Making Mongols:
Representations of Culture, Identity, and Resistance

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ABSTRACT
(academic)

Mongols in Northern China fear the end of a distinct cultural identity. Until the late 19th century, cultural differences between Mongols and Han could be seen through differences in each group's traditional way of life. Mongols were nomadic pastoralists. Han were sedentary farmers. Recent economic development, rapid urbanization, and assimilation policies have threatened Mongolian cultural identity. In response to this cultural identity anxiety, Mongols in Inner Mongolia have looked for ways to express their distinct cultural identity.

This dissertation analyzes three case studies derived from material cultural productions that represent Mongolian cultural identity. These include pastoralism, the use of Genghis Khan, and the Mongolian language. The analyses of different material cultural artifacts and the application of cultural and political theory come together in this dissertation to demonstrate how Mongolian cultural identity is reimagined through representation. In this dissertation, I also demonstrate how these reimagined identities construct and maintain ethnic boundaries which prevent the total absorption of a distinct Mongolian identity in China.

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ABSTRACT
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This dissertation analyzes three case studies derived from material cultural productions that represent Mongolian cultural identity. These include pastoralism, the use of Genghis Khan, and language. The analyses of different material cultural artifacts and the application of cultural and political theory come together in this dissertation to demonstrate how Mongolian cultural identity is reimagined through representation. In this dissertation, I also demonstrate how these reimagined identities construct and maintain ethnic boundaries which prevent the total absorption of a distinct Mongolian identity in China.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Bayin	*Bayin Haoriwa*
CNSDT	Central Nationalities Song and Dance Troupe
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
Cultural Revolution	Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution
Inner Mongolia	Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region
IMSDT	Inner Mongolia Song and Dance Troupe
MMI	Mongolian Medium of Instruction
MPR	Mongolian People's Republic
NIMPRP	New Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party
PAP	People's Armed Police
PRC	People's Republic of China
SMHRIC	Southern Mongolia Human Rights Information Center
Tibet	Tibetan Autonomous Region
WDP	Western Development Program
Xinjiang	Xinjiang Autonomous Region

PREFACE

I lived and worked in Hohhot, capital of Inner Mongolia, for eight years between 2001 and 2012. Like any expatriate who lives abroad for an extended period of time, I slowly peeled my way through the proverbial onion of culture past the top layers of language and food and into the complicated layers of history, relationships, politics, and so forth. After four years of working in Hohhot, I returned to the States for my graduate education. The training I received in my Intercultural Studies program equipped me to better understand the embedded and nuanced components of culture, politics, and how the two coalesce in complicated ways. Once I completed my MA, I returned to Inner Mongolia. My academic training combined with my experience of living there led me into deeper cultural understanding of the city, its history, its people, the regional and national political climate, and the impacts each of those components had on those living there.

Thus, when on May 27, 2011 Mongolian protests took place in Hohhot, I knew that there was “more to the story” than what I could see.[1] Protests were not uncommon in China. But, generally they took place in front of a government building and lasted a day or less. This particular set of protests prompted the local authorities to declare martial law throughout the city which indicated to me that this situation was quite unusual. I also knew that some ethnographic investigation would unearth details and stories surrounding the protests, and, perhaps the motivations of those protesting. But, I also knew that I could not investigate by asking questions due the political climate in Inner Mongolia.

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[1] I provide a detailed narration of the protests in Chapter Three.

Just over a year after I witnessed those protests I started my PhD program. As I began to design my research project I had the May 2011 protests in mind. I was not interested in the actual protests, per se, but in the notion of resistance that was marked by the protests. I wanted to know what else Mongols were resisting. Again, I knew that field interviews in a contentious area of China, especially interviews connected to political protests with a marginalized ethnic group conducted by an American would probably not have been approved by the necessary Chinese authorities. Instead, I turned to scholarly literature and to print material, social media, and electronic sources. My research combined with my extensive experience of living in Inner Mongolia led me to understand that Mongols grapple with cultural anxiety because of the ongoing urban development and state driven assimilation policies throughout the region.

As I scoured the internet and social media, I happened upon a piece of cartoon art called *Repair* by Mongolian artist. I immediately knew that I wanted to incorporate this piece of art into this dissertation. Shortly thereafter, I took a graduate seminar entitled "Material Culture and Public Humanities Theory," in which the class investigated theory and methods in the field of material culture. This course was foundational in how I formed my approach to my research. I began to understand how I could investigate modes of representation through which Mongols were reimagining a distinct cultural identity. Through further research, I developed this dissertation in which I analyze three case studies of material culture as modes of cultural representation, reimagination, and resistance.

INTRODUCTION

Geographical Context: Inner Mongolia

Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, here after referred to as Inner Mongolia, was established as an autonomous region for Mongols living in the Chinese territory on May 1, 1947, more than two years prior to the establishment of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949. Located in northern China, it is the third largest province and borders Mongolia, Russia, and eight other provinces as shown in the map below.[2] Its vast size comprises roughly 12% of China's land mass but it only has a population of roughly 25 million people.[3] Major cities in Inner Mongolia include Hohhot, the capital city, and Baotou and Ordos.

Inner Mongolia's population is comprised of many different ethnic minority groups. Han are the most populous ethnic group in the country. The most populous minority ethnic group in Inner Mongolia are Mongols. Although Inner Mongolia was established for Mongols, state directed assimilation policies, economic development, and rapid urbanization has resulted in more Han than Mongols in Inner Mongolia. According to the national census conducted in 2010, Han comprise 79.5%, Mongols comprise 17.1%, and other ethnic groups comprise 3.36% of the population.[4]

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[2] "Chinese Map," *Diverse China,* Accessed March 10, 2016, http://www.diversechina.com/leftpost/ProvinceIifo/.

[3] National Bureau of Statistics of China, "National Data," Accessed March 29, 2016, http://data.stats.gov.cn/english/easyquery.htm?cn=E0103.

[4] Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Bureau of Statistics, 内蒙古自治区发布2010年第六次全国人口普查主要数据公报, May 17, 2010, Accessed March 27, 2014, http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/tjgb/rkpcgb/dfrkpcgb/201202/t20120228_30397.html.

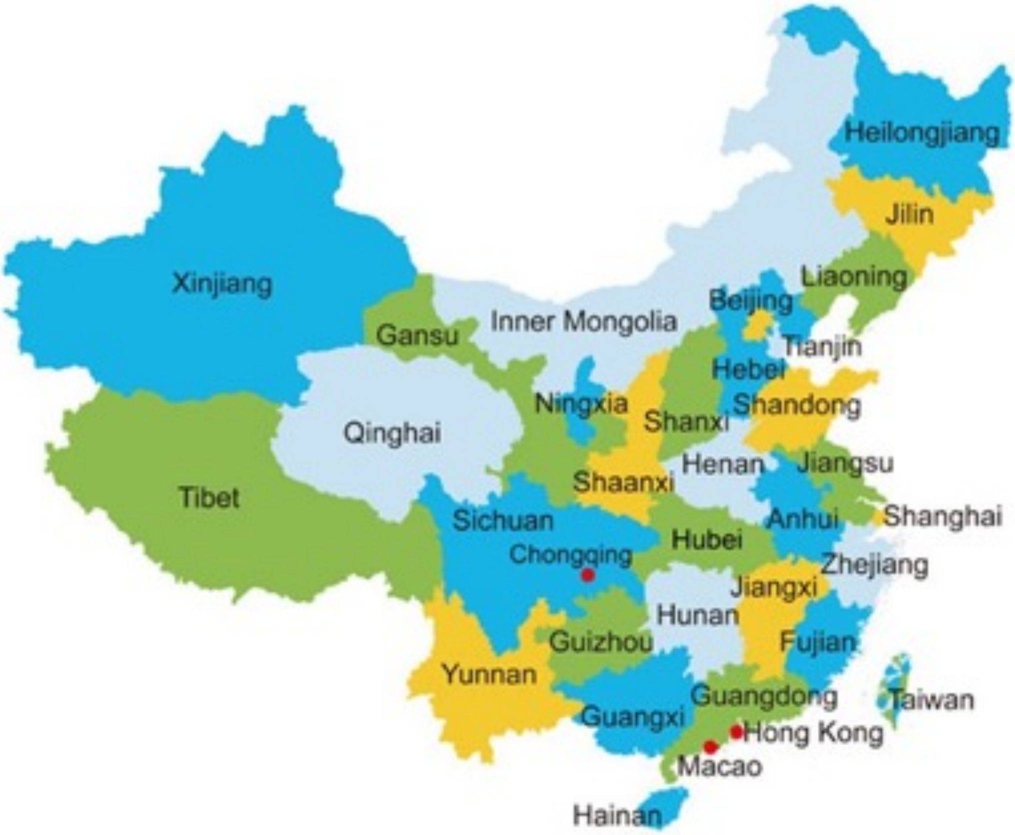
Heilongjiang
Jilin
Xinjiang
Liaoning
Beijing
Gansu
Inner Mongolia
Tianjin
Hebei
Ningxia
Shandong
Shanxi
Qinghai
Henan
Jiangsu
Shaanxi
Tibet
Sichuan
Anhui
Shanghai
Chongqing
Hubei
Zhejiang
Jiangxi
Hunan
Guizhou
Fujian
Yunnan
Guangdong
Taiwan
Guangxi
Hong Kong
Macao
Hainan

Figure 1. Map of China

Inner Mongolia is one of five ethnic autonomous regions in China.[5] Tibet and Xinjiang have recently been highlighted in media due to ethnic tension in each of those regions. Inner Mongolia does not gain as much attention from the media, in part, because assimilation policies have effectively transitioned Inner Mongolia from what was the Mongol homeland to a sinicized province with an increasingly homogenous population. Further, although protests, self-immolations, and other forms of resistance have not been as common amongst Mongols as with other ethnic groups in China,

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[5] The other four autonomous regions are: Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Tibetan Autonomous Region, and Xinjiang Autonomous Region.

Mongols resist changes to their cultural space, environmental degradation, and the threat to the end of a distinct Mongolian culture.

Problem Statement

The phenomenon of rapid urbanization in China has gained much attention from academic scholars. Thomas Campanella's noted work, *The Concrete Dragon,* is a critical overview of contemporary urbanization throughout China.[6] Steve Hess is in conversation with Camanella though his investigation into how some Chinese citizens resist the razing of their homes in stand-offs with the state.[7] Yet, most of the research conducted about resistance connected to the impact of urbanization is from journalistic accounts. The academic research on the intersection of the two topics, how Chinese citizens resist the impacts of the state's aggressive urban development, is largely missing from the literature.

Uradyn Bulag has written extensively about Mongols, Inner Mongolia, and the ethnopolitics involved in urbanization in the region.[8] He is also the only scholar that has addressed the issue of the threat to cultural identity as a result of an increasingly urban Inner Mongolia in which he focuses on the phenomenon of language anxiety amongst Mongols in Inner Mongolia. His study asserts that the decrease of Mongolian language use is due to the displacement of Mongols from rural locations to urban centers and the preference for Mandarin in the education sectors and in the marketplace.[9]

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[6] Thomas J. Campanella, *The Concrete Dragon: China's Urban Revolution and What it Means for the World,* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008).

[7] Steve Hess, "Nail-Houses, Land Rights, and Frames of Injustice on China's Protest Landscape," *Asian Survey,* Vol. 50, No. 5, (September/October 2010): 908-926.

[8] Uradyn Bulag, "Municipalization and Ethnopolitics in Inner Mongolia," in *Mongols from Country to City: Floating Boundaries, Pastoralism, and City Life in the Mongol Lands,* eds. Ole Bruun and Li Narangoa (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2006), 56-81.

Mongols, and many rural dwellers throughout the region, are moving to the cities because of state economic develop plans that is transforming grasslands into cities, factories, military bases, and mines. Because the grasslands are a key cultural identity marker for Mongols, one that distinguishes Mongol culture from other cultures in Inner Mongolia, the permanent transformation of the grasslands has created "cultural identity anxiety."[10] In response to the threat of a distinct culture, Mongols have looked to material culture as ways to reimagine and reify the notion of "Mongolness."

In this dissertation I will demonstrate how Mongols use material culture to construct a distinct cultural identity, to maintain ethnic boundaries in which they are distinct from Han, and to resist state discourse and the total sinicization of a Mongolian cultural identity. This research is situated within the larger discussion of the impacts of rapid urbanization and economic growth on China's ethnic minority groups, the resistance amongst China's marginalized minority groups, which also include Tibetans and Uyghurs, and it addresses contemporary issues of the state's management of ethnic minority groups and ethnopolitics in China's frontier regions.

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[9] Uradyn E. Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Language Anxiety in China," *American Anthropologist,* Vol. 104, No. 4, 2003: 753-763.

[10] I borrow "anxiety" from Bulag's who uses it in the term "language anxiety," in Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Language Anxiety in China." The term is further defined in the "Terms Defined" section of this Introduction of this study.

Research Questions

This study's central research question is:

1. How are Mongols grappling with cultural identity anxiety?

Further sub-questions are:

2. How do Mongols use material culture in order to deliberately reimagine a distinct cultural identity?
3. How does the construction of a Mongolian identity help "maintain Mongolness" and uphold the state's identity as a multiethnic nation?
4. How is pastoralism reimagined through material culture in order to reify Mongolness?
5. How does the cultural tourist industry construct a Mongol identity that reifies Mongolian culture for Mongols, tourists, and the state?
6. How has history been reimagined so that Mongolian cultural history can be part of China's national history?
7. How are Mongolian songs used to preserve Mongolian language?
8. How is the language of resistance evident in Mongolian music lyrics?

Scope and Limitations

This study examines various pieces of material culture as evidence and examples of how Mongols in Inner Mongolia grapple with threats to a distinct cultural identity. This study is not constructed, nor was research conducted, using field interviews. This study is not focused on how individual actors grapple with cultural identity. That type of study would have been a different project altogether.

Secondly, I look at the state as one entity. I do not delineate between different divisions of state power which may include the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), regional government authorities, city authorities, other local authorities, tourism boards, and so forth. A project that considers those specific power structures would distract from one part of my argument which posits that the state, broadly speaking, directs and constructs ethnic identities in China.

Thirdly, the study focuses on three specific areas of cultural identity: Pastoralism, Genghis Khan, and Language. These three cultural identity markers are key to Mongolian cultural identity, as I will demonstrate later in the dissertation. They also align with Joseph Stalin's model for ethnic distinction which the Chinese state followed in the Ethnic Classification Project. A detailed discussion of the Ethnic Classification is discussed below.

Fourthly, this project analyzes cultural material of Mongols in Inner Mongolia. Although I did consult literature about Mongols in the Mongolian People's Republic (MPR), I did not construct this project or conduct any analysis of Mongolians living in the MPR. While there are some cultural similarities between Mongols in China and Mongols in Mongolia, there are also stark differences. For one, Mongols in China are influenced by Han and PRC policies and Mongols in the MPR are influenced by Russians and past historical policies of the Soviet Union. As such, the geographic boundaries of my analysis are limited to Mongols living in Inner Mongolia.

I use political and cultural theory to examine and explain concrete case studies of material culture as evidence of my assertion that Mongols have turned to cultural materials to preserve a distinct cultural identity. I examine art, song lyrics, print materials, historical policies, and contemporary policies to explain the notion of cultural identity anxiety, representation, resistance, and identity making. I also bring my own experience into this project. My analyses are based on both my academic training as an ethnographer and my cultural understanding of China, Mongols, and Inner Mongolia. My aim is not to lend my voice to Mongols but to analyze the response to cultural identity anxiety through material culture.

Spelling and Transliteration

Most Chinese words are transliterated with the *pinyin* romanization system. In the case of some terms, I use the popular Wade-Giles form. For example, "Sun Yat-Sen" remains the common form in academic literature and so I keep it in this form in this study. Other terms like "Kuomintang" have been replaced by "Guomindang" although the abbreviation used is still KMT rather than GMD. Like many other scholars, I use the common English spelling of "Genghis Khan" instead of "Chinnghis Han" or "Chinngis Khan" because it still has universal recognition.

Mongol naming practices differ based on preference. Many Mongols use only one name. In this study, I follow that practice. However some Mongols may choose to use two names which may be a result of the pinyinization of the Mandarin transliteration of their name. In such cases I will use the full name when I mention the person the first time and use the surname thereafter.

Terms, Concepts, and Ideologies

Some terms in this study require further explanation or definition. Other terms require explanation regarding why this study uses one form of the term over another form used by other scholars. Other terms require a more extensive discussion to explain the how the term is deployed a concept or ideology by the state and, as such, how it is understood this study.

Cultural Identity Anxiety

In this project, I expand on what Bulag calls "linguistic anxiety" which he defines as "deep unease about the increasing loss of the Mongolian language," in Inner Mongolia.[11] In this project, linguistic anxiety is stretched and replaced by cultural identity anxiety. The premise is the same which is that Mongols have been assimilated in the process of the state's modernization and development of Inner Mongolia. As such, the political and social consequences for Mongols is an anxiety about imminent cultural identity loss.

Inner Mongolia

Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region is referred to as "Inner Mongolia" in this study. Although other literature uses the abbreviation IMAR, I chose to use Inner Mongolia because it is what the province is called in both English and Mandarin.[12]

Outer Mongolia

The Mongolian People's Republic, located just north of Inner Mongolia, is known colloquially in English as "Mongolia." In Mandarin, however, it is known as "Outer Mongolia." As such, there are points throughout the dissertation where I use the term "Outer Mongolia" rather than MPR.

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[11] Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Language Anxiety in China," 753.

[12] Inner Mongolia translates into *Nei Menggu* in Mandarin and is the common way to refer to the province in Mandarin.

Mongolian and Mongol

This study uses “Mongolian” to describe institutions, locations, and cultural markers and uses “Mongol” to refer to people.

Minzu

In China there are fifty-six officially recognized ethnic groups divided into *minzu* (ethnic group) which includes Han, the most populous group, and *shaoshu minzu* (ethnic minority group) which includes the remaining ethnic groups in China. The development of these groups began when the Qing dynasty ended and Sun Yat-sen initiated state building projects in order to establish the Nationalist Party called the Guomindang (KMT) in post-imperial China. In order to successfully mobilize all “Chinese” people, Sun Yat-sen needed to construct an identity under which the people of China could be united. To do this he borrowed and imported the term *minzoku* from Japan where he had spent significant time in Japan observing Japanese nationalism. He relaunched the term as *minzu* which can mean nation, people, ethnicity, and nationality.[13]

In Mandarin, *minzu* also holds different meanings based on the context in which it is used. When referring to the different ethnic groups in China, it is translated as “nationality.” But if used to refer to all the people of China as one *minzu,* it can also mean "nation."[14] Prior to the import of this term from Japan, there was no Mandarin word to describe the different people living in the Chinese territory. At the time of its introduction into the Chinese language, the term was not used as a way to distinguish one group of people from another as much as it was used to mobilize people. Christopher Atwood looks at the complicated use of *minzu* and argues that the fluidity of the term, having different meanings, "has proved to be one of the most important ways that the Chinese state allows members of minority nationalities to reconcile loyalty to their nationality as an ethnic community with loyalty to China as a state and country."[15]

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[13] James Leibold, “Positioning “Minzu” Within Sun Yat-Sen’s Discourse of Minzuzhuyi,” *Journal of Asian History,* Vol. 38, No. 2 (2004): 165.

The term *minzu* is not just a term that marks distinctions between China's ethnic minorities, it instead functions as a way of viewing each *minzu* through their relationship with the dominant *Hanzu* (Han ethnic group). In other words *Hanzu* are the lens through which all other *minzu* in China are viewed. Scholars vary in which English translation of this word they use. Some choose "ethnic minorities" and others choose "minority nationalities." For example, Bulag suggests there is a difference between nationality and ethnic group because the term "national" assumes that a group was part of a separate nation that existed as a "society." If the state views the a group as a nation it should also recognize the different histories, territory, traditions, languages, religion, and culture, along with the "colonization" of the society they have categorized.[16] In other words to translate *minzu* as a nationality would mean that the state recognizes the history of the people as a nation prior to the Chinese categorization of them as one of China's *minzu.* Bulag continues by arguing that nationality differs from "ethnicity" whereas the latter term "treat minorities as a "category," whose legitimacy lies in its "relationship" to a dominant other."[17] Thus, *minzu* is more of an ethnic categorization than a national one because of the hegemony involved which dismisses the recognition of the national history of the people that have been categorized. For this project, I take the lead from Bulag, whose extensive scholarship about Mongols in Inner Mongolia has been very influential, and I will translate this term as "ethnic minority."

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[14] Naran Bilik, "How Do You Say China in Mongolian? Toward a Deeper Understanding of Multicultural Education in China." in *Minority Education in China: Balancing Unity and Diversity in an Era of Critical Pluralism,* ed. James Liebold (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2014), 65.

[15] Christopher P. Atwood, "National Questions and National Answers in The Chinese Revolution; or How Do You Say *Minzu* in Mongolian?," *Indiana East Asian Working Paper Series on Language and Politics in Modern China,* (1994): 39.

Chinese Communist theorists apply Marxist thought to the division of *minzu* and *shaoshu minzu.* Ethnic groups in China can be located along the different states of social evolution which in China is one of two: modern or modernizing, represented by the Han and "backward" (*luohuo* in Mandarin*)* which generally includes all other minority groups in China.[18] A discussion on these terms follows later in this chapter.

Hanzu* and *Han

The import of the term *minzu* allowed for the construction of the notion of *Hanzu* (Han nationality). *Hanzu* is quite different than *Han ren* (Han person) which was a term that existed for many years in reference to the descendants of the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220CE).[19] The added term *zu* can mean race. So, essentially Sun developed *Han ren* into *Hanzu ren.* According to Dru Gladney, this evolution of terms occurred when China transitioned from an empire run by dynastic rule to an emerging nation.[20] The term, *Hanzu,* was used to unite the different people who lived throughout the Chinese territory in places like Sichuan, Hunan, Shanghai and Hong Kong despite the fact that each regionally located group had characteristics that distinguished them from one another.

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[16] Uradyn E. Bulag, "Alter/native Mongolian Identity: From Nationality to Ethnic Group," in *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance (3rd edition),* edited by Elizabeth Perry and Mark Selden, (London: Routledge, 2010), 263.

[17] Bulag, "Alter/native Mongolian Identity," 263.

[18] Charles F. McKhann, "The Naxi and the Nationalities Question," in *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers,* edited by Stevan Harrell, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), 41.

Once he developed the terms *Hanzu* and *minzu*, Sun then promoted the idea of the "Five Peoples of China" (*wuzu gonghe*), which included Manchu, Mongol, Tibetan, Hui, and Han.[21] This categorization was limited in scope as compared to the current list which has been expanded to 56 official ethnic groups. According to Gladney, the four minority groups listed with the Han were viewed by Sun Yat-sen as "internal foreigners" of which the Han needed to be wary in order to secure Chinese nationalism. At the same time, these ethnic groups needed to be united with the Han to battle the "external foreigners" that posed threats to the establishment of a new China.[22]

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[19] Dru Gladney, "Representing Nationality in China: Refiguring Majority/Minority Identities," *The Journal of Asia Studies,* Vol, 53, No 1, (Feb. 1994): 98.

[20] gladney, 98.

[21] Colin Mackerras, *China's Minority Cultures,* (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1995): 9.

[22] Gladney, *Dislocating China,* 15.

Despite the history of the term, *Han,* rather than *Hanzu ren,* is commonly used in literature, journalistic accounts, and spoken Mandarin. In this study I also use the term *Han* as an abbreviated version of *Hanzu ren.*

Barbarian

The English term *barbarian* has a long global history.[23] The social evolutionary scheme which outlined three stages of society development as savagery, barbarism, and civilization, was popular amongst social evolutionary theorists, anthropologists, and colonizing actors in the 19th century.[24] One influential anthropologist was Henry Lewis Morgan who developed work about social evolutionism which traced the progress of humans from savagery to barbarianism to civilization.[25] Morgan's evolutionary scheme influenced communist thinkers like Marx and Engels. Prior to its emergence in communist thought, the term was present in China. *Hua* was the term used to describe the Chinese and *yi* (which means barbarian) was used to describe other ethnic groups in China that were viewed as uncivilized.[26] The dichotomy of the term barbarian/civilized continues in China in various forms: civilized/uncivilized, modern/backwards, and big brother/younger brother. The terms position the majority group, Han, against ethnic minority groups, something which strengthens Han identity and justifies the need for policies that aim to modernize China's vast Western regions where many of the "uncivilized" minorities are located.

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[23] M. Shahid Alam, "Racism Across Civilizations: Greece, Western Europe, Islam and China," *Science and Society,* Summer 2003.

[24] Lewis Henry Morgan, *Ancient Society,* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985): xxix.

[25] Thomas Barfield, *The Dictionary of Anthropology,* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997): 331.

[26] Bin Yang, *Between Wind and Clouds,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), Chapter 7, Document 6, Accessed November 25, 2015, http://www.gutenberg-e.org/yang/.

Hexie Shehui

In 2005, President Hu Jintao gave a speech about the need to secure a harmonious society (*hexie shehui)* as part of the continued development of China as a global economic leader. This modern-day discourse is rooted in Chinese Confucian thought and works with Chinese cultural values, Marxism-Leninism, and Chinese Communism.[27] Western scholarship has challenged the embedded rhetoric of the "harmonious society" ideology because of the increasing inequalities that remain within China's society. However, this political ideology remains strong in China and is a standard, albeit vague in its definition, to determine if an individual or group is helping to uphold or threatening to disturb the "harmonious society." In this project, this term matters because resistance amongst any group in China should not threaten, or appear to threaten the state's notion of a "harmonious society." As such, in my analysis of the case studies, I assert that each piece of material culture in this dissertation fits within the state's "harmonious society" framework.

Collaboration

Part of my argument in this dissertation is that Mongols both resist the state's ideology, rhetoric, and impact on a distinct cultural identity *and* collaborate within the state's framework of approved ethnic minority cultural expression. I borrow the term "collaborate," in part, from Uradyn Bulag who writes about the history of Mongols in China. In his text, *Collaborative Nationalism,* Bulag argues that Mongols are required to participate in Chinese society in the ways the state has determined "rather than in constructing and defending ethnic boundaries in pursuit of becoming a solidified, bounded community."[28] I take up his position that Mongols must make themselves relevant to the state's political identity. However, I depart from Bulag's position that Mongols are not concerned with defending ethnic boundaries. They are concerned with a distinct ethnic identity, even if those boundaries are constructed through representation.

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[27] See: John Delury, "Harmonious" In China, *Hoover Institution,* April 2008, Accessed December 1, 2015, http://www.hoover.org/research/harmonious-china; Sujian Guo, Baogang Guo, eds, *China in Search of a Harmonious Society,* (New York: Lexington Books, 2008). Shi Li, hioshi Sato, and Terry Sicular, eds, *Rising Inequality in China: Challenges to a Harmonious Society,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Minzu Tuanjie* and *Minzu Fenlie

The Chinese nation (*Zhonghua Minzu)* is touted as a seamless, unified nation. This identity is perpetuated through the discourse of *minzu tuanjie* which means ethnic unity. The constructed notion of ethnic unity is meant to coerce the vastly different ethnic groups in China into one national identity. Bulag writes that "modern nation-states have many ways of managing their diversity, aiming to cohere diverse and often conflicting groups into a unitary whole."[29] *Minzu tuanjie* is also used to create "stability" or "social harmony." Through the naturalization of ethnic minority groups the state achieves the image of a unified but diverse country. There is an expectation that all citizens in China should uphold the ideology of “unity” even at the expense of their own aspirations or cultural practices.

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[28] Uradyn Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism: The Politics of Friendship on China's Mongolian Frontier,* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), 25.

[29] Bulag, Uradyn E, *The Mongols at China's Edge: History and the Politics of National Unity,* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002): 3.

Minzu tuanjie is strengthened when juxtaposed with its antithesis: *minzu fenlie* which means ethnic splittism. Those that are not viewed as upholding the notion of unity run the risk of being labeled as splittists. From the state’s perspective, ethnic groups that demand further autonomy or specific ethnic rights are not only threatening the social stability that is achieved through unity but they are also viewed as splittists and threaten to undermine the state’s sovereignty. Bulag goes as far as to argue that in some cases, the state may view cries for ethnic autonomy as tools used by other states to weaken China’s rule.[30] This is most evident in the case of Tibet in which Western states have inserted itself into the geopolitical situation surrounding the “Tibetan issue” of sovereignty.[31]

Ethnic Classification Project

In the years leading up to the establishment of the PRC, Chinese Communists began a vast project in which all the different groups of people living in the Chinese nation would be categorized according to ethnic distinction. During the 1953-1954 census, cadres were sent throughout the country to categorize the different *minzu*. Initially, people could self-determine their own *minzu* classification. The result was a staggering number of different groups with some groups only having one person listed.[32] Fearing that the emerging state would be overrun by *barbarian* groups, further measures were taken to reduce the list and simplify ethnic distinction. Thus, ethnic groups could no longer self identify according to their own cultural distinctions and instead the state determined which characteristics would define ethnic distinction.[33]

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[30] Bulag, *Mongols at China’s Edge*, 14.

[31] Allen Carlson, *Beijing’s Tibet policy: securing sovereignty and legitimacy,* (Washington, DC: East-West Center, 2004); Guangqiu Xu, “The United States and the Tibet Issue,” *Asian Survey, Vol. 37, No. 11* (Nov. 1997): 1062-1077; Dibyesh Anand, “Strategic Hypocrisy: The British Imperial Scripting of Tibet’s Geopolitical Identity,” *Journal of Asian Studies,* Vol. 68, Issue 1, (February 2009): 227-252.

Looking to Joseph Stalin's definition as modeled by the Soviet concept of *nastia,* a group would be categorized as a separate *minzu* if it shared: a common language, common territory, common mode of economic production, and a common culture.[34] Although Mongols had long been in China, and once ruled the Chinese territory, they still had to participate in the categorization process. Thus, for Mongols, the Mongolian language, Inner Mongolia, which had already been established as an autonomous region for the Mongols at the time of the classification projects, pastoralism as a common mode of economic production, and a common culture which includes historical heroes like Genghis Khan became essential identity markers. By following the Stalinist model, the state was able to winnow the list down from over 400 groups to 56 *minzu,* of which Mongols were one group.[35]

The Ethnic Classification Projects not only provided administrative help for the emerging Communist state to administer social goods like healthcare and education, but it also worked to create an identity to which the categorized groups in China could adhere. The newly categorized Chinese *minzu* would be united together into the *Zhonghua Minzu* (The Chinese Nation). The result was a strong national identity, contrived loyalty to the state, and the notion of a unified nation that would help the state fight any potential encroachment of foreign imperialist powers.

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[32] Thomas Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011): 37.

[33] Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation,* 39.

[34] Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation,* 72.

[35] Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation,* 34. Other related texts are: Melissa J. Brown, ed., *Negotiating Ethnicities in China and Taiwan,* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asia Studies, University of California, 1996); Frank Dikotter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China,* (London: Hurse, 1992).

Theory and Literature Review

In this dissertation, cultural and political theories coalesce as modes through which I analyze how Mongols maintain a distinct cultural identity. Fredrik Barth's seminal work about ethnic groups elucidates the function of ethnic boundaries. He writes, "…ethnic groups only persist as significant units if they imply marked difference in behaviour, i.e., persisting cultural differences."[36] Barth's main arguments are that ethnic boundaries are socially constructed categories and that boundaries organize ethnicities. Boundaries are not *a priori* but rather maintained through the embracement of an ethnic identity. Within the Chinese state, ethnic boundaries function in the same way. That is to say that ethnic boundaries are constructed so that groups with distinct behavioral differences can be marked as different than others within China. Once ethnic groups were categorized through Ethnic Categorization Project, the groups were bound together by socially constructed criteria to uphold the state's national identity. The Chinese state's promotion of a "multinational country" means that ethnic boundaries must persist in order to maintain *minzu* distinction.

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[36] Fredrik Barth, "Introduction" in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*. Fredrik Barth, ed, (1969): 15.

One challenge to the application of this theory is the generally accepted notion that ethnic identities are not static. People within each ethnic group have a variety of characteristics, values, and histories that distinguish them from one another. However, while distinctions may exist within ethnic categories and similarities may exist amongst groups across ethnic boundaries, there is still a need to maintain ethnic distinction within China so that China maintains the image of a unified, but ethnically diverse nation.

Benedict Anderson's notion of *Imagined Communities* is also key in this project. Since the collapse of the Qing dynasty, and even in Imperial China, the state has created a sense of national identity through the notion of an imagined community. Especially during the transition from dynastic rule to that of nation-state, a national identity was necessary to resist the attempts of colonization by foreign powers.[37] In *A Nation-State by Construction,* Suisheng Zhao traces the historical development of the ideological notion of nationalism in China. Zhao's work about the notion of a constructed national identity in China is in conversation with Anderson, mentioned above. Namely, he argues that the unified Chinese nation is imagined and built through political ideology and discourse. Of particular relevance to this study is Zhao's chapter about ethnic nationalism in China. Part of his argument is that, "To maintain the unitary myth (of China), the state has tried to suppress ethnic nationalism."[38] Zhao also discusses this in a chapter titled "State-Led Pragmatic Nationalism." In that chapter, he continues his line of argumentation that suggests that China's national unity has been constructed and is mobilized to quell ethnic nationalism.[39] In other words, a constructed Chinese identity takes precedence over ethnic nationalism.

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[37] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin an Spread of Nationalism,* (London: Verso, 1991): 13.

[38] Suisheng Zhao, *A Nation-State By Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism,* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004): 165.

The arguments put forth in these two texts are also relevant to understanding the Ethnic Categorization Project, which was, as mentioned above, dependent on the premise that people with different histories, languages, geographic locations, and cultures could be bound together into one large national identity. The notion of an imagined community also helps explain the ways in which Mongols resist the end of a distinct cultural identity. Whether or not specific Mongols have every been pastoralists, the notion of pastoralism connects modern-day Mongols to one another and constructs a distinct identity that allows for ethnic distinction. Thus the thrust of Anderson's theory is an underlying assumption in my analysis of how Mongols are maintaining a sense of "Mongolness."

Another pertinent cultural theory in this dissertation is *orientalism.* Recent Western scholarship about Chinese ethnicity has moved from an ethnopolitics that is predicated solely on the assertion that China's ethnic minorities are undergoing assimilation into the larger Han dominated society to one that suggests that Chinese ethnic minority identity has been constructed.[40] Additionally, scholars have looked to postcolonial literature to show how ethnic groups in China have been exoticized by the state.[41] Edward Said's *Orientalism* has been reconfigured as *internal orientalism* in order to explain the relationship of power the state has with ethnic minorities.[42] The central argument within much of this literature is that China's ethnic minorities are represented by both the state and the minority groups themselves in an exotic, romanticized way. For example, Dru Gladney challenges the misnomer of a homogenous Chinese identity by tracing the history of constructed national and ethnic identities.[43] Another example is Louisa Schein's ethnographic study of the Miao ethnic group. In this text, she focuses on how both state and non-state actors have constructed the Miao identity through feminization and commodification.[44] The constructed identities of China's ethnic minority groups achieve a hegemonic power relationship that often presents ethnic minorities as ahistorical, timeless, and backwards. But, as I will demonstrate in this dissertation, both the state and Mongols collaborate in the representation of the Mongol culture because representations are also a way in which the minority groups maintain cultural distinction.

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[39] Zhao, *A Nation-State By Construction,* 234.

[40] Some examples of studies about the construction of ethnic identities include: Dru C. Gladney, "Representing Nationality in China: Refiguring Majority/Minority Identities," *Journal of Asian Studies,* 53, 1: 92-123; Ralph Litzinger, *Other Chinas: The Yao and the Politics of National Belonging,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics,* (Durham: Duke University Press. 2000).

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[41] See: Uradyn Erden Bulag, *The Mongols at China's Edge: History and the Politics of National Unity,* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002); *Dislocating China: Reflections on Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects*; Amy Mountcastle, "The Construction of a Tibetan Identity: Women's Practices and Global Process," *Inner Asia: Occasional Papers* 2 (1): 128-142.

[42] Edward Said, *Orientalism,* (London: Routledge, 1978); For the use of "internal orientalism" in China ethnic minority studies, see: Ralph Litzinger, *Other Chinas: The Yao and the Politics of National Belonging,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics,* (Durham: Duke University Press. 2000); Dru C. Gladney, "Representing Nationality in China: Refiguring Majority/Minority Identities," *Journal of Asian Studies,* 53, 1: 92-123.

[43] Gladney, *Dislocating China.*

[44] Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

Almaz Khan also employs the notion of *internal orientalism* to explain the construction of Inner Mongolia as an “exotic and wild region where all is boundless blue sky, grassland, herds and nomads.”[45] The perpetuation of the constructed identity of Inner Mongolia helps spur on China’s cultural tourist industry that draws domestic and international tourists to see the traditional Mongol life in the grasslands of Inner Mongolia. I will explore cultural tourism and its relationship with Genghis Khan in Chapter Five.

Literature about Chinese political ideologies and discourse provides rich history about the state’s use of rhetorical devices and ideologies to rule the nation. In many of the texts I read about Chinese politics, there was an intersection of Chinese discourse and the politics of representation. For example, Ann Anagnost writes extensively about narratives and representation of identities in modern China.[46] The last chapter in her text focuses on cultural tourism sites, specifically a theme park in Shenzhen called *Splendid China,* to demonstrate how historical spaces are reconstructed and represented in a timeless sense for the modern audience.[47] The themes Anagnost uses in her analysis of *Splendid China* are relevant to this study. For example, *Splendid China* is displayed as an ahistorical representation, just as Mongols are displayed as ahistorical through the cultural tourism industry in Inner Mongolia. Additionally, the relationships of power embedded in such displays, whether they are about space or people, also makes Anagnost's work relevant to my own.

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[45] Almaz Khan, “Who are the Mongols? State, Ethnicity, and the Politics of Representation in the PRC” in *Negotiating Ethnicities in China and Taiwan,* ed. Melissa J. Brown, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996): 132.

[46] Ann Anagnost, *National Past-Times: Narrative, Representation, and Power in Modern China,* (Duke: Durham University Press, 1997): 1-15.

[47] Anagnost, *National Past-Times,* 161-175.

Frank Dikotter's rich study of the discourse of race in China in his text *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* was also helpful. Dikotter uses an analytical framework which is centered around group definition. He argues that "Groups are socially constructed entities that fulfill a purpose of identification and organization."[48] Dikotter also asserts that "Race,' of course, is a cultural construct with no relationship to objective reality."[49] Although Dikotter's use of race as an analytical category does not fit exactly with my own project, the historical evidence he provides is applicable to my own work. For example, Dikotter writes extensively about the term "barbarian" in both classical and modern China.[50] He asserts that a barbarian "could be culturally absorbed —*laihua,* 'come and be transformed,' or *hanhua,* "become Chinese."[51] Barbarian and assimilation policies that focus on "transforming barbarians," or to use today's parlance, "modernization," are both discussed later in this study.

Mullaney's text *Coming to Terms with the Nation,* which was mentioned above, is about the history of and politics embedded in the Ethnic Classification Project. Mullaney guided me in understanding the recent history of how Mongols were offically categorized as one of China's ethnic groups.[52] Additionally, Mullaney explained how the

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[48] Frank Dikotter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China,* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992): ix.

[49] Dikotter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China,* viii.

[50] Dikotter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China,* 2-5, 145-149.

[51] Dikotter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China,* 2.

[52] Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation,* 18-41.

PRC looked to the Stalinist model for criteria required for ethnic groups categorization.[53] Additionally, Mullaney's contextualization and historical tracing of how ethnic groups came to be in China help to elucidate the historical function that ethnic groups played in the early days of the PRC's nation building efforts.

Literature about other ethnic minority groups in China and Chinese ethnopolitics, broadly speaking, was also helpful in my research. Davis' study about ethnic revival amongst the Tai Lue people in southwest China is an example of another Chinese ethnic group that are reinventing a distinct cultural identity.[54] Gladney's scholarship about representation and the construction of majority and minority identities in China undergirded the notion that the state is involved in the representation of its ethnic minority groups.[55] Litzinger's study about the politics of national belonging through a case study of the Yao ethnic group demonstrated how intimately involved the state is in ensuring that its ethnic groups see themselves as Chinese and as part of the Chinese nation.[56]

I also turned to specific studies about Mongols. Bulag's scholarship was immensely influential in helping me formulate an academic framework to apply my cultural insight based on years of living in Inner Mongolia.[57] He provided guidance about the history, the identity, and the anxiety that is emerging amongst Mongols as a result of development. In conversation with Bulag are scholars like Khan who investigates the politics of representation of the Mongols.

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[53] Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation,* 72.

[54] Sara L.M. Davis, *Song and Silence: Ethnic Revival on China's Southwest Borders.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

[55] See: Dru Gladney, "The Ethnogenesis of the Ugyhur." *Central Asian Survey,* Vol. 9, I Issue 1, (1990): 1-28; Dru Gladney, "Representing Nationality in China: Refiguring Majority/ Minority Identities," *The Journal of Asian Studies,* Vol. 53, No. 1. (February 1994): 92-123.

[56] Ralph Litzinger, *The Yao and the Politics of National Belonging,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

David Sneath and Caroline Humphrey's co-authored work diminishing "nomadism" across Inner Asia was informative.[58] They provide a survey of the history of the changes in pastoral societies and the impacts of urbanization across Inner Asia. David Sneath's text is about shifts in pastoralism.[59] His focus is on Inner Mongolia and his study includes analysis of historical shifts within China and of how those shifts impacted the pastoral economy in Inner Mongolia. Finally, Dee Mack Williams' ethnographic account about the changes in the lifestyle of Mongol pastoralists was helpful to formulate my understanding about the shifts in pastoralism in Inner Mongolia.[60]

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[57] Uradyn E. Bulag, "Alter/native Mongolian Identity: From Nationality to Ethnic Group," In *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance (3rd edition)*, eds. Elizabeth Perry and Mark Selden, (London: Routledge, 2010), 261-287; Uradyn Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Language Anxiety in China," *American Anthropologist,* Vol. 104, No. 4, (2003): 753-763.; Uradyn E. Bulag, *The Mongols at China's Edge: History and the Politics of National Unity,* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002); Uradyn Bulag, "Municipalization and Ethnopolitics in Inner Mongolia." In *Mongols from Country to City: Floating Boundaries, Pastoralism, and City Life in the Mongol Lands,* eds. Ole Bruun and Li Narangoa, (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2006): 56-81.

[58] Caroline Humphrey and David Sneath, *The End of Nomadism,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

[59] David Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia: Pastoral Mongolian Society and the Chinese State,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[60] Dee Mack Williams, *Beyond Great Walls: Environment, Identity, and Development on the Chinese Grasslands of Inner Mongolia,* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2002).

I also investigated the broad body of literature in the field of cultural tourism including literature from other global cases. Studies about the representation of specific ethnic groups in China's cultural tourism industry all assert the same basic premise: that the state and the represented ethnic group are involved in how the group is represented.[61]

Material Culture as a Framework of Analysis

Studies, approaches, and definitions of material culture vary depending on academic disciplines. In the last twenty years, the field has expanded the way that material culture is conceptualized. There is no longer only an archaeological focus on material culture, but, rather, material culture can include just about anything. In the Introduction of the edited volume, *Handbook of Material Culture,* the editors assert that "Empirically material culture studies involve analysis of a domain of things, or objects, which are endlessly diverse: anything from a packet of fast food to a house to an entire landscape, and either in the past or in the present…"[62] Thus, while the field of material culture still includes artifacts, it also includes architecture, landscape, memory, performance, and political ideologies, to name only a few examples.[63]

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[61] Doorne, S., Ateljevic, S., and Bai, Z, "Representing Identity through Tourism: Encounters of Ethnic Minorities in Dali, Yunnan Province, People's Republic of China," *International Journal of Tourism Research,* Vol. 5 (2003): 1-11; William G. Feighery, "Heritage Tourism in Xi'an: Constructing the Past in Contested Space," in *Asian Tourism: Growth and Change,* ed, Janet Cochrane, (Oxford: Elsvier, 2008): 323-334; Alan A. Lew, ed, *Tourism in China,* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

[62] Chris Tilley, Webb Keane, Susane Kuchler, Mike Rowlands, and Patricia Spyer, editors, *Handbook of Material Culture,* (London: Sage, 2006): 4

[63] Chris Tilley, et. al, *Handbook of Material Culture, v-vii.*

Because the field of material culture is both broad and flexible in its definition and application, I chose to use material culture as a framework of analysis. The case studies, which are described in detail below, are specific pieces of material culture that, when analyzed, tell us about the historical and contextual relationship Mongols have with the state, one another, cultural identity, memory, and so forth. The material culture framework allows for a discussion of reflexivity, relationship, and resistance. Additionally, this analytical framework allows for a simultaneous discussion of the Chinese state ideologies, discourse, and economic policies to which each piece of material culture may be responding.

Methods: Case Studies of Material Culture

In a brief article that introduces the field of public culture, Appadurai and Breckenridge assert that cultural forms are everywhere and have emerged as “films, packaged tours, specialized restaurants…”[64] On a global scale, cultural forms draw the world into a homogenized presentation for commerce. However, Appadurai and Breckenridge also assert that “as vehicles for cultural significance and the creation of group identities, every society appears to bring to these forms its own special history and traditions, its own cultural stamps, it own quicks and idiosyncrasies.”[65] The position that cultural productions are merging throughout the world, albeit with unique characteristics, undergirds the framework of analysis in this dissertation which is to analyze three case studies of material culture.

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[64] Arjun Appadurai and Carol A. Breckenridge, “Debates and Controversies: Why Public Culture?,” *Public Culture, Vol 1, No. 1,* (Fall 1998): 5.

[65] Appadurai and Breckenridge, “Debates and Controversies: Why Public Culture?,” 5.

I present three case studies of cultural material of key Mongolian cultural identity markers: pastoralism in art, Genghis Khan at a cultural themed restaurant, and language in songs. In the addition of the analysis of material culture, I also use cultural and political theory, historical shifts in Inner Mongolia, and Chinese state discourse and ideologies to demonstrate how material culture is used to construct and represent Mongolian cultural identity. As Appadurai and Breckenridge also assert, analyses of cultural material can tell us about internal debates and how actors deliberately construct national and ethnic identities and cultural identities.[66]

Organization of the Project

What is presented here is my research in dissertation format. Throughout the chapters, I have referenced other parts of the dissertation to help guide the reader. But, each chapter is meant to be a stand alone case study that responds to the same research question and is based on the same foundational argumentation. As such each case study relies on much of the same theoretical literature. Within each case study there is also reference to literature specific to the topic. For example, Chapter Five relies on the broad body of cultural tourism literature in order to conduct my analysis of Genghis Khan in the tourist industry. When necessary, the argument may be repeated, although I have tried to not make the dissertation repetitive.

This study contains seven chapters. First is the Introduction, in which I establish the framework of the project. Chapter Two is entitled “Tumultuous Times: Historical Shifts in Inner Mongolia 1947-Present.” It is a brief history about the shifts within pastoralism, the state’s management of Genghis Khan, and Mongolian language use in Inner Mongolia since its creation in 1947. I trace shifts within each of these cultural identity markers which have been caused by development, policies, and state interventions in the province.

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[66] Arjun Appadurai and Carol A. Breckenridge, “Debates and Controversies: Why Public Culture?,” 7.

This study was sparked from my observation of a set of protests that took place in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia in May 2011. Thus, in Chapter Three which is titled “Protests in Inner Mongolia Since May 2011*,”* I include a timeline of protests surrounding the issue of land grabs that have taken place in Inner Mongolia since May 2011. This chapter is an empirical chapter and is meant to establish the fact that Mongols in Inner Mongolia continue to resist the overdevelopment of the grasslands. I do not conduct any discourse analysis of protest signs or interviews in this chapter.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six are the case studies through which I demonstrate how Mongols use cultural materials to assert a distinct cultural identity, how they cooperate with the state in the constructed framework of ethnic identity expression, and they resist some long held state discourses. In Chapter Four which is titled “Repair: Mongolian Art as Reimagination and Resistance” I analyze a piece of cartoon art by Mongolian artist Ba Bilig. Through the analysis I demonstrate how Bilig’s piece of art works to reimagine the pastoral identity that has been rendered extinct due to the development of the grasslands. I also demonstrate how Bilig debunks the long held state discourse of modernization which posits that Mongols are backwards and in need of state modernization efforts.

In Chapter Five which is titled “Proper Patriotism: Performing Genghis Khan” I consider the figure of Genghis Khan as an important Mongolian cultural distinction marker. In this chapter I provide a brief understanding of how the state and represented ethnic groups work together in the cultural tourist industry. I then demonstrate how Genghis Khan has been adopted by the Chinese state as part of the Chinese nation. This sinicization process, predicated on the power of the Chinese state to rewrite history, has sanitized Khan so that he is "safe" to be lauded as a Mongolian cultural hero. As such, he is represented throughout the cultural tourist industry of Inner Mongolia. I analyze the cultural themed restaurant, *Bayin Haoriwa,* to demonstrate how Genghis Khan's connection to the Mongolian cultural identity is performed and exported to tourists looking to have an "authentic Mongolian meal" and "see" the Mongolian experience. Part of my argument in this chapter is that the proliferation of Genghis Khan, a hero from the 13th century, constructs a timeless, ahistorical image of Inner Mongolia and of the Mongolian ethnic group. This construction works in conjunction with the state ideology that Mongols are backwards, which was mentioned above. Although Genghis Khan is lauded as a cultural hero, his connection to Mongols binds them to the past and reifies the notion that Mongols need the Chinese state to modernize them and the grasslands.

In Chapter Six which is titled "Mongol Songs: Language Preservation and Language of Resistance*,"* I frame the recent development of the Mongolian music industry in Inner Mongolia as evidence that Mongolian songs are one mode of language preservation in Inner Mongolia. Additionally, I analyze song lyrics by a Mongolian band called *Anda Union* as evidence of a language of resistance launched in response to the destruction of the Mongolian cultural space and the Mongolian cultural identity.

The conclusion summarizes the overall argument through the analysis of each of the case studies. The conclusion also includes recommendations for future studies with particular attention paid to expanding each case study in this dissertation. Each of the areas investigated in this study could provide further understanding of how Mongols retain a cultural identity in the face of the ever changing region in which they live. I recommend, too, that more scholarship be developed concerning the intersection of modern modes of material culture n as the means by which a traditional cultural identity is preserved.

In another work, Appadurai asserts that not all ethnic revivals have to lead to separatism.[67] This is true in China. Ethnic revivals throughout the country may be centered around a number of different issues. Whatever issue may be mobilizing ethnic revivals, the state is concerned with the underlying ideology of social harmony In other words, in rudimentary terms there are two kinds of ethnic revivals: those that threaten social harmony and those that uphold social harmony. In Mandarin, as discussed above, *minzu tuanjie* is a term that means “ethnic unity.” It also marks ethnic groups as upholding social harmony. The opposite term is *minzu fenlie* which, as discussed above, means ethnic separatists. This term is used to describe those whom the state views as a threat to social harmony.

Mongols fall into the first category. They are not concerned with ethnic separation. They are, however, concerned with being Mongolian. Like so many other ethnic groups throughout China’s borderlands, Mongols represent themselves and in doing so preserve cultural distinction, as this study will demonstrate.

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[67] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimension of Globalization,* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996): 21.

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CHAPTER TWO
Tumultuous Times: Shifts in Inner Mongolia from 1947-Present

"The communist ideology of progress had a profound effect both on the way of life of Mongols and on the way in which Mongol traditions were judged."[1]

Until 1911, China was ruled by a series of dynasties. Kublai Khan, grandson of Genghis Khan, established the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368).[2] The Mongol led Yuan Dynasty gave way to the Ming Dynasty which was the last Han ruled Dynasty in China.[3] After 276 years of rule, from 1338-1644, the Manchu defeated the Han to establish the Qing Dynasty which would rule China until 1911.

In 1911, after the Qing dynasty ended, the entire Chinese territory was thrust into a period of political and economic instability. In Northern China, countries like Russia and Japan were vying for the loyalties of the Mongols. By 1924, part of the Mongol territory was divided and aligned with different forces. In November 1924, the Soviet Union controlled Outer Mongolia and helped sponsor the formation of the Mongolian People's Republic, which despite its official title, was essentially a Soviet satellite state.[4] The remainder of the Mongol territory aligned with Japan from 1931 to 1945, when Japan invaded Manchuria and launched what is known as the second Sino-Japanese

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[1] Ole Bruun and Li Narangoa, eds., *Mongols from Country to City: Floating Boundaries, Pastoralism and City Life in the Mongols Lands,* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2006): 4.

[2] Bamber Gascoigne, *The Dynasties of China: A History,* (New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 2003): 138.

[3] Gascoigne, *The Dynasties of China,* 178.

[4] Bruce A. Ellerman, "Secret Sino-Soviet Negotiations on Outer Mongolia, 1918-1925," *Pacific Affairs,* Vol. 66, No. 4, (Winter 1993): 539.

War.[5] After the defeat of Japan, the Chinese Communists formed an official political relationship with the leaders of the Mongolian territory as part of a strategic move to gain Mongol loyalties and support. This exclusive relationship with China led to the establishment of an autonomous region for Mongols living in the Chinese territory on May 1, 1947.

The aim of this chapter is to summarize the shifts in Mongolian culture since the establishment of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in 1947. The markers of Mongolian culture I include in this dissertation are based on Stalin's list of characterizations of ethnic identity. As was discussed in the Introduction, I look to the Stalinist theory of ethnic categorization because it is the foundation of the Chinese state's *minzu* making projects in which an ethnic minority group was categorized as a separate group if it had a common territory, language, economic mode of production, and language.[6]

In this dissertation I analyze three case studies of material culture that represent thee different markers of Mongolian cultural identity. As such, I divide this chapter into three sections which are focused on pastoralism, Genghis Khan, and the Mongolian language. In order to understand the major shifts that have impacted the Mongolian culture in Inner Mongolia, it is necessary to understand the tumultuous political environment of the Chinese territory prior to the establishment of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. Thus, in this chapter, I will look to the significant political and historical shifts in Inner Mongolia and to how those shifts have disrupted Mongolian cultural identity.

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[5] Uradyn Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism: The Politics of Friendship on China's Mongolian Frontier.* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), 13.

[6] Thomas Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China,* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2011): 11.

The Chinese Communists, in their quest to ultimately establish a new state, continued to develop its ethnic minority policies. The hope was that the autonomous regions would create what Bulag terms an “expectation of belonging” in which ethnic minority groups had ownership over their designated territory.[7] However, in reality, the autonomy inserted as part of the official name of the province was only meant to satisfy Mongols so that they would align with Mao and the Chinese Communists, thereby preventing any possible allegiance to the Chinese Nationalists or any external powers like the Soviet Union. Inner Mongolia, as I will demonstrate through the discussion of historical shifts, was never intended to be a place of true political autonomy for Mongols living there.

Assimilation: Hanification and the End of Pastoralism

The expansion of the Chinese territory and the transition from dynastic rule to the nation-state model was not smooth. In order to establish itself as legitimate and powerful, the Chinese state needed to unite all people living within its territory. Out of this shifting political environment, Louisa Schein suggests that two nationalisms were developed. She writes, “Han nationalism was concerned with boundaries between people within the shifting territory of the Chinese polity, specifically between Han and those designated as ‘barbarians.’ Chinese nationalism rose in response to foreign imperialist aggression…"[8] In Inner Mongolia, the promotion of both Han and Chinese nationalism can be seen through policies like Han population transfers.

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[7] Uradyn Bulag, *The Mongols at China’s Edge: History and the Politics of National Unity*, (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002): 9.

In 1947, there were four Han for every one Mongol in Inner Mongolia. But by 1960, the ratio had more than doubled.[9] The mass movement of Han to Inner Mongolia was not accidental, nor was it a new trend in Chinese politics. Owen Lattimore wrote about the state's prevalent *assimilation* (*tong hua)* policies in Northern China during the 1930's when the state secured its border regions by moving Han into areas where there was a strong minority population. Lattimore suggests that though *tong hua* means "to assimilate," referring to the assimilation of Han and agriculturalism to Inner Mongolia, in practice *tong hua* actually means the "extermination of the Mongols, to make room for the Chinese."[10] By "extermination," Lattimore was referring to the end of a distinct Mongol identity. Lattimore uses other terms like "Chinese colonization" and "agricultural colonization" to explain that "All policies towards the Mongols, whether Chinese, Soviet or Japanese, appear to start from, a common premise: that something must be done about the nomadism of the Mongols."[11]

To end nomadism meant to terminate a distinct part of Mongol cultural identity which achieved another aim for the state. Namely, "balancing" the minority population with an increase of Han to the area interrupted any potential ethno-nationalistic tendencies that minorities may have harbored. It also prevented the border areas from attempting to split from China and align with other foreign forces. The state's perspective that a Han identity would balance out other ethnic identities in China is representative of the political ideology that affirms that to be Han is to be Chinese, and vice versa.

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[8] Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules,* (Chapel Hill: Duke University Press, 2000): 108.

[9] David Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia: Pastoral Mongolian Society and the Chinese State*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000): 88.

[10] Owen Lattimore, "On the Wickedness of Being Nomads," *T'ien Hsia Monthly,* 1, No. 2 (September 1935): 423.

[11] Lattimore, "On the Wickedness of Being Nomads," 415.

After the PRC was established in 1949, China continued the strategy of balancing the Han and ethnic populations in its border regions.[12] One study suggests that, "Chinese rangeland policy initiatives are informed by a long history of antagonism with the grassland environment and its native inhabitants" and that this attitude, which stemmed from Confucian thought, was then adopted by the "Marx-Lenin-Mao line of political philosophy (which) viewed nomadic pastoralism as an evolutionary dead-end standing in opposition to national progress, scientific rationalism, and economic development."[13] The state push to assimilate Han to the Mongol region was grounded in the perspective that Mongols were barbarians and that Han could civilize them.

This political ideology prompted Mao Zedong to begin Han population transfers to Inner Mongolia. He did so by claiming that there was an urgent need to address population swells on China's eastern coast and that the state could take advantage of the available open land in Inner Mongolia.

Sneath documents that, in just one year, between 1958 and 1959, as many as one million Han settled in Inner Mongolia.[14] Han repopulation not only shifted the demographics of the region, but the rapid increase of Han in the province also influenced its economy, political environment, and culture. At this time, Inner Mongolia, along with the rest of China, was a mostly rural country. Many Mongols in the rural grassland areas lived as nomadic pastoralists in yurts. The structure of the yurt allows for quick setup, tear down, and mobility so that Mongols could move with their herds to different grasslands throughout the province. However, the influx of Han into the province shifted the modes of production in the rural areas because of the difference between nomadic Mongols and Han, which were sedentary agriculturists. That is not to say that some Mongols are not farmers and that some Han might not be shepherds. But generally speaking, there is a distinction between the two ethnic groups along the lines of occupational identities. This is once again due in part to the Stalinist model of ethnic categorization in which a distinct mode of production, or economy, is one of the determining characteristics of an ethnic group. As Bulag asserts, “The emotion that pastoralism conjures up for Mongols derives from its importance as the quintessential historical cultural marker of Mongol-ness.” For Mongols, pastoralism connects them to their history, their memory, and their community.[15]

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[12] Caroline Humphrey and David Sneath, *The End of Nomadism? Society, State, and the Environment in Inner Asia,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999): 91.

[13] Dee Mack Williams, *Beyond Great Walls,* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2002): 10.

[14] Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia,* 88.

As a result of a mixed model of rural economies, there were three basic categories of production developed: pastoral districts with large numbers of nomadic Mongolian shepherds, semi-pastoral and semi-agricultural areas in which sedentary Mongols practiced a mix of agricultural farming and herding, and agricultural districts that were populated by Han who were agricultural farmers.[16] The division of land according to ethnic preference for economic production also helped maintain ethnic boundaries between Han and Mongolian. For the Mongols, however, this division marked the beginning of the transformation in the preferred economic system of the region and initiated the decline of nomadic pastoralism.

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[15] Bulag, *The Mongols at China’s Edge,* 7.

[16] Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia,* 88.

In contrast to Mongol nomadic pastoralists, Han agriculturalists live on farms with fixed boundaries and settled homes. The longstanding state ideology in which Han was the standard through which all other ethnic identities are viewed, combined with the influx of Han into Inner Mongolia and with the practical need to grow food that could be easily transported throughout the country, resulted in a preference for agriculturalism. As a result of this preference, Mongols continued to find themselves marked as "backward" people who were unable to progress from the antiquated nomadic pastoral economy to a more modern sedentary Chinese agricultural economy. Thus, the separation between the Mongolian and Han ethnic identities was strengthened by the emerging discourse that favored a "civilized" agricultural economy over a "primitive" pastoral economy.[17] Further exasperating the social and cultural climate in the region was the justification that the state held the right to develop any land throughout the Chinese territory, which meant that the land used for herds of sheep could be transformed into farmland. This shift also created environmental problems in the region, such as desertification and sand storms, which continue today.[18]

The transition for many Mongol pastoralists from a nomadic lifestyle to a settled one was not immediate but, rather, a gradual and subtle normalization that occurred over time. In the 1950's and 1960's, the state developed policies aimed at building settled Mongolian communities. Families were no longer nomadic, but lived in settled homes with only some family members moving with the herds to various pasture sites throughout the year.[19] The justification for such policies was rooted in the claim that education and healthcare were more accessible in urban centers than in the grasslands. Around the same time, the state also focused on expanding the agricultural industry, a move which further impacted the amount of pastureland available to herders.[20] The result of these policies was astounding. In 1949, all the families in the Xilingol league (a league is an administrative division) were mobile. But, by 1962, 40% of the families living in that area had become "settled with moving herding."[21]

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[17] Williams, *Beyond Great Walls,* 66.

[18] See Natalie Meyer, "Desertification and Restoration of Grasslands in Inner Mongolia," *Journal of Forestry, V*ol. 104, Issue 6, (September 2006): 328; H.L. Zhao, et. al., "Desertification processes due to heavy grazing in sandy rangeland, Inner Mongolia," *Journal of Arid Environments,* 62, (2005): 310.

The Cultural Revolution, which lasted from 1966 to 1976, was another period of time in which there were a large number of Han population transfers to Inner Mongolia. This was due, in part, because Mao was fearful of any hint of ethnic separatist sentiment. As such he claimed that the rural pastoral areas throughout Inner Mongolia were strongholds for Mongolian culture and ethnic nationalism. In order to stave off any potential uprisings against the state, Mao furthered Han immigration and land reclamation. The logic was that Han would be more loyal to the Chinese state than Mongols.

This ideology is still very much present within the Chinese state today amongst Uyghurs in Xinjinag in which "The Party brands all challenges to Han rule, however oblique, as "splittism," punishable by a prison term or even death."[22] Bovington has written extensively about the state's relationship with Uyghurs and the ongoing resistance to Han rule in Xinjiang. He asserts that that the fear of splittism still drives the state's relationship toward Uyghurs who are viewed, to varying degrees, as internal enemies fraught with ethnic nationalism and splittist tendencies.[23]

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[19] Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia,* 87.

[20] Humphrey and Sneath, *The End of Nomadism,* 91.

[21] Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia,* 87.

After Mao's death in 1976 and the end of the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping initiated economic reforms that focused on further modernization across China. He framed the new national focus as the "Four Modernizations," which aimed at developing China by further expanding the areas of agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology.[24] By using the term "modernization," Deng appealed to the people of China who were desperate to rebuild the country that had been decimated during the Cultural Revolution. Deng's national focus on further expanding agriculture was meant to benefit the national economy. However, in Inner Mongolia, the push for an expanded agricultural economy resulted in the further demise of the Mongolian pastoral economy. Once again, the state preference for the Han agricultural economy was promoted as a progressive method and as one of the keys to modernizing the country.

The national focus on modernization resulted in new regional policies throughout the country. In 1978, the household contract responsibility system was introduced to

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[22] Gardner Bovington, "The Not-So-Silent Majority: Uyghur Resistance to Han Rule in Xinjiang," *Modern China,* Vol. 28, No. 1, (January 2002): 46.

[23] See Nasan Bayar, "Nation-building, Ethnicity and Natural Resources," *Inner Asia,* Vol 16, (2014): 378; Bovington, "The Not-So-Silent Majority," 46.

[24] Benjamin I. Schwartz, *China and Other Matters,* (Harvard University Press, 1996): 264.

Inner Mongolia. This policy dictated that herding communities would have to sell their livestock to private households, and it forced the enclosures of many pasturelands throughout the region, presumably so that agriculture based farms could be developed.[25] The regional policies dictating the enclosure of pasturelands negatively affected the Mongolian spatial and cultural identity, which had long been informed by the vast, open, and boundless grasslands. This is documented in Williams' ethnographic account which is situated in a community of Mongol herders who have experienced significant changes in the environment and social landscape since the 1980's. Williams asserts that mobility is key to Mongolian spatial identity.[26] He writes, "Traditional Mongol spatiality is rooted in a landscape characterized by mobility and mutability. Mobility is the very essence of herding."[27] Thus, the PRC's modernization and development policies, which accelerated during the Deng era, transformed Mongols from a nomadic people that once enjoyed free movement into settled citizens with movement bounded by cities, something which challenges the Mongolian sense of identity. The history of living as mobile pastoralists on unbound land will be discussed in the analysis of a piece of cartoon art in Chapter Four.

As a result of population shifts, the new economic policies, and the impact that both had on pastoralism, Mongols were growing increasingly frustrated with visible transformation to the social and cultural landscape of Inner Mongolia. On September 13, 1981, more than 3000 Mongol students protested in the streets of Hohhot. One of the major criticisms of the protestors was the government policies that promoted Han population transfers to Inner Mongolia. Students demanded that Han immigration to Inner Mongolia cease "for the protection of the Mongols' interests."[28] The protests did not last long, the demands of the students were ignored, and the Chinese state moved forward with more population transfers. There were not any other notable protests amongst Mongols in Inner Mongolia until May 2011. Thus, the 1981 protests prompted scholars to view them as the "only major pro-autonomy movement" in Inner Mongolia and one referred to the protests as the Mongols' "last hurrah."[29]

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[25] Bilik, "How Do You Say China in Mongolian?," 71.

[26] Williams, *Beyond Great Walls,* 67.

[27] Williams, *Beyond Great Walls,* 67.

By the 1980's desertification had become a noticeable environmental problem, partly due to the changes in land use. Throughout much of history, Mongols had moved with their herds from location to location, which allowed each pastureland to be replenished. New policies that forced pasturelands to be continually farmed, combined with the high winds and dry climate of the region, exacerbated desertification. By 1995, the increase in the rate of desertification in Inner Mongolia prompted the Chinese government to create new laws to protect the lands from over-grazing.[30] Ironically, Mongol herders who were forced to become settled citizens as a result of national and regional policies were the ones blamed for overgrazing the land. This was part of the state ideology in which Han were viewed as modern and Mongols were viewed as barbarians who did not understand the science needed to raise herds.[31] The state's position that Mongols are not scientific is connected to the overarching *barbaric* or *backwards* rhetoric. By asserting that Mongols simply do not understand the science needed to live on the land, the state then frames Mongols as in need of state intervention. Williams, who was mentioned above, captures the increased resentment about land degradation between Mongols and the state. He writes that Mongols "not only reject the Chinese national discourse that would scapegoat Mongol herders, they explicitly blame Beijing for causing (through colonialism) and perpetuating (through neglect) the land degradation that jeopardizes their livelihood."[32] Thus, according to Williams, Mongols resent being blamed for the emerging environmental issues and the social environment in which Han are promoted as "scientific" and Mongols are viewed as "backwards."

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[28] Enze Han, "The Dog That Hasn't Barked: Assimilation and Resistance in Inner Mongolia, China." *Asian Ethnicity* 12, no. 1, (February 2011): 58

[29] Han, "The Dog That Hasn't Barked," 59; William Jankowiak, "The Last Hurrah? Political Protests in Inner Mongolia," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs,* No. 19/20, (1988): 269-288.

[30] Han, "The Dog That Hasn't Barked," 59.

In addition to the above mentioned policies that targeted Inner Mongolia, there have been additional national economic policies that have further increased the Han population in the region and have continued to negatively impact the pastoral economy in the province. In 2000, the Chinese state sought to repeat the economic success that Deng's economic reforms had in the eastern part of the country by launching the Western Development Program, hereafter referred to as WDP (*xibu dakaifa).* The highly aspirational WDP has focused on narrowing the economic gap between those living on the eastern coast of China and those in the rest of the country.[33] There are plans to move 250 million citizens from rural settings to newly built or expanded urban centers throughout China within 15 years of the WDP's launch.[34] The geographic focus of this new urban and economic reform covers more than 70% of the Chinese territory and includes Inner Mongolia. While the state's objective is that wide spread development will raise the living standards of the populations living in the western part of the country, I posit that the state also hopes that economic growth will quell splittist tendencies that exist amongst ethnic minority groups living on the geographic and societal margins.

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[31] Williams, *Beyond Great Walls,* 195.

[32] Williams,*Beyond Great Walls,* 195-196.

[33] V. Elena Barabantseva, "Development As Localization," *Critical Asian Studies* 41, no. 2 (June 2009): 233, Accessed November 8, 2014, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14672710902809393, 233.

The launch of the WDP has also impacted the infrastructure of existing cities in Inner Mongolia. While I was living in Hohhot, I saw the impacts of the development of the city. For example, traditional courtyard homes were razed and replaced with high rise apartment complexes built to house the increased urban population. New airports and train stations have been added to accommodate the influx of citizens and travelers, and new shopping areas have been constructed so that spending can help spur the economy.[35] There are also development plans such as building new highways between major cities in the province, and large projects such as coal mines and gas pipelines built to access the vast amounts of resources located throughout the Western provinces.[36] The West-East Pipeline, for example, transports natural gas from Xinjiang across the country to cities like Shanghai to provide the electricity needed to power large cities, many of which are trying to replace coal with other energy sources.[37]

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[34] Ian Johnson, "China's Great Uprooting," *The New York Times,* June 15, 2013. Accessed November 13, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/16/world/asia/chinas-great-uprooting-moving-250-million-into-cities.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

[35] Since the time I first visited Hohhot in March 2000 until I left the city in July 2012, I flew in and out of three different airports. The first one was replaced by a new, modern, larger airport that was unable to accommodate the increase of business and recreational travelers. As such it was replaced by a much larger airport within just a few years of being built.

[36] Barabantseva, "Development As Localization," 233.

Inner Mongolia is also a resource rich area. It includes vast amounts of natural gas, coal, gold, rare earth, wind power, solar power, and textile industries.[38] In order for the Chinese state to access these resources which are in or under the land, rural families who live on the land must move into to urban areas. The state compensation for land does not seem to satisfy Mongol protestors.[39] On January 20, 2015, Mongols herders in the western part of Inner Mongolia protested the state's construction of the Zhurihe Military Training Base in the grasslands. One protestor's banner, which was written in both Mongolian and Chinese, read: "Return our home, return our land, return our compensations, we want survival" and "We displaced herders from Zhurihe Military Training Base area have paid a heavy price to the state, yet no adequate compensation has been given to us."[40] Mongolian herders may have been compensated for the land. But as we have learned from other global cases no amount of compensation is adequate or can replace the self-autonomy and cultural identity attached to the land.[41]

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[37] Barabantseva, "Development As Localization," 237.

[38] CBI, "Basic Statistics on Inner Mongolia," no. April (2010): 5.

[39] The revised Law of Nationality Regional Autonomy which was passed on February 28, 2001 states in Article 65 that "When exporting natural resources out of the autonomous areas, the state should give them a certain amount of compensation."

[40] Staff, "Mongolian herders held simultaneous protests," *SMHRIC,* January 21, 2015, Accessed January 22, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_555.htm.

[41] Arturo Escobar, "Culture Sits in Places: Reflections on Globalism and Subaltern Strategies of Localization," *Political Geography* 20, no. 2 (February 2001): 162, Accessed November 8, 2014, http://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0962629800000640.

One personal story helps elucidate how rural families expressed part of their traditional identity in their new urban locales. I returned to live in Hohhot in late summer 2008 and found that many of the small, six-story apartment buildings that were commonplace when I left the city just three years prior had been replaced by large apartment subdivisions. I moved into one of the new apartment neighborhoods because I knew that living in an older home carried the danger of soon being *chai'ed* (demolished.)[42] Soon after I moved into the new complex, a Mongolian family moved into the first floor apartment of the building in which I lived. First floor apartments had enclosed yards which were a relatively new feature in apartment homes in the region. Many families in the complex used the yard space to grow gardens, but my new neighbors used the space to keep their sheep. I later found out that the family were Mongols who had been displaced from their rural homes and moved to the city. Thus, it seemed to me that the sheep they brought along with them were a reminder of their former life as pastoralists. The sheep also served as a sign to others that this family would not be displaced from their cultural identity.[43]

As suggested above, natural factors have impacted the environment in Inner Mongolia, but not to the extent that human factors have. One report claims that anthropogenic factors account for 94.5% of desertification in China.[44] Much of the human activity that has impacted the grassland areas can be linked to national policies. A study conducted in Ordos claims that "Policies are the underlying forces driving other kinds of socio-economic activities (proximate causes) which directly lead to land use change, development of market economy and new enterprises, and exploitation of natural resources in Ordos."[45] Tellingly, the state's response to the environmental issues further destabilizes Mongolian identity. Policies that forbid grazing or enclose grassland areas so that the land may recover continue to separate Mongols from a lived pastoral identity. Although many Mongols have now been far removed from their original pastoral identity marked by moving herds and living in a rural location, the pastoral identity in Inner Mongolia is clearly not extinct. It remains a strong part of the Mongolian identity, but it is also a part of the Chinese state imaginary that is used to maintain clear ethnic boundaries between Mongols and Han populations.

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[42] *Chai* means "to demolish." The Chinese ideogram, 拆, is painted on buildings marked for destruction. It is not unique to Hohhot. However, during the time that I lived there, the foreign community in Hohhot adopted the word into English. In fact, the summer of 2001, at the beginning of the WDP, became affectionately known as "The Summer of Chai" because of the mass destruction of buildings that took place in Hohhot.

[43] Personal story and observation also documented in Jamie N. Sanchez, "Cultural Colonization: The Dual-Displacement of Mongolians in Inner Mongolia*,"* *Spectra Journal* 2.2, (October 2013), Accessed January 29, 2015. http://spectrajournal.org/2013/11/18/2-2-5-cultural-colonialization-the-displacement-of-mongolians-in-inner-mongolia/.

Genghis Khan or Genghis Han?

At the time of Genghis Khan's birth, Mongols did not live as they do today. They were a pastoral people who lived in various tribes throughout the region of what is now Outer and Inner Mongolia. These various tribes were led by tribal chieftains and only interacted with one another during annual migrations. Genghis Khan would unite the separate tribes and go on to become the leader of the Mongol people and of much of the world.[46]

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[44] Weicheng Wu and Eddy DePauw, "Policy Impacts on Land Degradation: Evidence Revealed by Remote Sensing in Western Ordos, China," in *Land Degradation and Desertification: Assessment, Mitigation, and Remediation,* Pandi Zdruli et. al, eds.,(New York: Springer, 2010): 231.

[45] Wu and DePauw, "Policy Impacts on Land Degradation," 232.

Temujin, Genghis Khan's given name, was born sometime in the 1160's.[47] After uniting the Mongol tribes into one unified group, he was elected to be Genghis Khan, which means "Universal Ruler." Although Genghis Khan is a title, it has remained the name by which he is known. After uniting all the Mongol tribes, Genghis Khan focused on conquering the known world and he successfully established the largest empire to date. Jack Weatherford writes: "In twenty-five years, the Mongol army subjugated more lands and people than the Romans had conquered in four hundred years…..Genghis Khan conquered more than twice as much as any other man in history."[48]

By the time of his death in 1227, Genghis Khan had led the Mongols to conquer northern China. His death led to the division of the Mongol empire into four different areas, each led by a different Khan. The Golden Horde ruled Russia, the Ilkhanate ruled Persia and the Middle East, the Chagati Khanate ruled Western Asia, and the Great Khannate ruled Mongolia and China.[49] In 1260, Kublai Khan, one of Genghis Khan's grandsons, became ruler of the Great Khannate. After relocating the capital from Mongolia to Beijing, he went on to proclaim himself emperor of China by establishing the Yuan Dynasty, which lasted from 1271-1368.

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[46] George Lane, *Daily Life in the Mongol Empire,* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2006): 6.

[47] There is debate regarding Genghis Khan's exact year of birth. See John Man, *Genghis Khan: Life, Death, and Resurrection,* (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 2004): 68-69.

[48] Jack Weatherford, *Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World,* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2004): xviii.

[49] Weatherford, *Genghis Khan, ix.*

Although Kublai was a strong ruler in his own right, it is Genghis who has captured the attention of the world throughout history. Despite the brutality with which he reigned, *The New York Times* journalist Nicholas Kristof wrote that: "He may have killed people by the millions, but he was also a great nationalist and one of the most brilliant commanders in history."[50] He remains of interest to many throughout the world. In Outer Mongolia, one can find *Chinggis Vodka* brand that entices European consumers to "try Emperor Genghis Khan's No. 1 Vodka."[51] In the United States, Netflix recently produced a mini-series based on Marco Polo's interaction with the Khan's.[52] And "armchair archeologists" from around the world have joined the "Valley of the Khans," which is a crowd sourcing project, to scour satellite images in the search for Genghis Khan's tomb in Outer Mongolia.[53] While Mongols in Outer Mongolia enjoy the freedom to remember Genghis Khan as a great Mongol leader, Mongols in Inner Mongolia have been challenged by the Chinese state's reimagination of Genghis Khan.

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[50] Nicholas Kristof, "Ulan Bator Journal; With Genghis Revived, What Will Mongols Do?" *The New York Times,* March 23, 1990, Accessed February 3, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/1990/03/23/world/ulan-bator-journal-with-genghis-revived-what-will-mongols-do.html.

[51] "Mongolian Spirits," Accessed February 3, 2015, http://mongolianspirits.com/eng/. Chinggis is an alternative spelling of Genghis.

[52] Lenika Cruz, "Marco Polo:" Netflix's Critical Flop that Dared to be Diverse," *The Atlantic,* December 20, 2014, Accessed February 3, 2015, http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2014/12/in-defense-of-marco-polo/383905/

[53] Alex Santoso, "Valley of the Khans Project: Your Chance to Play Armchair Archaeologist," July, 1, 2010, Accessed February 3, 2015, http://www.neatorama.com/2010/07/01/valley-of-the-khan-project-your-chance-to-play-armchair-archaeologist/; Staff, "Field Expedition: Mongolia," Accessed February 3, 2015, http://exploration.nationalgeographic.com/mongolia/.

Mongolian scholar Alicia Campi writes that "China's absorption of Mongolia's founding hero has been a centuries-long process."[54] The Manchu, who ruled China during the Qing dynasty nearly 300 years after the end of the Mongol-led Yuan dynasty, earmarked a special budget to maintain Genghis Khan's shrine located in what is now Inner Mongolia. By the 1930's, when Japan established control of Manchuria, it too looked to Genghis Khan as a way to rally the Mongols against the ruling Republic of China by establishing a Genghis Khan mausoleum in Ulaanhot, Inner Mongolia.[55] In 1935, Mao started to strategically build alliances with non-Han living in China in order to battle outside aggressors. He also recognized the high position that Genghis Khan held amongst Mongols. In order to rally the Mongols against Japan, Mao suggested that they needed to "cooperate with the Chinese Soviet regime and the Red Army" on the grounds that nobody would "dare entertain the thought that the sons and grandsons of Chinggis Khan can be humiliated!"[56]

Since that time, the connection that Mongols have been allowed to have with Genghis Khan has gone through several phases. In 1954, following the political maneuver of Japan to use Genghis Khan to gain the loyalties of the Mongols, the PRC funded the construction of the Genghis Khan Mausoleum in Ordos, Inner Mongolia.[57] Even though Genghis Khan's remains have never been located, by building a mausoleum dedicated to Khan within the Chinese territory, the PRC attempted to pacify Chinese Mongols and, at the same time, began the reimagination of Genghis Khan as a *Chinese* hero. Genghis Khan's acceptance by the Chinese state took a downward turn during the 1960's and throughout the remainder of the Cultural Revolution. Like other expressions of ethnic identity, any loyalty to Genghis Khan at that time was seen as ethnic nationalism and reinforced the belief that the historical memory of Genghis Khan as a Mongol hero could pose problems to the Chinese state. Further, during that time, Mao and his comrades attempted to extinguish what was called the "four olds," which included old culture, old thought, old customs, and old habits. As a result of the strict social-political control of thought and life during the Cultural Revolution, Mongols were forced to silence any cultural distinctions, including their historical allegiance to Genghis Khan, because of the risk of being labeled as ethnic nationalists that were working against the Chinese state.

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[54] Alicia J. Campi, "Mongolian Identity Issues and The Image of Chinggis Khan," Woodrow Wilson Center, October 4, 2006, 32.

[55] Campi, "Mongolian Identity Issues and The Image of Chinggis Khan," 32.

[56] Almaz Khan, "Chinggis Khan: From Imperial Ancestor to Ethnic Hero." in *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers,* Stevan Harrell, ed., (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995): 265.

[57] Campi, "Mongolian Identity Issues and The Image of Chinggis Khan," 32

Once China emerged from the Cultural Revolution, Genghis Khan reappeared as a positive symbol that could once again be lauded as an ethnic and national hero, if for nothing else than to regain the trust of the Mongol people. In 1987, the year of the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of Inner Mongolia as an autonomous region, the Chinese government allocated significant funding to the restoration of the Genghis Khan Mausoleum in Inner Mongolia.[58] By that time, the Chinese government had already reclaimed Genghis Khan as one of China's historical leaders.

Today, Genghis Khan remains an essential symbol for the state in a constructed history that claims that China is the world's longest continuous civilization. In this way,

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[58] Khan, "Chinggis Khan," 267.

Genghis Khan is not viewed as the leader of the barbarian group which eventually ruled over the Chinese people, but rather he is viewed as a Chinese hero who ruled the world, something which by extension, attributes the medieval Mongol global dominance to China. Further, by rewriting the history of Genghis Khan, establishing a strong national discourse in which Genghis Khan is viewed as Chinese, and promoting Genghis Khan in various public sites throughout the province, Genghis Khan is also kept in China and out of Outer Mongolia. Whereas Outer Mongolia has capitalized on the search for Genghis Khan's remains through archeological tourism connected to projects like "Valley of the Khans," mentioned above, the Chinese state has looked to Genghis Khan to promote the broader cultural tourist industry in Inner Mongolia. Genghis Khan's Mausoleum in Inner Mongolia has been touted by the Chinese state as a "must see" tourist attraction. "The Mausoleum of Genghis Khan" website states that the Mausoleum is included on a list of "40 Best Places to Visit in China" and one of the nation's "100 Patriotic Education" sites.[59] Thus, the Chinese state has also managed to recreate Genghis Khan as a figure that can spur on the regional economy of Inner Mongolia through tourism while ensuring that Genghis Khan's identity as a Chinese hero can facilitate proper patriotism.

Mongol scholar Almaz Khan writes: "For the Inner Mongols, Chinggis Khan has come up to serve specifically as a symbol of ethnic/cultural survival of their group in relation to the overwhelmingly dominant Chinese state and society."[60] But the commercialization of Genghis Khan places Mongols in a quandary of sorts. In one sense, Genghis Khan has become a figure that benefits the Chinese state. At the same time, the export of Genghis Khan through the tourist industry allows Mongols to maintain a distinct cultural identity. Further, Genghis Khan continues to remind Mongols that they are Mongolian. However, as I will analyze in Chapter Five, there is evidence to appeal to the Mongol connection to Genghis Khan who, despite the official state discourse, remains essential to Mongolian cultural identity.

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[59] The Mausoleum of Genghis Khan, "A Brief Introduction of Khan's Mausoluem," Accessed November 10, 2014, http://www.cjshl.com:81/en/.

[60] Khan, "Chinngis Khan," 248.

Modernization through Mandarin, not Mongolian

Language is a powerful tool that has long been recognized by the Chinese state as an effective means to absorb the identities of those living within the Chinese territory. Anderson writes that, in imperial China, Mandarin was used to sinicize barbarians as part of a loyalty building method. By learning Mandarin, Mongols and Manchus could be accepted as “Sons of Heaven” and absorbed into the Chinese plan to fulfill the heavenly Mandate in an effort to achieve regional and global dominance.[61] The importance of the Mandarin language has not waned in modern China. This section of the chapter examines how shifts in language policies in Inner Mongolia since 1947 have exacerbated Mongolian language anxiety and further created fissures in Mongolian identity.

The Mongolian language in Inner Mongolia is not the same as the language used in Outer Mongolia. In Inner Mongolia, Mongolian is still written with the traditional vertical script whereas in Outer Mongolia it is written with the Cyrillic alphabet. Another difference between the two languages is that the Mongolian language in China is heavily influenced by Mandarin whereas Russian influences the Mongolian spoken in Outer Mongolia. In Inner Mongolia, as in other autonomous regions in China, the two official languages include Mandarin and the language of the titular minority group. However, despite the freedom to learn Mongolian, many Mongols choose to learn Mandarin because it is the dominant language.

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[61] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 13.

When Inner Mongolia was established as the first minority autonomous region in China, the PRC intended to make Inner Mongolia a model for policy implementation for all autonomous regions. Linda Tsung states that in 1947 there was a common saying about Inner Mongolia's "three many" which included "many lamas, many temples, and many illiterates."[62] At that time, more than 85% of Mongols were illiterate. In order to increase Mongolian literacy, new guidelines were established to "promote Mongolian newspapers and books, to research Mongolian history and to disseminate Mongolian language textbooks in schools and develop Mongolian culture."[63] In order to achieve Mongol literacy, Mongolian education was put in place from preschool to high school throughout Inner Mongolia in newly established Mongolian schools (*meng xiao)* which taught in the Mongolian medium of instruction (MMI). Mongol literacy grew at an average annual rate of 14.25% for primary schools and 21.84% for secondary schools between 1947-1965.[64] However, while Mongol literacy was on the rise, so were tensions between Mongols and Han.

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[62] Linda Tsung, *Language Power and Hierarchy: Multilingual Education in China,* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 65.

[63] IMAR Education Department, *Neimenggu zizhiqu minzu jiaoyu wenjian huibian,* Vol. 1, 1947-1957, (Hohhot: IMAR Education Press), quoted in Tsung, *Language Power and Hierarchy: Multilingual Education in China,* 65.

[64] Tsung, *Language Power and Hierarchy,* 65.

In 1957, the local Inner Mongolia government created a language unification committee to work with the Mongolia People's Republic (MPR) in an effort to build unity between the two languages. The plan was initiated so that the Mongolian language spoken in Inner Mongolia could follow the linguistic practices in Mongolia. Ulanhu, a Mongol who was the chairman of Inner Mongolia, argued that language unification would allow Inner Mongolia newspapers and books to promote Maoist thoughts to Outer Mongolia.[65] However, Bulag asserts that this political maneuver was a "public transcript" that "disguised an Inner Mongolian aspiration for cultural unification with the MPR."[66] Inner Mongolian Mongols wanted language unification because they looked to Mongols living in Outer Mongolia for a cultural connection. Another reason for wanting language unification was because of an aversion to any new terms from Mandarin that were introduced into the Mongolian language in Inner Mongolia.[67] In other words, the contempt between Mongols and Han was so strong in Inner Mongolia that there was an official attempt to look to Outer Mongolia for an escape from the aggressive influence that Han had on Mongolian culture through language. Unfortunately for Mongols living in Inner Mongolia, the plan to unify the two Mongolian languages did not work because of China's national language policies that focused on making Mandarin the standard language for all citizens living within China.

In 1958, Mao and Chinese premier Zhou Enlai introduced the *pinyin* system, which uses Latin letters to write the complex Chinese ideograms. This new writing system was fueled by “the belief that ideographic and logographic scripts were barriers to mass literacy and modernization…”[68] Further, because citizens throughout the Chinese territory spoke hundreds of different dialects, the *pinyin* system would make *putonghua* (the official standard dialect of Mandarin) more accessible and a tool to further unite local identities into the overarching, constructed Han identity. This focus was part of the PRC’s new state building practices which looked to language as an instrument that could also absorb the identities of all non-Han people living in China. Mao recognized the important role language played in nation building and, thus, continued the tradition of “alchemic absorption” through language.[69] Scholars have come to agree that, in China, language policies are not always separate from political agendas and, in Inner Mongolia, this has resulted the pressure for Mongols to learn Mandarin. Despite earlier policies to promote the Mongolian language, Mandarin had become the standard language of education. By 1963, even students in MMI schools could not be promoted to the next grade unless they passed a Chinese language examination.[70]

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[65] Uradyn E. Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Linguistic Anxiety in China," A*merican Anthropologist* 105, 4, (2003): 757.

[66] Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Linguistic Anxiety in China," 757.

[67] Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Linguistic Anxiety in China," 757.

Around the same time as the introduction of the *pinyin* system and the standardization of *putonghua,* there were other historical events that impacted minority language use. During the Cultural Revolution, most Mongol schools were closed and the remaining ones were converted into ordinary schools that used Mandarin as the language of instruction.[71] The original intent to standardize the different dialects of Mandarin was meant to build one strong Han identity. However, in the process of standardizing *putonghua,* "the Han language was promoted to replace minority languages as a shortcut for rapid linguistic convergence. This process was greatly accelerated during the Cultural Revolution when the dominant ideology became monolingual: one people speaking one language."[72] As a result, ethnic minority groups living in China were further isolated from the Chinese identity if they did not speak the standard dialect of Mandarin. Even today, those who speak only a local dialect are often referred to as *luohuo,* which means backwards.

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[68] Gulbahar H. Beckett and Gerard A. Postiglione, “China’s language policy for indigenous and minority education,” in *China’s Assimilationist Language Policy,* eds. Becket and Postiglione (New York: Routledge, 2012), 22.

[69] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 15.

[70] Tsung, *Language Power and Hierarchy,* 67.

Another result of the ban of minority languages in schools during the Cultural Revolution was that minority cultural transmission through language essentially stopped. In the public sphere, the possibility of any expression of Mongol identity in Inner Mongolia was halted altogether because of a genocidal campaign during the Cultural Revolution in which Mongols were accused of harboring ethnic aspirations that were anti-Chinese. This accusation stemmed from paranoia within the PRC that looked to non-Han peoples in the Chinese territory as liable to collaborate with external enemies. Bilik writes that Xie Fuzhi, the Minister of Public Security at the time, fabricated the claim that all Mongolian Communist Party members were also secretly aligned with the New Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (NIMPRP).[73] Thus, a campaign against the Mongols, which lasted between 1968 and 1969, was launched.

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[71] Tsung, *Language Power and Hierarchy,* 67.

[72] Becket and Postiglione,"China's language policy for indigenous and minority education," 24.

[73] Bilik, "How Do You Say China in Mongolian?, 70

During this time, paranoia and fear reigned in the daily lives of Mongols throughout the region. Mongols stopped wearing Mongol style dress and, in some cases, stopped using Mongol names. Mongolian parents who were trying to protect their children often resorted to giving their children Chinese names to use at school.[74] The impact of the campaign not only resulted in the decline of Mongolian cultural expression but also in the death of many Mongols. According to Bilik, an indictment was brought against the Gang of Four in 1980 because of the wrongful accusation of 346,000 and the death of more than 16,000 Mongols.[75] Further, authorities acknowledged that Xie Fuzhi's claim was fabricated.

Once the Cultural Revolution ended, Mongol cultural expression slowly reemerged. Educational policies concerning Mongolian language instruction was reestablished, but in a social and political environment marked by paranoia and fear. Mongol students could once again receive education in Mongolian (MMI) and learn Mandarin as a class subject. Mongol children who did not have any Mongolian language proficiency attended schools where Chinese was the language of instruction with an option of taking Mongolian as a subject class.[76] The regional government worked to promote education policies that would reestablish minority language instruction. At the same time, there was also a push for all Chinese citizens to learn Mandarin, which Mongols cautiously resisted because of the recognition that the national stance to learn Mandarin was more of an attempt at cultural colonization by the

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[74] Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Language Anxiety in China," 759.

[75] Bilik, "How Do You Say China in Mongolian?, 70

[76] Tsung, *Language Power and Hierarchy,* 68.

Chinese state than about just unifying the nation under one common language. Mongols, who had already experienced a harsh genocidal campaign during the Cultural Revolution, now faced a softer campaign aimed at some parts of Mongol cultural identity.[77]

Deng's social and economic reforms in the 1980's further affected Mongolian language use because of the push to learn English along with Mandarin. The regional government passed regulations that "Mongol schools must persist in teaching Mongolian language first and use MMI as the major model in order that students become Mongolian and Chinese bilingual at the same time as learning a foreign language (English)."[78] These regulations further pressured Mongol students to achieve trilingual literacy if they wanted any chance at competing with Han citizens for jobs. The pressure to learn three languages was not well received by Mongol linguists. In 1981, Mongol linguist Chuluun Bagan asserted that bilingual regulations that forced Mongols to learn Mandarin but not Han to learn Mongolian was "tantamount to using a covert administrative measure to restrict and limit the development of the Mongolian language, and it can only accelerate the process of the loss of Mongolian."[79] Bulag writes that Shenamjil, another prominent Mongol linguist, was also concerned about the development of the economy and culture of Inner Mongolia because the pressure to learn multiple languages meant that Mongols did not learn Mandarin or Mongolian well.[80] This sentiment concerning the decline of Mongolian language literacy in a social environment that promotes Mandarin remains amongst many Mongolian scholars today. Bulag maintains that, for many people in Inner Mongolia, the reality is that "because almost all jobs are controlled by Chinese, university-level knowledge of Mongolian is no different from illiteracy."[81] Thus, Mongols may choose Mandarin as their marketplace language and, in doing so, they "naturally leave their minority language behind."[82]

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[77] Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Linguistic Anxiety in China," 759.

[78] Tsung, *Language Power and Hierarchy,* 68.

[79] Chuluun Bagan, "Jianchi minzu yuyan wenze de pingdeng diwei" in *Nei Menggu zizhiqu minzu yanjiu xuehui,"* (Inner Mongolian prefecture language association), Nei Menggu Ziahiqu Minzu Yanjiou Xuihui Shoujie Nianhui Lunwen Xuanji, Huhehaote, 1981, 122-23 quoted in Bulag, "Alter/native Mongolian Identity," 285.

Ironically, the historical push for the country to speak one language also poses a challenge for the Chinese state because of the need to maintain strong ethnic boundaries in a way that would uphold the identity of China as a multinational country. In other words, the Chinese state is caught in a paradox of its own making. By promoting Mandarin as the lingua franca of China, it has, whether inadvertent or deliberate, caused the demise of other languages spoken within its territory. But if China's ethnic groups do not maintain their own distinct languages, then China will be challenged in its identity. Instead of a nation comprised of different nationalities (*minzu*), the loss of ethnic languages that maintain ethnic boundaries pushes China one step closer to a mono-lingual and mono-cultural state.

The rapid urbanization in Inner Mongolia and the WDP also impacted Mongolian language use. Thus, even though there have been policies to promote Mongolian language, many Mongolian parents today urge their children to learn Mandarin so that they will be better equipped to compete in the marketplace. The plight of the Mongols concerning language is reminiscent of Bourdieu's analysis of French peasants who chose to learn the official language of the nation-state instead of maintaining their own specific dialects, which essentially was a choice to participate "in the destruction of their instruments of expression."[83] Additionally, the choice to learn Mandarin because it is key to economic prosperity affirms that there is a language hierarchy and Mandarin is at the top.

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[80] Shenmanjil, *Yuyan yu Zhili Kaifa* (Language and the Development of Intelligence), (Huhehaote: Nei Menggu Renmin Chubanshe, 1990) 54, Quoted in Bulag, *Alter/native Mongolian identity,* 272.

[81] Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Language Anxiety in China," 754.

[82] Harrell, *Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers,* 110.

China continues to be criticized by human rights organizations that accuse the state of ignoring minority rights to cultural preservation. In an effort to stave off any further criticism regarding the dissolution of the Mongolian language and to maintain distinct ethnic boundaries marked by language, the Inner Mongolia government passed a regulation in November 2004 recognizing the need to "expand the use of the Mongol language" by offering incentives for students in Mongolian language schools, bilingual government workers, and Mongolian media broadcasts.[84] A report in 2006 from the Congressional-Executive Commission on China stated that the Inner Mongolian regional government earmarked significant funds to subsidize university fees for students who received their high school education in Mongolian and to support minority language teaching materials.[85] Despite the regional policies, there still is a large gap between policy and practice due to a lack of available teachers fluent in minority languages and to discriminatory attitudes within regional education bureaus. As a result, Mandarin continues to be the language of preference throughout Inner Mongolia. Other minority languages in the province that are on the verge of extinction include Daur, Ewenki, and Oroquen.[86]

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[83] Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power,* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991): 49.

[84] Human Rights in China, "China: Minority Exclusion, Marginalization and Rising Tensions," 2007, 27.

[85] Staff, "Inner Mongolia Government Promotes Mongolian Language," *Congressional - Executive Commission,* August 20, 2006, Accessed January 30, 2015, http://www.cecc.gov/publications/commission-analysis/inner-mongolia-government-promotes-mongolian-language

By 2002, Mongolian language education occurred only through the second grade, after which Mandarin was taught.[87] The focus on English literacy in China continues to be an obstacle to Mongolian language proficiency. Currently, there is a debate surrounding the possible reforms to remove English testing from China's national college entrance exam by the year 2020.[88] However, the reality is that English is still key to national and global economic mobility in Chinese society. Thus, the pressure to become literate in Mandarin and English can force many Mongols to forgo Mongolian language literacy altogether, particularly when both languages are shown to provide economic and social benefits.

The state's efforts to preserve and promote the Mongolian language through education cannot challenge the social environment that demands Han fluency in order to secure economic and social mobility. Tsung posits that, as Mongolian in the education system will continue to decline, the language "will become a token and commercial product in the tourist industry."[89] In Chapter Six, I will further examine how the Mongolian language is maintained through the proliferation of Mongolian bands. In that chapter I will also analyze some song lyrics as evidence of a growing language of resistance to sinicization.

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[86] See Juha Janhunen, "Tungusic: An Endangered Language Family in Northeast Asia," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language,* Vol. 2005, Issue 173, (July 2005): 37; Linda Tsung, *Language Power and Hierarchy: Multilingual Education in China,* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014): 33.

[87] Edward J. Kormondy, "Minority Education in Inner Mongolia and Tibet," *International Review of Education*, Vol. 48, Issue 5, (2002): 385.

[88] See Liyan Qi, "Is English Necessary? China Debates Whether College Exams Should Bother," *Wall Street Journal,* May 20, 2014, accessed January 29, 2015, http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2014/05/20/is-english-necessary-china-debates-whether-college-exams-should-bother/, Yang Rui, "China's Removal of English from *Gaokao,"* International Higher Education," Number 75, (Spring 2014): 12-13; Zhuran You and Yingzi Hu, "Walking a Policy Tightrope: The Dilemma of Balancing Diversification and Equality in Chinese College Examination Reform," *Higher Education Policy,* vol. 26, (September 2013).

Conclusion: Between Real and Imagined Representations of Cultural Identity

In this chapter I have tried to contextualize the historical shifts in Mongolian the cultural identity markers of pastoralism, Genghis Khan, and language since the establishment of Inner Mongolia as China's first "autonomous" region. In no way is this chapter all inclusive of every policy that has impacted Mongolian cultural identity. The political history of Inner Mongolia is much richer than can be captured in one chapter. However, I do hope this chapter provides an understanding of how China's ethnopolitics and internal colonialism have been perceived by Mongols as threats to a distinct cultural identity.

Mongols, caught somewhere between real and imagined identities, have been the focus of other scholars too. Bulag considers the "language anxiety" felt by many Mongols as a result of social and political hierarchy that favors Mandarin over any other language in China. Campi seeks to understand how globalization and the Chinese state's ongoing urban and economic development impact Mongolian identity. And Almaz Khan simply asks, "Who are the Mongols?" The common thread among these scholars is the issue of identity with which Mongols in China grapple. It is impossible to isolate one definition of culture for any particular group. Yet, there are attempts amongst Chinese Mongols to resist the loss of a distinct cultural identity in a heavily

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[89] Tsung, *Language Power and Hierarchy,* 89.

Sinicized environment which is a result of aggressive Han assimilation to the region. This ongoing tension has prompted some Mongols to protest the ongoing "land grabbing" that is the result of the Chinese state's expansion and development of the remnants of Inner Mongolian grasslands. In this project, I look at protests as representative of the resistance that Mongols have expressed in relation to the ongoing loss of land, something which, as I have stated above, informs much of Mongol identity. Whereas protests in Tibet and Xinjiang are calls for political separation, protests in Inner Mongolia are calls for cultural preservation.[90] However, protests are not the only ways Mongols resist cultural loss. The material culture analyzed in this dissertation are also important reminders of a distinct culture. Anthony Cohen states that there is a "resourcefulness with which people use symbols to reassert community and its boundaries when the processes and consequences of change threaten its integrity."[91]

The bulk of this dissertation studies in detail each of the cultural markers mentioned in this chapter, namely pastoralism**,** Genghis Khan, and language. Next, however, I will give an an extensive of the May 2011 protests, which are the catalyst for this study. While the protests are themselves modes of resistance against the ongoing loss of the Mongolian cultural space, they are also an indication of other cultural losses amongst Mongols in Inner Mongolia.

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[90] See the following about the Tibetan riots since 2008: Andrew Grant, "Mega-Events and Nationalism: the 2008 Olympic Torch Relay," *Geographical Review,* Vol. 104, Issue 2, (2014): 197; Lucy Montgomery and Chen Li, "The 2008 Tibet riots: Perspectives, Divided Group Protests, and Divergent Media Narratives," in Simon, Cottle and Lester, Libby (eds), *Transnational Protests and the Media,* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing): 2011. See the following about Xinjiang riots: Bovington, "The Not-So-Silent Majority," 40; Colin Mackerras, "Xinjiang in China's Foreign Relations: Part of a New Silk Road or Central Asian Zone of Conflict?," *East Asia,* (January 2015), Accessed February 13, 2015, DOI: 10.1007/s12140-015-9224-8.

[91] Anthony Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community,* (New York: Tavistock Publications, 1985): 28.

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CHAPTER THREE
Protests in Inner Mongolia Since May 2011

"We have been protesting for years."[1]
Gerlee, Mongolian herder

Ongoing Resistance: Mongol Protests in Inner Mongolia

One of the main arguments I make in this dissertation is that the continuous land based protests in Inner Mongolia are evidence of resistance in which Mongols grapple with threats to their cultural identity. The connection between land grab protests and perceived threats to cultural identity has been elucidated by other scholars. For example, J. Douglas Porteous and Sandra E. Smith have coined the term "domicide" to express the deep sense of loss that is felt when one's living place is destroyed.[2] There is, argues Hess, a "sheer emotional and psychological trauma associated with forced displacement."[3] Forced displacement and the emotional trauma it causes has prompted Mongols to protest.

This dissertation is, once again, informed by my personal experience of living in Inner Mongolia during a time of political upheaval in China's borderlands. The Mongol protests that took place in Inner Mongolia in May 2011 are the catalysts for the project. Those protests, and others that have taken place since then, are part of a narrative of Mongol resistance to cultural destruction. Most of the protests, as I note later in this chapter, center around the issue of land grabs connected to urbanization and development that have increased throughout the province in recent years. Some of these protests can also be framed as environmental protests because of the impact that urbanization has had on the environment. Environmentalism is an emerging concern within China. For example, in April 2015, Mongols staged a three week protest over toxic waste caused by a chemical plant.[4] Also, because of widespread unrest in other ethnic minority regions like Tibet and Xinjiang, Mongol protests may be labeled, particularly by the state, as tools used by separatists, whether there is an actual call for separatism or not.

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[1] Quoted in: Staff, "Herders protest government officials' occupation of grazing land," *SMHRIC,* February 23, 2016, Accessed March 22, 2016, http://www.smhric.org/news_592.htm.

[2] Steve Hess, "Nail-Houses, Land Rights, and Frames of Injustice on China's Protest Landscape," *Asian Survey,* Vol. 50, No. 5, (September/October 2010): 919.

[3] Hess, "Nail-Houses," 919.

But although protests are the launching point for this project, they are not the central focus. There is already an extensive literature about contention throughout China which helps to situate the protests in Inner Mongolia.[5] Instead, this dissertation views protests as evidence of one large narrative of resistance against cultural threats.

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[4] Simon Denyer, "Chinese riot police crush grasslands protest over chemical pollution," *The Washington Post,* April 6, 2015, Accessed April 10, 2015, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/chinese-riot-police-crush-grasslands-protest-over-chemical-pollution/2015/04/06/0c4a0cf2-dc6a-11e4-b6d7-b9bc8acf16f7_story.html.

[5] See: Kevin O'Brien, "Rural Protest," *Journal of Democracy, Vol. 20, No. 3,* (July 2009): 25-28; Kevin O'Brien and Lianjiang Li, *Rightful Resistance,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006; Rachel Stern and Kevin O'Brien, "Politics at the Boundary: Mixed Signals and the Chinese State," *Modern China,* Vol. 38, No. 2, (March 2012): 174-19; Patricia M. Thornton, "Framing Dissent in Contemporary China: Irony, Ambiguity, and Metonymy," *China Quarterly,* Volume 171, (September 2002): 661-681. Patricia M. Thornton, "Insinuation, Insult, and Invective: The Threshold of Power and Protests in Modern China," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 44, Issue 3, (July 2002): 597-619.

Protests, then, are both the launching point for this study and one way Mongols are "rightfully" resisting cultural colonization.[6]

The contextualized history in which the protests are situated is part of the relevant background. In the previous chapter, I provided an overview of the historical shifts in Inner Mongolia since 1947. The first part of this chapter will contextualize resistance throughout China with some global examples of other ethnic groups whose protests are connected to cultural identity. Also relevant to the Mongol resistance are other ethnic protests that took place along China's geographic border in the years prior to the Mongol protests. As such, in this chapter I will provide a short summary of the riots that took place in Tibet and Xinjiang. The rest of the chapter will describe the protests in Inner Mongolia that took place in May 2011 and provide a timeline of other Mongol protests that have taken place throughout the province since May 2011.

Contemporary Protests in China

The increase in the number of contemporary protests in China has prompted scholars to write extensively about various forms of resistance in China which includes protests and collective action. This suggests that China has shifted from a culture marked by social revolutions to a culture dominated by localized protests.[7] While I use the term "protests" to describe the incidents that are the catalyst for this project, any other generalized term could just as easily be used. "Resistance" in China has been referred to as "contemporary protests," "localized protests," "mass incidents" or "collective incidents."[8] The terms vary because forms of resistance in China also vary. Broadly speaking, resistance in China has come to include emerging values like environmentalism, transnational activism, and an opposition to an increase of violence.[9] Further, the frequency of collective action in China had managed to steadily increase since the events of June 4, 1989. One study reports that, by 2005, there were over 87,000 "collective incidents" in China.[10]

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[6] In response to James C. Scott's work about everyday forms of resistance and hidden transcripts in his text *Weapons of the Weak*, Kevin J. O'Brien and Lijiang Li developed the model of "rightful resistance" as a way of analyzing the increase of public protests in China. Rightful resisters frame their claims in reference to implied rights based on ideologies and policies, they generally forgo violence as a means of resistance, and operate as a collective group with a common purpose. See: Kevin O'Brien and Lianjiang Li, *Rightful Resistance,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 3.

Scholarly research about protests in China have mostly focused on those conducted on the basis of socioeconomic inequalities which have become pervasive as a result of China's period of "deep reform" from 1994-2002.[11] Feng Chen argues that the increase in protests since 2005 is the result of growing economic inequalities and losses amongst China’s workers.[12] Hurst and O’Brien assert that working class citizens responses to economic shifts resulted in income-based grievances against the state throughout the 1990’s.[13] Yongshun Cai suggests that the increase in protests amongst laid-off workers is connected to economic losses.[14]

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[7] See Yongshun Cai, "Local Government and the Suppression of Popular Resistance in China," *The China Quarterly*, 193, (2008): 24-42; Yongshun Cai, *Collective Resistance in China: Why Popular Protests Succeed or Fail*, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2010); Murray Scott Tanner, "China Rethinks Unrest," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol 27, Number 3, (Summer 2004): 137-156.

[8] See: Yongshun Cai, "Local Government and the Suppression of Popular Resistance in China;" Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden, eds, *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance,* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Tanner, "China rethinks unrest."

[9] See Yanfai Sun, "Environmental Campaigns," 144-162, Yongshun Cai, "Disruptive Collective Action in the Reform Era," 163-178; Patricia M. Thornton, "Manufacturing Dissent in Transnational China," 179-204, in Kevin J. O'Brien, ed., *Popular Protests in China*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008.)

[10] Kevin J. O'Brien, ed, *Popular Protests in China*,12.

[11] Steve Hess, "Nail-Houses, Land Rights and Frames of Injustice on China's Protest Landscape," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 50, No. 5, (2010): 910.

While there is an increasing amount of literature on economic based protests, literature about land based protests in China is relatively new because land based protests themselves are relatively new. Hess examines different actions of resistance which have resulted from forced relocation to urban centers, rural land seizures, and impingement of property rights and places them into a general category of “land rights.”[15] Based on this overarching category, he writes that “land rights, initially a relatively marginal issue within the broader scope of protests in the late 1990’s and early 2000’s, have quickly risen to prominence in recent years.”[16] The prominence of land issues within China’s protest landscape can be tied to China’s economic and urban boom that has led the state to focus its expansionist policies on the western part of the country, which has more undeveloped land than the coastal regions. Much of the contention driving protesters, both in urban and rural areas throughout the country, is as a result of China’s rapid urbanization.

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[12] Hess, “Nail-Houses,” 911.

[13] William Hurst and Kevin O’Brien, “China's Contentious Pensioners,” *China Quarterly* 170 (June 2002): 353.

[14] Yongshun Cai, *Collective Resistance in China: Why Popular Protests Succeed or Fail,* 63.

[15] Hess, “Nail-houses,” 918.

[16] Hess, “Nail Houses,” 918.

Added to the discussion about land based protests is literature about the role that identity plays in resistance in China. For example, Klandermans asserts that collective identity plays an important role in protest behavior.[17] He posits that collective identity functions to demarcate one group from another. In other words, identity works to construct boundaries in which a group is viewed as distinct from others. Additionally, Klandermans argues that collective identity is measured by a common language and common culture.[18] Thus, the link between identity and protests as posited by Klandermans is relevant to this study. Those that view themselves as part of a collective identity will then join the group in protests. Scholarly development about the importance of identity as a driving force behind why groups protest helps elucidate how globalization and state expansion have impacted the collective identity of many marginalized groups.[19]

Another connection that can be made within different types of protests in China is the connection between land grabs and cultural identity loss. To contextualize the protests included in this chapter, I turn to various case studies from different parts of the world. The Maori in New Zealand have been resisting land grabs and cultural identity loss since the early 1970's.[20] In the Vietnamese province of Thai Binh, protests against unfair land grabs erupted in 1997.[21] In her book, *Hawaiian Blood,* Kauanui includes an analysis of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement in which Hawaiians persistently protested against the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy and appropriation of native Hawaiian lands by the United States government. The Hawaiian sovereignty movement has been ongoing for the last century but gained momentum in the 1990's and resulted in the 1993 Apology Resolution.[22] For many ethnic minority groups throughout the world, there continues to be a common struggle to maintain some semblance of cultural identity that is distinguishable from the identity of other groups living in the same nation-state or region.[23]

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[17] Bert Klandermans, "Identity and Protest: how group identification helps overcome collective action dilemmas," in *Cooperation in Modern Society: Promoting the Welfare of Communities, States, and Organizations,* ed. Mark Van Vugt, Mark Snyder, Tom R. Tyler, and Anders Biel, (New York: Routledge Publishing, 2000), 164.

[18] Klandermans, "Identity and Protest," 889.

[19] See: D. McAdam, D.J. McCarthy, and M. N. Zald, "Comparative perspectives on social movements: Political opportunities, mobilizing structures, and cultural framing," (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); B. Simon, et. al, "Collective Identity and social movement participation," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* Vol. 74, (1998): 646-658; Marga De Weerd and Bert Klandermans, "Group identification and political protest: farmers' protest in the Netherlands," *European Journal of Social Psychology,* Vol. 29, (1999): 1073-1095.

Although, as noted above, there has been an increase in protests throughout China, protests in Inner Mongolia have been rare occurrences. In fact, the last significant Mongol protest in Inner Mongolia prior to May 2011 mentioned in any scholarly literature happened in 1981.[24] This is not to say that Mongols have not had any grievances against the state but that, since that time, scholars have not paid attention to demonstrations in the region since then. One reason for this may be due to the state's minority policies according to which collective action is more heavily monitored for evidence of splittism.[25] Another reason may to the recent surge in economic growth throughout the province. Bulag asserts that Mongols have accepted the authority of the Chinese state, questioning only its method of rule, particularly the Chinese state's economic development policy that targets Mongol grasslands.[26] In other words, the economic growth that has permeated Inner Mongolia, particularly since the beginning of the WDP has, in some ways, quelled ethnic resistance from within the Mongol community. However, by targeting the grasslands for economic expansion and industry development, the state has also coaxed Mongols into cooperating in their own cultural demise, often through the promise of economic prosperity. This is not a new strategy. The imperial Chinese state used language absorption to tame the barbarians living in the Chinese territory.[27] And much of Lattimore's work has centered around agricultural colonization throughout Inner Mongolia during China's Republican era.[28] Since that time, the state has looked to absorb Mongols through different means, in particular through the WDP whereby the focus has been on the modernization of China's border regions. But economic prosperity may not be enough to keep Mongols from defending their cultural space, and by extension, their cultural identity.

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[20] Aroha Harris, *Hikoi: Forty Years of Maori Protest,* (Aotearoa: Huia Publishers, 2004): 10.

[21] Zachary Abuza, *Renovating Politics in Contemporary Vietnam,* (Boulder: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2001): 83.

[22] J. Hehaulani Kauanui, *Hawaiian Blood: Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indigeneity,* (Wake Forest: Duke University Press, 2008): 31.

[23] See: Jeffrey Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil,"* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Viranjini Munasinghe, *Callaloo or Tossed Salad?: East Indians and the Cultural Politics of Identity in Trinidad,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Anne Marie Monchamp, *Autobiographical Memory in an Aboriginal Australian Community: Culture, Place, and Narrative,* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

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[24] See: Jeffrey Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil,"* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Viranjini Munasinghe, *Callaloo or Tossed Salad?: East Indians and the Cultural Politics of Identity in Trinidad,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Anne Marie Monchamp, *Autobiographical Memory in an Aboriginal Australian Community: Culture, Place, and Narrative,* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[25] Colin Mackerras, *China's Ethnic Minorities and Globalisation,* (London: Routledge, 2003): 47.

[26] Uradyn E. Bulag, "Ethnic Resistance with Socialist Characteristics," in eds. Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden, *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict, and Resistance,* (London: Routledge, 2000), 178-197.

[27] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* (New York: Verso, 1983): 13; Bin Yang, *Between Wind and Clouds: The Making of Yunnan,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), chap. 7, doc. 6, Accessed July 31, 2015, http://www.gutenberg-e.org/yang/chapter7.html.

Unrest throughout China's Borderlands

When I moved back to Inner Mongolia in August 2008, the political climate was more tense than when I had lived there just three years prior. That year, 2008, was a "big" year for China. Beijing had just hosted the Summer Olympic Games, which further secured China's position as a dominant leader in the global community. And global tourists were still flocking to The Great Wall and other sites throughout the country, which continued to spur the national economy. But not everything in China at the time was celebratory. The country was still in the midst of dealing with the effects of the earthquake that hit Sichuan in May 2008 and killed nearly 70,000 people.[29] Not far from Sichuan, the state was also dealing with another crisis. Just a few months prior to the earthquake, in March 2008, ethnic riots erupted in Tibet.[30] What the Chinese state had hoped would be an auspicious year was already marked with violence by March.

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[28] Owen Lattimore, "On the Wickedness of Being Nomads," *T'ien Hsia Monthly,* 1, No. 2 (September 1935); "The Historical Setting of Inner Mongolian Nationalism," *Public Affairs,* Vol. 9, No. 3 (September 1936): 388-405. "Inner Asian Frontiers: Chinese and Russian Margins of Expansion," *The Journal of Economic History,* Vol. 7, Issue 1, (May 1947): 24-52.

[29] Chen Yong and David C. Booth, *The Wenchuan Earthquake of 2008*, (Beijing: Science Press, 2011): 18.

[30] Robert Barnett, "The Tibet Protests of Spring, 2008: Conflict between Nation and State," *China Perspectives,* No. 3, (2009): 9.

Although ethnic tension in Tibet is not new, the state's strict policies in Tibet have managed to keep protests to a minimum. Prior to March 2008, the last major episode of ethnic unrest in Tibet took place in March 1989.[31] The March 2008 riots are known in China as the *3/14 Riots,* to denote the day the protests began in Lhasa and quickly spread throughout Tibet and other global locations. One report suggests that there are several reasons why protests erupted in Tibet.[32] For one, aggressive economic development in Tibet, as in most of the western parts of China, has impacted Tibetan cultural identity and further fractured state and Tibetan relationships. The state, as was detailed in Chapter Two, often pairs aggressive economic development with Han assimilation, which, because of the shift in population, directly impacts minority cultural identity in many of China's ethnic minority regions.

On March 10, 2008, protestors in Tibet gathered to commemorate the 1959 Tibetan uprising and called for the release of several monks who had been detained since October 2007 because of their participation in a celebration of the Dalai Lama's US Congressional Gold Medal.[33] They were met with resistance by the People's Armed Police, hereafter referred to as PAP, which eventually resulted in the PAP firing tear gas and arresting several participants in the protests.[34] In response to the PAP actions, the protests grew in number and spread throughout the province. By March 14, the protests included cases of self-immolation, and calls for separation from the Chinese state.[35] From the perspective of the state, the Tibetan ethnic uprising was ill-timed because the state hoped to present itself as a peaceful and stable multiethnic country that was ready to safely host the world for the Olympic Games. In light of the protests, and the images of the protests that were quickly exported through the internet, the world was reminded of the fact that China is an authoritarian state in which not all ethnic groups are altogether satisfied with China's ethnopolitics. The impact of the riots was felt beyond China's domestic borders because the situation catapulted the Tibetan issue to the forefront of US-Sino relations and led to increased military presence in and around Tibet.[36]

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[31] Mackerras, *China's Ethnic Minorities and Globalization,* 48; Barnett, "The Tibet Protests of Spring," 2008, 9.

[32] For a detailed chronology and analysis of the 2008 Tibetan protests see: Department of Information and International Relations, "2008 Uprising in Tibet: Chronology and Analysis," (Dharamsala: Narthang Press): 2008.

[33] Department of Information and International Relations, "2008 Uprising in Tibet," 7.

[34] Department of Information and International Relations, "2008 Uprising in Tibet," 8.

A year after the *3/14* riots, in July 2009, protests began in Xinjiang amongst ethnic Uyghurs, the largest ethnic minority group in that region. Xinjiang, located in far Northwestern China, borders Tibet and seven other countries. Like other autonomous regions in China, Xinjiang has a long history of tension between the titular ethnic group of the region and the Chinese state.[37] In recent years, in Xinjiang, as in Tibet and Inner Mongolia, the Chinese state has implemented aggressive economic and development plans and assimilated Han into the region. The Uyghur population in Xinjiang has grown increasingly frustrated with the state's modernization efforts because of the impact those efforts have had on parts of the Uyghur culture, including Uyghur language and religious expression.[38]

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[35] Barnett, "The Tibet Protests of Spring, 2008," 8.

[36] Barnett, "The Tibet Protests of Spring, 2008," 6.

[37] For an extensive history about Ugyhurs in China see: Gardner Bovingdon, *The Uyghurs: Strangers in Their Own Land*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Michael E. Clarke, *Xinjiang and China's Rise in Central Asia: A History,* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

The 2009 riots in Xinjiang escalated as a result of a brawl between Uyghur and Han factory workers in Guangdong province. The brawl in the factory turned violent and resulted in the death of two Uyghur workers. Details about the situation, now known as the *Shaoguan Incident,* which took place on June 25, 2009, were immediately shared with others both in and outside China via social media, internet chat rooms, text messages, and phone calls. It was the quick reports about the deaths of the Uyghur factory workers that sparked the riots in Xinjiang, which began on July 5. Much like the situation in Tibet, there had not been any large scale riots in Xinjiang for a number of years. Thus, the July riots were a surprise to China's leadership. In fact, the president of China at that time, Hu Jintao, cut short his European tour and his participation in the G8 Summit in order to return to China to deal with the ethnic tension.[39] Like the Tibetan protests, the riots in Xinjiang turned violent and resulted in the deaths of 197 people, including both Uyghur and Han.[40] In order to control the situation and prevent the protests from spreading to other regions, the state initiated a communication outage which blocked phone calls and shut down the internet.[41]

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[38] See: Michael Dillon, "Uyghur Language and Culture Under Threat in Xinjiang," *The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst,"* August 14, 2002, Accessed April 4, 2015, http://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/7024-analytical-articles-caci-analyst-2002-8-14-art-7024.html; Joseph Grieboski, "Tension, Repression, and Discrimination: China's Uyghurs Under Threat," *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs,* September 24, 2014, Accessed April 4, 2015, http://journal.georgetown.edu/tension-repression-and-discrimination-chinas-uyghurs-under-threat/.

[39] Shan Wei, "China's New Policy in Xinjiang and its Challenges," *East Asian Policy,* (2011): 59.

[40] Wei, "China's New Policy in Xinjiang and its Challenges," 59.

There are some similarities between the ethnic unrest in these two areas. Both areas had been relatively "calm" for a number of years. But various grievances against the Chinese state, such as the threat to cultural identity, hit a tipping point and erupted into protests. Unlike the labor protests which have steadily increased throughout the country, ethnic protests in Tibet and Xinjiang are managed differently by the state.[42] Accusations of separatism result in the state's quick and decisive action to quell unrest. Suppression of separatism has become an essential political tool through which the state justifies its ethnic policies in regions like Tibet and Xinjiang.[43] By framing any civil unrest in ethnic minority regions as evidence of separatism, the state is also able to sensitize wider society about the dangers of potential internal terrorists that aim to disrupt "societal harmony."[44] Despite the cultural plurality of the Chinese nation, which is defined by Chinese sociologist Fei Xiaotong as a "plural unitary body" in which all the *minzu* live under one national entity, China is still very much a Han-centered nation as we saw in the previous chapter.[45] Although the state has developed affirmative action policies to benefit ethnic minorities, some regions are still wrought with ethnic tension because policies like the suppression of splittism promote Han nationalism at the expense of ethnic nationalism.[46] This is why an ethnic brawl between Ugyhur and Han workers in a factory in Guangdong so easily sparked the riots in Xinjiang.

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[41] Yanqi Tong, Shaohua Lei, *Social Protest in Contemporary China, 2003-2010: Transitional Pains and Regime Legitimacy,* (New York: Routledge, 2014): 134.

[42] Joseph Kahn, "Pace and Scope of Protest in China Accelerated in '05," *New York Times*, January 20, 2006, Accessed April 10, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/20/international/asia/20china.html?_r=0.

[43] Many scholars address the Chinese state's use of "separatism" in minority policies: Mackerras, *China's Ethnic Minorities and Globalisation;* He Baogang, "The Power of Chinese Linguistic Imperialism and Its Challenge to Multicultural Education," in eds. James Leibold and Yangbin Chen, *Minority Education in China: Balancing Unity and Diversity in an Era of Critical Pluralism,* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2014), 64.

[44] Chas Morrison, "Tibetan Self-Immolation as Protest Against Chinese State Repression," in *Conflict, Violence, Terrorism, and their Prevention,* eds. J.M. Ramirez, C. Morrison, and A.J. Kendall, (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 89.

The situations in Tibet and Xinjiang worried the expat community living in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia. There were questions about whether ethnic protests would spread along China's geographic border from Xinjiang to Inner Mongolia. If so, would protests in Inner Mongolia also turn violent? Would communication be cut off, as was the case in Xinjiang? How would the state respond? The concerns about protests erupting in Inner Mongolia were not the result of generalizations which posit that the situations in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia are exactly the same. There are some similarities amongst the three areas, including the impact that the WDP has had on minority cultural identity and the state's ethnic minority policies concerned with suppressing splittism in each region. But the questions regarding potential protests taking place in Inner Mongolia were directed by on-the-ground knowledge about the frustrations that many Mongols felt regarding the impact of Inner Mongolia's rapid economic growth on Mongolian culture.[47] I now turn to a more detailed overview of these frustrations and protests.

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[45] Fei Xiaotong, "Plurality and Unity in the Configuration of the Chinese People*," The Tanner Lectures,* November 1998.

[46] Mackerras, *China's Ethnic Minorities and Globalization,* 27.

[47] By 2009 Inner Mongolia was China's largest producer of coal and held the world's largest supply of rare earth. See: Staff, "Little Hu and the mining of the grasslands," *The Economist,* July 14, 2012, Accessed February 24, 2015, http://www.economist.com/node/21558605.

Mongol Resistance: The May 2011 Protests

The political forecasts about imminent Mongol resistance came true shortly after a Mongolian herdsman was struck and killed by a Han coal truck driver near Xilinhot, Inner Mongolia on May 10, 2011. Mergen, the Mongol herdsman, was trying to block the Liaoning Chencheng Industry and Trading Group from driving vehicles onto his pastureland. Li Lindong, a Han truck driver who worked for the Liaoning Group, struck Mergen with his vehicle and then dragged him to his death.[48] The Mongolian community living in the surrounding area responded to Mergen's death by organizing protests. On May 24, the local government in Xilinhot, which had become aware of the organized protests, attempted to stop them by announcing the arrest of the truck driver and ensuring that there would be "a series of measures" taken regarding coal and mineral extraction in the grasslands.[49] But the state's efforts were too late. On May 25, Mongols protested at various government buildings in West Ujimqin Banner near Xilinhot. That same day, more than 2000 Mongols protested in Xinlingol and in East Ujimqin Banner.[50] By that time, the sentiments of the protestors had evolved from centering on the unjust death of Mergen to focusing on the issues of land degradation throughout Inner Mongolia. Perhaps because the protests were gaining momentum, the state declared martial law in several areas of the region on May 27. By this point, I was living in Hohhot and I still had not heard of the protests taking place in and around Xilinhot because the state closely monitored any discussion about the situation on the internet, through social media, and through phone calls and text messages. But, on the morning of May 29, murmurings of university closures began to spread throughout Hohhot. By that night, an American friend, who taught English at a university in Hohhot, informed me that the entire university had been closed and nobody could enter or leave the campus.[51] The next day, on May 30, Mongols protested throughout the city. By that time, Hu Chunhua, who was, at that time, the Communist Party Secretary of Inner Mongolia, had directed the closure of all universities and large public spaces, such as the main city square, called *New China Square* in English, as well as other public parks.[52]

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[48] Jonathan Watts, "Herder's death deepens tensions in Inner Mongolia,"*The Guardian,* May 27, 2011, Accessed February 22, 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jun/08/chinese-trucker-killing-mongolian-herder

[49] Translated from Staff, "内蒙两千学生抗议牧民被煤车碾死" (In Inner Mongolia 2000 students protest the death of a herdsman that was crushed by a coal truck," *BBC,* May 25, 2011, Accessed February 24, 2015, http://www.bbc.co.uk/zhongwen/simp/chinese_news/2011/05/110525_inner_mongolia_protest.shtml.

[50] Yang Ming, "中国内蒙爆发30年最大规模抗议活动,(Inner Mongolia, China: Largest outbreak of protests in 30 years," Voice of America, May 25, 2011, Accessed February 23, 2015, http://www.voachinese.com/content/article-20110525-mongolian-122601904/782229.html

Although the protests in Hohhot stopped shortly after they began, universities and public spaces throughout the city remained closed for a couple of weeks afterwards. In some cases, students could leave the university, but visitors were not allowed to enter. In other cases, especially for universities with a high Mongolian student population like the Inner Mongolia Agricultural University, students could not even leave the university campus. Western news agencies including *The New York*

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[51] Universities in Hohhot are enclosed by walls. All traffic, including motor vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians, enter universities through a guarded gate. Thus, to say that universities were closed means that the security personnel at university gates would not allow anybody to enter or leave the university campus.

[52] Staff, "Little Hu and the mining of the grasslands," *The Economist,* July 14, 2012, Accessed February 24, 2015, http://www.economist.com/node/21558605.

Times, CNN, The Economist, and *BBC* began to report about the protests.[53] But much of the information was also disseminated through the Southern Mongolia Human Rights Information Center (SMHRIC), based in New York, which resulted in the Chinese state's accusation that foreigners were responsible for spurring ethnic tensions. Transnational actors, like *SMHRIC,* and the use of the internet and mobile technology to inform others both in and outside China about civil unrest, have become more common in contemporary protests.[54] It was the quick spread of information about the situation in Xinjiang in 2009 which prompted the state to cut off internet access in that region. The involvement of Western media and transnational actors which reported on the protests in Inner Mongolia also created some suspicion about the involvement that foreigners living in Inner Mongolia may have had in the situation. For example, in December 2011, several months after the protests in Hohhot had stopped, a security guard of my apartment complex asked a small group of friends (both Han and Mongol) coming to visit me if I was organizing a protest.

The incident that launched the protests is a good point of departure to explain both the ethnic tensions and historical shifts witnessed in Inner Mongolia: A Han truck driver, who worked for a large Han owned corporation, was driving through the Mongolian cultural space, and was perceived to be destroying the land in the process. A Mongol shepherd, which is the quintessential Mongolian occupation, was protecting his land and his livelihood. The standoff was between a Mongol and a Han. What happened next is even more telling of the plight of Mongols. Lin Lidong, the Han truck driver, ran over Mergen, crushing his body and dragging him to his death. Though a crude analogy, this situation can be thought to mirror the overall situation in Inner Mongolia. That is to say, Mongols have been dragged by state-driven policies throughout the province, often resulting in the "death" of some parts of the Mongol culture.

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[53] Andrew Jacobs, "Anger Over Protester's Deaths Leads to Intensified Demonstrations by Mongolians," *The New York Times,* May 30, 2011, Accessed March 2, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/31/world/asia/31mongolia.html?_r=0; Steven Jiang, "Activists: Inner Mongolia protests continue," *CNN,* May 31, 2011, Accessed March 2, 2015, http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/asiapcf/05/31/china.mongolia.protest/, Staff, "China's Inner Mongolia under heavy security," *BBC News,* May 30, 2011, Accessed March 2, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-13592514; Staff, "No pastoral idyll," *The Economist,* June 2, 2011, Accessed March 2, 2015, http://www.economist.com/node/18775303.

[54] Guobin Yang discusses the role the internet plays in both spreading information about dissension in China and as new site of activism. See Guobin Yang, "Contention in cyberspace," in *Popular Protest in China,* ed. Kevin J. O'Brien, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 131; Guobin Yang, *The Power of the Internet in China: Citizen Activism Online,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

In order to understand why some protests are allowed to take place and others are quickly stopped, I look to Stern and O'Brien who write about the Chinese state's "boundaries."[55] The intentions and actions of the Chinese state in any given situation are notoriously hard to predict. In some cases actors may collaborate with one another to criticize unjust policies or to protest unjust actions. But in other cases, actors may be prevented from taking such actions. The boundaries within which collective action may take place are marked by law. Although laws may be static, the ways in which laws are interpreted are not. Thus, the shifting nature of the Chinese state have prompted scholars to use terms like "ambiguous" and ambivalent" to describe the complexities in interpreting responses by the Chinese state to different situations.[56] Those living in

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[55] Stern and O'Brien, "Politics at the Boundary."

[56] O'Brien and Li, Rightful Resistance in Rural China, 63; Guobin Yang, *The Power of the Internet in China*, 188; Ching Kwan Lee, "Workers and the quest for citizenship," in *Reclaiming Chinese Society: The New Social Activism,* eds. You-tien Hsing and Ching Kwann Lee, (New York: Routledge, 2010), 51; Guobin Yang, "Contention in cyberspace," 131.

China can be taken by surprise because the signals through which the state communicates can be contradictory and difficult to interpret. Stern and O'Brien assert that "information passes constantly between signal senders (different parts of the state) and signal receivers (individuals in society) and is distilled into common knowledge."[57] But, even then, signals can be difficult to read because "there are at least two Chinas: the stable, high-capacity juggernaut familiar from the headlines and a hodgepodge of disparate actors."[58]

In the case of the May 2011 protests, the communication between the state and society was somewhat clear. Mergen's death was a clear sign that legitimized the Mongols' right to protest.[59] The state could have stopped the protests immediately but, instead, allowed the protests to take place while simultaneously monitoring physical spaces, virtual spaces, and population flows. The state set the physical boundaries of the protests by closing specific spaces and, in doing so, the state also communicated the ideological boundaries that would limit a Mongol's ability to protest. In other words, by closing *New China Square*, the state prevented the protests from being compared to the deadly protests which took place on Tiananmen Square in June 1989.

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[57] Stern and O'Brien, "Politics at the Boundary," 176.

[58] Stern and O'Brien, Politics at the Boundary, 190.

[59] O'Brien and Li, Rightful Resistance; James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

Constructed Social Meanings Through Place

Cultural geographers and anthropologists have come to regard space, place, and landscapes as text.[60] While the definitions of each term, space, place, and landscape, have a wide array of meanings in the academy, most agree with the notion that each are fraught with cultural and political meaning. In her study on the reemergence of cultural landscapes in post-Socialist European cities, Czepczynski that: "Landscape has been seen as a social and physical construction, where symbolic and represented landscapes produced and sustained social meanings, visualized in physical forms."[61] Political geographer Linda Hershkovitz writes: "In China, there is one universally recognized monument which overshadows all others in signifying both the hegemonic power of the state and the history of struggle against it, and that is Tiananmen or the Gate of Heavenly Peace."[62]

The symbolic power of Tianamen Square elucidates the response of the state to the protests in Inner Mongolia, and to any politically motivated protests in China. The complex relationship between space and power is evident in the symbolic power with which Tiananmen is imbibed.[63] Tiananmen Square as a symbol of hegemonic state power is exerted through the Square's monuments, Mao's Mausoleum, which is located on Tiananmen Square, and the buildings that surround Tiananmen Square which include The Forbidden City and the Great Hall of the People.[64] Since 1989 Tiananmen Square has also become a space of "symbolic geography" that is more associated with dissent and rebellion because of the protests that have taken place on the Square, most notably those which took place in 1989.[65] The politically motivated movements that have taken place on the Square have left a permanent mark on the geography of the Square making it a spatial object of struggle.

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[60] See: J.R. Gold and J. Burgess (eds), *Valued Environments*, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1982); Charles T. Goodsell, *The Social Meaning of Civic Space: Studying Political Authority Through Architecture*, (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1988); Amos Rapoport, *The Meaning of the Built Environment: A NonVerbal Communication Approach,* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1982).

[61] Mariusz Czepczynski*, Cultural Landscapes of Post-Socialist Cities: Representation of Powers and Needs,* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2008): 26.

[62] Linda Hershkovitz, "Tiananmen square and the politics of place," *Political Geography,* Volume 12, Issue 5, (September 1993): 399.

[63] See Henri Lefebvre*,* Donald Nicholson-Smith, translator, *The Production of Space,* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1991); Linda Hershkovitz, "Tiananmen square and the politics of place."

Lefebvre defines monumental space to be "determined by what may take place there, and consequently by what may not take place there."[66] Following Lefebvre, monumental spaces like city squares in China are monitored for what can and can not take place within their boundaries. As such, I assert that by securing public spaces during the Mongol protests, the state may have also been trying to prevent a comparison between the ethnic tension in Inner Mongolia and that in Tibet and Xinjiang. That is not to say that the Mongol protests had any obvious connections to the protests of 1989, but rather that the state did not want any connections to be made based on the symbolic geography that city squares hold in resistance movements. In Hohhot, the Chinese state extended the closure of the city square, called *New China Square* in English, beyond June 4, which is the day when the Tiananmen Square protests are silently commemorated in China.

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[64] Hershkovitz, "Tiananmen square and the politics of place," 395.

[65] Hershkovitz, "Tiananmen square and the politics of place," 400.

[66] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 224.

The physical boundaries that have been set by the state, and which demarcate where protests can happen, are important to understand how the state monitored the May 2011 protests in Inner Mongolia. Additionally, it is essential to understand that Mongols in Inner Mongolia continue to protest, despite the fact that Enze Han posits that "low group concentration, lack of political leadership, weak religious affiliations, and geopolitical and historical proximity to China proper have all made the Inner Mongols less prepared for political mobilization."[67] I agree with Han. Mongols, unlike Tibetans and Uyghurs, are not positioned for political mobilization in the same way. One reason for this is that there is not a strong religious affiliation in contemporary Mongol identity as there is in Tibet and Xinjiang. That is to say that Tibetan and Uyghur protests may be focused on religious expression, which is not the case, in general, for Mongols in Inner Mongolia. But, as shown in Chapter Two, historical shifts in Inner Mongolia have prompted some Mongol resistance. Further, Mongols have been caught in the ideological formation of the state in which the Han identity is the civilizing standard by which other ethnic groups in China are viewed. Thus, though Mongols may not have the same agenda as groups in other regions of China, there is an emerging collective resistance regarding cultural identity that ethnic groups in other parts of the world have faced.[68] As such, I take issue with Han who also posits that Mongols are "less anxious about their current incorporation within the Chinese state."[69] This is altogether not true. While the Mongol resistance to cultural colonization may not be the same as the resistance found in Tibet and Xinjiang, it is still very much a part of the current state of Mongol life in Inner Mongolia.

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[67] Han, "The Dog That Hasn't Barked," 73.

[68] As an example, see Michael Ezekiel Gasper, *The Power of Representation: Publics, Peasants, and Islam in Egypt,* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009): 180-181.

[69] Han, "The Dog That Hasn't Barked," 55.

The next part of this chapter offers an overview of the protests that have taken place in Inner Mongolia since May 2011. I do not analyze the protests' rhetoric in this section, but merely list the protests as evidence that there are ongoing protests in Inner Mongolia.

Protests Since May 2011: A Timeline

Perhaps the description of the protests in Inner Mongolia as "ongoing" is a bit inaccurate because it may leave the reader with the impression that the protests in Inner Mongolia have not stopped. "Intermittent" may be a more accurate word to use here. But the reason I use the term "ongoing" is that I consider the protests to be representative of a still active mode of Mongol resistance. This resistance has not ceased since and, in fact, it could be argued that resistance has been a part of the Mongol relationship with the state long before the May 2011 protests. For example, Bulag mentions that in 1995 twelve Mongols asking for more democracy and greater autonomy were arrested. Of those twelve, two Mongols were jailed for 15 years on charges of separatism and espionage.[70] There is also the case of Hada, a Mongol activist who was jailed for fifteen years on charges of separatism.[71] These examples are telling of both the sentiment that some Mongols in Inner Mongolia have regarding the state and of the action of the state to quickly quell instances of resistance in order to prevent large scale movements.

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[70] Uradyn Bulag, "Inner Mongolia: The Dialectics of Colonization and Ethnicity Building," in *Governing China's Multiethnic Frontiers,* ed. Morris Rossabi, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 85.

Below is a timeline and brief description of Mongol protests regarding the issue of "land grabbing" that have taken place since May 2011. I have only included protests which have been reported by news media or *SMHRIC*.

> June 21, 2011: Protests in Balinzuo Qi, Inner Mongolia near Chifeng municipality. According to SMHRIC, Mongols were protesting the Bayannuur Lead Mine which Mongols blamed for land degradation, the deaths of livestock in the area, and imposing health hazards on people living in the surrounding area.[72]
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> July 18, 2011: More than 1000 Mongol herders protested land grabs in the Balinyou Banner in Inner Mongolia. SMHRIC reports that several Mongols were hospitalized for injuries sustained during the protests.[73]

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[71] See: Benjamin Carlson, "Profiles in Dissidence: Why China is crushing a Mongolian intellectual," *Global Post,* March 5, 2013, Accessed July 31, 2015, http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/asia-pacific/china/130228/inner-mongolia-china-dissident-hada; Staff, "China Releases Veteran Mongolian Activist Who Says He Was Tortured," *Radio Free Asia,* December 12, 2014, Accessed July 31, 2015, http://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/hada-12092014104722.html; Staff, "Wife of Mongolian activist speaks out against Chinese harassment," *The Guardian,* October 15, 2012, Accessed July 31, 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/oct/15/wife-mongolian-activist-china.

[72] Staff, "New Round of Herders' Protest Erupts in Southern (Inner) Mongolia," *SMHRIC*, June 29, 2011, Accessed February 25, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_392.htm.

[73] Staff, "Fresh Protests by Mongolian Herders, Dozens Hospitalized," *SMHRIC,* July 23, 2011, Accessed February 25, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_395.htm.

October 24, 2011: Several news agencies reported about, Zorigt, a Mongol shepherd in Inner Mongolia who was struck and killed by a Han truck diver, while protecting his land. Chinese authorities claim the incident was an accident.[74]

April 2, 2012: A small group of Mongols protested a Chinese operated foresting company near Tongliao, Inner Mongolia.[75]

June 19, 2012: Hundreds of Mongols protested against land grabs in Hailut Town, Inner Mongolia.[76]

July 2, 2012: Protests near Hailar, Inner Mongolia in response to the state's plan to resettle nomads over the next five years.[77]

October 9, 2012: Mongol protests take place in Alashan Meng, Inner Mongolia.[78]

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[74] See: Staff, "Truck kills herder in Inner Mongolia China," *BBC,* October 24, 2011, Accessed February 25, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-15428590; Staff, "Truck kills herder in China Inner Mongolia protest: group," *Reuters,* October 24, 2011, Accessed February 25, 2015, http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/10/24/us-china-innermongolia-idUSTRE79N14L20111024; Staff, "Mongol herders killed in China land dispute: rights group," *Seed Daily,* October 24, 2011, Accessed February 25, 2015, http://www.seeddaily.com/reports/Mongol_herder_killed_in_China_land_dispute_rights_group_999.html

[75] Staff, "Inner Mongolians Escalate Land Protest," *Radio Free Asia,* April 4, 2012, Accessed February 25, 2015, http://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/inner-mongolia-04042012173454.html; Staff, "Continuing Protests Met with More Government Violence in Southern Mongolia," *Mongolia Daily Economic Update,* Accessed February 25, 2015, http://www.mongoliaeconomy.com/continuing-protest-met-with-more-government-violence-in-southern-mongolia/; Tania Branigan, "Chinese villagers clash with police in land-grab protests," *The Guardian,* April 3, 2012, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/apr/03/chinese-police-land-grab-protests.

[76] Staff, "Herders Took to the streets again in Southern Mongolia," *SMHRIC,* June 20, 2014, Accessed February 25, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_446.htm.

[77] Staff, "Tensions Rise between Mongolian Herders and Chinese Authorities," *SMHRIC,* July 8, 2012, Accessed February 26, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_447.htm; The website for *The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China* documents the plans to resettle the nomadic population. The title of the document is: *The Five National Strategic Emerging Industries* and *The Plan to Resettle National Nomads during the Twelfth Five Year Plan,* *"十二五"国家战略性新兴产业发展规划"* 和 *"全国游牧民定居工程建设"十二五"规划," The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China,* May 30, 2012, Accessed March 2, 2015, http://www.gov.cn/ldhd/2012-05/30/content_2148928.htm.

[78] Staff, "China: Herders protest loss of land," *Radio Free Asia,* October 9, 2012, Accessed February 26, 2015, http://www.refworld.org/docid/50879ed523.html.

March 1, 2013: Mongol herders gathered at the train station in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia. They planned to march on foot to Beijing in order to protest at the National People's Congress. They were met by local police and forced to return to their homes.[79]

March 2, 2013: Another group of herders in Halgait Village who were planning to march to Beijing were stopped by the local police. The protesters in this village focused on illegal land grabs by Lu Huo Coal Mining and Yi Cheng Coal Mining companies.[80]

April 27, 2013: Mongol herders in Bayannur, Inner Mongolia attempted to reclaim land from Chinese farmers who had a ten year agreement to lease the land. The lease had expired and the Mongol herders were "defending" the land, which resulted in a brawl between the herders and the farmers.[81]

July 15, 2013: Thirty-eight Mongol herders planning to travel to Beijing in order to protest were arrested at the Tongliao train station.[82]

August 19, 2013: Bayanbaatar, a Mongol herder who was defending his land, was beaten to death by Chinese railroad workers.[83]

September 4, 2013: The Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Public Security Bureau held a press conference to report the arrest of 52 people in Inner Mongolia for "stirring up ethnic relations" through the internet. The information is corroborated on the IMAR Public Security Bureau website (listed in the footnote below). This is important because it involves resistance through virtual spaces. It should be noted that the report does not list the ethnicity of those arrested.[84]

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[79] Joshua Lipes, "Herders Blocked from Protest Marches to Beijing," *Radio Free Asia,* March 7, 2013, Accessed February 26, 2015, http://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/herders-03072013183135.html.

[80] Lipes, "Herders Blocked from Protest Marches to Beijing."

[81] Staff, "Herders attacked while defending their grazing land," *SMHRIC,* May 3, 2013, Accessed February 26, 2015.

[82] Lipes, "Herders Blocked From Travel to Beijing."

[83] Staff, "One more Mongolian herder killed by the Chinese defending his land," *SMHRIC,* August 20, 2013, Accessed February 26, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_494.htm.

December 7, 2013: Mongol herders gathered in Beijing to appeal the Central Government authorities and solicit support from the state to stall Chinese miners' from occupation of the herders' land.[85]

January 9, 2014: Five Mongol herders from different parts of Urad Middle Banner protested in Haliut, Inner Mongolia. They planned to move the protests to Hohhot and Beijing but, on January 11, 2014, they were arrested and the protests were stopped.[86]

March 26, 2014: Nearly 100 Mongol herders protested in front of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Government building in Hohhot.[87]

March 31, 2014: More than 100 Mongol herders protested in front of a Bayannur Municipality government building.[88]

May 4, 2014: Herders protesting the expansion of a military base in Alashan, Inner Mongolia, were stopped by armed military.[89]

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[84] The following article is a translation of the report listed on the IMAR government website: Staff, "52 netizens arrested for "spreading rumors," "sensationalizing conflicts," and "stirring up ethnic relations," *SMHRIC,* September 4, 2013, Accessed February 26, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_497.htm; See the following for the IMAR Public Security Bureau website: Staff, "内蒙古警方抓获52名网上制造传播谣言信息违法犯罪嫌疑人," (Inner Mongolia Police arrest a network of 52 criminal suspects for spreading rumors and manufacturing information on line," *Inner Mongolia Public Security Bureau,* August 30, 2013, Accessed February 26, 2015, http://www.nmgat.gov.cn/jwzx/gayw/201308/t20130830_5618.html.

[85] Staff, "Protesting Mongolian herders expelled from Beijing," *SMHRIC,* December 7, 2013, Accessed February 26, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_510.htm.

[86] Staff, "Herders' protest put down, five arrested, one escapes in handcuffs," *SMHRIC,* January 14, 2014, Accessed February 26, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_515.htm.

[87] Staff, "Protesting herders stopped by machine guns," *SMHRIC,* May 4, 2014, Accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_527.htm.

[88] Staff, "Fresh wave of herders' protests erupts following Chinese Premier's visit to Southern Mongolia," April 3, 2014, Accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_525.htm.

[89] Staff, "Protesting herders stopped by machine guns," *SMHRIC,* May 4, 2014, Accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_527.htm.

July 28, 2014: Mongol herders in Xinjiang (which borders Inner Mongolia) protested against the state's appropriation of grazing lands for the expansion of tourism and mining.[90]

October 8, 2014: Nearly 400 Mongol herders from Xiang Huang Qi, Inner Mongolia, protested. They were asking for the protection of a "traditional economy."[91]

January 11-13, 2015: More than 50 Mongol herders marched in protest toward Beijing.[92]

January 28, 2015: A Mongol herder hung himself in front of a government building in Abag Banner, Inner Mongolia. According to the *China Post,* the suicide came after several demonstrations in Inner Mongolia.[93]

April 4, 2015: A three week standoff in Naiman Banner, Inner Mongolia, ended. Villagers had been protesting against pollution and toxic waste from the Naiman Chemical Refinery Zone. More than 2000 riot police used rubber bullets, high-pressure water guns, and tear gas to end the riots. SMHRIC estimates that 100 people were injured, 50 people were arrested, and one person was killed.[94]

June 9, 2015: Mongolian herders staged protests on at least five different occasions. At least 17 herders were arrested.[95]

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[90] Staff, "Mongolian herders take to the streets to demand protection of grazing land," *SMHRIC,* July 28, 2014, Accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_535.htm.

[91] Staff, "Herders protest economic injustices," *SMHRIC,* October 14, 2014, Accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_544.htm.

[92] Staff, "Herders stage protest in Beijing against the seizure of grazing lands," *SMHRIC,* January 13, 2015, Accessed March 2, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_554.htm.

[93] Staff, "Mongol hangs himself in China protest: group," *The China Post,* January 28, 2015, Accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.chinapost.com.tw/china/national-news/2015/01/28/427539/Mongol-hangs.htm; Sui-Lee Wee, "Herder kills himself in Inner Mongolia over land grab," *Reuters,* January 26, 2015, Accessed March 1, 2015, http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/27/us-china-innermongolia-idUSKBN0L009E20150127.

[94] Staff, "Staff police mobilized, 100 people injured, 50 arrested, 1 killed, Internet cut off, highways shutdown in Naiman Banner of Southern Mongolia," *SMHRIC,* April 6, 2015, Accessed April 7, 2015, http://www.smhric.org/news_562.htm.

[95] Staff, "Protests spread in Southern Mongolia, many arrested," *SMHRIC,* June 9, 2015, Accessed March 22, 2016, http://www.smhric.org/news_572.htm.

September 9, 2015: More than 200 herders gathered in protests which resulted in the arrest of more than 20 of the protesters.[96]

January 26, 2016: Dozens of Mongolian herders were arrested for engaging in national separatism.[97]

February 23, 2016: Mongolian herders from Urad Banner protested the illegal occupation of land by the government.[98]

March 19, 2016: Six Mongolian herders were arrested for blocking coal mines.[99]

The number of protests that have taken place since May 2011 indicates that the issue of land degradation is an ongoing concern for many Mongols throughout Inner Mongolia. Many Mongols continue to resist what they see as the irreversible loss of the grasslands in Inner Mongolia. But why? Are protestors only seeking to address the environmental issues caused by state driven urban expansion? Are protestors merely seeking monetary compensation? In this study, I argue that Mongol protestors resist both the permanent transformation of the land and the impact it has on the Mongolian culture.

Conclusion: Resistance Through Art, Performance, and Song

In this chapter, I have provided a timeline of the protests in Inner Mongolia that have taken place since May 2011 and that center around the issue of land grabs, unjust deaths of Mongols, and environmental issues. Each of these protests could be analyzed for specific content, actors, locations, and responses by the state. Yet, as mentioned above, my concern is with the narrative that is emerging from various modes of resistance including protests. So, although protests may be categorized as one type or another, one theme that connects protests is the concern for cultural loss. Land grabs, for instance, refer to the permanent transformation and development of grasslands throughout the province.

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[96] Staff, "Herders took to the streets, 20 some arrested," *SMHRIC,* September 9, 2015, Accessed March 22, 2016, http://www.smhric.org/news_580.htm.

[97] Staff, "Taken away by police, herders accused of "national separatism," *SMHRIC,* January 26, 2016, Accessed March 22, 2016, http://www.smhric.org/news_591.htm.

[98] Staff, "Herders protest government official' illegal occupation of grazing land," *SMHRIC,* Febrary 23, 2016, Accessed March 22, 2016, http://www.smhric.org/news_592.htm.

[99] Staff, "Herders blocked mines, six arrested," *SMHRIC,* March 19, 2016, Accessed March 22, 2016, http://www.smhric.org/news_594.htm.

Chinese state policies, including the plan to resettle all nomads throughout the country, do not give much hope to any remaining pastoralists who want to maintain a traditional lifestyle. The Chinese state claims that, by modernizing the undeveloped parts of the country, it will continue to build a "harmonious society" and will raise the living standards of the nomadic populations.[100] Ethnic minority groups, human rights activists, and environmentalists are suspicious of China's economic expansion.[101] Scholars have countered the state's claim of goodwill development amongst various ethnic minority regions throughout China by positing that economic expansion shrouds the state's destructive tools of cultural colonization, railroad colonization, Hanificaiton, and sinicization.[102] Further, any benefits that modernization may introduce to the region are easily dismissed when considering the disastrous environmental catastrophes like desertification, sand storms, and pollution, all of which have been exacerbated by China's development boom.[103] Despite criticism from various actors and organizations, the state continues to develop the western regions of the country which will, most likely, permanently end nomadism.

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[100] Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China,*The Plan to Resettle National Nomads during the Twelfth Five Year Plan.*

[101] See: Elizabeth C. Economy, *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future,* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2010); Staff, "World Report 2014: China," *Human Rights Watch,* January 2014, Accessed July 31, 2015, https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2014/country-chapters/china-and-tibet; Theresa Wright, *Party and State in Post-Mao China,* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015).

As Mongols grapple with cultural identity anxiety, they look for ways to prevent full absorption into a Han identity by constructing a reimagined identity. James Scott writes that "*All* identities, without exception, have been socially constructed" and that "invented identities combine with self-making of a heroic kind, in which such identifications become a badge of honor."[104] While some ethnic minority groups may look to ethnonationalism as a way to challenge the state's right to rule and as a mode of heroic self-making, it is not the only mode in which identities can be constructed. Given the cultural and historic role that land and pastoralism play in Mongol identity, there must be new ways in which a pastoral identity is constructed and reified.

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[102] See: Owen Lattimore, "On the Wickedness of Being Nomads;" Dru C. Gladney, *Dislocating China: Reflections on Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics,* (Durham: Duke University Press. 2000); Uradyn E. Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Language Anxiety in China," *American Anthropologist,* Vol. 104, No. 4, (2003): 753-763.

[103] Kristen A. Day, ed., *China's Environment and the Challenge of Sustainable Development,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005); Joseph Kahn and Jim Yardley, "As China Roars, Pollution Reaches Deadly Extremes," *The New York Times,* August 26, 2007, Accessed April 12, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/26/world/asia/26china.html?pagewanted=all; Yanzhong Huang, "China: The Dark Side of Growth," *YaleGlobal,* June 6, 2013, Accessed April 12, 2015, http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/china-dark-side-growth.

[104] James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland South Asia,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), xiii.

These three points, that identities are constructed, that land and pastoralism play an important role in Mongol identity, and that nomadism is ending, are the backdrop for the next chapter in which I consider how Mongols are constructing an imagined pastoral identity. Although resistance expressed through material culture is different than protests, together they are part of the same narrative in which Mongols resist the end of their distinct culture. These sites of memory and identity inform Mongols of their history and help construct and maintain boundaries from other ethnic groups in the region, most notably from the Han.

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CHAPTER FOUR
Repair: Mongolian Art as Reimagination of the Pastoral Identity

“Communities are to be distinguished,
not by their falsity/genuineness,
but by the style in which they are imagined.”[1]

“To be Mongol is no longer to be nomadic,
but rather to have the nomadic ideal in mind.”[2]

Cultural Identity Anxiety in Inner Mongolia

Tegexi is a Mongolian shepherd from Hulunbuir, Inner Mongolia in Northeastern China. He and his family have been pastoralists for more than 30 generations, dating back to the reign of Genghis Khan.[3] Regional development throughout the grassslands has made it difficult for Mongols to retain their traditional occupation as pastoralists. Tegexi worries about the end of pastoralism fits well in my discussion about the end of a cultural identity. He laments, "I do not want him (his son) to forget his traditions.”[4] Tegexi is not alone in his fear that Mongolian cultural identity is fading. A Google search of “Ethnic Mongol Nomads China” will yield articles from several news outlets about how urban development in China has resulted in the relocation of Mongolian pastoralists and threatens cultural identity.[5]

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[1] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* (London: Verso, 1991): 6.

[2] Anne Henochowicz, “Blue Heaven, Parched Land: Mongolian Folksong and the Chinese State,” *Graduate Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies,* 6:1 (2008): 46-47.

[3] Anath Krishan, “In Mongolian grasslands, winds of change,” *The Hindu,* August 8, 2104, Accessed December 8, 2015, http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/in-mongolian-grasslands-winds-of-change/article6295578.ece.

[4] Krishan, “In Mongolian grasslands, winds of change,” *The Hindu,* http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/in-mongolian-grasslands-winds-of-change/article6295578.ece.

The threat to cultural identity stems, in part, from years of economic development in Inner Mongolia. On one hand, development has led to a more "modern" Inner Mongolia*,* marked by paved roads and settled homes. On the other hand, it has also resulted in the influx of more Han citizens into the province as well as Han-preferred economies. The history of state assimilation policies and the impacts such policies have had on pastoralism in Inner Mongolia was discussed extensively in Chapter Two. But, to repeat the points made in that chapter, pastoral lands are diminishing, which results in less land for Mongols to live as pastoralists. Whereas Mongols were once obviously distinct in their cultural identity due to environmental markers like pastoralism, development across the plains of Inner Mongolia has erased this obvious signifier of Mongolian culture. In other words, the end of pastoralism has also ended an obvious marker of Mongolness.

This is the quandary in which Mongols are caught. Some, like Tegexi, grapple with the cultural identity anxiety. Yet, others laud the benefits of economic development. In a recent *New York Times* article*,* Bater, a Mongol sheep merchant, commented on the benefits of economic development. He stated, "It used to take a day to travel between my hometown and Xilinhot, and you might get stuck in a ditch, now it takes 40 minutes."[6]

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[5] See: Andrew Jacobs, "China Fences In Its Nomads, and an Ancient Life Withers," July 11, 2015, Accessed December 9, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/12/world/asia/china-fences-in-its-nomads-and-an-ancient-life-withers.html?_r=0; Staff, "China Plans to end Nomadic Life," *Radio Free Asia,* June 5, 2012, Accessed December 8, 2015, http://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/nomadic-06052012093838.html. Staff, "Keeping nomadic traditions alive in Inner Mongolia," *BBC,* February 6, 2014, Accessed December 8, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-china-blog-26031552.

Despite any benefits that may be a result of the state's modernization efforts, criticisms regarding the state's economic development continue. Critics are not opposed to economic development per se but are concerned with *how* state development impacts indigenous cultural identity. Nicholas Bequelin, director of the East Asia division of Amnesty International, states that "In a matter of years, the government is wiping out entire indigenous cultures."[7] Bequelin's concern about the development of ethnic minority regions is that development requires geographic relocation in spite of what those forced to relocate actually want. He states that "These relocation campaigns are almost Stalinist in their range and ambition, without any regard for what the people in these communities want."[8] The tension between what the state does and what local communities want has prompted resistance from many ethnic groups throughout China. To elucidate this point, Suisheng Zhao, in his text about modern Chinese nationalism, argues that "ethnic nationalism has a resilience of its own; it cannot be easily dislodged from the minds of minority peoples by repression."[9] One way that ethnic nationalism and cultural identity are still evident amongst Mongols in Inner Mongolia is through cultural material representations.

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[6] Jacobs, "China Fences In Its Nomads, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/12/world/asia/china-fences-in-its-nomads-and-an-ancient-life-withers.html?_r=0.

[7] Jacobs, "China Fences In Its Nomads," http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/12/world/asia/china-fences-in-its-nomads-and-an-ancient-life-withers.html?_r=0.

[8] Jacobs, "China Fences In Its Nomads," http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/12/world/asia/china-fences-in-its-nomads-and-an-ancient-life-withers.html?_r=0.

[9] Suisheng Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism,* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2004): 179.

In this chapter, I analyze a piece of cartoon art as a case study through which I demonstrate how Mongols have (re)imagined a pastoral identity. The first part of the chapter includes a discussion of the notion of goodwill development in China and the state's construction of a Mongol identity and grassland trope. I include an image of a piece of art common in the tourist industry in Inner Mongolia as an example of how the state perpetuates an idealized representation of the Mongol grasslands through the tourist industry. Juxtaposed with this piece of art is the discussion of a piece of cartoon art titled *Repair* as an example of how the Mongolian cultural identity is represented through art. Additionally, the analysis demonstrates how the artist resists the state discourse which posits that Mongols are not modern and in need of state development.

Debunking "Goodwill" Development

Criticisms against the state are centered around notions of power. State-driven economic development throughout China's borderlands is thought to be one way the state controls ethnic minority groups living in the border regions. For example, in her study of state policy in Xinjiang, Adrienne Dwyer claims that control and power are shrouded as "goodwill development." She writes:

> condescension towards ethnolinguistic groups on China's margins is a centuries-old custom that has developed into modern policy. Developments in 20th-century China have merely served to drape the reflexive dehumanization of minorities in new garb: Once termed "raw barbarians," now unassimilated minorities are sexy and in touch with nature and spirituality, while concomitantly of "low quality" and in need of Chinese civilization.[10]

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[10] Arienne M. Dwyer, *The Xinjiang Conflict: Uyghur Identity, Language Policy, and Political Discourse,* (Washington, DC: East West Center: 2005): 9.

Dwyer references the state's long held rhetoric that represents ethnic minority groups as backwards. *Backwards* has replaced *barbaric* but the term still holds the same function: it beckons the role of the state to civilize.[11]

In 1954, Liu Shaoqi wrote that Han should provide economic assistance to ethnic minority groups in China because they "cannot immediately overcome their original economic and cultural *backwardness*"[12] (italics added). This ideology, that Han are culturally progressive and that all others in China are backwards, continues the state's management of ethnic minority groups. Modernism, backwards, goodwill, and the kinship metaphor in which Han are the "older" brother and all other ethnic groups are the "younger" brother are rhetorical tropes that construct the state's ideology and its aggressive development policies.[13]

The state's colonial projects are not unlike the global norm in which state powers have framed *others* as in need of help from the civilized world. North American Indians, Native Hawaiians, and Australian Aborigines have all been ushered into modernity through so-called goodwill development introduced by the civilized world. Stevan Harrell refers to this process as a "civilizing project" in which China's *shaoshu minzu,* have been "subjected over the last few centuries to a series of attempts by dominant powers to transform them, to make them more like the transformers, or in the parlance of the transformers themselves, to "civilize" them."[14]

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[11] Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 13.

[12] Liu Shaoqi, *Report on the Draft Constitution of the People's Republic of China,* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1954): 47.

[13] The state often uses a kinship metaphor to express the unity of China as a happy family. The *Common Program,* the interim constitution of the People's Republic of China which was adopted on September 29, 1949, asserts that "the People's Republic of China will become a big fraternal and cooperative family composed of all its nationalities." See: *The Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference,* Accessed December 30, 2015, http://e-chaupak.net/database/chicon/1949/1949e.pdf.
See also: Arienne Dwyer, *The Xinjiang Conflict,* 78; Barry Sautman, "Ethnic Law and Minority Rights in China: Progress and Constraints," *Law and Policy,* (July 1999): 288.

A specific example of this is in Tibet. In her ethnographic account of development in Lhasa, Emily Yeh writes that the state's focus in Lhasa is to transform it into a "civilized city for civilized citizens."[15] The implicit understanding that Han culture is the standard and civilized culture in China remains strong despite efforts to root out *Han chauvinism.* For example, in the early days of the PRC, Liu asserted that Han have a "higher political, economic, and cultural level" than other ethnic groups living in China.[16] More recently, Dwyer posited that Mandarin speaking Han citizens sit atop the hierarchy of ethnolinguistics groups in China.[17] In light of the prevalent ideology that Han are the standard culture in China, Yeh's assertion that the state's aim is to make Lhasa a "civilized city for civilized citizens" can be read to mean that Lhasa is slowly and methodically being transformed into a Han city for Han citizens or at least for those who can be Han-like.[18] Thus, the state's civilizing projects threaten ethnic identities in China, especially in areas where urban development results in homogenous Han-like cities.

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[14] Stevan Harrell, "Introduction" in *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers,* ed. Stevan Harrell (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995): 3.

[15] Emily Yeh, *Taming Tibet,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), Kindle, Location 4335.

[16] Liu, *Report on the Draft Constitution of the People's Republic of China,* 47.

[17] Arienne M. Dwyer, *The Xinjiang Conflict: Uyghur Identity, Language Policy, and Political Discourse,* (Washington, DC: East-West Center, 2005): 14.

[18] Yeh, *Taming Tibet,* Kindle, Location 4543.

The State: Construction of Ethnic Identities

Although Han remains the standard culture in China, the state still needs ethnic groups to showcase evidence that China is still a multiethnic nation. The proliferation of ethnic groups also helps the state stave off criticisms of cultural destruction. The state does not leave it to each ethnic group to construct its own identity. As was mentioned in the Introduction, this strategy was attempted and failed during the beginning stages of the Ethnic Classification Project. As such, the state has long been involved in the construction of ethnic minority group identities.

In order for a group to be categorized as its own in the Ethnic Classification Project, it needed to be distinguishable from other ethnic groups. Harrell asserts that ethnic group identity also holds "the awareness of belonging to an ethnic group," in which an ethnicity is a "a group that….sees itself as solidary…..and that sees itself in opposition to other groups."[19] This is a key point that is relative to the Chinese context because ethnic minority groups are often defined vis-à-vis Han. The perspective that minorities are viewed through a majority identity has led to what Homi Bhabha calls a "nation split within itself, articulating the heterogeneity of its population" and one that is "internally marked by the discourses of minorities, the heterogeneous histories of contending peoples, antagonistic authorities and tense locations of cultural difference."[20] Bhaba's assertion can be applied to the Chinese context in which ethnopolitical tensions indicate that China is split within itself. However, this is not the image the state wants to promote. Instead, the state wants China to be viewed as a united nation.

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[19] Harrell, "Introduction" in *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers:* 28.

[20] Homi Bhaba, *The Location of Culture,* (New York: Routledge, 1994): 148.

China has long been involved in what Wai-Teng Leong has termed the state's "national image-management" in which Chinese citizens become cognizant of the prescribed social order and help perpetuate the prescribed state image of a unified nation.[21] During the early Maoist years, the state produced images in which Chinese citizens were depicted as both united in form and function but were obviously distinct from one another.[22]

After the Cultural Revolution, during which ethnic distinction was prohibited, Deng once again allowed for ethnic differences, which became "picturesque assets" for China's state building efforts.[23] For example, one propaganda poster from 1982 declares, "Our country is a united and unified multi-cultural nation."[24] It depicts various ethnic minority group members dressed in distinctly different cultural clothing, walking arm in arm in front of the Gate of Heavenly Peace.[25] At the center of the image is a Han man dressed in Western clothes walking arm and arm with a Uyghur man and a Mongolian man, both of whom are dressed in traditional clothes. The juxtaposition of a Han man with ethnic minority group members dressed in traditional garb perpetuated the state binary in which Han were depicted as modern and all others as in need of modernization. This is one example of how ethnic minority groups were viewed vis-à-vis the Han.

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[21] Wai-Teng Leong, "The Culture of the State: National Tourism and the State Manufacture of Cultures," in *Communication for and Against Democracy,* Marc Raboy and Peter A. Bruck eds, (Montreal: Black Rose Books): 76.

[22] Schein, *Minority Rules,* 144.

[23] Schein, *Minority Rules,* 144.

[24] ChinesePosters.net, *National Minorities,* Accessed January 23, 2016, http://chineseposters.net/themes/national-minorities.php.

[25] ChinesePosters.net, *National Minorities,* Accessed January 23, 2016, http://chineseposters.net/themes/national-minorities.php.

China's ethnic minorities were put on display through state produced cultural productions to showcase China as a multinational state, in part because multinationalism had become the global norm.[26] The Stalinist model of how an ethnic group should be defined, that guided the Ethnic Classification Project in the 1950's, still directed China's state building efforts during the Deng era. But whereas the prior focus was on social classes, the Deng era focus was on ethnic groups. As a result, Chinese citizens looked to the state's focus on ethnic groups, including the construction of cultural identities attached to each group, for direction on how to express cultural identity. To this day, the state still sets the parameters for ethnic identity expression.

Cultural identity is often an expression of ethnic group consciousness. That is not to say that *all* members of one ethnic group express cultural identity in the same way. Yet, there are often commonly expressed traits. The construction of cultural identities functions in the same way as the construction of national identities. Following Anderson's assertion that national identities are constructed through an "imagined community," Stuart Hall asserts that national cultures are also imagined. He states that "National cultures construct identities by producing meanings about 'the nation' with which we can *identify;* these are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and images which are constructed of it."[27] He also asserts that identities are constructed through "memories for the past; the desire to live together; the perpetuation of the heritage."[28] In light of the theoretical positionality taken up by Anderson and Hall, namely that national identities are constructed, how then are cultures represented?

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[26] Schein, *Minority Rules,* 143.

[27] Stuart Hall, "The Question of Cultural Identity," in *Modernity and Its Futures,* eds. Stuart Hall, David Held, and Tony McGrew, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992):   293.

In China, the representation of ethnic groups are managed in such a way that promotes nationalism and legitimates the Chinese state. Scholar Anagnost points out that, through the representation of ethnic groups, the state has rendered itself "civilized" and "constructed an 'otherness' against which the Party can exercise its legitimating activism."[29] Whereas the categorization of China's ethnic minority groups coaxed those living on the fringe of Chinese society into viewing themselves as part of the Chinese nation, the construction of ethnic identities coaxes ethnic minority groups to look to the state for directions on how to be Mongolian, or Tibetan, or any member of any other ethnic identity. Hall posits, "You only discover who you are because of the identities you are required to take on, into which you are interpellated: *but you must take up those positionalities*, however temporarily, in order to act at all."[30] For Mongols, then, there is an identity that has been constructed and promoted by the state, which maintains ethnic boundaries between Mongolians and other ethnic groups in China. In this way, Mongolian ethnic boundary maintenance is reminiscent of Barth's assertion that ethnic boundaries are constructed , something which was discussed in the Introduction to this study.

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[28] Hall, "The Question of Cultural Identity," 296.

[29] Ann Anagnost, *National Past-Times: Narrative, Representation, and Power in Modern China,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997): 231.

[30] Stuart Hall, "Fantasy, Identity, Politics," in *Cultural Remix: Theories and Politics of the Popular,* eds. Erica Carter, James Donald, and Judith Squires, (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1995): 65.

Who are the Mongols?

The question is, then, to borrow from Almaz Khan, "Who are the Mongols?"[31] Khan suggests that "Historical memory plays an important role in how the Mongols are perceived and represented today. This is true both in terms of Mongol self-imaging and representation and their perception and representation by other parties."[32] There is, he argues, a "homogenizing "Mongolness" for the *public* domain, an essentialized identity grounded in a historical pastoral ecology."[33] As was discussed in the Introduction, Khan's assertion that the pastoral identity is key to Mongolian cultural identity is evident throughout scholarly literature. For example, Bulag maintains that pastoralism is a key cultural marker of Mongolness, and Fujitani writes that pastoralism is "a material vehicle of meaning that helped construct a memory…or that served as a symbolic marker."[34] Thus, the pastoral identity is a key marker of Mongolian identity and, therefore, is used as representation of Mongols in China despite the diminishing numbers of the Mongolians who continue to work as pastoralists.

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[31] Almaz Khan, "Who Are the Mongols?": State, Ethnicity, and the Politics of Representation in the PRC, in *Negotiating Ethnicities in China and Taiwan,* ed. Melissa J. Brown, (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1996): 126-159.

[32] Almaz Khan, "Who are the Mongols? State, Ethnicity, and the Politics of Representation in the PRC" in *Negotiating Ethnicities in China and Taiwan,* ed, Melissa J. Brown, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996): 127.

[33] Khan, "Who are the Mongols?," 126.

[34] Takashi Fujitani, 'Inventing, Forgetting, Remembering: Toward a Historical Ethnography of the Nation-State," in *Cultural Nationalism in East Asia: Representation and Identity,* ed. Harumi Befu, (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1993): 89.

Many of the historical shifts and scholarly literatures about the practice of pastoralism in Inner Mongolia were discussed in Chapter Two.[35] However, to be clear, this study does not claim that pastoralism and agriculturalism fall perfectly along ethnic lines. There is a need to be aware that the binary divide between Mongolian pastoralists and Han agriculturalists marginalizes those Mongols who are farmers and those Han who raise sheep.[36] However, whether or not Mongols are actually pastoralists, they, as a collective group, are represented as such. This identity is constructed and maintained by both the state and Mongols themselves, in part because, as Mullaney states about the Ethnic Classification Project, "its continuity requires perpetual management by the state and continued participation by the people."[37] In other words there must be continued efforts for ethnic groups to remain distinct.

There is a general consensus amongst scholars that China's minorities have long been represented by an outsider without any voice from within the minority group.[38] Scholar Nimrod Baronovitch counters this view with the assertion that, in recent years, minority groups have increasingly been active in the public representation of their own cultural identities.[39] This chapter follows this position and suggests that both the state and minority groups are active in the representation of ethnic minority identity. For Mongols, cultural differences are promoted through material culture, which has become a form of "resistance within collaboration."[40] In other words, Mongols' resistance (to "land grabs," sinicization, assimilation, cultural identity anxiety) is achieved through a collaboration with the state in how Mongol identity is publicly represented. Through these modes of representation, the Mongol culture is portrayed as that of an essentialized minority group in which the discourse of a multi-national state is perpetuated and Mongols are represented in a stereotypical and internally orientalized fashion.

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[35] See: Uradyn Bulag, T*he Mongols at China's Edge: History and the Politics of National Unity,* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002); Caroline Humphrey and David Sneath, *The End of Nomadism,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Dee Mack Williams, *Beyond Great Walls: Environment, Identity, and Development on the Chinese Grasslands of Inner Mongolia,* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2002).

[36] Uradyn E. Bulag, "Alter/native Mongolian identity: from nationality to ethnic group," in *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict, and Resistance,* eds. Elizabeth J. Perry, Mark Selden, (New York: Routledge, 2000): 277

[37] Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation*, 135.

[38] Dru Gladney, "Representing Nationality in China; Refiguring Majority/Minority Identities," *The Journal of Asian Studies,* Vol. 53, No. 1 (February 1994): 92-123; Norma Diamond, "Defining the Miao: Ming, Qing, and Contemporary Views," 92-112; Charles McKhann, "The Naxi and the Nationalities Question," in *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers,* ed. Stevan Harrell (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), 39-62.

The Idealized Grasslands as Landscape Representation

The use of landscape as a mode of representation can be traced back to the Italian Renaissance.[41] David Mitchell argues that it was during that time period that landscape began to be theorized as a "visual ideology" of realism.[42] Because landscapes are represented, argues Mitchell, "indicates that landscapes are in some very important senses 'authored.'[43] Following this line of argument, W. J. T. Mitchell writes that landscape "is an instrument of cultural power, perhaps even an agent of power that is (or frequently represents itself as) independent of human intentions. Landscape thus has a double role with respect to something like ideology….It naturalizes a cultural and social construction representing an artificial world…"[44] In other words, landscape representations are often created in order to promote ideologies.

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[39] Nimrod Baranovitch, "Between Alterity and Identity: New Voices of Minority People in China," *Modern China,* July 2001: 361.

[40] This term is borrowed from Uradyn Bulag, "Models and Moralities: The Parable of the Two 'Heroic Little Sisters of the Grassland." *China Journal,* 42, (1999): 21-41.

[41] Coscrove, Denis, "Prospect, Perspective and the Evolution of the Landscape Idea," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographer,* 10, No. 1 (1985): 46.

[42] David Mitchell, *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction,* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000)*:* 115.

[43] Mitchell, *Cultural Geography,* 121.

Cultural geographers have traced landscape, both the built environment and the representation of it, as a method of exerting power and control over those who inhabit the land.[45] Rapid urbanization in China is an example of built environments that exude meaning as a representation of power. Throughout China, built environments have come to represent China's secured position as a global powerhouse to both domestic and international observers. Skyscrapers built throughout Beijing just in time for the 2008 Summer Olympic games, the transformation of villages like Shenzhen into economic centers of trade, and the expansive urban centers built throughout the western regions of the country all represent and undergird the state's power.

Landscape representations can also function in the same way: as representations of power. Richard Peet writes that, "by recreating landscapes, filling them with signs carrying ideological messages, images are formed of past and future

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[44] W. J. T. Mitchell, "Introduction" in *Power and Landscape,* ed. W. J. T. Mitchell, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1-2.

[45] See: Denis Coscrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape,* (London: Croom Helm, 1985); Tim Cresswell, "Imagining the Nomad: Mobility and the Postmodern Primitive," in *Space and Social Theory: Interpreting Modernity and Postmodernity,* George Benko and Ulf Strohmeyer, eds, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997): 360-379; Stephen Daniles and Denis Cosgrove, "Spectacle and Text: Landscape Metaphors in Cultural Geography," in *Place/Culture/Representation,* eds. James Duncan and David Ley, (London: Routledge, 1993): 57-77.

"realities," patterns of meaning created and changed, and thereby, control exerted over the everyday behavior of the people…"[46] In Inner Mongolia, the grasslands are the key representation of landscape in the province and display the state's power to represent the land as pristine despite the burgeoning urban growth, coal and gold mines, and other industrial structures that have been built throughout the province. Khan argues that, despite any reality concerning the grasslands, Inner Mongolia "continues to be perceived the way it has always been: as an exotic and wild region where all is boundless blue sky, grassland, herds, and nomads."[47] The construction of the grassland imaginary is not accidental but "authored" as part of the state's construction of an identity that both appeals to the local community and benefits the state.

One example of a representation of the grasslands as idealized can be seen in the leather painting below. The painting is titled *Mongolian Family in the Grasslands*.[48] Leather paintings are part of the cultural tourism industry in Inner Mongolia. Although leather painting is a traditional Mongolian art, it has only recently reemerged in China. According to an article in *China Daily,* there are more than 20 leather painting studios in Hohhot.[49] It has become such a vibrant industry in Inner Mongolia that in 2014, the

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[46] Mitchell, *Cultural Geography,* 120.

[47] Almaz Khan, "Who are the Mongols? State, Ethnicity, and the Politics of Representation in the PRC" in *Negotiating Ethnicities in China and Taiwan,* ed, Melissa J. Brown, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996): 132.

[48] Mongolian Title: Tali'n Mongol Aill. English Translation: Mongolian Family in the Grasslands.

[49] Kaihao Wang, "Creative Cowhide," *China Daily,* May 13, 2013, Accessed June 15, 2015, http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2013-05/13/content_16494696.htm.

Hohhot Museum featured the Hohhot Treasured Relics and Leather Carvings and Paintings Exhibition.[50]

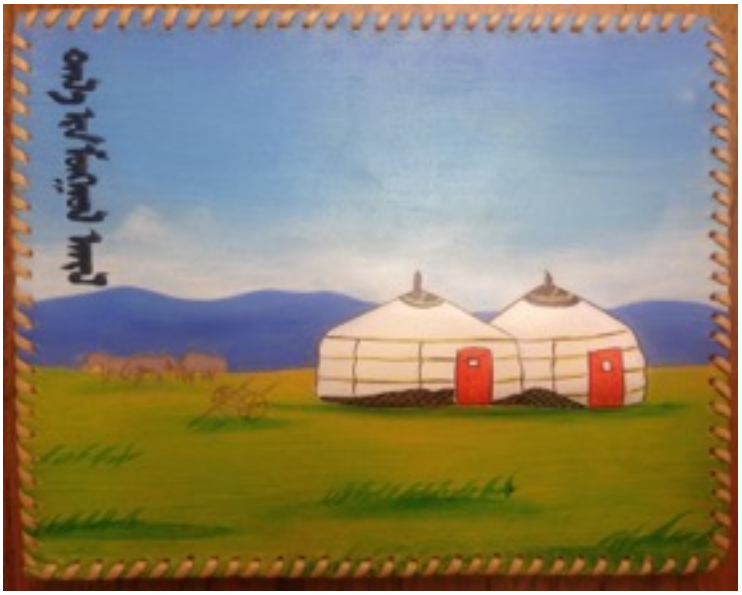

Figure 2: Mongolian Leather Painting

The grasslands in the painting are represented as pristine, marked with only green rolling hills, blue skies, and white clouds rather than massive coal mines or polluted skies. I purchased the leather painting below just before I moved back to the United States in July 2012. I bought it at a Mongolian owned tourist shop in the Mongolian Cultural Center in Hohhot.[51] I knew that it was not an accurate depiction of typical Mongolian life, but I purchased it because it represented the notion of a Mongol culture with which I had become familiar.

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[50] Liu Yufen, "Second Leather Carvings and Paintings Exhibition on Show," *China Daily,* December 31, 2014, Accessed June 15, 2015, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/regional/2014-12/31/content_19211055_3.htm.

[51] The MCC is a two story shopping center that has stores which sell items which include school supplies, sporting equipment, dvd's, books, and cultural souvenirs.

This painting follows the pattern of Mongol identity dictated by the state and perpetuated through other cultural art forms. For example, state-sanctioned songs about Inner Mongolia have lyrics comprised of one set of grassland imagery repeated by another. Singing shepherdess, white yurts, and happy herders are surrounded by pristine grasslands.[52] However, the grasslands represented in the image above no longer match the reality of daily lives. Mitchell argues that "if we live out the spectacle of landscape then it is certainly quite plausible that we do so under someone else's direction."[53] In China, cultural productions are not meant to depict reality per se but, rather, to perpetuate the grasslands as idealized and undisturbed by economic and urban expansion. The pieces of material culture above are indicative of the ability of state power to commodify the memory of the grasslands through art which is purchased as a reminder of a reality that no longer exists.

In his book *Landscape and Memory,* Simon Schama documents the relationship between geographic places and the human imagination.[54] He argues that geographical locations do not match the reality of their existence. Said also writes about how geographic locations are often perpetuated through memory and cultural materiality. He writes that "Geography stimulates not only memory but dreams and fantasies, poetry and paintings…"[55] The Inner Mongolian grasslands have been rendered to the imaginary in such a way as to give them permanence and to position them so they can spur on human imagination and memory. The reimagination of the grasslands continues to be perpetuated despite the reality in which the grasslands throughout the province are increasingly disrupted with sprawling cities and environmental catastrophes. Ironically, the representation of the grasslands as pristine can also be read as a subtle critique of the state's destruction of the grasslands. In other words, the representation of the picturesque geography that no longer exists serves as a reminder that the grasslands have been destroyed by the state's modernization efforts.

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[52] Anne Henochowicz, "Blue Heaven, Parched Land: Mongolian Folksongs and the Chinese State," *Graduate Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies,* Vol. 6, Issue 1, (2008): 41.

[53] Mitchell, *Cultural Geography,* 125.

[54] Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory,* (New York: Vintage, 1995): 30.

[55] Edward Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place," *Critical Inquiry,* Vol. 26, No. 2, (Winter 2000): 181.

The grasslands have long been the setting of an internally colonial experience. Said writes that "more subtle and complex is the unending cultural struggle over territory, which necessarily involves overlapping memories, narratives, and physical structures."[56] Thus, the grasslands are not just represented as idealized for the sake of nostalgia, but they also signify the setting of a cultural struggle between traditional Mongolian shepherding and the modernizing efforts of the state.

The Grasslands in Disrepair

> "I have a dream that one day
> I will invent a kind of ink that turns everything into
> grasslands when I put a drop on the ground."
> Uudam, Mongolian singer[57]

Mongols have a common saying: "Born in the grasslands, raised in the grasslands, the grasslands will always be the source of life and root of creation."[58] The rhetoric in this idiom informs Mongol cultural identity and is an inspiration for artists like Ba Bilig. Bilig is an internationally known artist, a member of the Inner Mongolia Artists Association, and an art teacher at Sunitequoqi Comprehensive High School in Xilingol, Inner Mongolia.[59] He has won several awards for his art, both in China and in international competitions throughout the world.[60] Several Chinese news outlets feature Bilig on a portion of their online publications. *China Daily* highlights him through the News Cartoon portion on its website.[61] *China Net* hosts an entire section titled "grasslands" with current news and special features which include Bilig's work.[62] His work can also be found on *Facebook* or *Sina*. And he has an account on *WeChat* where he posts his artwork.[63]

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[56] Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place," 182.

[57] Facebook, "Uudam Michael (Wudamu)," Public Figure Page, Accessed April 20, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/Uudam-Michael-Wudamu-136715259767442/info/?tab=page_info.

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[58] Translated from: Wendy Sainan, "Ba Bilig: Comic Complex," *China Net,* November 11, 2015, Accessed December 11, 2015, http://grassland.china.com.cn/2015-11/02/content_8343522.htm.

[59] Translated from China Daily: News Cartoon, Accessed June 19, 2015; http://newscartoon.chinadaily.com.cn/onlineartist.shtml?do=homepage&uid=11118.

[60] Translated from: Staff, China Daily: News Cartoon, Accessed June 19, 2015; http://newscartoon.chinadaily.com.cn/onlineartist.shtml?do=homepage&uid=11118.

[61] Staff, China Daily: News Cartoon, Accessed June 19, 2015; http://newscartoon.chinadaily.com.cn/onlineartist.shtml?do=homepage&uid=11118.

[62] Wendy Sainan, "Ba Bilig: Comic Complex," *China Net,* November 11, 2015, Accessed December 11, 2015, http://grassland.china.com.cn/2015-11/02/content_8343522.htm.

[63] Facebook, "Ba Bilig-China," Caricature World Facebook Page, Accessed October 12, 2015, https://www.facebook.com/caricatureworld/photos/ms.c.eJw9kdkRAzEMQjvK6LbUf2NJhPHnGwReWD1RUXosu3r0o~_BZ7rlslmNi~_viH6RmPG7pfdoEeZF9dmlzgJPfee5EHTD3if69zyA3meylgfn~;q~_u3pyFfmJ~;KV~_VtI9LBPoZ887t0j5PLZPlrscxLM~;FN~;f8zT4Xf6W6Bzn47V7TH8TX~;P5qddHt175R7jYPaZgJ~;vDf6vcp~;BfuFfP1NoYw~-~-.bps.a.174646162586892.49713.173457316039110/174646445920197/?type=3&theater; Ba Bilig, blog.sina.com.cn (blog), June 9, 2015, http://blog.sina.com.cn/babilig; Ba Bilig, WeChat Mobile Account, Accessed June 9, 2015.

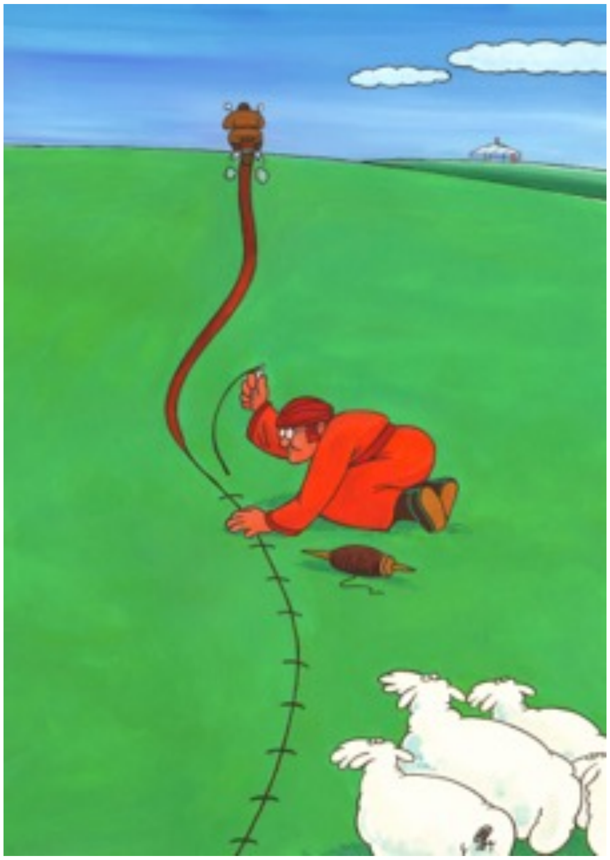

Figure 3: *Repair* by Babilig

The piece of cartoon art above is titled *Repair.*[64] I first saw the piece of art on *WeChat* in 2012. I chose this particular piece of art to examine here because it is a commentary on cultural and political change in the grasslands of Inner Mongolia. The elements in this art piece work together to represent Mongolian culture and to create tension in which the overdevelopment of the grasslands is critiqued.

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[64] Facebook, "Ba Bilig-China," Caricature World Facebook Page, Accessed October 12, 2015, https://www.facebook.com/caricatureworld/photos/ms.c.eJw9kdkRAzEMQjvK6LbUf2NJhPHnGwReWD1RUXosu3r0o~_BZ7rlslmNi~_viH6RmPG7pfdoEeZF9dmlzgJPfee5EHTD3if69zyA3meylgfn~;q~_u3pyFfmJ~;KV~_Vtl9LBPoZ887t0j5PLZPlrscxLM~;FN~;f8zT4Xf6W6Bzn47V7TH8TX~;P5qddHt175R7jYPaZgJ~;vDf6vcp~;BfuFfP1NoYw~-~-.bps.a.174646162586892.49713.173457316039110/174646445920197/?type=3&theater.

Repair depicts the ongoing challenges Mongolian families face in response to over development throughout the grasslands. It is both an imagined representation of the pastoral life and a critique of the impact of modern technology on the grasslands. The geographical setting in this piece of art is the pristine grasslands which, as mentioned above, have become a trope in the construction of a “petrified” Inner Mongolia.

Traditional versus Modern

There are two men in Babilig’s art piece. The most prominent figure is at the center of the image. He is depicted as a Mongolian shepherd wearing traditional Mongolian clothes, called a *deel,* and Mongolian boots. The *deel* is brightly colored, which draws the viewer’s gaze towards the man. His pastoral identity is further marked by the sheep in the foreground of the picture. Additionally, the grasslands are presented as wide, open spaces without fences or any other boundary marker. As mentioned in Chapter Two, boundless grasslands in which Mongols lived as mobile pastoralists was once part of the Mongol spatial identity. Bilig rightly places the Mongol shepherd in a traditional Mongolian space. Finally, the glasses he is wearing seem to indicate that he is an older man. In this way, this man is representative of a past generation for whom pastoralism was the most common occupation. Like Tegexi mentioned above, the man in this image could be one of the last remaining pastoralists in his family.

This is in direct contrast to the other man in the picture who is also a Mongolian man, wearing a *deel*, but who is driving a motorcycle which is representative of modern technology. This man is representative of a younger generation. Similar to what Bater mentioned above, he is enjoying the benefits of modern technology. He is facing forward, moving, and leaving the past behind. This tension, between young and old, modern and backwards, moving and stuck, is key in this piece of art. The actions of each of the men are juxtaposed in order to critique the impact that *modernism* has had on the Mongolian cultural space and, by extension, on the Mongolian people. The tension created by destruction and repair are a reference to the state's policies in Inner Mongolia in which Mongols were blamed for overgrazing and destroying the land. Chinese state discourse deflects any responsibility for land degradation and, instead, blames local residents.[65] Mongol pastoralists are depicted as lazy and as lacking the scientific understanding necessary to care for the pastoral lands.[66]

Thus, by depicting the older Mongolian man as the one who is able to repair the land, Bilig resists the state discourse that insists that Mongols are not able to care for the land. Bilig also avoids the danger of having his art censored in China. This is achieved through his nuanced critique whereby, instead of blaming the state directly for the destruction of the grasslands, the focus is on the Mongolian man's "repair" of the grasslands. In doing so, the focus is on the Mongolian shepherd, and by extension, traditional Mongolian pastoralists, the ones who are able to repair the destruction caused by modern development.

Invoking Nostalgia

Another important element in this piece of art is the notion of nostalgia. Resaldo describes nostalgia as the "association with (indeed, its disguise as) more genuinely innocent, tender recollections of what is at once an earlier epoch and a previous phase of life."[67] Nostalgia is invoked in both the constructed image of the grasslands and by the image of a yurt in the background of the painting. Yurts are not as common in daily life as they once were. Instead, they have been transformed into markers of Mongolian ethnicity through the cultural tourism industry which is further discussed in the next chapter. They are used as hotels for tourists who want to have an "authentic" Mongolian experience.[68] In this piece of art, there is just one yurt rather than a cluster of yurts, which is common in tourist locations. This probably indicates that the yurt belongs to one of the men. It is safe to assume that it belongs to the older gentleman because he represents a past Mongolian cultural identity. But, unlike the vivid colors used to depict the man, the image of the yurt is muted. Its faded appearance represents the fading of Mongolian traditional culture. What once was a reality has been relegated to a memory, but even that memory is faded. In this way, perhaps Bilig is conceding the fact that Mongol traditions are in the distant past, and in the distant memory, of the Mongolian people.

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[65] Williams, *Beyond Great Walls,* 31.

[66] For a longer discussion on Chinese discourse concerning land degradation see Williams, *Beyond Great Walls,* 24-40.

Said writes that people look to "memory, especially in its collective forms, to give themselves a coherent identity, a national narrative, a place in the world" even if it is "manipulated and intervened for sometimes urgent purposes in the present."[69] The image of the yurt is part of the ethnic Mongolian narrative that maintains Mongolness through imagined pastoralism. In this way, memory is also an indicator of the relationship between Mongols and the state. The fact that a yurt has been relegated to memory is a reminder that the Mongolian cultural identity has been interrupted by state power. In this way, a "dialectic of memory over territory" highlights the place that Mongols have within the Chinese ethonopolitical order.[70]

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[67] Renato Resaldo, "Imperialist Nostalgia," *Representations,* Vol 26 (Spring 1989): 108.

[68] Christopher Evans and Caroline Humphrey, "After-Lives of the Mongolian Yurt: The 'Archaeology' of a Chinese Tourist Camp," *Journal of Material Culture,* Volume 7, No. 2, (July 2002: 189-210.

[69] Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place," 179.

Red China Reigns

The last element of this piece to be analyzed is the color of the dirt beneath the grasslands. It is a reddish hue. Perhaps Bilig painted the dirt red to represent blood. The land is "bleeding" due to the way modern technology has "cut" it. Because of the destruction of modern technology, the land requires a surgical repair by one who knows how to care for the land: a Mongol shepherd. Further, the shepherd is wearing a traditional Mongolian deel that is the same color as the land. There is a connection, a unity, between the Mongol shepherd and the land. Thus, if the land is representative of Mongolian culture, then the fissure in the land is representative of the fissure in Mongolian cultural identity. As such, it is a return to the traditional Mongolian lifestyle that will repair the land.

Another possible reading of the color of the dirt is that the red hue represents China. Red is representative of state power. Red is the color of the nation's flag, the color of money-filled envelopes given at Chinese festivals, and the name for the youth army (Red Guards) during the Cultural Revolution. It is a Chinese (Han) color. At Inner Mongolia University, in the capital city of Hohhot, at the top of the main building on campus, there are three decorative concrete yurts. At first glance, it would appear that the yurts that sit atop the main building of a traditionally Mongolian university were constructed to represent the Mongolian culture. But instead of painting the yurts blue, which is a color that is traditionally representative of the Mongolian people, the yurts were painted red to signify the power that the state holds over Mongols. The color literally covers the yurts, which communicates that any expression of the Mongolian culture must follow the state's mandates for the public domain. Thus, by painting the dirt red, Bilig is perhaps cooperating with the state by affirming its power in Inner Mongolia. Further, if the land is red, then it could be interpreted that the land belongs to the state. Despite what Mongols may believe about their cultural connection and history with the land, it is the state that owns the land.

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[70] Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place," 181.

Modern Modes of Technology to Preserve Tradition

As mentioned above, I first saw *Repair* on the popular Chinese social media site *WeChat,* and Bilig's art is also easily accessible on other social media sites. If Bilig is using modern technology to promote his artwork, is it contradictory to my argument that Bilig is preserving a traditional identity? Is the use modern technology contradictory to the resistance theme of *Repair?* I do not think that it is.

My argument in the analysis of *Repair* is not that Mongols are not modern or disdain modernity. Rather, I use *Repair* as a case study to show how Mongols, in response to development, have reimagined their cultural identity. Thus, modern technology like social media sites are just another mode through which the Mongolian cultural identity can be reimagined and relaunched.

In *Imagined Communities,* Anderson discusses how newspapers were used to promote ideas of nationalism.[71] Printed newspapers have largely given way to social media tools, which include Facebook and Twitter. But the function is still the same: to unify people who live in different geographic locations. The Arab Spring's "twitter revolutions" have prompted scholars to analyze how technology is used to unify people and to propagate resistance.[72]

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[71] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 33.

In the same vein, the distribution of *Repair* through social media functions to mobilize Mongols through a common identity and purpose. *Repair* is at the intersection of art as resistance and social media as mobilization.[73] Rather than display *Repair* as a fixed image on an urban wall mural, Bilig's art is accessible through various online sources. It has been "liked" and "shared" and "reposted" widely. Through this prolific dissemination, Mongols are mobilized in the resistance of the destruction of the grasslands and unified into a reimagined pastoral identity.

Another question with regards to the use of social media as a means of distribution of the artwork is whether or not Mongols are able to commonly access *WeChat* and other social media. When *WeChat* was launched in January 2011, I was living in Inner Mongolia. *WeChat,* called *weixin* in China, became *the* social media site used to connect with friends and business colleagues. According to *DMR*, a website that provides digital statistics, *WeChat* had 650 million monthly users in November 2015.[74]

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[72] See: Nahed Eltantawy and Julie B. Wiest, "The Arab Spring Social Media in the Egyptian Revolution: Reconsidering Resource Mobilization Theory*," International Journal of Communication,* Vol. 5 (2011): 1207-1224; Paolo Gerbaudo, *Tweets and the Streets: Social Media and Contemporary Activism,* (London: Pluto Press, 2012); Gary Wolfsfeld, Elad Segev, Tamir Sheafer, "Social Media and the Arab Spring: Politics Comes First," *The International Journal of Press/Politics,* Vol. 18, No. 2, (April 2013): 115-137.

[73] An example of art as resistance and identity making is: Kristin Lee Moss, "Cultural Representation in Philadelphia Murals: Images of Resistance and Sites of Identity Negotiation," *Western Journal of Communication,* Volume 74, Issue 4, (2010): 372-395.

[74] Craig Smith, "By the Numbers: 50+ Amazing WeChat Statistics," *DMR,* February 8, 2015, Accessed February 25, 2015, http://expandedramblings.com/index.php/wechat-statistics/.

While there are not specific statistics about users in each province of China, the website states that 69% of the population in Tier 2 cities in China, which include provincial capitals, use *WeChat.*[75] Additionally, a recent news article on *BBC* stated that "Nomads in northern China are relying on social media to stay connected," and that "herders in the autonomous Inner Mongolia region are using instant messaging services like WeChat, a service similar to WhatsApp, to advertise the sale of their livestock, state news agency Xinhua reports."[76] This particular news article focuses on how rural Mongols stay connected through WeChat for business development. However, the fact that Mongols are connected through WeChat is relevant in this study. Mongols access WeChat and, as such, remaining Mongolian shepherds and urban Mongols alike are connected through the use of modern technology.

Conclusion: Collective Memory as Representation and Resistance

In conclusion, representations of cultural identity are "not an inert and passive thing, but a field of activity in which past events are selected, reconstructed, maintained, modified, and *endowed with political meaning* (italics added)."[77] Said's statement helps further elucidate Bilig's poignant piece of cartoon art. In *Repair,* the collective memory of a Mongol pastoral life is not passively represented. Rather, Bilig chooses certain cultural markers, like the setting of the pristine grasslands and the "wise" shepherd as the one who is able to "repair" the grasslands. He maintains a sense of an imagined community through the expression of cultural identity. Bilig's work is certainly endowed with political meaning. Through the nostalgic elements of a past Mongolian lifestyle and through the destruction created by modern technology, Bilig critiques the Chinese discourse of modernization. What is also important in Bilig's piece is the work that collective memory does to harken Mongols back to the pastoral lifestyle. The images of the grasslands, the shepherd, and the yurt are all a representations of a timeless and idealized pastoral identity that Mongols do not want to forget.

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[75] Smith, "By the Numbers: 50+ Amazing WeChat Statistics,"

[76] Staff, "China: Nomadic herders rely on social networks," *BBC News,* November 14, 2014, Accessed February 25, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-29986931.

[77] Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place," 185.

Zhao writes that "the state may rewrite history as a means to colonize ethnic minorities and to control them through coercive policies. It cannot, however, eliminate the historical memory of ethnic minorities."[78] Therein lies another point of tension between Mongols and the Chinese state. On the one hand, it is the state that has constructed Mongolian cultural identity and has relegated pastoralism to the imaginary. Mongols see themselves as pastoralists forced by the state to become "modern." The state views Mongols as recovered pastoralists that are finally moving along the evolutionary scale of social development.[79]

Repair is also a form of resistance. Mitchell defines resistance as "attempts to redefine or break down the structures of power that govern resister's lives" and it can be "*any* act that occurs in a way not fully intended by the "powers that be."[80] Bilig resists the state's discourses about romanticized Inner Mongolia, backwards Mongols, and the benefits of modernity by depicting the grasslands differently from the way the state would wish them to be depicted. This piece of art has all the elements of the state constructed image of the grasslands, just like the leather painting described above. But in Bilig's rendition, the grassland trope is interrupted by destruction. The fissure through Bilig's piece is, as Cresswell states, a "purposeful action directed against some disliked entity."[81] Bilig's painting is then an act of resistance, different from protests, but still aimed at the same disliked entity: the destructive actions in the grasslands.

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[78] Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction,* 179.

[79] The state followed Lenin in its categorization of ethnic groups and in its ranking of those ethnic groups according to Lenin's five-stage evolutionary scale: primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism. See Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation,* 72.

[80] Mitchell, *Cultural Geography,* 148.

The pastoral imaginary is publicly represented because, for the state, the image of the pristine grasslands not only dismisses criticisms of environmental destruction, but it also creates a visual rhetoric in which the grasslands are represented as an idyllic tourist destination. It is within this framework that Mongols continue to represent themselves. Thus, the reimagined pastoral identity is taken on by Mongols. For Mongols, however, this identity is not an advertisement for tourism but, instead, a critique of the state's destruction of their homeland. The critique of the state is a method in which Mongols resist and protest the state discourse of goodwill development that frames Mongols as backwards. Further, Mongols resist and protest the end of a distinct cultural identity because, although pastoralists like Tegexi are quickly disappearing, the pastoral identity can still be perpetuated, even if only through a nostalgic representation of a past reality.

As mentioned above, I first saw Bilig's *Repair* on *WeChat,* which also has several user accounts through which other types of Mongolian art is displayed. I would like to expand this case study by analyzing other pieces of art in which themes of an imagined cultural identity and of resistance to the state’s modernization discourse are displayed. I think a pertinent component of further study would also be to demonstrate how a constructed visual rhetoric of pastoralism is represented through various types of artistic works.

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[81] Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology and Transgression,* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996): 22.

Representations of the past are also evident in Inner Mongolia’s cultural tourism industry. Both the state and Mongols laud Genghis Khan as a marker of Mongolian cultural identity. In the next chapter, I will analyze how Genghis Khan has been sinicized by the state so that he can be commodified as a key figure in Inner Mongolia’s cultural tourism industry.

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CHAPTER FIVE
Proper Patriotism: Performing Genghis Khan

“It is a constant surprise to see what power Genghis still exerts today.”[1]
Jonathan Man

“We are the Mongols, descendants of Genghis Khan.”[2]
Mongolian Rap Artist

Cultural Tourism and the Invention of Ethnic Identity

Studies in the field of cultural tourism reinforce the notion that ethnic identity is not fixed but invented and imagined as part of ethnopolitical polity.[3] These studies also support the claim that there are several actors, including the state and members of the represented ethnicity, that are involved in the construction of ethnic identities throughout the global tourist industry.[4] Literature about tourism in Asia demonstrates that there is an intersection between tourism, ethnic identity, and state policies.[5] Because the Chinese state lurks in every industry in the country, domestic cultural tourism is a highly politicized industry that aims to secure distinct *minzu* identities that can work within the prevalent discourses of modernization and national unity.[6] Timothy Oakes argues that the Chinese state draws on indigenous notions of identity to undergird the constructed ethnic identities promoted through tourism.[7]

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[1] Jonathan Man, *Genghis Khan,* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2004): 362.

[2] Staff, “Rap Song Dedicated to Mergen Banned,” *SMHRIC,* June 13, 2011, http://www.smhric.org/news_390.htm*,* Accessed February 28, 2016.

[3] Robert E. Wood, “Tourism and the State,” in *Tourism, Ethnicity, and the State in Asian and Pacific Societies,* eds. Michael Picard and Robert E. Wood, (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1997): 18.

[4] See: Janet Cochrane, ed., *Asian Tourism: Growth and Change,* (Leeds: Leeds Metropolitan University, 2008); Michael Picard and Robert E. Wood, *Tourism, Ethnicity, and the State in Asian and Pacific Societies,* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1997).

[5] Li Yang, “Ethnic Tourism Development: Chinese Government Perspectives, *Annals of Tourism Research,* Vol. 35, No. 3, (2006): 752.

In China's cultural tourism industry, ethnic identities are constructed and reimagined based on cultural markers within each ethnic group.[8] Barth asserts that boundaries are constructed categories that organize ethnic groups. His notion of ethnic boundaries is important here because constructed boundaries help promote the notion that China is a multiethnic state and that its ethnic minority groups are part of the "big happy multicultural family."[9] In other words, the state looks to the domestic cultural tourism industry to construct ethnic identities, which then secure the notion of a multiethnic state.

In an article about the intersection of tourism and the state, Robert Wood puts forth the notion that "states have deep interests in both tourism and ethnicity."[10] He considers key issues in the cultural tourism industry, which include how concepts of ethnicity and culture are diffused through tourism, how specific identities persist in the context of tourism, how tourism is a part of a state's ethnic management policies, and how the intersection of state policies, tourism practices, and ethnopolitics shapes the construction of identities produced by a variety of actors.[11] These key issues coalesce in the cultural tourism industry in Inner Mongolia.

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[6] William G. Feighery, "Heritage Tourism in Xi'an: Constructing the Past in Contested Space," in *Asian Tourism: Growth and Change,* ed. Janet Cochrane, (Oxford: Elsvier), 325.

[7] Timothy Oakes, "Ethnic tourism in rural Guizhou: Sense of lace and the commerce of authenticity," in *Tourism, Ethnicity, and the State in Asian and Pacific Societies*, eds. Michael Picard and Robert Everett Wood,(Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997): 36.

[8] There are several studies about performance and ethnic identity in China. I have included three here: E.R. Walsh and M.B. Swain, "Creating Modernity by Touring Paradise: Domestic Ethnic Tourism in Yunnan, China," *Tourism Recreation Research,* Volume 29, Issue 2, (2004): 59-68; Jing Li, "Tourism enterprises, the State, and the Construction of Multiple Dai Cultures in Contemporary Xishuang Banna, China," *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research,* Vol. 9, No. 4, (December 2004): 315-330; Philip Feifan Xie, "The Bamboo-beating Dance in Hainan China: Authenticity and Commodification," *Journal of Sustainable Tourism,* Volume 11, Issue 1, (2003): 5-16.

[9] Clarissa Sebag-Montefiore, "China's Ethnic Song and Dance," *The New York Times,* May 31, 2013, Accessed March 22, 2016, http://latitude.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/05/31/chinas-ethnic-song-and-dance/?_r=0.

[10] Wood, "Tourism and the State, 2.

In this chapter, I show that Mongolian cultural identity is also constructed by way of Inner Mongolia's cultural tourism industry. To support this claim, I draw on personal experiences in a cultural themed restaurant in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia. The restaurant is a case study through which I will argue that Mongolian identity is perpetuated through spectacle type performances. A key figure in Mongolian cultural identity distinction is Genghis Khan who has become normalized as a Chinese national hero through the state's retelling of Mongolian history. In this chapter, I posit that Genghis Khan remains an active part of the cultural tourism industry in Inner Mongolia. I will also argue that, by participating in the cultural tourism industry, Mongols collaborate with the state's construction of an identity that is ahistorical, romanticized, and internally orientalized. For the state, the cultural tourism industry undergirds the notion that distinct ethnic identities in China still exist. For Mongols, the cultural tourism industry provides a way for a distinct cultural identity to remain intact even if ethnic boundaries are constructed and maintained through representation and reimagination.

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[11] Robert E. Wood, "Tourism and the State," 5-6.

The Politics of Imagining

In 2006, Guo Wurong, manager of the Genghis Khan Mausoleum in Inner Mongolia, claimed that "Genghis Khan was certainly Chinese" and a "great man of the Chinese people, a hero of the Mongolian nationality, and a giant in world history."[12] Guo's statement follows the state ideology according to which Genghis Khan has been strategically reimagined as part of the Chinese nation. This conflation of Genghis Khan's identity within China is not new. When the Qing Dynasty collapsed in the early part of the 20th century, the Chinese state appropriated Genghis Khan as a politically strategic tool in order to gain the loyalty of the Mongols. Mongols could not stop their cultural hero from being absorbed into the Chinese state's retelling of history. In Chapter Two, I traced the major historical shifts of Genghis Khan's evolution as a political and cultural symbol in Inner Mongolia. I will add a few more key historical moments below in order to contextualize how the Mongolian rights to their cultural hero were severed and, in turn, how the state "adopted" Genghis Khan as part of the Chinese nation.

Throughout the 1930's and 1940's, the Chinese Communists looked to Genghis Khan to rally Mongols against Japan and the Chinese nationalists.[13] Mao used the cultural connection Mongols had with Genghis Khan in order to strategically align Mongols with the Chinese Communists to defeat other external powers vying for rule of

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[12] Graeme Baker, "Outrage as China lays claim to Genghis Khan," *The Telegraph,* December 30, 2006, Accessed July 1, 2015, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1538174/Outrage-as-China-lays-claim-to-Genghis-Khan.html.

[13] Uradyn Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism: The Politics of Friendship on China's Mongolian Frontier,* (Lanham: Rowmand & LIttlefield Publishers, 2010), 48.

China. By referring to Mongols as "descendants of Khan," Mao elicited national pride that could be mobilized against Japanese aggressors.[14] By 1949, Mao and the Chinese Communists successfully established the PRC and began to develop further ethnopolitical policies, which included the categorization of the country's *minzu* through the Ethnic Classification Project, as was detailed in the Introduction.

In order for the Ethnic Classification Project to be successful, there needed to be some distinction between ethnic groups. Ethnic distinction achieves two goals. Firstly, at the time of the Ethnic Classification Project, the Chinese state was in the process of building a strong national identity as a "family" of ethnic groups that the state would recognize as a part of the z*honghua minzu* (Chinese nation).[15] The categorization project was a strategic move that ensured that ethnic minority groups living throughout the Chinese territory would see themselves as *Chinese.* In this way, the state hoped to secure loyalty and prevent potential geopolitical alignment with other state powers that surrounded the Chinese territory. Secondly, the state began to focus on modernization. Ethnic categorization defined minority groups as "backwards" and in need of economic, social, and cultural development.[16] In order to "help" ethnic groups develop out of *backwardness*, the state would modernize its ethnic minority groups, which was to be achieved, in part, through the construction of social, cultural, and political identities. These distinct identities would be perpetuated to draw tourists to “exotic” locations to “see” China’s ethnic minority groups.

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[14] Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism,* 49.

[15] For a more extended history about China's Ethnic Classification Project See: Melissa Brown, "Ethnic Classification and Culture: The Case of the Tujia in Hubei, China," *Asian Ethnicity,* Vol. 2, Issue 1, (2001): 55-72; Dru Gladney, "The Ethnogenesis of the Ugyhur," *Central Asian Survey,* Vol. 9, Issue 1 (1990): 1-28; Ralph Litzinger, *The Yao and the Politics of National Belonging,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); Thomas Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Nicholas Tapp, "In Defense of the Archaic: A Reconsideration of the 1950's Ethnic Classification Project in China," *Asian Ethnicity* 3, No. 1 (2002): 63-84.

[16] Oakes, "Ethnic tourism in rural Guizhou: Sense of lace and the commerce of authenticity," 35-70.

Thus, in the case of the Mongols, the state developed a “cult of Khan” in order to promote Inner Mongolia as a tourist destination. While the Soviets banned Genghis Khan in the MPR in order to quell Mongol nationalism, the Chinese state promoted Genghis Khan in order to modernize the region and develop its economy.[17] In this way, Genghis Khan became a part of the cultural distinctiveness of the Mongol *minzu* even if he was also part of the state’s efforts to modernize Inner Mongolia.

However, the state’s allowance for Genghis Khan’s alignment with the Mongols would not remain intact for long. The Tibetan uprising in 1959 was a watershed year which created state paranoia and a fear that ethnic nationalism would spread.[18] For Mongols this meant that the state would again intervene in its management of Genghis Khan in order to quell any potential Mongolian nationalist sentiments. The state’s concern was predicated on the view that, because Genghis Khan was a Mongolian hero, he would override Mongol sensibilities to view themselves as a part of the Chinese nation. The fear that a strong Mongolian national identity could evolve into an uprising similar to the case in Tibet prompted the state to claim Genghis Khan as Chinese and, thereby, to publicly sever the cultural tie that Mongols had with Genghis Khan.[19] Unlike the Soviets who outright banned any mention of Genghis Khan in the

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[17] Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism,* 50.

[18] Robert Barnett, “The Tibet Protests of Spring, 2008: Conflict between Nation and State,” *China Perspectives,* No. 3,(2009): 7.

[19] Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism,* 51.

MPR, the Chinese state took a more nuanced approach in its ethnopolitical management of Mongols by relying, instead, on a political reimagination of Genghis Khan which now asserted that Genghis Khan was now part of the entire Chinese nation. This political maneuvering was executed in order to exert further control over Mongols.

Beginning in the 1980's, when Deng began to develop new economic policies, Genghis Khan was again placed at the forefront of ethnopolitics in Inner Mongolia in order to help to develop the cultural tourism industry which had become a national priority. Now that Genghis Khan had slowly been absorbed into the state's manipulation of history, the state would capitalize on the Mongol claim to Genghis Khan as a cultural hero and a marker of Mongolian ethnic identity. Feighery argues that Deng's economic reforms "instituted the right to be non-Han."[20] That is not to say that the state suddenly permitted the expression of ethnic identity, but rather that ethnic identity was developed by the state as a commodity in order to spur on economic growth. As part of the state's ethnic policies, the cultural tourism industry was launched throughout China's border regions.[21] Part of the reason for this focus was because border regions would act as geographical buffers between external nation states and interior China. As the state continually monitors its geographic borderlands for notions of separatism, ethnic identities were strengthened within the framework of Chinese nationalism.[22] As such, the state continues to determine how an ethnic identity is marketed so that it enhances the local tourism industry and creates a local sense of identity that is predicated on the notion that all the people in China belong to the Chinese nation.[23]

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[20] Feighery, "Heritage Tourism in Xi'an," 325.

[21] Davis, *Song and Silence,* 29.

[22] Dru C. Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic of China,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

Genghis Khan's presence in Inner Mongolia facilitates at least two state goals. Firstly, Genghis Khan is used to promote Inner Mongolia as a tourism destination because domestic and international tourists seek an authentic Mongolian experience, which includes interaction with the Great Khan.[24] Secondly, in the same vein, the public display of Genghis Khan facilitates proper patriotism and helps the state to maintain a unified sense of Chinese national loyalty in Inner Mongolia. Bulag argues that the state's manipulation and maneuvering of Genghis Khan "serves the interest of contemporary Chinese nationalism."[25] In some ways, this claim is self-evident because the state would not promote anything that does not serve its purposes. Additionally Bulag claims the "Chinese cult of Chinggis Khan" can be "understood both as a statist attempt to accommodate minorities within China and as the exercise of racial nationalism…," which displays minority national pride but adheres to the state's promotion of social harmony.[26] Thus, Genghis Khan is a marker of Mongolian cultural distinction in an increasingly Han dominated region. The state's allowance for Genghis Khan to be promoted as a cultural hero reconstructs necessary ethnic boundaries between Han and Mongols.[27] But, in doing so, the state also maintains social harmony and constructs a stopgap to any potential attempts at ethnic separatism in the region.

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[23] Li Yang, "Ethnic Tourism Development," 572.

[24] Nasan Bayar, "On Chinggis Khan and Being Like a Buddha: A Perspective on Cultural Conflation in Contemporary Inner Mongolia," in *The Mongolia-Tibet Interface: Opening New Research Terrains in Inner Asia,* ed. U.E. Bulag and H. Diemberger (Lieden: Brill, 2007), 197-221.

[25] Uradyn Bulag, "The Chinese Cult of Chinggis Khan: Genealogical Nationalism and Problems of National and Cultural Integrity," *Asian Nationalities Project at University of Victoria,* (October 3-5, 2003): 2, Accessed July 10, 2015, http://web.uvic.ca/~anp/Public/posish_pap.html.

[26] Bulag, "The Chinese Cult of Chinggis Khan," 2.

It should be noted that Genghis Khan is not the only non-Chinese hero to be colonized by the Chinese state and incorporated into the Chinese nation. There have been "other non-Chinese heroes, who had once been ignored or denounced as China's enemies, have been taken aboard as "Chinese" (*zhongguo ren).*"[28] Additionally, historical figures that were once lauded as Chinese heroes may not fit the Chinese state's contemporary definition of a hero anymore. For example, Baranovitch writes that, in December 2002, Yue Fei (1103-1142) was demoted from the status of national hero because he "did not represent the entire Chinese nation as presently defined."[29] This is important because it demonstrates how the Chinese state manages its ethnopolitics and drives its ideologies through historical reimagination and discourse development. Ethnic groups, which the state used to refer to as "foreigners," are now fully incorporated into the state's definition of "Chinese."[30] This strategy undergirds state power (to invent history) and undermines ethnic minority agency (to claim history).

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[27] Almaz Khan, "Chinggis Khan: From Imperial Ancestor to Ethnic Hero," in *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers,* ed. Stevan Harrell (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 248.

[28] Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism,* 56.

[29] Nimrod Baranovitch, "Others No More: The Changing Representation of Non-Han People's in Chinese History Textbooks, 1951-2003," *Association for Asian Studies,* Vol. 69, No. 1, (February 2010): 85.

[30] Baranovitch, "Others No More," 103.

Genghis Khan is evidence of the state's internal colonialist efforts in Inner Mongolia in whereby Genghis Khan has been constructed as an extension of state power.[31]

Scholars have contributed to much of the scholarship about how Genghis Khan is perceived, reimagined, and manipulated within China. Almaz Khan writes extensively about the cult and symbolism of Genghis Khan, which maintains sociopolitical significance within China.[32] Nasan Bayar analyzes the function of the Genghis Khan Mausoleum as part of the growing cult-like worship of Genghis Khan in which Mongols, both in Inner and Outer Mongolia, worship Genghis Khan in their quest for cultural identity.[33] Bayar outlines a historical trajectory in which Genghis Khan has shifted from being known as the founder of the Mongol empire to a "hero of the Chinese nation."[34] Bayar is also helpful in contextualizing my assertion that Genghis Khan is both a Chinese national hero and a marker of Mongolian cultural identity. Bayer writes that "the notion that Chinggis Khan is a hero of the Chinese nation, obtained through a non-historical conceptualisation, shares a common ground with his other identity as Buddha."[35] In other words, Genghis Khan holds multiple identities in China. In this project, he is both a Chinese politicized figure and a Mongolian cultural hero.

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[31] See: Dru C. Gladney, "China's Indigenous Peoples and the Politics of Internal Colonialism: The Case of the Uyghur Muslim Minority," *Harvard Asia Pacific Review,* Volume 3, No. 1, (Winter '98-'99): 1-16; Trevor Sofield and F. M. Sarah Li, "Indigenous minorities of China and effects of tourism," in *Tourism and Indigenous Peoples,* eds. Richard Butler and Tom Hinch, (Oxford: Elsevier, 2007): 265-280; Dawa Norbu, *China's Tibet Policy,* (Surrey, England: Curzon Press, 2001).

[32] Almaz Khan, "Chinggis Khan: Form Imperial Ancestor to Ethnic Hero," 248-277.

[33] Bayar, "On Chinggis Khan and Being Like a Buddha,"

[34] Bayar, "On Chinggis Khan and Being Like a Buddha," 217.

[35] Bayar, "On Chinggis Khan and Being Like a Buddha," 216.

In *Collaborative Nationalism,* Bulag examines how Genghis Khan has been constructed and appropriated by Japan, China, Russia, and Mongolia in the context of the complex geopolitical environment of Inner Mongolia.[36] The work of these scholars informs my claim that Genghis Khan continues to be a marker of Mongolian cultural identity.

Cultural Tourism: At the Intersection of Ethnic Identity and State Loyalty

The connection that Genghis Khan has with Mongolian cultural identity is easily viewed through the cultural tourism industry in which "tourism (is) motivated by a tourist's search for exotic cultural experiences."[37] Tour companies advertise Genghis Khan as part of the tourism experience in Inner Mongolia. Below are some examples of how Genghis Khan is mobilized through various tour company websites:

- ***Smart Travel Asia***: **http://www.smarttravelasia.com/InnerMongolia.htm**

  In reference to Genghis Khan, the website promotes Inner Mongolia with the following statement: "Yet, almost 800 years on, *his memory is very much alive and kicking in Inner Mongolia* – under Chinese rule for over 60 years. Shrines to the great warrior are still proudly displayed in that Mongolian icon, the yurt,…" and "His memory has served to fuel commerce too, and Genghis souvenirs, including stern bronze statues and vivid wall hangings depicting triumphant battles, dominate souvenir stores, and market stalls." (italics added)[38]

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[36] Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism.*

[37] L. Yang, "Ethnic Tourism and Cultural Representations," *Annals of Tourism Research,* Volume 38, Number 2, (2001): 562.

[38] Staff, "Inner Mongolia, mutton mood," *Smart Travel Asia,* http://www.smarttravelasia.com/InnerMongolia.htm, Accessed February 15, 2016.

- ***Tour Beijing***: **http://www.tour-beijing.com/inner_mongolia_tour/#.VssUA7T4-Vs** This website promotes a tour titled "Beijing-Inner Mongolia *Genghis Khan* 5 Day Experience Tour.[39]
- ***China Highlights***: **http://www.chinahighlights.com/inner-mongolia/** This website promotes Inner Mongolia by positioning Genghis Khan as a Chinese hero. It states: "*Genghis Khan is the one who ended their suffering and built a united country*, and an empire including much of China, and so the history of China went into a new dynasty, the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368). There are museums to commemorate this great hero."[40]
- ***Lonely Planet:*** **https://www.lonelyplanet.com/china/inner-mongolia** The Lonely Planet website states that: "Mongolia. The word alone stirs up visions of nomadic herders, thundering horses and, of course, the warrior-emperor Genghis Khan. The Mongols conquered half the known world in the 13th century and while their empire is long gone, *visitors are still drawn to this land wrapped up in both myth and legend*."[41]

Each of the websites listed above incorporates Genghis Khan into the promotion of Inner Mongolia as a tourism destination. Inner Mongolia is therefore frozen in time. By traveling to Inner Mongolia, tourists are taken back to the 13th century when Genghis Khan "built a united country." Just as the grasslands are promoted as idyllic, as we saw in the previous chapter, Genghis Khan is promoted as the historical figure who united China.

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[39] Staff, "Tour Inner Mongolia," *Tour Beijing,* http://www.tour-beijing.com/inner_mongolia_tour/#.VssUA7T4-Vs*,* Accessed February 15, 2016.

[40] Staff, "Inner Mongolia Travel Guide," *China Highlights,* http://www.chinahighlights.com/inner-mongolia/*,* Accessed February 15, 2016.

[41] Staff, "Inner Mongolia," *Lonely Planet,* https://www.lonelyplanet.com/china/inner-mongolia*,* Accessed February 15, 2016.

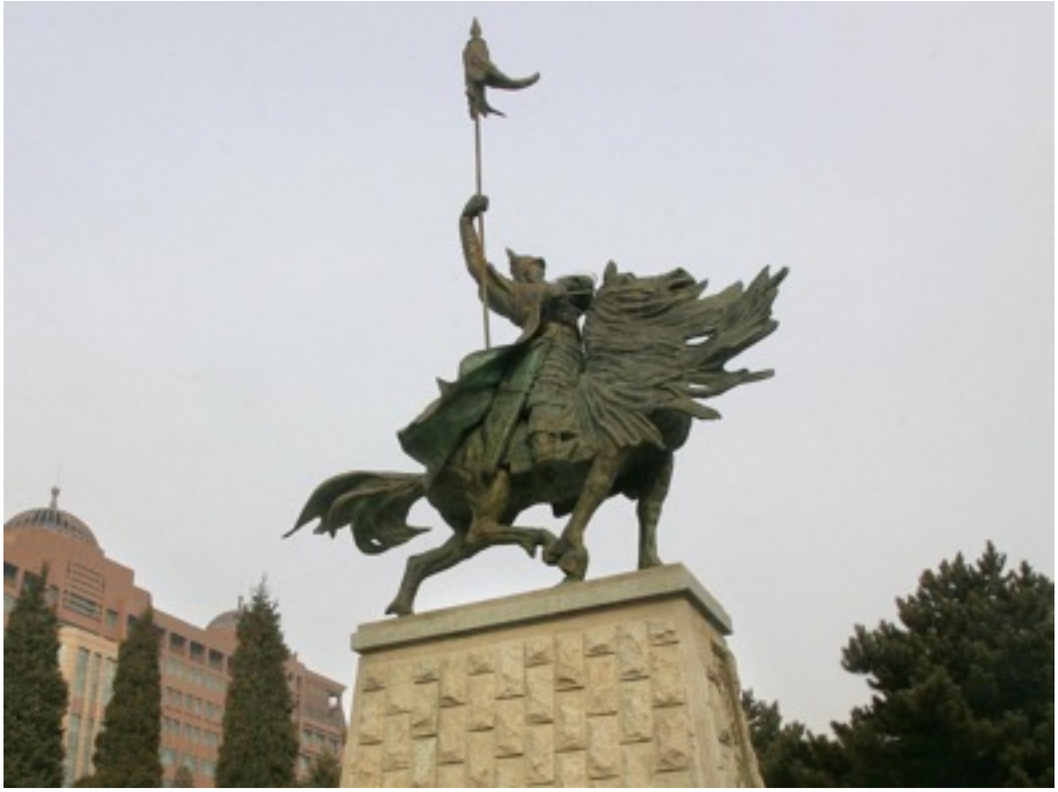

Figure 4: Genghis Khan Statue at Inner Mongolia University

The most famous Genghis Khan themed tourist site in Inner Mongolia is the Genghis Khan Mausoleum which was mentioned in Chapter Two.[42] However, Genghis Khan is also seen throughout cities in Inner Mongolia. For example, there are countless representations of Genghis Khan throughout Hohhot. On the campus of Inner Mongolia

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[42] The Mausoleum of Genghis Khan, http://www.cjshl.com:10151/en/, Accessed February 28, 2016.

University there is a large bronze statue of the Great Khan mounted on a horse as shown in the image above.[43]

In another part of the city, one can find the Genghis Khan Elementary School, Genghis Khan Street, and Genghis Khan Park. City planners did not, by happenstance, attach Genghis Khan to so many locations throughout Hohhot. Instead, Genghis Khan has been transformed into an urban dweller like so many Mongols who have been displaced from the rural grasslands. As such, Genghis Khan also normalizes urban life for Mongols. Although he was once located only in the past and in rural areas, Genghis Khan is now found in the present and in modernized urban centers.

Thus far, in this chapter, I have demonstrated how the state has reimagined Genghis Khan as part of the Chinese nation. His forced allegiance to the Chinese state has sanitized and sinicized Genghis Khan so that he is "safe" to be a key figure throughout Inner Mongolia and can be linked to Mongolian cultural identity. Genghis Khan has been incorporated into the built environment in Inner Mongolia and in the broader regional cultural tourism industry. The next section of this chapter demonstrates how Genghis Khan is represented in a cultural themed restaurant through spectacle-type displays and performances.

A Restaurant Experience: A Spectacle of Mongol Identity

In *The Society of the Spectacle,* Guy Debord writes that, "All that once was directly lived has become mere representation," that the spectacle "appears at once as society itself, as a part of society, and as a means of unification," and that this "is not a collection of images; rather it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images."[44] China is fraught with spectacle-type displays. The Opening Ceremony of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing was one such recent spectacle. If the aim was to show the world a glimpse of how the state utilizes spectacles as a means of performing national unity and as a method of state-society mediation, it was successful.[45] Just a year later, on October 1, 2009, the 60th anniversary of the founding of the PRC was commemorated through several events including the National Day Parade. In the parade, ethnic groups performed in such a way as to affirm the state ideologies of "collective harmony, unified patriotic sentiment, and ethnic unity."[46] Further, the promotion of such strong imagery could also work to dispel any concerns with "ethnic fractures, labour unrest, and massive inequalities."[47] The state's demonstration of different ideologies through spectacle performances mediates and perpetuates social relationships in China.

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[43] Ryan Hooper, "Briton wrongly held in Mongolia criticises authorities for a 'serious error of judgement,' *Independent,* July 19, 2015, Accessed January 26, 2016, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/briton-wrongly-held-in-mongolia-criticises-authorities-for-a-serious-error-of-judgement-10400369.html.

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[44] Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle,* (New York: Zone Books, 1995): 12.

[45] C. R. Pramod, "The 'Spectacle' of the Beijing Olympics and the Dynamics of State–Society Relationship in PRC," *China Report,* May 2008: 111-137.

[46] E. Kuever, "Performance, spectacle, and visual poetry in the sixtieth anniversary national day parade in the People's Republic of China*," Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Volume 12, Issue 1, (April 2012): 6.

[47] E. Kuever, "Performance, spectacle, and visual poetry in the sixtieth anniversary national day parade in the People's Republic of China*,"* 6.

Scholars who look at various social identity constructs in China assert that the notion of performativity can be applied to various categorical differences.[48] In her ethnographic study of the Miao in Southern China, Schein argues that recurring performances give “certain social norms their authority.”[49] Schein suggests that notions of performativity within the state display of Miao culture include categorical differences such as ethnicity.[50] Thus, the notion of peformativity is applied to understand how constructed spectacular performances perpetuate the image of a fraternal relationship that ethnic groups have with the state.[51]

In this chapter, performativity helps explain the nuanced constructed identities within China’s cultural tourism sector. Non-Han identities fulfill a performative function in which tourists are drawn to sites to “experience the culture” and watch groups perform “authentic” ethnic customs. The tourists’ “gaze” works to “internally orientalize” China’s minority ethnic groups as ahistorical and backwards.[52] Additionally, ethnic minority performances also facilitate a hierarchization of ethnic identities whereby Han remain at the top.[53] These performances are constructed with precision in order to promote nationality, unity, and harmony. Who can forget the 2008 drummers in the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games that executed each beat in perfectly practiced unity? These types of performances are also on display throughout cultural themed restaurants in order to export images of a multiethnic China to domestic and international tourists.

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[48] See: Ann Anagnost, *National Past-Times: Narrative, Representation, and Power in Modern China,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990); Jason Powell and Ian G. Cook, “Unpacking performativity: a case study of patriarachy and the elderly in China,’ *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy,* Vol. 26, Issue 7/8 (2006): 277-283; Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China’s Cultural Politics,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

[49] Schein, *Minority Rules*, 259.

[50] Schein, *Minority Rules*, 261.

[51] Catherine Nash, “Performativity in practice: some recent work in cultural geography,” *Progress in Human Geography,* 24, 4 (2000): 655.

[52] Janet Cochrane, ed, *Asian Tourism: Growth and Change,* (Oxford: Elseveir, 2008); Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation,* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules.*

Cultural themed restaurants are marketed as places where tourists can enjoy an "authentic" Mongolian meal. These types of restaurants also provide a space through which minority groups are expected to perform their allegiance to the state. Performances are executed to perpetuate the image of a harmonious nation despite a possible history of struggle with any hegemonic or majority group. This follows the global norm. For example, "Charming Tatar" dances performed by the Moiseyev Dance Company choreographically glossed over the brutal reality of that ethnic group's shameful expulsion from its homeland during the Stalin period.[54] In Inner Mongolia, Mongols perform as happy members of the Chinese nation despite a history of struggles or even current tensions between Mongols and the state.

One popular cultural restaurant in Inner Mongolia is *Bayin Haoriwa* (巴音浩日娲*),* hereafter referred to as *Bayin.* Established in 1989, *Bayin* claims to have *pioneered* famous Mongolian meals.[55] This claim is reminiscent of the state's ethnic categorization projects in which ethnic groups existed prior to official recognition by the state. Mongolian meals obviously existed prior to *Bayin's* pioneering efforts.

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[53] Davis, *Song and Silence,* 18.

[54] Anthony Shay, *Choreographic Politics: State Folk Dance Companies, Representation and Power,* (Fishers, IN: Wesleyan Publishers, 2002): 2.

[55] Translated from: Staff, 巴音浩日娲蒙餐, Accessed July 3, 2015, http://www.baike.com/wiki/巴音浩日娲蒙餐.

The restaurant has a profile page on *Baidu-Baike* which is a Chinese on-line website often compared to *Wikipedia* but with content that includes company profile pages. *Baidu-Baike* mentions the Japanese acquisition of the restaurant. The company profile states that "Bayan Ho Wa ethnic Japanese Food Culture Management Co., Ltd. was established in August 13, 2004, and operates a culture-themed restaurant with pure Mongolian characteristics…"[56] The corporate expansion of the restaurant in 2004 included the development of "Mongolian food brands" and the acquisition of cultural experts to choreograph the "feast dance." This "dance" is said to depict the palace banquet of the Khan-ruled Yuan Dynasty. *Bayin* has also categorized, and thus legitimized, Mongolian meals as part of the Mongolian folk encyclopedia. In the same way Mongols exist because they are officially recognized by the state, Mongolian meals can exist because they are officially listed in a cultural encyclopedia.

Most telling of the function of *Bayin* as a site of *minzu* making and cultural peformativity is the state ideology of maturity, which is connected to the prominent ideology of modernization. *Bayin's* website declares that the restaurant "marks the maturity of the modern Mongolian meal."[57] The *modern* Mongolian meal had not reached a level of maturity until it was commodified. The meal, and by extension Mongols, have finally been ushered into modernization. Ironically, as I will demonstrate below, the restaurant presents the meal in the context of an ahistorical, premodern time. When I lived in Hohhot, I often took visiting colleagues to *Bayin* for a "real Mongolian meal." The entire dining experience is evidence of the constructed Mongolian cultural identity as part of the tourism industry in Inner Mongolia.

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[56] Translated from: Staff, 巴音浩日娲蒙餐, Accessed July 3, 2015, http://www.baike.com/wiki/巴音浩日娲蒙餐.

[57] Translated from: Staff, 巴音浩日娲蒙餐, Accessed July 3, 2015, http://www.baike.com/wiki/巴音浩日娲蒙餐.

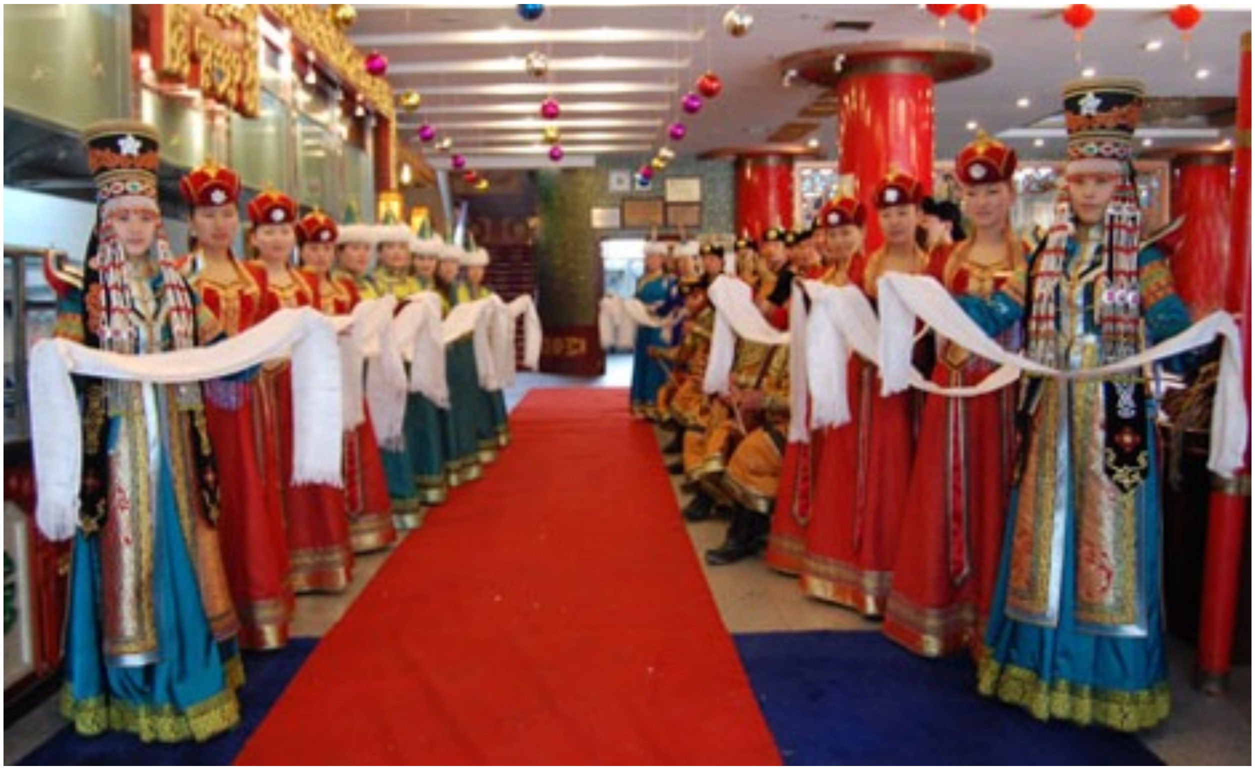

Figure 5: Welcome Ceremony at *Bayin*

After arriving at *Bayin,* customers are greeted by women donning traditional Mongolian costumes, wearing an elaborate headdress, and holding a *hada* which Mongolian silk scarf often used to welcome visitors to a Mongolian home.[58] The picture below was accessed from the *Hohhot Tourism News* website.[59] The women are dressed in traditional Mongolian costumes as part of the "portrayal of happy, traditional ethnic minorities as entertainment…."[60] As indicated above, the display of ethnic minority groups has become an important part of symbolic capital whereby the exoticized minority becomes central to the Chinese state's modernization projects.[61]

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[58] A *hada*, also rendered as *khatag* and *hadag,* is a silk scarf used in religious ceremonies, special events, and to welcome friends (to one's home). See: Willaim Jankowiak, *Sex, Death, and Hierarchy in a Chinese City,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

[59] Staff, *Hohhot Tourism News,* (呼和浩特旅游信息), October 29, 2010, Accessed July 22, 2015, http://www.zgbfly.gov.cn/E_ReadNews.asp?NewsID=3214.

After the traditional Mongolian greeting, customers are escorted upstairs to the second floor to dine in a private room, which is often constructed to look like the inside of a yurt. As part of the entire experience, customers have the option of purchasing one of the many entertainment packages that include Mongolian singers, dancers, and instrumentalists. One such performance is the "Feast Meal," which, as mentioned above, *Bayin* claims to be the re-creation of a palace banquet from the Yuan Dynasty.[62]

The image below is one depiction of the Feast Meal performance at *Bayin.*[63] The still image does not fully capture the movement of the Mongolian performers in which "they dance, they twirl, they whirl….they smile, showing their happiness to be part of the motherland."[64] This spectacle performance of the Feast Meal undergirds the state's *minzu* making aims. The Feast Meal is said to be a traditional banquet performance from the Yuan Dynasty, which is when the Khanate ruled the Chinese territory. Whether or not the performance is an accurate rendition of what may have been performed during the Yuan Dynasty is irrelevant. Because the state has adopted Genghis Khan as one of its own, the Feast Meal performance represents the state's power to invent history. In this way, the meal performance can be viewed as, according to Debord, "a spectacle (which) is the acme of ideology, for in its full flower it exposes and manifests the essence of all ideological systems: the impoverishment, enslavement and negation of real life."[65] Thus, the purpose of the Feast Meal is not to be authentic, but rather to bolster the state's ideological constructs of ethnic diversity and state power.

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[60] Clarissa Sebag-Montefiore, "China's Ethnic Song and Dance," *The New York Times,* May 31, 2013, Accessed February 25, 2016, http://latitude.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/05/31/chinas-ethnic-song-and-dance/?_r=0.

[61] Dru Gladney, "Representing Nationality in China: Refiguring Majority/Minority Identities," *The Journal of Asian Studies,* Vol. 53, Issue, (February 1994): 94.

[62] Staff, "Bayin Haoriwa."

[63] Staff, "Bayin Hao Ri Wa Creative Mongolian Restaurant," (Bayin Hao Ri Wa Chuangyi Meng Can), *Weibo,* Accessed February 25, 2015, http://weibo.com/2880390983/z6E2yBNhR.

[64] Dru C. Gladney, "Nationality in China: Refiguring Majority/Minority Identities," *The Association for Asian Studies,* Vol. 53, No. 1 (February 1994): 95.

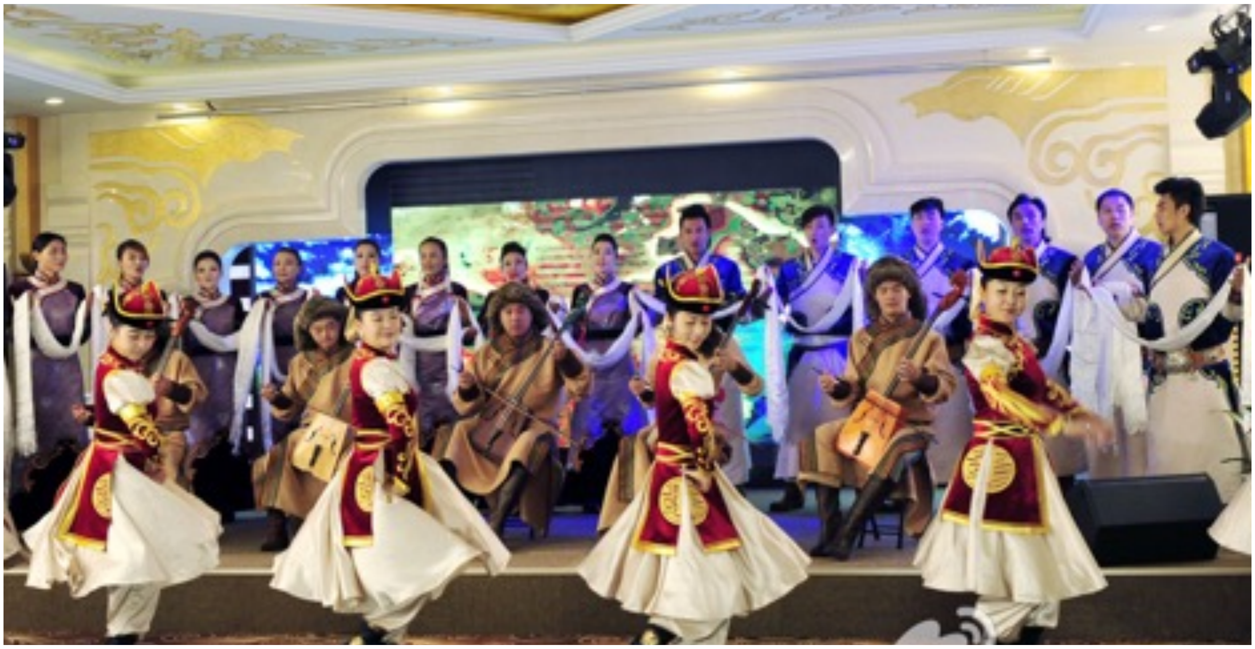

Figure 6: The Feast Meal Performance

This performance also helps explain the conundrum that Mongols face because, "by supporting Mongol claims (to Genghis Khan), they (Mongols) risk accusations of treason from the Chinese state; by supporting Chinese claims, they betray their ancestral roots."[66] If Mongols want to continue to be "distinct" from others in China, then they must *collaborate* with the state through performances like the one above. I borrow the term *collaboration* from Bulag who traces the historical path of the Mongolian position in China in his text *Collaborative Nationalism*.[67] The state's power to rewrite history, combined with the Mongolian cultural identity connected to Genghis Khan, has created a collaborative relationship between Mongols and the state whereby the representation of Genghis Khan allows Mongolian cultural identity to be expressed in a manner that is facilitated by the state.

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[65] Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle,* 151.

The representation of Genghis Khan also constructs Mongols as "others" in an *internally orientalized* fashion. This follows the recent trends about ethnicity and tourism. One of the main theoretical tenets found throughout the literature and in various global case studies is that ethnicity is reinvented, reimagined, and reconstructed.[68]

It is important to note that performances in the cultural tourism industry are also spaces where Mongols can be Mongolian. Cultural restaurants are safe spaces where the Mongolian cultural identity can be performed. In a blog hosted by *The New York Times,* Clarissa Sebag-Montefirore asserts that, when ethnic minorities "attempt to venture outside the zones of tourism and entertainment," they may "hit a wall."[69] In other words, cultural identity expression outside of designated spaces would not be allowed by the Chinese state, which always monitors its borderlands for any hints of ethnic separatism. As such, there is a connection between performer and space and the expression of identity.[70] Mongols work within the allotted space where Mongolian identity is allowed and, perhaps even, applauded.

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[66] Uradyn E. Bulag, "Inner Mongolia: The Dialectics of Colonization and Ethnicity Building," in *Governing China's Multiethnic Frontiers,* ed. Morris Rossabi, (Seattle: University of Washington Pres, 2004): 100.

[67] Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism,* 4.

[68] Robert E. Wood, "Tourism and the State, 18.

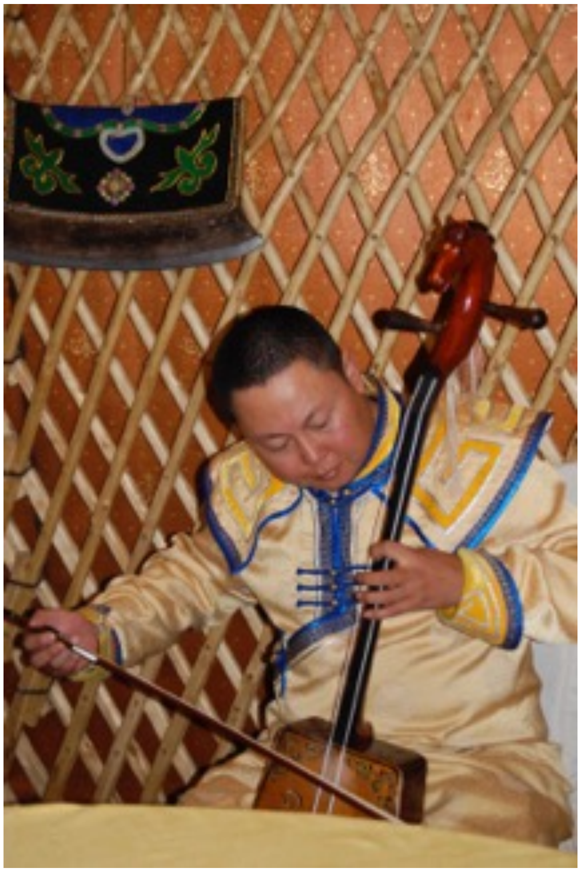

Figure 7: Mongolian Performer

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[69] Sebag-Montefiore, "China Song and Dance," http://latitude.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/05/31/chinas-ethnic-song-and-dance/?_r=0

[70] A discussion about identity and resistance is in Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, eds., *Culture, Power, and Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997): 12-17.

The next photograph, depicted above, was taken during one of the meal performances on one of my visits to *Bayin* in October 2008. The man is wearing a traditional Mongolian *deel,* which is no longer commonly worn in daily life, and is playing the traditional Mongolian musical instrument called the horse-head fiddle. The lattice on the wall indicates that the room was constructed to represent the inside of a yurt.

The yurt, Mongolian traditional dress, and traditional instrument perpetuate the notion that Mongols are *still* backwards, which further works to justify the state's modernization efforts. Further, the presentation of Mongols in a traditional setting also undergirds the state's power to valorize ethnic hierarchies. Gladney asserts that "the politics of representation in China reveals much about the state's project in constructing, in often binary minority/majority terms, an imagined national identity."[71] The Mongolian man, a representative of the Mongolian culture, is presented as timeless and "backwards," much like the central figure in *Repair* which was analyzed in Chapter Four. This representation Mongolians in a suspended state of social evolution and, by contrast, reifies the notion that Han remain China's only modern ethnic group. Thus, when Han tourists travels to Inner Mongolia to "see" the Mongolian culture, they also see the need for further development throughout the region and the need for assimilation of more Han into the province because Mongols are in need of "help" to continue modernize. As such, the state secures its place in Inner Mongolia as a goodwill developer who will continue to facilitate Mongol modernization.

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[71] Gladney, "Nationality in China: Refiguring Majority/Minority Identities," 93.

Other state motivations in the construction of performances like the ones mentioned above are best understood by looking at other global examples of cultural performances. Shay writes extensively about the representation of people through state folk dance companies. He synthesizes research from around the world whereby different states, including Mexico, Russia, and the United States, *choreograph politics* through performances. Song and dance troupes are "multilayered political and ethnographic statements designed to form positive images of their respective nation-states.[72] To add to Shay's analysis, Bottomley also observes that cultural performance troupes offer a "representation (which) itself implies a kind of power, the power to define, to describe, to act on behalf of someone else."[73] This is evident in the case of *Bayin* where the performance of Mongol ethnic identity secures the harmonious, multi-ethnic image of the state.

Participation in state-approved cultural performance industries has political and cultural implications. Because the social-cultural environment in Inner Mongolia is increasingly Hanified, cultural tourism is one way Mongols can express and preserve their cultural identity. But, by performing for the state, Mongols are also complicit in the state's construction of Mongols in an allegedly harmonious, non-confrontational relationship with the state, despite the reality of recent historical tensions and conflicts. This contrived presentation of the state as a goodwill actor toward Mongol identity attempts to debunk ongoing claims about cultural destruction and cultural identity anxiety.

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[72] Anthony Shay, *Choreographic Politics,* 2.

[73] Gillian Bottomley, "Cultures, multiculturalism and the politics of representation," *Journal of Intercultural Studies,* Vol. 8, Issue 2, 1987: 1.

Conclusion: Genghis Khan as a Pawn of Progression

In this chapter, I have explored the role that Genghis Khan, and the “Khanate,” broadly defined, play in the cultural tourism industry of Inner Mongolia. One would be hard pressed to find any other ethnic minority hero that has received as much attention from the Chinese state as Genghis Khan. In March 1962, in order to stave off criticism surrounding the state’s absorption of Genghis Khan into Chinese history, Han Rulin, a Mongolist historian, delivered a speech at a Genghis Khan research symposium.[74] At that time, the domestic criticism amongst Chinese nationalists regarding Genghis Khan surrounded the issue of the historical conquest of China by Genghis Khan’s “barbarians.” Additionally, Bulag writes that there was also a “foreign (Russian) denunciation of Chinggis Khan’s brutal and destructive campaigns.”[75] In response to these criticisms, Han Rulin stated that, “Regarding Chinggis Khan, these hegemonists (referring to the Soviets) emphasize his massacre and destruction one-sidedly, emphasizing the brave resistance by various nationalities in one city or place, without giving correct evaluations of the progressive function he performed in history.”[76] Here we see how the state’s normalization of Genghis Khan as part of the Chinese nation is coupled with the promotion of Genghis Khan and the “progressive function” he performed. Han, under the direction of the state, glossed over Genghis Khan’s brutal warfare tactics and instead reframed Genghis Khan as a “progressionist.” Perhaps Han Rulin aligned Genghis Khan with a “progressive function” because of the way Genghis

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[74] Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism,* 52.

[75] Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism,* 52.

[76] Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism,* 52.

Khan united disparate Mongol tribes and led them to become the largest global empire to date. However, Genghis Khan can not be removed from the brutal strategies that Mongols once used.

Criticism against the state's promotion of Genghis Khan as a Chinese hero is still present in China. In a Chinese blog hosted by *Sina*, the blogger, Xiong Fei Jun, asks: "Should Chinese worship Genghis Khan?"[77] The blogger continues to remark on the warfare strategies Genghis Khan deployed to overtake the Chinese territory. He cites massacres of the Chinese people, destruction of property, and repression of the Chinese civilization.[78] The blogger also interrogates the "logic" of the state ideologies whereby ethnic groups are part of the "Chinese family" (of nations) and Genghis Khan, a Mongol, is viewed as Chinese.

But, the answer to the blogger's critical questions can be provided by looking once again at the function that Genghis Khan performs for the state. Throughout the cultural tourism industry in Inner Mongolia, Genghis Khan helps the state to assure Mongols and tourists alike that a distinct Mongolian identity remains intact. Mongols are still allowed to connect with Genghis Khan within the spaces constructed and provided by the state.

However, those who interact with Genghis Khan outside of the designated spaces are perceived as a threat to the state. For example, in July 2015, a group of British tourists were detained in Ordos, Inner Mongolia.[79] Local police claim that the travelers were watching a terrorism video in their hotel room. The tourists argue that the video was a documentary about Genghis Khan which they were watching in preparation for a trip to the Mausoleum. Whatever the details of the case may be, this situation shows that the state is still on alert and looking for any potential threats to its power in Inner Mongolia.

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[77] Xiong Fei, "Should Chinese Worship Genghis Khan," *Xiong Fei Blog,* January 4, 2011, Accessed July 11, 2015, http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_44918b0a0100o1b2.html

[78] Xiong Fei, "Should Chinese Worship Genghis Khan,"

[79] Staff, "China deports last foreign tourists from Inner Mongolia," *BBC,* July 18, 2015, Accessed July 22, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-33588988.

Thus, state concerns regarding the promotion of Genghis Khan as a Mongol hero also lie beyond any economic gains within the cultural tourism industry. Genghis Khan is a pawn in a game set up by the Chinese state that allows Mongols to remain distinctly Mongolian, but within limits. Perhaps the state hopes that a Mongolian cultural identity built on the figure of Genghis Khan will quell mounting cultural identity anxiety throughout the region. If Mongols were to resist the state intervention in cultural expression, there is always a risk that the state may respond in the same ways it has in Xinjiang where the state monitors the use of the Uyghur language, has prevented local men from wearing beards, and, most recently, has banned fasting during Ramadan.[80] These state restrictions are meant to censor any cultural identity expression amongst Uyhgurs. Thus, any direct Mongol resistance to the state may result in stopping Mongol cultural expression altogether. Instead, in Inner Mongolia, there is a collaboration within the cultural tourism sector between Mongols and the state in a way that ensures that Mongolian identity is preserved.

The significance of the cultural tourism industry in Inner Mongolia goes beyond the analysis of regional economic growth and the construction of permitted spaces for ethnic identity performance. For example, the fact that the Genghis Khan Mausoleum is located in China rather than in the Mongolian People's Republic (MPR) is significant because of the role that Genghis Khan plays as a Chinese historical figure while simultaneously playing a part in the construction of a distinct Mongolian cultural identity. It is this specific area of research that I want to further develop. Specifically, I would like to consider the role that Genghis Khan plays in China's cultural tourism industry. I want to analyze how Genghis Khan and the cultural tourism industry in Inner Mongolia work as geopolitical buffers, particularly between China and the MPR. In future work, I also want to study how strong centers of cultural tourism are not as much evidence of China's strength as an economic powerhouse as much as they are evidence of China's waning power in its ethnic minority borderlands.

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[80] Ivan Watson, Serena Dong, and Shen Lu, "China criticized over Ramadan restrictions," *CNN,* July 8, 2015, Accessed July 20, 2015, http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/02/asia/china-xinjiang-ramadan/

The next chapter will analyze Mongolian language songs as spaces through which the Mongolian language is preserved. The proliferation of Mongolian language bands in Inner Mongolia is one way by which the state and Mongols negotiate to preserve and promote Mongolian cultural identity.

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CHAPTER SIX
Mongolian Songs: Language Preservation and Language of Resistance

> "Mongols….having less proficiency in the Mongolian language,
> may find grassland songs linguistically accessible
> and appealing to their sense of nostalgia…"[1]
>
> "I cannot even tell this story in my mother tongue."[2]

Language serves as an important ethnic boundary marker.[3] It remains one of the official criteria for defining an ethnic group in China. Additionally, language holds significant value for national and ethnic identity.[4] Despite the importance of Mongolian language to cultural identity and its seemingly inherent political value to the Chinese state, Mongolian language use in daily life has long been in rapid decline, which is telling of the social and political environment in Inner Mongolia.

Rapid urbanization and assimilation policies, which were detailed extensively in Chapter Two, have displaced Mongols from rural grasslands to urban centers. The migration has also displaced them from cultural practices including pastoralism and language fluency.[5] This dual-displacement, from space and culture, has created what Bulag terms a “linguistic anxiety” and what I term a cultural identity anxiety.[6]

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[1] Stephen May, *Language and Minority Rights: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Language,* (New York: Routledge, 2012,): 137.

[2] Lyrics from *Father's Grassland, Mother's River.* See D'Evelyn, "Music Between Worlds," 55. This song, sung in Mandarin, has been performed by many musical artists in China. The song is about a Mongol who feels separated from his heritage and expresses the issues of language and cultural identity loss. One example of a music video for this song can be viewed on YouTube here: Buyin Music, "父亲的草原母亲的河, (Father's Grassland, Mother's River," Accessed March 11, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWFYbdd92OI.

[3] See: Fredrik Barth, "Introduction" in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*. Fredrik Barth, ed, (1969); Andre Tabouret-Keller, "Language and Identity," in F. Coulmas, ed, *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics,* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997): 315-326. Bucholtz, M and Hall, K., "Language and Identity," in *Companion to Linguistic Anthropology,* A. Duranti, ed, (Malden, MA: Blackwell), 369-394.

[4] May, *Language and Minority Rights*, 135.

Linguistic and cultural anxiety are intensified by the the hierarchy of languages in China, which is discussed in detail below, and which situates Mandarin as the nation-wide standard language.[7] That is not to say that the state does not *officially* promote ethnic languages through policies. In Inner Mongolia, there are Mongolian language newspapers, radio programs, television programs, and schools. Street signs and public announcements are in both Mandarin and Mongolian. Policies ensure that there is a bilingual presence throughout the province. Yet, policy does not always uphold practice. The decline of Mongolian in daily use upholds that there is, what Michael Billig terms, a “hegemony of language.”[8]

This hegemony of language is upheld by an unofficial ideology in China in which China’s ethnic minority groups are labeled as backwards.[9] Additionally, English and Mandarin are promoted as the languages that carry scientific progress and provide marketplace opportunities. Yet, Mongolian language still holds ideological and cultural value for Mongols. It is a symbol of identity even for Mongols who do not speak

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[5] Jamie N. Sanchez, “Cultural Colonization: The Dual-Displacement of Mongolians in Inner Mongolia*,” Spectra Journal* 2.2, (October 2013), Accessed January 29, 2015. http://spectrajournal.org/2013/11/18/2-2-5-cultural-colonialization-the-displacement-of-mongolians-in-inner-mongolia/

[6] Uradyn Bulag, “Mongolian Ethnicity and Language Anxiety in China,” *American Anthropologist,* Vol. 104, No. 4, (2003): 753-763.

[7] Arienne M. Dwyer, *The Xinjiang Conflict: Uyghur Identity, Language Policy, and Political Discourse,* (Washington, DC: East-West Center, 2005): 14.

[8] Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism,* (London: Sage Publications, 1995): 29.

[9] Bulag, “Mongolian Ethnicity and Language Anxiety in China,” 759.

Mongolian.[10] In light of Mongolian language decline, and of the value Mongolian language still holds, Mongols must work within the state's framework for ethnic identity expression. In other words, Mongols must not appear to disrupt social harmony or show any hints of ethnic separatism. Through collaboration, Mongols mobilize modes of cultural expression and language preservation that the state will allow, and even promote.

This chapter suggests that Mongols, in response to the process of dual-displacement from space and culture, have developed new spaces for the Mongolian language to continue to be expressed. The increase of Mongolian language music bands, which have proliferated in a highly politicized ethnopolitical environment, are evidence that Mongols have turned to music as a mode of language and cultural transmission. In this chapter, I highlight the Mongolian band *Anda Union* as a case study through which I assert claims about the language of resistance in Mongolian music. Because the Chinese state is active in every industry, I will also demonstrate how *Anda Union* still operates within the permitted spaces of cultural expression.

Mongolian Language Decline: A Reflection of a Political Ideology

Language ideology is loaded with political interests.[11] Although "language seems straightforwardly a piece of culture," it is simultaneously a result of "politics and power interplays."[12] That is not to say that language is only a political tool because it is also connected to symbols of cultural identity. In fact, the ideological divide between cultural and language practices in China cannot be exaggerated. Language practices in China display linguistic and hegemonic interplays at work in ethnopolitics.[13]

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[10] Naran Bilik, "Language ideology and semiotic negotiation in Mongolian use," in *Contemporary Chinese Discourse and Social Practice in China,* eds. Linda Tsung and Wei Wang, (Philadelphia: Johns Benjamins Publishing, 2015)*,* 86.

[11] Michael Silverstein, "Monoglot 'standard' in America: standardization and metaphors of linguistic hegemony," in *The Matrix of Language: Contemporary Linguistic Anthropology,"* eds. Donald Brenneis and Ronald H.S. Macaulay, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996). See also: Judith T. Irvine, "Talk Isn't Cheap: Language and Political Economy," *American Ethnologist,* 16: 255.

I have already established the importance of pastoralism to the Mongolian cultural identity. But scholarly literature which connects language and cultural identity requires that I revisit the importance of pastoralism here. Bilik asserts that a division over the use of Mongolian language is rooted in the division between the two culturally based economic practices, something Bilik terms as "the right to move" and the "right to camp." The connection between language and pastoralism and the simultaneous decline in both is due, in part, to geography. Indeed, Mongols who once lived in pastoral regions no longer practice pastoralism in cities for reasons that are self-evident and have been discussed in Chapter Two. Additionally, Mongols living in cities find themselves forced to choose between learning Mongolian and learning Mandarin, which to be remains the marketplace language. Additionally, Mandarin fluency promises to afford China's citizens social and economic mobility in addition to educational and professional opportunities.

However, in addition to the physical geography connected to the decline of Mongolian language and cultural practices, the simultaneous decline in both pastoralism and language use is also a function of political ideology. The state has regarded language as a marker of modernization since the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). Mette Hanses states that, since the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), many Chinese leaders "have regarded institutionalized education as a means of integrating, controlling, and civilizing the various peoples who inhabit the border or peripheral regions of what was the empire, then the Republic, and now is the People's Republic of China (PRC)."[14] The education system, for example, is one of the institutions through which the state has sought to deny "significance of the minorities' own languages, histories, religions, and cultural values…"[15]

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[12] Manning Nash, *The Cauldron of Ethnicity in the Modern World,* (Chicago: Chicago University Press,1989): 6.

[13] Stevan Harrell, "Linguistics and Hegemony in China," *International Journal of Sociology of Language,* 103, (1993): 97-114.

In the same way that Mongol pastoralists were, and still are, termed barbaric or backward and in need of state modernization, the Mongolian language is also framed as "not suitable for modernity and should be replaced by Chinese at the earliest convenience."[16] The state ideology in which Mandarin is the standard is displayed in China's hierarchy of languages which is detailed in Arienne Dwyer's study about language policy and use in Xinjiang.[17] In this study, she argues that while official language policies in China have remained consistent, covert language policies have sought to assimilate Mandarin throughout China's border regions. She includes the following:

1. The national standard: Mandarin Chinese.

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[14] Mette Halskov Hansen, "Introduction," in *Lessons in Being Chinese,* ed. Mette Halskov Hansen, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), xi.

[15] Mette Halskov Hansen, "Introduction," xiii.

[16] Bilik, "Language ideology and semiotic negotiation in Mongolian use," 84.

[17] Dwyer, *The Xinjiang Conflict,* 14.

2. Regional Linguae Francae (Quasi-Standards): Cantonese, Lhasa Tibetan, and Standard Uyghur[18].

3. Primary Minority Languages (Regional-Recognized Varieties): Urumuchi/Xining Chinese, Toisan Cantonese, Kazakh, Kashgar Uyghur, Sani Yi, Amdo and Khams Tibetan

4. Secondary minority languages (Local subvarieties): usually unwritten languages with small numbers of speakers and no political clout. Includes Evenki and Salar. Often these groups will have larger numbers of speakers elsewhere, hence their designation as Dispersed Nationalities by the 1950's government.

5. Unrecognized Languages: usually classified mixed languages such as Wutun or Gyarong (both classified as "Tibetan"), Wakhi ('Tajik,'), Tuva, and Yala (Yi).[19]

According to Dwyer, power is also embedded in the list of the hierarchy of languages in China. In other words, those who speak Mandarin may have more power (in all realms of social life) than those who are only fluent in languages that are listed, and viewed, as having less prestige than Mandarin.

Bilik, in conversation with Dwyer, asserts that "Mongolians in China will continue with their uphill struggle to revive and maintain their native language while trying to keep their life going in a commercialized world where Chinese (Mandarin) and English are dominant communicative media in every sector of public life."[20] However, the vast changes in Inner Mongolia's social and economic environment do not necessarily aid Mongolian language use and development. The reality is that Mongols who want to maintain native language fluency and who want as many opportunities for economic and social mobility as Han speakers must become fluent in three languages. The struggle to attain fluency in Mongolian, Mandarin, and English may cause some to forgo native language fluency altogether.

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[18] Dwyer does not list Mongolian under regional standard languages in her study. However Mongolian is the regional language of Inner Mongolia.

[19] Dwyer, *The Xinjiang Conflict,* 14.

[20] Bilik, "Language ideology and semiotic negotiation in Mongolian use," 97.

Inner Mongolia's changing social environment is also telling of the political ideology that directs Mongolian language use. In Chapter Two, I provided a brief history of the decline of Mongolian language use in Inner Mongolia due to state policies, concerted efforts to assimilate more Han into the province, and the focus on modernization and development through the Western Development Program (WDP). The view that acculturation of national minorities is necessary to build a Chinese civil society remains strong in Inner Mongolia.[21] Fluency in any language is "accompanied by explicit and implicit values, beliefs, purposes, and activities…."[22] As such, fluency in Mandarin promotes the ideology that it is the modern language, and that by extension, the Han culture is the modern culture.

Although the state posits that minority language is not suitable for modernity, this view is not accepted by Mongols, at least not in an ideological sense. Bilik writes that "Mongolian elites are extremely proud of their own language and culture."[23] The political stakes are too high for Mongolians to fully give up any language expression. If they did, they would be yielding to state ideologies and become yet another embodied evidence of the state's power to homogenize and sinicize. Instead, Mongols are developing different modes of language preservation and transmission. One mode through which Mongols have sought to preserve language use, and thus promote the symbolic ideology that language holds for cultural identity, is through Mongolian language songs. Current Mongolian songs can be best understood by first visiting the history of the development of ethnic songs in China.

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[21] Bilik, "Language ideology and semiotic negotiation in Mongolian use," 85.

[22] Naran Bilik, "Language education, intellectuals and symbolic representation: Being an urban Mongolian in a new configuration of social evolution," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics,* Vol. 4, Issue 1-2, 1998: 47.

[23] Bilik, "Language ideology and semiotic negotiation in Mongolian use," 86.

Ethnic Songs: State Intervention, Ethnic Participation

In the years leading up to 1949, the Communist Party deployed Han musicians to minority areas in order to familiarize them with the local culture so that new songs could be written that combined cultural norms with socialist messages.[24] Most orthodox minority songs were aimed at legitimizing state control and perpetuating state ideologies like national unity.[25] By 1964, Vice Premier Lu Dingyi delivered a speech at the national festival of amateur minority performances.[26] He stated, "The revolutionary cultural art of the national minorities must pay attention to using ethnic forms, for thus it can be more easily accepted by the people of the national minorities. The cultural art of each nationality must be revolutionary in content and must be beneficial to socialism."[27] In the 1950's, many regional song and dance troupes were also established in minority areas.[28] In Inner Mongolia, a dance troupe known as the *wulanmuqi* was established in 1957 to travel throughout the region in order to spread Maoist thought to the countryside.[29] The expectation that the dance troupe members to be loyal to the Chinese state is evident in the name *wulanmuqi.* The term is translated on the *China Culture* website as "Red Culture Working Team."[30] But that translation is more of an expression of what the troupe does rather than what the term means. *Wulan* is a transliteration of the Mongolian word *ulan* which means *red.* As was already explained in Chapter Four, red is often representative of the Chinese state and of Han culture in general. *Mu* is a Mandarin term that means shepherds, and *qi* means to "ride a horse."[31] When the words in the name are put together, it is evident that the term is meant to describe the group as culturally Mongolian (shepherds and horse riders), but ideologically as loyal to Red China. These cultural troupes are still in operation throughout Inner Mongolia today.[32]

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[24] Nimrod Baranovitch, "Between Alterity and Identity: New Voices of Minority People in China," *Modern China,* (July 2001): 364.

[25] See: Nimrod Baranovitch, "Between Alterity and Identity: New Voices of Minority People in China;" and Nimrod Baranovitch, *China's New Voices: Popular Music, Ethnicity, Gender, and Politics, 1978-1997*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003): 208-219

[26] Helen Rees, *Echoes of History: Naxi Music in Modern China,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000): 124.

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[27] Quoted in Helen Rees, *Echoes of History: Naxi Music in Modern China,* 124.

[28] Helen Rees, *Echoes of History*, 20.

[29] Rees, *Echoes of History,* 20.

[30] Staff, "The Wulanmuqi Arts Festival of Inner Mongolia," *China Culture,* Accessed March 12, 2016, http://www.chinaculture.org/focus/focus/minzuwang/2007-08/16/content_382152.htm.

[31] Self translation. The full term for shepherd is *muyang ren.* On its own, *qi* means "to ride" but the context of the sentence demands that, in this use, *qi* is referring to riding a horse (or camel).

[32] Translated from: 乌兰牧骑 (Wulanmuqi), Accessed June 10, 2015, http://baike.baidu.com/view/193054.htm.

In 1982, the China Central Nationalities Song and Dance Troupe, hereafter referred to as CNSDT, was established.[33] The CNSDT is a Soviet-style state run troupe that specializes in the collection, arrangement, and promotion of minority song and dance traditions.[34] Colin Mackerras asserts that the CNSDT is *also* a highly politicized cultural organization, which displays state policies through the performance of ethnic minorities.[35] Given the politicization of cultural organizations, it can be understood that cultural expression is presented through the state's constructed framework whereby ethnic minority groups must be of benefit to national policies.

Mongolian singers who gained fame throughout China were often members of the CNSDT and the *wulanmuqi* first.[36] Ethnomusicologist Baranovitch analyzes a famous Mongolian singer named Tenger. Tenger began his musical career as a state artist who would sing songs about Mongols according to state constructed identities. For example, one of his most famous songs, *Paradise,* includes lyrics like, "Blue blue sky, clear clear lake water, green green grassland, this is my home."[37] This song perpetuates the grassland trope, as mentioned in Chapter Three. Later in his career, due to mounting frustrations about the state directed lyrics that perpetuate an image that is not true to reality, Tenger began to criticize the false construction of Inner Mongolia and Mongols. He said, "What kind of feeling does it give? Ai ya, (China's) minorities are so happy today. They sing all the time "Ah, Long Live the Communist Party." They sing all the time about happiness. But, actually it is not like that."[38] Despite his efforts, Tenger's criticisms have not changed Mongolian songs. One recent study about music in Inner Mongolia suggests that, when Inner Mongolian music artists aim to create and produce songs about Mongolian culture, there must not be any overt ethnic pride that could disrupt social harmony or debunk Chinese nationalist ideology.[39]

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[33] Rees, *Echoes of History,* 20.

[34] Helen Rees, "Writing Lives in Chinese Music," in *Lives in Chinese Music,* ed. Helen Rees, (University of Illinois Press, 2009), 20 and 206.

[35] Colin Mackerras, "Folksongs and Dances of China's Minority Nationalities: Policy, Tradition, and Professionalization," *Modern China,* Vol. 10, No. 2, (April 1984): 208-217.

[36] See: Nimrod Baranovitch, "Compliance, Autonomy, and Resistance of a "State Artist": The Case of Chinese-Mongolian Musician Teng Ge'er," in *Lives in Chinese Music,* ed. Helen Rees, (University of Illinois Press, 2009): 173-212; Charlotte Alexandra D'Evelyn, "Music Between Worlds: Mongol Music and Ethnicity in Inner Mongolia, China," (PhD dissertation, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, 2013): 34; Anne, Henochowicz, "Blue Heaven, Parched Land: Mongolian Folksongs and the Chinese State," *Graduate Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies,* Vol. 6, Issue 1, 2008: 41.

[37] Baranovitch, "Compliance, Autonomy, and Resistance of a 'State Artist,'" 183.

Singing Mongolian: Mongolian Songs as Language Preservation

"*They are part of a musical movement*
that is finding inspiration in old and forgotten songs,
drawing on a repertoire of magical music
that has all but disappeared
during China's recent tumultuous past."
—Anda Union Promotional Brochure[40]

Ethnomusicologists, sociolinguists, and anthropologists agree that the revitalization of music is key to ensuring the ongoing vitality and viability of endangered languages.[41] In Inner Mongolia, the increase in the number of Mongolian language music groups can be attributed, in part, to a response to linguistic and cultural identity anxiety. Songs have become one mode of language preservation. They create a space through which Mongolian cultural distinction may be expressed. In her extensive study on Mongolian music of Inner Mongolia, D'Evelyn posits that:

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[38] Baranovitch, "Compliance, Autonomy, and Resistance of a "State Artist," 185.

[39] Wing-Wah Law and Wai-Chung Ho, "Music education in China: In Search of Social Harmony and Chinese Nationalism," British Journal of Music Education 28, No. 3 (2011): 380-383.

[40] This particular brochure is on the Norwich Arts Centre website. "Anda Union," *Norwich Arts Center,* Accessed March 12, 2016, http://norwichartscentre.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Anda%20Union-%20An%20Introduction.pdf.

> "A rising interest in cultural heritage and preservation in China and Inner Mongolia has led musicologists, government authorities, and media producers alike to look outside the professional conservatory system for models of great artists, whom they promote in scholarship, commemorative events, festivals or television programs."[42]

Whereas music groups were once formed through the official CNSDT and *wulanmuqi* systems, they now are formed under the direction of other musical professionals like musicologists and media producers. However, it should be noted that "government authorities" are still one of the key actors involved in the promotion of Mongolian music through events, festivals, and television programs.

One such Mongolian language band that has developed outside of traditional conservatory training is *Ajinai.* The band was formed in 1999, and it includes members from various parts of China. The band profile, along with some of the band's music, is available through social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Baidu.[43] In an interview conducted with "World Music Central," the band founder, Hugejiletu, stated that "There are more and more new bands coming out playing Mongolian traditional music in China now."[44] Hugejiletu attributed the rise in Mongolian language bands to cultural preservation. He states, in another interview, that "Urbanization is inevitable. We are losing some traditions but also enjoy the convenience of technology. There is no point in opposing modern civilization. But it's important for us to promote and continue our ethnic culture using technology."[45] In this statement, there is a recognition that the loss of cultural traditions is as a result of urban development. His statement, that "There is no point in opposing modern civilization" is very telling of how political discourses inundate the lives of Mongols in Inner Mongolia. This statement could be read as "there is no point in opposing the state." Rather than resist the state in traditional ways, *Ajinai* operates within the state ideology of modernization. For this band, modern technology can be used to promote the Mongolian culture. Similar to what was mentioned in the case of *Repair* in Chapter Four, there is a manipulation of modern technology to preserve a traditional culture.

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[41] See: Catherine Grant, "The links between safeguarding language and safeguarding musical heritage," *International Journal of Intangible Heritage,* Vol 5, (2010): 46-59; Salikoko S. Mufwene, "Colonisation, globalisation, and the future of languages in the twenty-first century," *International Journal of Multicultural Societies Special Edition: Protecting endangered minority languages: Sociolinguistic perspectives,* Vol. 4, No. 2, (2002): 162-193; Suzanne Romaine, "Preserving endangered languages," *Language and Linguistic Compass,* Vol. 1, Issue 1-2, (2007): 115-132.

[42] D'Evelyn, "Music Between Worlds," 137.

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[43] See: "Ajinai," *Facebook,* Accessed March 11, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/ajinaiband/info?tab=page_info; "Ajinai," *YouTube,* Accessed March 11, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVsbyDJnflw&list=RDYVsbyDJnflw#t=9; "Ajinai," *Baidu,* Accessed March 11, 2016, http://www.baidu.com/s?ie=utf-8&f=8&rsv_bp=0&rsv_idx=1&tn=baidu&wd=Ajinai&rsv_pq=8fe8e7eb000454a9&rsv_t=2112yk3V5MMnmTeJSG20vDLvFZOPXOo54zneibYcvgtiwhexpJU4j%2BSN%2BzQ&rsv_enter=1&rsv_sug3=10&rsv_sug2=0&inputT=2800&rsv_sug4=2801.

[44] Angel Romero, "Interview with Inner Mongolian Folk Rock and world Music Band Ajinai," *World Music Central,* October 17, 2014, Accessed March 11, 2016. http://worldmusiccentral.org/2014/10/17/interview-with-inner-mongolian-folk-rock-and-world-music-band-ajinai/.

[45] Lu Tanrou, "Upcoming Gigs," *Global Times,* November 18, 2013, Accessed March 11, 2016, http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/825714.shtml.

Another popular Mongolian band is *Hanggai*. Since it was founded in 2004, *Hanggai* has become a musical tour de force in China and it has gained attention on the international music scene by participating in global music festivals and concerts throughout Europe, Japan, Taiwan, Australia, Canada, and the United States.[46] In a 2015 interview with the *South China Morning Post*, Ilchi, the band's founder, said that "Many of us have gradually been subjected to a very strong cultural invasion by an oppressive culture" and that, in response to this, "we feel we have a responsibility to continue these musical and cultural traditions."[47] Like *Ajinai*, this band also connects the loss of culture to their music. Ilchi is direct in his statements as evidenced by phrases like "very strong cultural invasion," which refers to the state's assimilation policies in Inner Mongolia, and "an oppressive culture," which refers to dominant Han culture.

Hanggai's Facebook profile page also contains statements about the band's sentiment regarding cultural loss and preservation. The profile page states that, "By playing Mongolian folk songs while also incorporating modes of popular music, *Hanggai* is creating a medium through which it is effectively able to express the voice of a generation yearning to reconnect with its ethnic roots in the face of a dominating mainstream culture."[48] Again, there is a reference here to the "dominating mainstream culture." Although this statement does not explicitly state that Han are the dominating culture, the historical shifts in Inner Mongolia undergird the assertion that the dominating culture is the Han culture.

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[46] "Hanggai (China)," Vancouver Folk Music Festival, Accessed March 11, 2016, http://thefestival.bc.ca/artists/hanggai/.

[47] Jonathan Campbell, "The Next Big Thing: Hanggai, Mongolian folk rockers and Chinese reality TV stars," *South China Morning Post,* October 22, 2016, Accessed March 11, 2016, http://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/music/article/1870818/hanggai-inner-mongolian-folk-rockers-and-chinese-reality-tv-stars.

[48] "The Original Hanggai fanpage," *Facebook,* Accessed March 11, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/hanggai/info/?tab=page_info.

For the two bands mentioned above, there is a connection between assimilation, loss of cultural identity, and the aim to introduce the Mongolian language to Mongols who never learned to speak Mongolian. These bands are only two of the many Mongolian bands that are part of the Mongolian musical movement in Inner Mongolia. D'Evelyn mentions other bands like *Blue Fields Band* and *Black Steed* as evidence that, "In the past decade, a new generation of young grassland stars has emerged, many who enjoy earning a comfortable living while promoting Mongol music to a wide national audience."[49] Henochowicz adds that more and more Mongolians in China are using songs to reconnect with their cultural identity.[50] *Anda Union* is one band that uses songs to promote cultural identity.

Anda Union: On A Mission to Stimulate Mongolian Culture

Anda Union was formed in Inner Mongolia is 2003 and currently has nine band members.[51] Like the two bands mentioned above, *Anda Union* has band profile pages on Facebook YouTube, and Baidu, in addition to its own website.[52] Their website states that *Anda Union's* music is part of the effort to preserve the Mongolian culture: "Keenly aware of the threat to the Grasslands and their age old Mongolian culture, *Anda Union* is driven by their fight for survival of this endangered way of life, by keeping the essence of the music alive."[53] The "About Us" section of the band website states that "They are on a mission to stimulate their culture and reengage young Mongols, many of who can no longer speak their own language" and that "our culture is broken and needs to be mended."[54] For this band, the fact that many young Mongols can no longer speak Mongolian drives the musical "mission" to sing and produce songs in Mongolian. A further examination of the language of resistance that some song lyrics display below.

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[49] D'Evelyn, "Music Between Worlds," 58.

[50] Henochowicz, "Blue Heaven, Parched Land: Mongolian Folksongs and the Chinese State," 47.

[51] Anda Union, "Images," Accessed March 31, 2016, http://andaunion.com/images.php.

[52] Anda Union," *Facebook,* Accessed March 11, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/andaunion/info/?tab=page_info; "Anda Union," *YouTube,* Accessed March 11, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/user/andaunion; "安达组合," *Baidu,* Accessed March 11, 2016, http://baike.baidu.com/link?url=xqAQCg0R2Tl7r0iVsI4UJ2iUA2N2P4eKcP-DZ9KCYuHfT-26hOttdjdsep6Nm5FMJXzoetGs3OzvWpQMw4Typq.

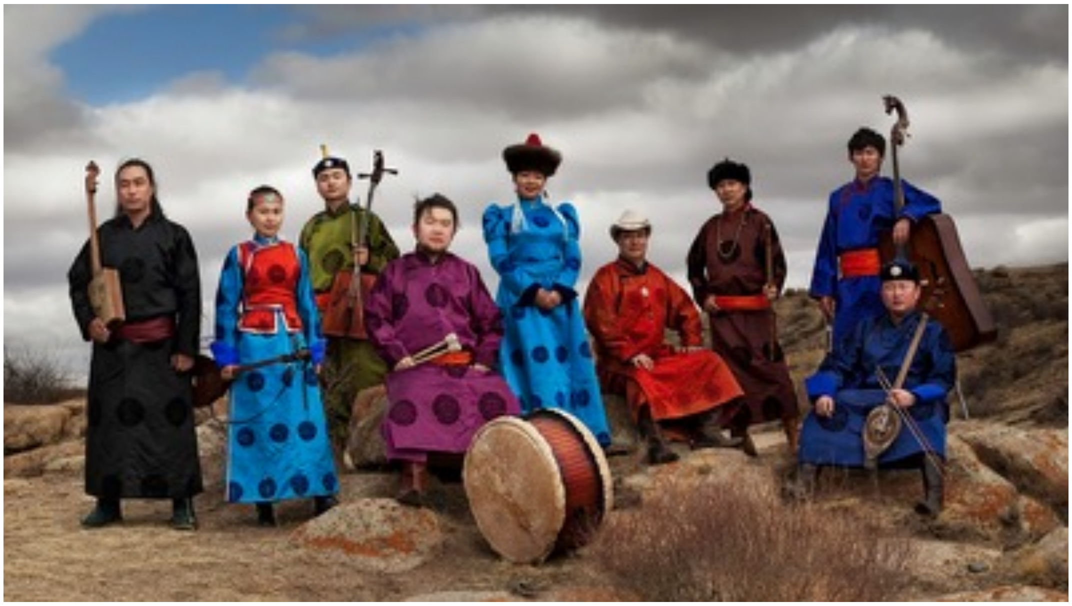

Figure 8: *Anda Union*

Anda Union has constructed its image with the use of traditional Mongolian elements like wearing *deels* and other traditional clothing. In addition, their music is played using traditional Mongolian musical instruments like the horse-head fiddle. A picture of *Anda Union* which is showcased on their website can be found below.[55] The constructed image of traditional Mongolian musicians seeks to promote an image of an intact Mongolian culture to the audience. In some ways, this mitigates the cultural identity anxiety that permeates Mongol life in Inner Mongolia. Additionally, the image works in tandem with the language of resistance that is subtly embedded in some of the band's songs, something which will be further discussed below. This is especially true because part of the "mission" is also to educate the Western world about Mongolians and their quest to preserve cultural distinction. Thus, the band needs to "perform" its "culture" for *Western* audiences as part of the message of resistance.

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[53] Anda Union, Accessed March 11, 2016, http://andaunion.com.

[54] Anda Union, Accessed March 11, 2016, http://andaunion.com/about.php.

Anda Union has only produced one commercial album, *The Wind Horse,* which was released in 2011 and features 13 songs. All of the songs on the album are old Mongolian folksongs. For example, *Altargana* is based on a famous Buriat folksong, and *Boomborai* is a folksong about ancient shamanistic traditions.[56] The album appears to be another vehicle for promoting a distinct Mongolian culture. However, *Anda Union's* performances at international venues affirm that Mongolian bands are "sometimes engaging in new meanings and subtle discourses of resistance at the same time."[57]

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[55] Anda Union, Accessed March 31, 2016, http://andaunion.com/images.php.

[56] "Anda Union and the Wind Horse," *The Clarice,* September 20, 2013, Accessed March 11, 2016, https://theclarice.umd.edu/sites/default/files/program-notes/cspac_092013_AnDa.pdf.

[57] D'Evelyn, "Music Between Worlds," 58.

Singing Mongolian: Songs and the Language of Resistance

Harrell and Ma, in a study about the Yi ethnic minority group in China, posit that ethnic minority groups will resist if cultural expression and transmission is not allowed. They write that:

> …if members of a minority hold the view that they can use education to achieve success, they devise ways to surmount the obstacle posed by cultural divergence. If they hold, on the other hand, that the education system will merely strip them of their own culture and identity without giving them equal opportunity in the wider society, they will respond with resistance.[58]

Chapter Three of this study already established that Mongols are responding to cultural identity anxiety through resistance in the form of protests. The case studies in this study have sought to demonstrate how Mongols resist the ideological constructs of the state that posit Mongols as backwards. This study has also sought to argue and demonstrate that protests agains state ideology and cultural impositions take different cultural forms. Following is an analysis of two *Anda Union* songs that contain lyrics in which *Anda Union* seeks to resist state ideologies of modernization.

On September 20, 2013, *Anda Union* performed at the University of Maryland, located in College Park, MD, in the Ina and Jack Kay Theater at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center.[59] The program for the performance introduced the band members, the traditional Mongolian instruments, and singing styles. It also highlighted the songs which were to be performed that evening, which included some songs that are not on the commercial album. The guide provided English lyrics for both of these songs. Tellingly, the program introduction of these particular songs and the song lyrics were evidence of the language of resistance that *Anda Union* mobilizes in order to educate international audiences about the plight of Mongols in Inner Mongolia.

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[58] Stevan Harrell and Erzi Ma, "Folk THeories of Success: Where Han Aren't Always the Best," in *China's National Minority Education Culture, Schooling and Development,* ed. Gerard A. Postiglione, (New York: Falmer Press, 1999), 214.

[59] "Anda Union and the Wind Horse," *The Clarice,* September 20, 2013, Accessed March 11, 2016, https://theclarice.umd.edu/sites/default/files/program-notes/cspac_092013_AnDa.pdf.

The introduction to the song *Ode to Mongolia* states: "The mighty Mongolian Empire and Genghis Khan are of central importance to Mongolian culture and a source of immense pride for Mongolians today."[60] Because I have already discussed the importance of Genghis Khan to the Mongolian culture in Chapters Two and Five, I will not discuss it again here. Suffice it to say that this song directly references the importance of Genghis Khan to Mongols, but in a way which is in resistance to the state's normalization of Genghis Khan as a Chinese hero.

The song lyrics include:

To be the world's master
O Genghis Khan's Mongolia
The ancient history of Mongolia
Urlan is the mother of Genghis Khan and Mongolia
The Mongolians have 800 years of history[61]

In the lyrics above, there is a reference to "Mongolia" as opposed to specifically referring to either Inner or Outer Mongolia. The concept of "Mongolia" is part of the "pan-Mongolian" ideology. Xiaoyuan Liu asserts the notion of a "pan-Mongolia" has been a "central theme in any spontaneous Mongolian nationalist movement of the twentieth century."[62] Further extrapolating this concept, Bulag asserts that "pan-Mongolia," has developed over time to become more an identity concept than a concept meant to position one nation-state against another.[63] In this song, the notion of a pan-Mongolian ideology and culture which connects Mongol listeners to one another as part of a Mongolian cultural group and claims a connection to one "Mongolian land." This is not just a reference to the nation-state boundary of the MPR. In this way, *Anda Union* ensures that its lyrics are not tinged with any notions of separatism.

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[60] "Anda Union and the Wind Horse," *The Clarice,* September 20, 2013, Accessed March 11, 2016, https://theclarice.umd.edu/sites/default/files/program-notes/cspac_092013_AnDa.pdf.

[61] "Anda Union and the Wind Horse," *The Clarice,* September 20, 2013, Accessed March 11, 2016, https://theclarice.umd.edu/sites/default/files/program-notes/cspac_092013_AnDa.pdf.

Additionally, *Anda Union* invokes the long history of the Mongols' by referencing "800 years of history." *Anda Union* reasserts the collective identity of Mongols that is rooted in history and that has existed long before any nation-state boundaries. The members of *Anda Union* are certainly aware of the Chinese state's official discourse with regards to its ethnic groups and because the state has reimagined Mongol history as part of the long standing Chinese civilization. The long history of the Mongolian people sung about in *Ode to Mongolia* resists this official discourse. Thus, *Anda Union* uses song lyrics to represent the identity of the Mongolian people that is rooted in the conception of a unification ideology and in the reassertion of the historical significance of the Mongolian people.

Another song included in the performance program is *Hometown.* This song is about the destruction of the grasslands in Inner Mongolia. The program from the 2013 performance at the University of Maryland, mentioned above, states that the lyrics of the song are an appeal to preserve the grasslands. The program states:

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[62] Liu, *Reins of Liberation, 6.*

[63] Uradyn Bulag, *Nationalism and Hybridity in Mongolia,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998): 62.

> “This song is inspired by the steady destruction of the grasslands as farming and mining encroach ever further combined with the effects of global climate change. The lyrics were written by Anda Union’s Urgen, who left his home in the grasslands when he was 13 years old to train at a music school in the city. He has never returned but his heart remains there, as do all the hearts of Anda Union’s performers. But the grasslands are no longer the grasslands of their childhood. This song appeals for the grasslands to be saved and preserved.”[64]

The program description is replete with a language of resistance against the Chinese state’s modernization efforts. For example, *Anda Union* expresses the “steady destruction of the grasslands as farming and mining encroach.” This is a direct reference to the state’s assimilation policies, the state’s preferences for agriculture over pastoralism, and to economic development in general. Rather than explicitly criticizing the state, the description passively, but effectively, posits that farming and mining have “encroached” upon Mongolian space and culture. But, the lyrics do not directly blame the state for intentionally targeting the grasslands for development through economic policies and state ideologies.

The lyrics of *Hometown* also contain a language of resistance. Some of the lyrics are:

My hometown the place where I was born was far away from here
My close family, how is your health?
My missing hometown is far away from here,
my missing relatives how is your health?
There is no water in the river, I am sad about that from my heart
There is no water in the spring, I am sad about this from my mind.[65]

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[64] “Anda Union and the Wind Horse,” https://theclarice.umd.edu/sites/default/files/program-notes/cspac_092013_AnDa.pdf.

[65] “Anda Union and the Wind Horse,” https://theclarice.umd.edu/sites/default/files/program-notes/cspac_092013_AnDa.pdf.

Hometown's lyrics express a lament about the destruction of the grasslands. They are also a critique of the negative impacts of modernization and of a stated preference for sedentary economies, which have driven Mongols away from their hometowns. The modernization ideology, in which pastoralism is typically viewed with contempt, means that "roads are built, trees cleared, wetlands trained, common property parcelized, multiple land uses eliminated, settlement patterns reorganized, and everywhere, new boundaries are erected."[66] This is reflected in the lyrics, which state that the grasslands and the people that once lived there are now *missing.* There is a recognition that the transformation of the grasslands and the transplantation of the people from the grasslands are permanent phenomena.

Additionally, *Anda Union* refers to dried up rivers and springs, which seems to be a reference to the ongoing environmental degradation that is rampant throughout Inner Mongolia. The destruction of grasslands throughout Inner Mongolia has been also addressed elsewhere. For example, Scholars Humphrey, Sneath, and Williams have all written extensive studies about Inner Mongolia that include discussions of the ongoing environmental degradation.[67] These studies do not directly criticize the state for the environmental problems but, rather, frame the negative impact to the land within a discussion about state policies aimed at expansion throughout Inner Mongolia. Western media have also highlighted the environmental problems in Inner Mongolia. One example is a report in *The Washington Post* which highlights the plight of Mongol pastoralists whose lands have been destroyed by the bourgeoning mining industry in Inner Mongolia.[68] Thus, *Anda Union's reference* to environmental problems is not out of the ordinary. *Anda Union,* like the artist Bilig discussed in Chapter Four, may have included references to land degradation in order to debunk the state's discourse that suggests that Mongols are backwards and thus unable to care for the land.

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[66] Dee Mack Williams, *Beyond Great Walls: Environment, Identity, and Development on the Chinese Grasslands of Inner Mongolia,* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2002): 11.

[67] See: Caroline Humphrey and David Sneath, *The End of Nomadism? Society, State, and the Environment in Inner Asia,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); David Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia: Pastoral Mongolian Society and the Chinese State*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Williams, *Beyond Great Walls.*

Both of the songs above articulate the struggle of Mongols in the internal colonial projects of the state. The state has confiscated history, heroes, and hometowns. Yet, as marginalized actors have been displaced from hometowns and from cultural distinction in daily life, *Anda Union* reasserts a Mongolian cultural identity and history. These songs are symbolic and cultural spaces in which *Anda Union* resists state modernization projects that aim to render the Mongolian culture sinicized and modernized. *Anda Union* connects modernization to the destruction of the environment, which further prompts the audience to question the methods of the Chinese state's economic expansion.

As mentioned above, these two songs are not included in the commercial album that is available in China. Presumably, *Anda Union* intentionally performs these songs, and perhaps other songs with similar themes of resistance, at international venues but not in domestic performances. I assert that self-censorship allows *Anda Union* to continue in its quest to educate international audiences.[69]

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[68] Simon Denyer, "In China's Inner Mongolia, mining spells misery for traditional herders," *The Washington Post,* April 7,2015, Accessed May 8, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/in-chinas-inner-mongolia-mining-spells-misery-for-traditional-herders/2015/04/07/16b3a252-d643-11e4-bf0b-f648b95a6488_story.html.

Resistance Beyond Music

Anda Union has gained international popularity. They have sought to combine an educational element aimed at promoting Mongolian traditional music with a criticism about the plight of Mongols and the grasslands for Western audiences, particularly through English language program notes. An example of such a program is shown below.[70]

Other performance venues also had introductory programs particularly via websites, in order to educate audiences prior to *Anda Union's* performances. For example, the *University Musical Society* at the University of Michigan featured a 58 page guide that was produced to "help teachers and their students engage in UMS K–12 China-related programs: *Anda Union*, the Chamber Ensemble of the Shanghai Chinese Orchestra" and "offers cultural overviews of China and Mongolia as well as more in-depth information about the performances and related historical, musical, and literary connections."[71]

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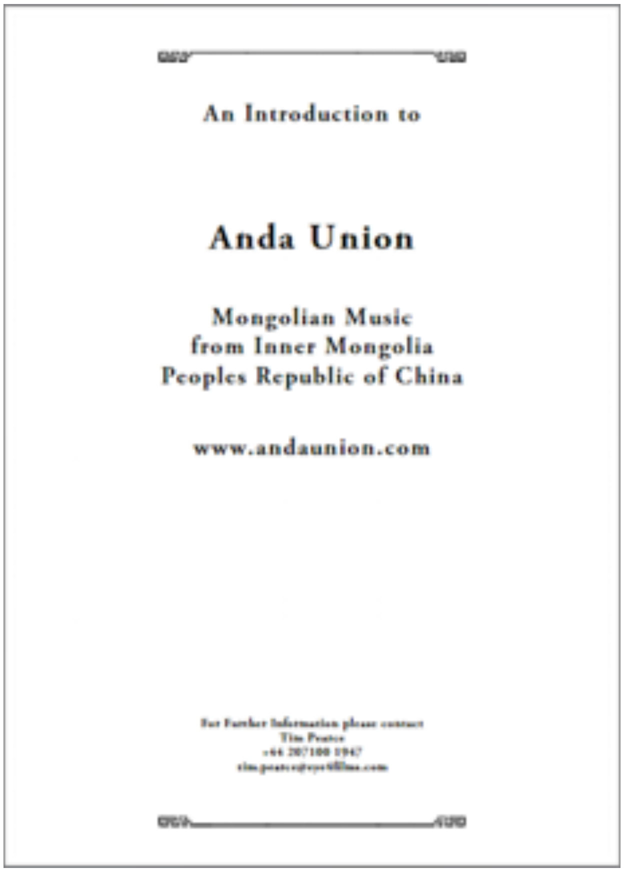
[69] I emailed *Anda Union* through their website to ask for English lyrics to more of their songs. I received a response from Tim Pearce, who is listed as one of Anda Union's producers on the program mentioned above. Mr. Pearce responded to my email stating that "I'm sorry we do not have translations of all the songs. Could I ask why you ask?" I told Mr. Pearce about this particular chapter of my dissertation, and though he thought it was interesting, he did not provide any more translated lyrics. Tim Pearce, e-mail message to author, March 11, 2016.

[70] This particular brochure was posted on the website of Norwich Arts Centre, Accessed March 10, 2016, http://norwichartscentre.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Anda%20Union-%20An%20Introduction.pdf

[71] "China!," *University Music Society,* Accessed March 16, 2016, http://ums.org/assets/AnDa_Union_and_Shanghai_Chinese_Orchestra_UMS_Teacher_Guide_-_FINALL.pdf.



An Introduction to

Anda Union

Mongolian Music
from Inner Mongolia
Peoples Republic of China

www.andaunion.com

For Further Information please contact
Tim Pearce
+44 207100 1947

Figure 9: Front Cover of Program of an *Anda Union* Performance

Anda Union also promotes cultural preservation through film. *From Steppes to the City,* which was released in 2012, is a documentary film that follows the band members on a journey throughout the grassland regions of Inner Mongolia where they hope to reconnect with their Mongolian cultural heritage. The film website states that "While wholeheartedly embracing modern society in all its facets, the Mongolian people are a culture fighting for survival in an increasingly industrialised world."[72]

The two examples of material culture provided above are examples of resistance that are in addition to the song lyrics which were analyzed. *Anda Union* has developed spaces in the international arena where freedom of expression is handled differently than in China and where it can promote itself and advertise the broader political struggles of Mongols in China. One question that arises in response to the proliferation of the band's presence across the international landscape is how *Anda Union* is able to produce a film that criticizes the modernization efforts of the Chinese state. As with the other case studies analyzed in this dissertation, there is actually a form of collaboration between *Anda Union* and the state.

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[72] "The Film," *Anda Union: From the Steppes to the City,"* Accessed March 11, 2016, http://www.andafilm.com/film.html.

Collaboration with the State: To Bless Our Eternal Motherland

Anda Union's collaboration with the Chinese state is seen through a performance in which *Anda Union* sings a song that fits within the state's discourse of ethnic minority life in China. This performance is evidence of how the Chinese state has secured *Anda Union's* loyalty. In 2011, the band performed *Ode to Auspiciousness* at the Chinese CCTV Lunar New Year Gala. The video showcased on *YouTube,* is a spectacular display of everything the Chinese state wants to be associated with when it comes to ethnic minority groups. The backdrop for the performance is a visual media representation of the pristine grasslands with all the necessary components in place: white clouds, blue skies, green grass, and yurts. There are a couple of dozen performers, all wearing traditional Mongolian costumes. The men are playing the horse-head fiddle while the women perform the Mongolian tea dance. The colors of the costumes that each performer is wearing are bright. The performers all have a contrived smile to ensure that the audience knows that they are "happy." The performance is executed with precision and unity. *Anda Union* is at the front of the stage singing a song in Mongolian, but with lyrics rooted in the Chinese discourse of a unified, multiethnic country.

Some of the lyrics are:

Let us sing and dance,
To extol our happy life.
Let us sing and dance
To bless our eternal motherland.[73]

Because the song is sung in Mongolian, the state seeks through *Anda Union* to debunk criticisms of the destruction of indigenous cultures. Viewers can hear that the Mongolian language remains intact. This program also exports images of happy, dancing Mongols to the rest of the world. Performances like this one are another way the state tries to uphold the image of a multiethnic nation. Thus, by participating in this spectacular showcase about Mongolian culture, *Anda Union* collaborates with the state in promoting and perpetuating images of Mongols in an ahistorical fashion, singing and dancing against the background of the grasslands.

Conclusion: The Political Stakes of Language Preservation

In this chapter, I have analyzed how some Mongolian bands are mobilizing the Mongolian language through songs. Mongolian language songs are in response to forces in the global and local environment which continue to impact distinct expressions of cultural identity, which include language use. The reality is that Mongolian language use is in decline. As such, there is more at stake to the proliferation of Mongolian language music bands than mere cultural expression. The social environment in China in which Mandarin fluency is key to economic opportunities is not likely to change any time soon. The waning use of Mongolian language, in daily life juxtaposed to the state's ideology of modernization in which Mongolian is posited as a backward language that should be left behind, has resulted in a criticism of the state as destroyer of ethnic identity.[74]

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[73] "(English Lyrics) Mongolian Song-Ode to Auspiciousness (Chinese CCTV Lunar New Year Gala 2011)," *YouTube,* Accessed March 11, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y17Nyo2Xd_4.

The tension between Mongols and the state is evident in the language ideology of the state. As such, Mongolian language songs become a space of tension and ideological negotiation. Songs facilitate the preservation of Mongolian language and allow for the expression and transmission of cultural identity. Coupled with language is the emphasis on traditional Mongolian folksongs and the reemergence of traditional instruments. These elements work together to construct an imagined reality in which ethnic boundaries are (re)constructed and that "Mongolness" can be seen, heard, and celebrated. Thus, songs create a symbolic and cultural space though which Mongols who have been displaced from rural geographies can now exist.

But, the state also needs Mongolian language songs to remain so as to dispel criticisms that indigenous cultures in China have no chance to survive. Songs, then, also work to help the state to promote the notion that China remains a multiethnic state. This means, however, that there are limits that Mongols must recognize as demonstrated by *Anda Union's* decision not to include songs of resistance on its commercial album. The state's ideological rhetoric that directs the actions of ethnic minority groups in China is the division between *minzu tuanjie* and *minzu fenlie* which were defined in the Introduction. If Mongol songs are perceived to be tinged with hints of separatism, their songs will be censored.

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[74] Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Linguistic Anxiety in China," 753.

Shortly after Mergen, the Mongolian shepherd, whose fate was described in the Introduction, was struck and killed in a hit and run accident, a rap artist released a song titled *Dedication to Mergen.* In the song, the artist directly challenges the state discourse that posits that Mongols overgrazed the grasslands and are to be blamed for land degradation particularly with lyrics like, "Whose fault is it really? Overgrazing is a myth and a lie." The artist criticizes the Western Development Program for the destruction of the environment and asserts that Mongolian cries for freedom are censored and removed from Chinese internet sites.[75] His song was censored too shortly after it was released online. It now is only available through the *SMHRIC* website.

In a future study, I would like to develop the argument I make in this chapter, that Mongols resist state ideologies and rhetoric through songs, through the analysis of other Mongolian songs. Specifically, I would like to access songs that have been censored within China. By using content analysis as my main method, I plan to analyze song lyrics for evidence of resistance to state ideology and for evidence of Mongolian cultural identity making. Additionally, there are many Mongolian songs available within China that are about the constructed pastoral identity. I will further develop the arguments I make in Chapter Four about the constructed pastoral identity and analyze how songs are a space in which Mongols and the state collaborate in the construction of the pastoral identity.

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[75] Staff, "Rap Song Dedicated to Mergen Banned," *SMHRIC,* June 13, 2011, http://www.smhric.org/news_390.htm, Accessed February 28, 2016. The entirety of the songs lyrics is provided in the Appendix section.

Songs like *Dedication to Mergen* overtly seek to resist the state's intervention in Inner Mongolia and in Mongolian cultural practices. However, state censorship prevents such songs from wide distribution. For now, at least, if Mongolian artists want to create spaces through which language and cultural identity can be preserved, they must self-censor as part of the ongoing ideological negotiation with the state.

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CONCLUSION

In the case studies included in this dissertation, I have examined how Mongols grapple with cultural identity anxiety by using material culture in order to deliberately reimagine a notion of “Mongolness.” The reality of a social environment dominated by rapid urbanization, economic development, and Han assimilation has prompted Mongols in Inner Mongolia to turn to material culture as representations of culture, identity, and resistance. Whereas the daily lives of Mongols in Inner Mongolia are marked by the realities of an ever changing region, representation through material culture helps Mongols preserve their cultural distinction.

In the first case study, I juxtaposed Babilig’s piece of cartoon art, *Repair,* with one example of a standard Mongolian leather painting common in the cultural tourism industry of Inner Mongolia. As I demonstrated through the analysis, Babilig follows the parameters of the state constructed grassland image in his painting, which includes the representation of the grasslands as an idealized space. Additionally, as was also demonstrated, Babilig critiques the state discourse in which Mongols are presented as backwards and unable to care for the land. Babilig’s piece is an example of a Mongol response to the claim of the destruction of the grasslands within the state’s dominant framework of representation.

In the second case study, I examined how it has been “safe” for Mongols to laud Genghis Khan as a Mongolian cultural hero because he has been sinicized by the Chinese state. As was demonstrated in this chapter, Genghis Khan is present in Inner Mongolia, in places which include: The Genghis Khan Mausoleum, a university campus, an elementary school, a main street, and a public park, among other locales.

In conversation with existing scholarship about the normalization of Genghis Khan in the cultural tourism industry in Inner Mongolia, I have examined *Bayin,* a well-known cultural themed restaurant in Hohhot. In this case study, I analyzed how cultural themed restaurants have become spaces through which Mongols may demonstrate a distinct cultural identity aligned with Genghis Khan as a Mongolian cultural hero even while he is simultaneously promoted as a patriot of the Chinese state. As such, the state allows, and even encourages, the proliferation of restaurants like *Bayin,* because they generate income for the regional cultural tourism industry and because they secure China's national identity as a multiethnic country.

The final case study in this dissertation has considered Mongolian music to be another type of material culture through which Mongols seek to preserve the Mongolian language. The proliferation of Mongolian language bands has helped to create songs which act as spaces of language preservation. Additionally, in this chapter, I posited that song lyrics by the band *Anda Union* are evidence of a language of resistance that is a response to the attack on a distinct cultural identity. In short, Mongols use songs to preserve the Mongolian language while simultaneously resisting some of the state's ideologies and discourses.

While each of the chapters has focused on a different case study, an underlying argument is threaded throughout the entire analysis. The use of material culture to represent a distinct cultural identity is one key way by which Mongols are able to prevent the total extinction of their distinct cultural identity. These case studies have shown how Mongols position themselves to preserve their distinct cultural identity while strategically embedding cultural productions within nuanced modes of resistance to state policies, discourse, and ideologies.

In China, the Deng era ushered in a nation-wide economic focus, which meant that ethnic identities were commodified for state building and for regional economic development. Today, Inner Mongolia continues to be a focus of economic development. Additionally, rapid urbanization continues to create sprawling homogenous cities in which the Han culture is promoted over that of other ethnic groups. As such, Mongols continue to grapple with the threat to cultural identity. Material culture will continue to be one vector through which Mongols will seek to represent and preserve their distinct cultural identity. Additionally, material culture will remain essential in the development of a shared Mongolian history for generations of Mongols who may have never lived in the grasslands or do not speak Mongolian. As a result, material culture will be a tool to bind Mongols together within a shared identity that is increasingly dispersed over space and time. Current and future urban Mongols will likely look to art, performances, songs, and other forms of material culture as representations of a past reality.

Key to the analyses conducted in this dissertation are some state ideologies and discourses. These political constructs are the backdrop of this study and of daily life for many marginalized minority groups in China. Ethnic minority groups in China are aware of the shifting limits of cultural identity expression. There is an awareness in China that those who cross the blurred boundaries of the state which determines how a group may or may not resist, will run the risk of being labeled as a separatist (*minzu fenlie).* If Mongols want to continue to be able to express their distinct cultural identity on the national and global stages, they will also need to continue to collaborate with the state whether they like it or not. Once they begin to make overt claims to rights to cultural autonomy, the state may label them as separatist and may respond with harsh policies that further limit cultural identity expressions.

Thus, Mongols are constantly negotiating ethnopolitical challenges in China, the impacts of economic expansion, urban policy shifts, and their own ethnic minority status. Because Mongols' daily lives are undergoing constant changes due to urbanization, assimilation, and economic development policies, various forms of material culture may well be one constant source of identity making for Mongols. As such, material culture will also continue to provide sources of study for cultural anthropologists, historians, and political scientists who want to understand the nuanced ways in which Mongols seek to preserve their heritage and culture.

I will end this study with suggestions for further research. Each of the case studies in this dissertation could be expanded. For example, as mentioned in Chapter Four, multiple pieces of art could be catalogued and analyzed to further demonstrate how Mongols try to preserve pastoralism. Through *WeChat,* I had access to countless pieces of art available in online art stores in Inner Mongolia. Similar to the music industry in Inner Mongolia, there seems to be a proliferation of art whereby the grasslands remain the main setting for a pastoral lifestyle that is depicted through artistic representations.

The arguments made in Chapter Five could be expanded to demonstrate how cultural tourism in Inner Mongolia creates centers of economic growth for the sake of geopolitical maneuvering. As was stated, centers of economic growth may not indicate China's ongoing global dominance, but, instead may indicate China's need to develop industries in which its authority is permeated throughout ethnic border regions. In Chapter Six I mentioned two possible areas of further research. Firstly, another research project could analyze the lyrics of censored songs as evidence of resistance to state discourse. Secondly, Mongolian songs that continue to gain popularity within China could be analyzed as examples of how Mongols continue to construct a pastoral identity through various modes of material culture. Whereas in this dissertation I only looked at representations of pastoral identity through art, a similar project about representations of the pastoral identity in songs could be developed.

The “state” is key in each of the case studies in this dissertation. As mentioned in the Introduction to this dissertation, I discussed “the state” as a broad entity. I did not delineate between the various state bodies that led China throughout different points of history, different state leaders, or different state agencies. By doing this, I constructed a framework through which I could focus my analysis on how Mongols and the state *collaborate*. However, there were points in my analysis, particularly in the case studies, where a discussion of specific state entities would have been fruitful. Additionally, at some points in the dissertation, the state is presented as a monolithic entity that is only concerned with oppression. In future projects, in order to provide a rich analysis of the complex relationships between Mongols and various state entities, I may need to include the variety of different state actors at work in China’s ethnopolitics.

Another area of future study concerns Mongolian cultural identity. As was already stated, Mongolian culture is also comprised of more than the three cultural markers analyzed in this dissertation. For example, Mongolians from various parts of the regions have their own distinct sub-regional ceremonial clothing. Thus, a further study could examine which regional identity has become the standard Mongolian identity that the state seems to wish to export. In other words, within the constructed Mongolian ethnic identity, there is also a cultural hierarchy whereby one particular regional identity may be the standard by which all other regional identities are measured. As such, a further question would be to ask whether not Mongols are contributing to their own cultural destruction by submitting to state-validated regional hierarchies. Have Mongols, broadly speaking, conceded to the construction of one overarching Mongolian cultural identity so that some semblance of a Mongolian cultural identity can be preserved?

I would also like to develop further research study that deals with the issue language and music. Scholars have already generated some rich academic studies about Mongolian music, which have been referenced in this dissertation. A future project could examine "independent" Mongolian language songs that do not fit within the state's dominant framework. Many of these songs are often banned from the internet within China, like the rap song which was mentioned in Chapter Six. But, just as that particular song was captured by an entity outside of China, there may be other controversial songs that may be accessed. An examination of Mongolian songs that are more overt in their resistance may provide a broader contextual understanding of the range of modes of resistance to the state that are evident amongst Mongols.

This dissertation also leaves room for a study of representations of traditional cultural identities manufactured and maintained by modern modes of technology. A further study could investigate this topic through other forms of material culture including how traditional musical instruments are used to promote cultural identity to a modern audience.

In this dissertation, I have synthesized research from various fields of study, which include political science, Chinese political theory, history, material culture, cultural tourism, ethnic studies, and Mongol studies. As such, this study will be of interest to scholars seeking to further understand how historical state discourses and ideologies continue to dictate the Chinese state's management of ethnopolitics and identity making. This study is also in conversation with other studies about the politics of various ethnic groups in China, many of which have been referenced in this study. Thus, this dissertation can be seen to be part of the broad spectrum of studies about the reemergence of cultural identity amongst China's ethnic minority groups. Additionally, Inner Mongolia has long been an isolated region of China. Scholarship about Inner Mongolia has also been isolated in the academy, and thus there have been a limited number of studies about the region. While existing scholarship about Inner Mongolia has been rich and informative, I hope that this study will expand the interest of scholars who aim to further develop scholarship about this region. Scholarship about the *history* of Mongolians is expansive. The reign of Genghis Khan has captured, and continues to capture, the attention of scholars throughout the academy. But, scholarship about current-day Mongols in China is quite limited. This body of literature needs to expand so that the study of Mongols can be developed beyond the study of people who once lived in the Genghis Khan era.

As Mongols continue to grapple with cultural identity anxiety posed by problems in the past and predicated upon an unknown future, it will be critical to watch how

Mongols continue to answer the question, “Who are we?” It will be telling to see how the state allows or prevents Mongols to answer this question.