

Höömii is used by Altai Urianghai and Bait camel herders, as well as Western Khalkha and Bayan Ölgii Tuvan yak herders, as a means of calling their animals. The Western Khalkha Gereltsogt (IN) explained that it is more effective in controlling yaks than using a sling. *Höömii* reverberates better in the mountains, the natural habitat of yaks, than on the steppes, and, as with whistling, the ability to transmit the sound over a great distance is much admired. The forty-eight-year-old Bait Mongol Mangiljav (IN), camel-herder and *höömiich*, learned from Setsen, an uncle on his father's side (*avga*), who was noted for his ability to do this (IN). Similarly, the Bait Mongol Jamiyan (IN) recalled, with admiration, herders whose *höömii* could be heard over a distance of 3 kilometers.

Melodious, short *magtaar*—delivered with a powerful, rhythmic voice—are also used to call yaks. In the *magtaar* “Hartai Sarlag” (Black and White Yaks), performed by Hotons, the herder calls the yaks, warning them that it is getting dark.

<i>Hartai sarlag n',</i>	Black and white yaks,
<i>Höör höörlöö,</i>	Höör höörlöö,
<i>Haranhui bolbol,</i>	If it becomes dark,
<i>Naariig, naariig (naash ir),</i>	Come here, come here,
<i>Ee höörhiim, naariig, naariig.</i>	Oh my poor things, come here, come here.

Instruments are also used to call animals and birds, as well as to instruct people. Listen, for instance, to the Zakchin Mongol Bayarmagnai, who plays melodies on the *ikil* to call deer, lure birds, and to unite or disperse people (CD:21).

Musical Techniques of Milking

Milking mares was traditionally a man's task, and for this reason the hide containing fermented mare's milk is kept in the western, male side of the *ger*. In contemporary Mongolia, women milk mares, but a man simultaneously holds the animal's head and, rolling the *rs* melodically with the tongue, cries *hurui, hurui, hurui*. This cry lacks the circular gestures of the beckoning (*dallaga*) ritual¹ but clearly is “to beckon good fortune” (*buyan*

hishig dallah) in the form of the highly precious milk. It also serves to keep the mare calm, so that she gives milk more easily.

In the same way, vocal and instrumental melodies are used to encourage animals to give milk to their newborns, since it is important not to lose any animals. Spring is a particularly difficult season in Mongolia. It is still bitterly cold but also dusty. Moreover, food stocks are low after the demands of winter. Mongols have different musical remedies for the four domesticated animals that reject their young. (Mares never reject their colts.) When a ewe will not allow her lamb to nurse, a herdsman first takes a small amount of milk from the ewe and puts it on to the lamb's back. In one hand, she keeps hold of the ewe's teat and with the other holds the lamb close. Then she sings:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Hundan tsagaan hon' min',</i> | My snow-white sheep, |
| <i>Hurgaa yuund golno ve?</i> | Why do you reject your lamb? |
| <i>Havryn tsasan hailna l,</i> | The spring snow will melt, |
| <i>Hajuud chin' yuu hevtene ve?</i> | What will be lying beside you? |
| <i>Toig, toig, toig.</i> | <i>Toig, toig, toig.</i> |
| 2. <i>Denjiin nogoo urgana,</i> | <i>The grass on the knoll will grow,</i> |
| <i>Delen höh chin' chinerne,</i> | Your udder will become swollen |
| | and sore, |
| <i>Derged chin' yuu hevteh yum ve?</i> | What will be lying beside you? |
| <i>Toig, toig, toig.</i> | <i>Toig, toig, toig.</i> |
- (Devee IN) (CD:36)

For goats, the song and sounds used are different:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>Yangir evertai min',</i> | My wild goat-horned one, |
| <i>Üree yuund golno ve?</i> | Why do you reject your kid? |
| <i>Chüü, chüü, chüü.</i> | <i>Chüü, chüü, chüü.</i> |
| 2. <i>Ag' sharilj² urgana,</i> | Sagebrush will grow, |
| <i>Atga delen chin' chinerne.</i> | Your fist-sized udder will become sore. |
| <i>Chüü, chüü, chüü.</i> | <i>Chüü, chüü, chüü.</i> |
- (Devee IN)

For camels, it is necessary to play the *huur* and sing a song that is believed to have originated with an elder who understood the animal language. It tells how a camel ran away to give birth to her calf and how the camel herder spent several days looking for her. When he eventually found the camel by the River Buuj, he punished her by cutting her Achilles tendon, so that she was unable to walk. As the herder took away her calf, the camel wept and sang (Devee IN). When the mother camel hears this song, she makes a wailing noise, weeps large tears, and gives the calf milk.

For cows, a magical cure (*dom*) is used. A mixture of salt and dry tea is put down for the cow to eat. Then a dog is brought, tied close to the cow and calf, and beaten so that it makes loud distressed howls. The cow will take the calf in order to defend it. The call made is “*hoo, hoo, hoo*.” Alternatively, one person hits the dog while another ties the calf to the dog’s neck saying, “*hoo, hoo, hoo*.”

All Mongolian ethnic groups use the same techniques, but there are some variations in sound. Dariganga Mongols use the *morin huur* and *limbe* to encourage camels to accept their young. They sing “*toig, toig, toig*” for sheep; “*oo, oo, oo*” (and beat a dog) for cows; “*cheeg, cheeg, cheeg*” for goats; and “*hoo, hoo, hoo*” for camels. Darigangas play instruments and put milk on the animal’s back in all cases. Hotons sing “*toig, toig, toig*” for sheep and “*chiig*” for goats, but, encouraging the camel to take her young, they sing “Sarig Tsagaan Inge” (Sarig White Camel), accompanied by the *huur*.

Placating Animals with the Music of the Wind

The *morin huur* or *ikil* is often used to soothe restless horses and camels. Sometimes, it is hung from one of the camel’s humps, so that the wind continually sounds the strings. The two-string fiddle is also used when animals are giving birth—reportedly the reason the instrument came to symbolize prosperity (Badamhatan 1987:352). Among Kazakhs, the three-holed, end-blown pipe (*sibizgi*) is played for the same purpose. Totai explained how this came to be so and how the instrument’s origin was related to the wind.

Once some herders were living in a very beautiful place. It was very peaceful. One evening, a wind got up and they were surprised to hear wonderful melodious sounds. Deciding to investigate, they discovered that close by were many bamboo stalks, some of which had bent. The herders realized that sounds were being produced as the wind passed through these bent bamboo stalks. They also noticed a change in the behavior of their animals that evening. So now they use [the pipe] for animals—horses especially like it. When horses are restless and don’t particularly like to stop next to the *ger*, herdsmen play the *sibizgi* and the horse will remain in the same place happily. (Totai IN)