a bit more welcoming.

Me: Why do you think Japanese people like Mongolian music so much?

I12: It’s not just Japanese people who like the music. Many different people from different countries like Mongolian music because they know Mongolian history, how Mongolians came to be in this place and that place, they all know. They know that there are Mongolians all over the world, and they didn’t get to those places by driving cars, just by riding horses. Do you know, in Mongolian history, there are Mongolians all over the world.

Me: Could you sing one more song for us?

I12: Yes! [Interviewee Twelve sings another song]

Me: Amazing! Thank you! Let’s stop here.

I12: Ok.

Me: Thank you professor!
Appendix K

HSIRB Approval Letter
Date: September 17, 2012

To: Matthew Steel, Principal Investigator
Thalea Davis, Student Investigator

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 12-09-11

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project titled “Mongolian Music in China” has been approved under the expedited category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note: This research may only be conducted exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project (e.g., you must request a post approval change to enroll subjects beyond the number stated in your application under “Number of subjects you want to complete the study.”) Failure to obtain approval for changes will result in a protocol deviation. In addition, if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

Reapproval of the project is required if it extends beyond the termination date stated below.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: September 17, 2013
Western Michigan University
School of Music

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Matthew Steel  
**Student Investigator:** Thalea Davis  
**Title of Study:** Mongolian Music in China

You have been invited to participate in a research project titled "Mongolian Music in China." This project will serve as Thalea Davis's thesis for the requirements of the Master of the Arts in Music degree. This consent document will explain the purpose of this research project and will go over all of the time commitments, the procedures used in the study, and the risks and benefits of participating in this research project. Please read this consent form carefully and completely and please ask any questions if you need more clarification.

**What are we trying to find out in this study?**
The purpose of this study is to discover how, by what factors, and to what extent Mongolian music practice has been influenced by Han culture, especially since the Cultural Revolution. It is being conducted in order to add traditional and modern Mongolian music, especially that which has been influenced by Han Chinese culture, to the body of academic knowledge in non-Western music research.

**Who can participate in this study?**
Persons who are invited to participate in this study should have at least one of the following qualities: have lived or who currently live in China's Inner Mongolia Province; are of Mongolian ancestry within at least 3 generations; listen to or have listened to Mongolian music extensively; teach about Mongolian music or Mongolian history; play or have played Mongolian (traditional and modern) Mongolian music extensively.

Because this study is related to Mongolian music as it exists in China and studying its change over time since the Chinese Communist Revolution after World War II, persons with any of the following qualities may not participate in the study: have never listened to, played, or taught about Mongolian music or Mongolian history; have never lived in or visited China's Inner Mongolia Province.

**Where will this study take place?**
This study will take place in China's Inner Mongolia Province. Interviews will occur at a prearranged location between the participant and the researcher. Interviews should occur in quiet locations to allow the interviewer and the interviewee to be able to hear and respond to each other easily.
What is the time commitment for participating in this study?
Participants will be asked to participate in at least one one-on-one interview. Any subsequent or follow-up interviews are optional. The interview will take at least 20 minutes and will last no longer than 90 minutes. Any subsequent or follow-up interviews in which the participant is willing to participate will follow the same time limit.

What will you be asked to do if you choose to participate in this study?
You will be asked to answer a series of questions about Mongolian music in China freely. You may also be asked to expand some of your answers.

What information is being measured during the study?
Opinions about Mongolian music in China from relevant persons (see “Who can participate in this study?”) in China’s Inner Mongolia Province will be collected and included in a large body of information regarding Mongolian music as it exists in China.

What are the risks of participating in this study and how will these risks be minimized?
Uncomfortable seating or an uncomfortable environment (temperature-wise) during the interview. Your time may be inconvenienced due to the length of the interview. Also, it is possible that may feel some questions asked to you may be too personal.

Efforts will be made to provide a comfortable seating and environmental space for the you, including requesting to have the interview in a place where you would most likely feel the most comfortable. Also, if you feel that any questions asked are too personal, you are free to not answer the question, to stop participation in the interview at any time, and/or to request that certain information remain confidential or removed from the interview write-up/notes/recording.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?
This research may not benefit you directly. However, it may contribute to a knowledge base regarding a phenomenon that is known but not heavily documented: that is, the erosion/assimilation of Mongolian culture in Chinese society specifically as it relates to its music and its implications for other aspects of Mongolian culture and its implications and possible applications of the phenomenon to other ethnic minorities in China.

Are there any costs associated with participating in this study?
Participating in the interview may cost you time, including travel time to and from the interview location and the time it will take to review and sign the Informed Consent document as well as participating in the actual interview. Also, if the agreed-upon interview location requires you to
travel more than walking-distance, you may incur costs by using a taxi or filling up a car with gas for the trip to the interview location.

Is there any compensation for participating in this study?
There is no compensation for participating in this study.

Who will have access to the information collected during this study?
The completed research project will be presented in a public presentation at Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo, MI, USA) and a print version of the research paper will be kept in the university’s archives. Although the questions that will be asked in the interview will be related to Mongolian music history and music practice rather than personal questions about you, you still may request to keep any information confidential or removed from my recordings or notes.

What if you want to stop participating in this study?
You can choose to stop participating in the study at anytime for any reason. You will not suffer any prejudice or penalty by your decision to stop your participation. You will experience NO consequences either academically or personally if you choose to withdraw from this study. The investigator can also decide to stop your participation in the study without your consent.

Should you have any questions prior to or during the study, you can contact the primary investigator, Dr. Matthew Steel at 269-387-4667 or matthew.steel@wmich.edu. You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at 269-387-8293 or the Vice President for Research at 269-387-8298 if questions arise during the course of the study.

This consent document has been approved for use for one year by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) as indicated by the stamped date and signature of the board chair in the upper right corner. Do not participate in this study if the stamped date is older than one year.

I have read this informed consent document. The risks and benefits have been explained to me. I agree to take part in this study.
负责人：Dr. Matthew Steel
学生调查：Thalea Davis
研究题目：蒙古音乐在中国

您已被邀请参加一个研究项目，名为“蒙古音乐在中国”。该项目将作为Thalea Davis的艺术音乐学士学位的硕士论文的要求。这同意书将说明这一研究项目的目的和可能超过所有的时间承诺，在研究中使用的程序，以及参与这一研究项目的风险和收益的。请仔细阅读本同意书，并请提出任何问题，如果你需要进一步澄清。

我们在这项研究试图找出什么？
本研究的目的是探索如何，究竟是什么因素，以及到什么程度蒙古族音乐的做法已经由汉文化的影响，特别是自“文化大革命”。正在有序进行，将传统和现代蒙古音乐，特别是那些已经由中国汉族文化的影响，对身体的非西方音乐研究的学术知识。

谁可以参加这项研究？
谁被邀请参加本研究的人应该有至少以下素质：有生活或谁目前居住在中国的内蒙古蒙古地区;内至少有3代的蒙古血统,听或已听蒙古音乐广泛“蒙古音乐或蒙古历史教科书”传统和现代蒙古音乐广。

由于本研究是相关的，因为它存在于中国的蒙古族音乐，并研究其自二战结束后的中国共产主义革命的变化随着时间的推移，以下的素质与任何人不得参与这项研究：从来不听，播放，或教导蒙古音乐或蒙古历史从来没有住在或访问中国的内蒙古蒙古。

本研究的地方吗？
这项研究将在中国内蒙古。面试将发生在一个预先安排的参与者和研究者之间的位置。访谈发生在安静的地方，让采访者与被采访者能很容易够听取和回应对方。

参与这项研究的承诺是什么时候？
参与者将被要求参加至少一个一对一访谈，任何后续或后续访谈是可选的。面试将采取至少20 分钟，而且会持续时间超过90分钟。任何后续或后续的采访中，参与者愿意参与将遵循同样的时间限制。

如果你选择参加这项研究吗你会被要求做些什么？
您将被要求回答一系列的问题蒙古音乐在中国的自由。你也可以问，扩大一些答案。

什么样的信息在研究过程中被测量的？
有关人士（请参阅“在这项研究中哪些人可以参加吗？”）在中国的内蒙古地区蒙古族音乐在中国的意见将被收集，并列入有关蒙古音乐，因为它存在于中国的庞大的身徵。

参与这项研究的风险是什么，以及如何将这些风险降到最低呢？
座位不舒服或不舒服的环境（温度）在接受记者采访时。由于长在接受记者采访时，你的时间可能会感到不便。此外，你可能会觉得问你一些问题太个人化。

将努力提供你一个舒适的休息环境空间，包括要求有面试，在一个地方，你很可能会觉得最舒服的。另外，如果你觉得任何问题过于私人的，你是自由不回答这个问题，停止参与在接受记者采访时，在任何时候，和/或要求某些信息是保密的，或从采访中写下/录音/录音。

参与这项研究的好处是什么？
这项研究可能有利于你直接。但是，它可能有助于被称作为一个现象，但没有大量文档的知识基础：那就是，侵蚀/同化蒙古文化在中国社会，特别是因为它涉及到它的音乐和它的影响等方面的蒙古族文化和其影响和可能的应用的现象在中国其他少数民族。

参与这项研究相关的任何费用？
参与在接纳记者采访时，可能会花费你的时间，包括旅行时间和地点和时间将审查并签署知情同意书，以及在实际的采访中。另外，如果商定的面试地点需要你更多的旅行或填补了汽车用油的行程到达了面试地点。

参与这项研究是否有任何补偿吗？
没有参与这项研究的补偿。

在研究过程中收集到的信息将有机会获得谁？
已完成的研究项目将在玉密歇根大学（卡拉马祖，密歇根州，美国）和印刷版的研究论文将被保存在大学的档案公众展示。虽然会涉及到蒙古音乐史和音乐的做法，而不是私人的问题，你的问题将被要求在接受记者采访时，你仍然可以要求任何保密信息，或从我的录音或笔记。

如果你想停止参加这项研究是什么？
您可以选择停止参与在任何时候因任何原因的研究。你不会遭受任何损害或罚款决定停止您的参与。您将体验到任何后果，不论是在学术或个人，如果你选择退出本研究，未经您的同意，也可以决定停止参与这项研究的研究者。

如果您有任何问题，或在研究过程中，您可以联系主要研究者，马修博士钢铁269-387-4667或matthew_steel@wmich.edu。您也可以联系主席，人类的主题269-387-8293或机构审查委员会的副总裁269-387-8298如果在研究过程中出现的问题。
此同意书已被批准使用一年的机构审查委员会（HSIRB）董事会主席在右上角的邮戳日期和签名的人的主题。不要参与这项研究，如果以邮戳日期超过一年。

我已阅读知情同意书。风险和收益已经向我解释。我同意参加本研究。

请清楚地写你的名字

参与者的名字

日期