

11. The Taiga Within. Topography and personhood in Northern Mongolia

Morten Axel Pedersen

1. Introduction

The binary between “the wild” and “the tame” has been out of fashion for some time now among anthropologists, historians of religion, and scholars from cognate disciplines. Like its conceptual parent nature/culture, alongside with a whole number of its more or less distant “cousins” such as the raw/cooked and public/private, wild/tame has been criticized for its inability to capture the diversity of human engagements with and perceptions of their surroundings in a cross-cultural perspective. Indeed, it seems hard to conclude otherwise when faced with the bewildering ethnographic variation documented by anthropologists from all corners of the world, ranging from the Hagen people’s “no nature, no culture” in Papua New Guinea’s (Strathern 1980) over the Amerindian “multi-naturalism” discussed by Viveiros de Castro (1998) to the landscapes of Northern Mongolia’s reindeer-herders, which, to cite a previous work of mine, “is not simply comprised by the physical contours of the environment surrounding the nomadic camp. For [the] camp does not define an enclosure of cultural space on the other side of which its inhabitants encounter a natural wilderness. ‘Wild’ spaces can be found inside each Duxa camp, just as ‘tame’ places can be found outside it” (Pedersen 2009, 137)

But perhaps there is reason to pause a bit, and ask whether it is possible, germane even, to try reinstating the binary between nature and culture – and, more specifically between the wild and the tame – as an analytical framework in a manner that seeks to overcome its multiple (Eurocentric, Cartesian, modernist, etc.) biases, but retains its explanatory power. The present article attempts to do just that. More specifically, my aim in what follows is to explore the concept of wilderness as an ethnographically derived analytical concept and, in so doing, demonstrate the scope of a certain form of contemporary anthropology, which may

be described as “post-plural” (Holbraad & Pedersen 2009) or “post-relational” (Pedersen 2012). My case is Mongolia’s Darhad peoples, with whom I have carried out some 20 months of fieldwork since the mid-1990s.¹

The Darhads, who number around 20.000 individuals, are a Mongolian speaking group of pastoralists, hunters and village dwellers, who inhabit the north-western corner of Mongolia’s Hövsgöl Province 1000 km away from the national capital of Ulaanbaatar and 200 km away from the provincial capital, Mörön. The Darhads originate from a complex mix of ethnic groupings only some of which were Mongolian in cultural and linguistic terms, whereas the rest were Tuvan, Turkic and, possibly, Tungusian tribes. Today these original groupings, many of which at some point were known as clans (*ovog*), are largely defunct in sociological and economical terms, though people still make reference to certain clans; particularly in the context of the Darhads’ shamanist religion, in which they play a crucial role (Badamhatan 1986; Dulam 1992; Pedersen 2011a). The Darhads are clustered around a region bearing their name. Located west of the Hövsgöl Nuur, Mongolia’s largest freshwater lake, south-east of the Tuvian Autonomous Republic of Russia, and south-west of Russia’s Buryat Autonomous Region, the Shishged Depression is a geographically isolated lowland situated between three large mountain complexes, south-east of Mongolia’s border with the Tuvan Autonomous Republic of Russia. In topographical terms the Shishged Depression is quite unique in Mongolia, for it is comprised of a largely uninterrupted flat steppe zone surrounded on all sides by coniferous forests and high alpine lands (collectively known as the *taiga*).

Ever since the heyday of the Mongolian empire in the 13th and 14th centuries, if not before, the Shishged Depression has fluctuated between

1 Fieldwork was carried out from October 1995 to January 1996; June 1998 to September 1999; June to August 2000, and from May to June 2009. I would like to thank the Danish Research Academy; King’s College; the William Wyse Foundation; The Department of Anthropology, Aarhus University, Mindefondet; King Christian X’s Foundation; HH Queen Margrethe and Prince Henrik’s Foundation, and Crown Prince Frederik’s Grant for Scientific Expeditions for financial support that has made this research possible. This article builds in some parts on Morten Axel Pedersen’s previous article “Tame from Within: Landscapes of the Religious Imagination Among the Darhads of Northern Mongolia” in *The Mongolia-Tibet Interface*, edited by Uradyn E. Bulag and Hildegard G.M. Diemberger, Leiden: Brill, (2007). Gaby van Rietschoten and the Brill publishing house are gratefully acknowledged for the permission to re-use parts of this previous work.

periods of social, cultural, and religious incorporation during which this region and its inhabitants were fully part of large-scale polities, and periods of social, cultural, and religious fragmentation, where it was not governed by any single sovereign, subject instead to constantly changing alliances and feuds between different tribes and their chiefs. Indeed, the Shishged Depression is situated right on the border between two major geographic, political and cultural regions. Not only is it located on the present-day border between Mongolia and Russia, which, before that, was the border between the Mongolian Peoples' Republic and the Soviet Union, and, still further back in time, the Qing empire and the Russian empire. It is also on the geographical border between the forests of Siberia and plains of Inner Asia; on the religious border between the predominantly shamanic indigenous peoples of Siberia and the predominantly Buddhist peoples of Mongolian societies; and on the sociological border between the traditionally egalitarian hunting societies of Northern Asia and the traditionally hierarchical pastoral societies of Inner Eurasia (Ingold 1980; Hamayon 1994; Humphrey 1994; Pedersen 2001, Pedersen 2011a).

Indeed, “the Darhad people” (*Darhad yastan*) is a product of complex political dynamics unfolding at the fringe of the Qing empire from the late seventeenth to the early twentieth century. With the collapse of the Mongolian empire in 1368, Northern Mongolia entered a tumultuous period in which, for nearly four hundred years until the final defeat of the Jungar (Oirat) federation 1757, it was caught in endlessly shifting alliances and antagonisms between different polities, including the rising imperial powers of Czarist Russia and Qing China, who simultaneously exercised power as part of a wider political outmanoeuvring game. In the mid-18th century, the Shishged entered a period characterized by relative stability, which was to last until the chaotic decade of political turbulence culminating in the revolution of 1921, and, with the death of the “Holy Emperor” (Bogd Khan) in 1924, full Communist takeover. During this period, which people nostalgically refer to as the “golden age of Buddhism”, the Shishged was home to the Darhad Ih Shav’ (“The Great Darhad Ecclesiastical Estate”), a Buddhist estate belonging directly to the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, the leading reincarnation or, in popular parlance, Living Buddha of Mongolia’s Buddhists. It was this Buddhist estate that defined Darhads as a people of ecclesiastical disciples (*shabinar*) corresponding to a sacred landscape and administrative structure, and it was this institution that established Gelupka Buddhism firmly in a region,

which, by all accounts, had until then been a shamanist stronghold (Sandschejew 1930; Zhamtsarano 1979).

This chapter explores certain contemporary ramifications of this historical Buddhist missionizing or, to adopt the lamas' own term, "domestication" project that took place in the shamanic hinterlands of Mongolia in the centuries up until the communist takeover. My argument proceeds from the ethnographic premise that Darhad concepts of the person cannot be understood without a careful exploration of how people are thinking through the landscape. Indeed, many aspects of Shishged social life revolve around two overarching dichotomies, namely a spatial contrast between the taiga and steppe, and an existential contrast between what is widely understood to define the basic substances of Darhad persons, namely the so-called "yellow side" (*shar tal*) and the so-called "black side" (*har tal*). The black side comprises everything that is violent, uncontrolled, harmful, morally ambiguous, and – the logic goes – shamanic. The yellow side, conversely, is all peaceful, balanced, benevolent, morally unambiguous, and – therefore – Buddhist. Indeed, people often refer to shamanism as the "black religion" (*shar shashin*) and to (Gelugpa) Buddhism as the "yellow religion" (*shar shashin*).

Some might wish to think of these two "sides" as ethnic identities, for they spring from a cultural imaginary shared by Darhads and non-Darhads as to what distinguishes the former as a *yastan*. However, the concept of ethnic identity may be misleading in the present context, if not generally (Pedersen 2011b). Not only does it easily give rise to the dubious notion that the Darhads subscribe to only one subjectivity in their relations with significant others, but it also conceals that Darhads see themselves as internally differentiated into "black" and "yellow" persons. For, although both of these "sides" are understood to reside within each and every Darhad, they are also employed to distinguish between different kinds of Darhads. Every person is simultaneously black and yellow on the inside, but not on the outside, where some persons (such as potential future shamans) stand out by being particularly "black", while other persons (like respected male elders) are prominent in a "yellow" way. Thus agency becomes a question of how these two sides are extracted from land, things and people, by different kinds of persons recognized to have the capacity to do so (Pedersen 2011a).

The central claim of this chapter is thus that the two "sides" of Darhad persons are folded into the geographically-cum-historically generated spatial contrast between a Shishged *taiga* zone and a Shishged steppe zone, and between shamanism and Buddhism. What we seem to be

faced with, then, is classic line-up of homologous binary oppositions, which, to adopt the old structuralist convention (Levi-Strauss 1962), may be depicted as follows: wild: *taiga*: shamanism: “black side” :: tame: steppe: Buddhism: “yellow side”. The point, however, is that there is an inherent asymmetry at work in these homologies; and it is the nature and the implications of this homological asymmetry that defines the thrust of my argument. I contend that the Shishged *taiga* zone constitutes a “multiple margin” in asymmetrical opposition to which the Shishged steppe zone represents a “singular centre”; and that this contrast between a wild or natural dimension that is “black”, “shamanic” and “multiple” and a tame or cultural dimension that is “yellow”, “Buddhist” and “singular” is replicated across a range of different objects and scales, including, above all, mindscapes and landscapes.

In what follows, I outline the key dynamics of the process by which the “outer topography” of the Darhad landscape has become replicated in the “inner topography” of Darhad persons. I then present in some detail the Buddhist attempt to domesticate of the Darhads and their landscape in the 18th and 19th centuries, and end by discussing some local legends suggesting an alternative view of Darhad cultural history. But first, let me begin by describing the prevailing Darhad stereotype entertained by most people in Mongolia.

2. The black side and the yellow side

How do other Mongolians view the Darhads? Tellingly, little attention is paid to the Darhads’ notable Buddhist history. Indeed, the Darhads are widely known to be *the* shamanist ethnicity (*yastan*) in Mongolia. Thus non-Darhads,² when asked to characterise the Darhads, tend to single out three traits: 1) The Darhads, due to the extreme remoteness of their homeland, are wild, crude, and poor. 2) The Darhads are deeply shamanic, and they all have the ability to curse (*haraal hiib*). 3) The Darhads are inveterate jokers, about whose intentions one can never be sure. Taken together, these traits signify a more general concept of a significant other in opposition to which non-Darhads can identify themselves. If They are shamanists, then We are Buddhists; if They are wild, then We are civilised; and, since They are positioned at the very margin/border

2 By this term I here refer mainly to Mongolia’s Halh majority, whose stereotype of the Darhads many of Mongolia’s other ethnic minorities seem to share.

(*zah, hil, hyazgaar*) of the Mongolian nation-state, We are positioned closer to its centre (*töv*).

But the Darhads are not only seen to occupy the margin in geographical, economical and political terms. They are also known to be marginal in sociological and psychological terms. Darhads are thus not held to be as *shuluuhan* (“straight, direct”) as other people, notably Mongolia’s Halh majority, who, at least in Northern Mongolia, are known to be especially *ilen dalangüi* (“open, earnest”, *töv sanaatai* (“balanced”, lit. “to have centred feeling-thoughts”) and *töviig baridag* (“balanced”, lit. “to be holding the centre”).³ More generally, as Bulag (1988: 70–76) have argued, where the Halh originally constituted one *halh* (“flank, shield”) of the Mongolian heartland, they are now widely considered to be positioned at its very *gol* (“core, centre”). Thus Halh’s peoples’ “balanced” and “centred” *inner* position correspond to their *outer* position in Mongolia’s political economy. Darhads, conversely, are “unbalanced” (*töviig baridaggüi*, lit. “not holding the centre”), and, far from being “straight and direct” (*shuluuhan*), Darhads are feared for “always to speak in a roundabout way” (*dandaa toiruu yaridag*). Indeed, Darhads are widely believed to have “layered minds” (*davhar uhaan*). Interestingly, *davhar*, in addition to meaning “double”, “layered” or “stratified”, is also used to denote processes of impregnation (e.g. *biye davhar boloh* – “(for a body) to become pregnant”) (Hangin et. al. 1986). From the non-Darhad point of view, then, the Darhads’ political-economic marginality corresponds to an internal state of multiplicity: every Darhad person is understood to constitute an existential manifold within.

In many ways, the negative ethnic stereotype of the Darhads is similar to their own notion of the “black side”, as outlined above. Typically, when people talk about the “black side”, it revolves around the famous hostility of Darhad shamans towards the Buddhist *lamas* of the Darhad *Ih Shav’*. A multitude of legends (*domog*), curses (*haraal, zühel*) and shamanic invocations (*duudlaga*) play on this theme. Common for such narratives is the ability of Darhad shamanic spirits (*ongon*, pl. *ongod*) to undergo constant and unpredictable metamorphoses (*huvilgaan*). In one legend, for example, the spirit of a female shaman (*udgan*) transmutes into a rainbow hovering across a valley, where a caravan of Buddhist *lamas* is passing through. The *lamas* are terrified: the rainbow is defiling them, for it is also the underneath of a menstruating shaman. Eventually,

3 C.f. Hangin et. al. (1986). As Sneath (2000, 144) points out, *töv* – whose general meaning is that of “centre” or “middle” – also means “orthodox and righteous”.

a high-ranking *lama* (in some versions the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu himself) says a powerful prayer, and the rainbow dissolves. We have here a fine example of how the historical conflict between shamans and *lamas* takes the form of a contest over control of the Darhad landscape (just as it is strongly gendered). However, an additional notion underwrites the idea of the “black side”, namely one on which the Darhad Depression plays the role of a topographical index of the Darhads’ uniqueness. Consider, for example, the following explanation, offered to me by a prominent Darhad hunter:

There is a kind of uranium (*uraan*) around here. Nature (*baigal*) contains it, and the flowers, wild animals and so on receive it, and pass it on to humans. A wild goat may have *uraan* and rest where the blueberries are growing. The blueberries will then receive the *uraan*, and their taste and colour will become excessively nice. So, humans will eat all the berries and receive the harmful things (*hortoi yum*). Their eyes will become light blue and they sight will deteriorate. I think, if Darhad people were able to avoid this influence from nature (*baigalyn nölöö*), we would live for 2–300 years. Darhads are different because the nature is different around here. We are receiving many things from nature – too many things – and this makes our minds very powerful (*hüchtei*) and very strange (*hachin*). What are these things? They are the many different things of nature (*yanz büriin baigalyn yum*), different things that influence peoples’ minds and render them powerful. This is why we have shamans here, and why we have the ability to curse. Some people will not admit this, but they ought to, for it is part of them [...] People who have left the Darhad Depression generally have success; their heads are working very well. During their time here, they received enough energy for the rest of their life. People who stay usually do not have good lives – they are receiving too much power from nature. So why don’t we leave? Because we cannot: Nature is pulling us back.

Not surprisingly, migrant Darhads seem to agree with this characterisation. An elderly Darhad man living in the provincial capital of Mörön made the following observation: “Why, I am a real Darhad, but I also did right in leaving my homeland. The Darhads living in our native land are smart enough, but their problem is that they can’t see to the end of things” (*etsesit n’ hürgehgüi orhidog*).

The native Darhads, it would appear, are not “straight” enough in their heads, at least not in the superior manner the Halh are known to be. Certainly, this is the message of the following observation, made by a middle aged businessman from the ethnically mixed Arbülag district, located some eighty kilometres south of the Shishged Depression. The man classified himself as *erliz* (“of mixed breed”), half Darhad and Halh, and is (as I was later told) very rich. “You see”, he said, “in our dis-

trict, the Darhads are doing extremely well. We are the best in school, we are highly skilful (*chadvartai*), and we are hardworking. This is because we are living in close proximity to the Halh. In the Darhad Depression, people do only what they feel like doing, which sometimes is very much, but usually is very little. But, here in Arbülag, the Halh leaders know to praise the Darhads so that they will work all the time". (For more on the Darhad minority districts in the Hövsgöl province, see Lacaze 2000).

Again, we are presented with the idea that the Darhads are out of balance. Their minds are hazy and unclear. They cannot see properly. They are unable to carry things through. Too many things are distracting them, influencing them. But the quotation from the hunter also shows that, when Darhads talk about the "influence from nature", they tend to do so with reference to the *taiga*. Thus the vehicles of *uraan* are associated with the *taiga* (blueberries and mountain goats), and not with the steppe zone. Darhads, it seems, are not at risk of receiving *uraan* from the life forms of the steppe, such as the domestic livestock or the grass on which these animals feed. In fact, the steppe is not associated with shamanist activities. Rather, the steppe is known as a peaceful place. It is where the pastoralists nomadise; it is where the wild predators (ideally) do not come, and it is where everyone, man and beast alike, enjoys a care-free life during the lush and plentiful summer.

We can now return to the discussion of marginality and multiplicity. For if we look at the first quotation again, we realise that nature (*baigal*) here is evoked to express the idea of a manifold. There are "many different things" in the Shishged Depression, "too many different things", in fact. Diversity, not unity, is what the hunter's explanation is about, apart from "power" (*hüch*). Certainly, *uraan* is used as an all-encompassing metaphor for the "influence from nature"; yet it is surely no coincidence that this term is adopted for this purpose. Uranium, after all, is known for its inherently unstable nature – and for the harmful power that springs from this instability. *Uraan*, it seems, represents an apt metaphor for conveying the popular Darhad notion that the *taiga* zone is a vehicle of transformation, of mutation (of one's eyes, for example), and, above all, of multiplicity.

To the Darhads, I propose, the *taiga* zone constitutes an external homologue of what from the perspective of non-Darhads (and migrant Darhads), is internal to all Darhad persons. The steppe zone, on the other hand, is understood to provide the inhabitants of the Darhad Depression with what moving away from the Darhad homeland has accomplished for the migrant Darhads, namely a sort of spatial refuge from the "black

side” But how did this spatial refuge come into being? Why does the steppe constitute a “tame” safe haven beyond the reach of the dangerous “influence from nature”? To answer these questions, we need to consider how the Mongolian Buddhist church governed the Shishged Depression during the centuries up until the Communist revolution.

3. The Darhad Ih Shav’

Much has been written about Buddhist domestication projects and the search for hidden valleys in the borderlands of Tibet (see e.g. Blondeau & Steinkellner 1996; Huber 1999; Ehrhard 1999a, 1999b; Dienberger, H. & G. Hazod 1999). Less attention, however, has been paid to similar politico-religious agendas at play at the northernmost fringes of Inner Asia. Here, various representatives of the Mongolian Buddhist church were also engaged for centuries in an uneven struggle for domination with local shamanist practitioners, usually to the effect that the latter became marginalised in society or even disappeared altogether (Heissig 1980; Even 1991). The remote forests of northern Mongolia, for instance, seem to have represented a treasured pilgrimage spot for a certain class of *lamas*, the so-called *badarchid* (“itinerant *lamas*”) (see Pozdneyev 1971, 343–44; Charleux 2002, 169). There is every reason to think that, as has been shown to be the case in Tibet’s southern borderlands, these Mongolian *lamas* ventured out to discover “an untamed wilderness, one which awoke anxieties and terrors but also held the prospect of spiritual satisfaction.” (Ehrhard 1999a, 228; see also Charleux 2002, 195–200).

It is well-known that “part of the aspiration of Tibetan religious ideology is to eliminate wilderness by subjugating it” (Ramble 1997, 133). The Darhad Ih Shav’ is a case in point. Indeed, there is reason to believe this Buddhist estate entertained a privileged position within the total ecclesiastical estate (Shabi Yamen) of the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu. For one thing, the Darhad Ih Shav’ was one of a few *shav*’ situated inside the politically ambiguous borderland *hyazgaar* between the Qing and the Russian empire (Ewing 1981). Not only was the Darhad Ih Shav’ uncharacteristically open to Russian influences, but its ecclesiastical subjects were also literally sealed off from the Outer Mongolian *aimags* located to the south of the *hyazgaar* (Badamhatan 1986, 26). Secondly, because of its location within the forest belt of Northern Mongolia, the Darhad Ih Shav’ constituted the Shabi Yamen’s primary source of fur and pelt reve-

nues, obtained from the *shabinar* in the form of direct taxation as well as religious alms (Badamhatan 1986, 27–34). Finally, as Bawden notes (1986, 69), “the *Shabi yamen*, did not control actual territory, apart from the pastures of the Darkhat in the far north-west of Mongolia”. So not only does the Darhad Ih Shav’ seem to have comprised the largest and economically most vital population of *shabinar* within the Shabi Yamen estate, but it also comprised the only lands in Qing Outer Mongolia under *de facto* sovereignty of the Buddhist church (see also Ewing 1981; Pedersen 2011a).

On several levels, I propose, the Darhad Ih Shav’ imposed a spatial dimension and political scale upon the Shishged Depression which had not been there before. The very entity known as the “Darhad people” is a case in point. For, even if one assumes that a grouping with this designation was found in north-western Mongolia before the Darhad Ih Shav’s creation at the Khuren Belchir Assembly in 1668, it is still unquestionable that this original group subsequently were infused with a range of other ethnic or political groupings (Badamhatan 1986, 62–63). Indeed, the Darhad Ih Shav’ was probably created by a close alliance between Mongolia’s Buddhist church and its Halh nobility with the explicit aim of imposing a degree of political stability on the Hövsgöl region, which had suffered from civil war and general political unrest for several centuries (Ewing 1985; Bawden 1986; Pedersen 2011a). One could even argue that the very concept of “domestication” is inscribed into the Darhad ethnonym. The term *darhan* (pl. *darhad*) can denote something “sacred”, “protected”, and, most interestingly, “an area set aside for religious reasons or rites” (Hangin et. al. 1986).

It is not fully clear how many monasteries the Darhad Ih Shav’ comprised at a given time during its more than two-hundred years long history. Several monasteries were relocated or perhaps even closed down due to the ongoing conflicts with local shamans as well as warlords from the White Army during the Russian Civil War (Pürev 1980, 46–48). But it is reasonably certain that the first monastery dates back to 1757, at which point the Darhads apparently resettled in their homeland following their forced migration to the Selenge region during the various Jungar invasions of the late 17th century (Badamhatan 1986, 25; 44–45; Badamhatan & Banzragch 1981, 13–15). This was the Zöölöngiin Hüreе (also known as the Darhadyn or Renchinlhümbe Hüreе), which was to become the religious, administrative and commercial centre of the Darhad Ih Shav’ for the next 175 years or so (see, for example, Sandschejew 1930). The location of this ecclesiastical centre was, however, changed

several times. Initially, the Zöölön monastery was built at the mouth of the river Ivd, which is located in the present day Soyot sub-district of the Ulaan-Uul district. But, partly for occult reasons, and partly for practical ones, the Zöölön monastery was later relocated in two stages, eventually to find its permanent base East of the Shishged Depression's geographical centre, close to the present day Renchinlhümbe district centre (Dioszegi 1961).

At some point between 1821 and 1855, the Darhad Ih Shav' underwent an administrative reform. Until this point, this Buddhist estate had been organised into one *otog* (i. e. the ecclesiastical equivalent to the *hoshoo*, the main administrative unit in Qing Mongolia), but it was now reorganised into three *otogs*, known as the East, West and North *otog* respectively, each administered by an office headed by a secular *otog* leader (*otogyn darga*) ultimately answering to the ecclesiastical authorities (Badamhatan 1980, 26; see also Legrand 1976, 81–82; Vreeland 1962: 11–23). Not surprisingly, the introduction of this tripartite administrative structure was soon followed by the introduction of a tripartite monastic structure as well. Thus, in 1880, a second monastery was built at a place called Tsaram, but was soon relocated to another place called Burgaltai, after the river with the same name. Later, the monastery was moved once again finding its permanent location south of the Hög River in the present Ulaan-Uul district, though it kept its former name, the Burgaltai Hüree. In 1890, a third monastery was established, which in the early 1900's, was *also* moved to the aforementioned Ivdiin Am. Henceforth, this third monastery became known as the Ivdiin Hiid. Finally, two smaller prayer temples (*hural*) were at some point constructed to the north-east of the Zöölön monastery, namely the Töhiin Hural and the Mandalyn Hural respectively.

At the beginning of the 20th century, then, there seems to have been five (or possibly six) monastic sites in the Shishged Depression, all located within the spatial and political territory of the Darhad Ih Shav'. Now, if one plots these monastery locations onto a map, something resembling a star-shaped figure emerges. This could be taken to suggest that there was a deliberate design behind the construction of monastic sites in the Darhad Ih Shav'. Still, plenty of pragmatic reasons may account for the location of these sites. A variety of more contingent religious factors should also be taken into account, such as the possibility that the monastic locations were determined by divination activities carried out *in situ*, by the nature of the water flow of local streams and so forth.

If the strategic positioning of monasteries was one way in which the Mongolian Buddhist church sought to domesticate the Shishged Depression, then its appropriation of pre-existing sacred sites was another. Now there are many different kinds of sacred places in the Shishged Depression, some of which are (still today) distinctly shamanist in nature. Here I will focus solely on the so-called *ovoos* (i. e. sacred stone or wooden cairns constructed at prominent spots in the landscape to appease local “land-masters” (*gazaryn ezed*)). Both the written sources and my informants suggest that, by the mid-19th century, the Darhad Ih Shav’ had taken over the management of most prominent *ovoos* within its territory. Badamhatan (1980, 24) writes that, in 1855, the Darhad Ih Shav’ comprised 26 *züünij ovoos* and 24 *hilnii ovoos*, where the former apparently served ‘monastic’ purposes, and the latter marking the borders of the non-ecclesiastical administrative units in the vicinity of the Darhad Ih Shav’. It is not known whether the 26 *züünij ovoos* existed before the creation of the Darhad Ih Shav’, but it is likely that the majority did so, as these must have played an important politico-religious role for the indigenous patri-clans of the region (c.f. Humphrey 1995). So, it is reasonable to assume, as these and other clan migrant groupings became incorporated into the administrative structure of the Darhad Ih Shav’, the corresponding *ovoos* and their ‘resident’ *gazaryn ezed* underwent a similar domestication, as local *lamas* gradually took over the ceremonial roles previously performed by shamanist clan-elders at these *ovoo* sites.

Nevertheless, the *ovoos* did not lose their pre-Buddhist significance with the increasing institutionalisation of the Darhad Ih Shav’. My data suggest rather that the former clannish cult-sites became subsumed under standardised liturgical forms imposed by the Buddhist church, and by equally standardised bureaucratic interventions instituted by the Darhad Ih Shav’s secular arm. For example, a high-ranking *lama* from the Ivd monastery each year would preside over the *ovoo* ceremonies of the North Otog. The latter’s territory, like that of the two other *otogs*, is likely to have comprised several *ovoos* as well several clan groupings. So, if the *otog* leader of the North Otog encompassed the diversity of human groupings (households, clans) within this *otog’s* territory, the high-ranking *lama* assumed the leadership of the diversity of non-human entities (“land-masters” etc.) within the same *otog*. In that sense, the North Otog and its corresponding Ivd monastery seems to have fulfilled the same encompassing role towards the clans and *ovoos* within their territory as did the larger Zöölön monastery towards them.

We are reminded here of Stanley Tambiah's notion of the "galactic polity" (1985). As Samuel (1993, 62–63) notes, this model only partly fits the Tibetan case, since the latter was often characterised by several politico-religious polities in conflict with one other. A similar objection might be raised with respect to long periods in Mongolian history, though the Qing colonial polity does, in fact, fit Tambiah's model (Bawden 1986, 108; Humphrey 1996, 275). Indeed, when it comes to the Darhad *Ih Shav'*, Tambiah's model seems to work very well. For it is clear that the Zöölön monastery was the centre of this micro-cosmos, and it is now also clear that its four adjacent monastic sites performed the role of "satellites" in Tambiah's sense, replicating (if to a higher or lesser degree) the political, economic and religious properties of the former, but on a smaller scale.

4. A magic circle?

Are we able to conclude, then, that the different politico-religious interventions of the Buddhist church outlined above gradually turned the Shishged Depression into "an enclosure, not necessarily circular, which separates a sacred area from the profane world" ? (Snellgrove 1987, 198). In my view, this would imply the existence of a particular point from where this encompassment could be *seen* (or at least imagined); that is, a spatial vantage point from where the *entirety* of the Darhad *Ih Shav'* could be apprehended in a *mandala*-like way. In fact, the so-called Jargalantyn Ovoo (also called the Zöölöngiin Ovoo) seems to have constituted precisely such a spatial vantage. This *ovoo* was – and still is – located on a hill top near the geographical centre of the Shishged Depression. Indeed, as the proud locals seldom fail to tell you, Jargalantyn Ovoo is "the only place from where it is possible to see the whole Darhad Depression". At this site, I was told, seven lamas from the Zöölön monastery used to perform an important annual ritual.

First, the seven lamas would visit a sacred lake, at whose midst there was – and apparently still is – a tiny island with seven Siberian Larch trees (the lake is probably Deed Tsagaan Nuur). Here, the lamas made offerings and read prayers to the seven trees, which were named after the Great Bear Constellation (*Doloon Burhan Od*).⁴ Following this, the

⁴ Pegg (2001, 117) presents a short Darhad wish-prayer for this star constellation, which is worth quoting due to its explicit Lamaist connotations: "Risen above //

lamas would climb the nearby hill, at whose peak the Jargalantyn Ovoo is located. Only the lamas were allowed to ascend all the way up to the *ovoo* itself. The laymen assembled for the ritual were left behind on the hill below the *ovoo* site (women were not allowed to participate at all). The seven lamas would then perform a full-blown *ovoo* sacrificial rite (*ovoony tabilga*), in which sacrifices (*tabil*), sutra-readings and beckonings (*dallaga*) were made for the local ‘land-masters’ / gods of the Great Bear. Finally, a big celebration of games (*naadam*) was held at the mountain pass below, in which ecclesiastical subjects from all over the Darhad Ih Shav’ participated.

In discussing a comparable (Bonpo) case from the Tibetan context, Ramble suggests that “the pattern that formed around the site were, like a mandala in the most general sense, a magic circle that changed everything that came within its perimeter. The changes are thus not uniform but in accordance with *possibilities of form* offered by the nature of the quantities concerned: divinities are ranked hierarchically, stray events find themselves drawn into a unifying narrative, rocks are accorded resemblances to suitable subjects, and wildlife becomes tame” (1997, 134; emphasis added). This observation is highly pertinent for our present purposes, for it emphasises that a given project of domestication does not give rise to a perfect real-world instantiation of the *mandala* shape. Indeed, it is to some degree beside the point whether the Darhad Depression was meant to be transformed into a *mandala* or not. What matters is that the this landscape – with its unique hollow shape – must have offered the Mongolian Buddhist church a perfect “possibility of form” through which it could carry out its agenda of subjugation. Indeed, the term *hotgor* – which I elsewhere in this article have translated as “depression” – also means “concave”, “a cavity” and “hollow” in the Mongolian language. (Incidentally, Darhads informally refer to their homeland simply as “The Hotgor”).

But what was the outer perimeter of the sacred enclosure delineated by the Darhad Ih Shav’? It is relatively certain that the Buddhist sphere of influence did not reach into the depths of the *taiga*. Rather, the border zone between the steppe and the *taiga* appears to have been the major battlefield in the lamas’ continuous struggle to subjugate the Darhads and

The Seven Gods of the firmament // Guard [us] like a hat // Guard us as a shadow // Please banish misfortune and evil spirits. (*Oroid mandсан // Ogtarguin Dooloon Burhan // Malgai met mana // Süüder met sah’ // Gai bartsat gamshig totgoryg arilgaj hairla*”; translation original).

their landscape. The frequent relocation of monasteries within the Darhad Ih Shav' testified to this. Clearly, had the Buddhists not met so fierce resistance from the local shamans, all these relocations might not have been necessary. We may therefore view the vectors delineated by the monastic relocations as indices of the changing power balance between shamanism and Buddhism in the course of Darhad history. A famous narrative published by Dioszegi (1961), for instance, refers to the earliest days of the Darhad Ih Shav', namely to a time when the only Buddhist site in the Darhad Depression was a temple inhabited by a sole lama; and to a time when the Buddhist church was forced to move this temple further into the steppe zone, because "shamanism was flourishing in the region" (1961, 202). Then, as the ecclesiastical estate gained more strength, its activities gradually expanded outwards towards the *taiga* zone, such that, eventually, the Ivdiin Hiid was erected at the very spot from where the temple originally had been removed, as explained above.

But this liminal zone between the steppe and the taiga also came to define the outer range of the Darhad Ih Shav's sphere of influence. The *taiga* zone proper, with its "too many different" animal, plant, and spirit entities, was left for the shamans to deal with (Pürev 1999, 342–44; Pedersen 2011a). But a more general observation also springs to mind. Just as in the comparable cases from Tibet (see MacDonald 1997), the Buddhist subjugation of the Darhad Depression never was – and nor could it ever have been – completed. Susan Mackinnon has demonstrated how, in Island Melanesia, "unified, fixed, weighted centers [are contrasted] to multiple, dispersed, moving, and weightless peripheries" (1991, 33). Were these centers to exist on their own, their solidity would be become void, for they would have no labile other in whose asymmetrical refraction they could imagine themselves as composed by congruent, commensurable entities that add up into one another. In much the same way, I suggest, for the weighty concept of a centred steppe to work in the Shishged context, it requires the weightless counter-image of a marginal *taiga*. The *taiga*, then, emerges as a zone of pure multiplicity and metamorphosis in opposition to a zone of pure sameness and singularity, the steppe, and this centre–periphery spectacle has come into being through a combination of consecutive political and religious interventions pertaining to the Mongolian empire, the Mongolian Buddhist church, and, as I have accounted for elsewhere (Pedersen 2011a), the Mongolian communist party.

We are now better equipped, ethnographically and historically, to account for the analogies that many Darhads make between the topography

of their minds, and the topography of the Shishged landscape. Even on the assumption that shamans were already associated with the *taiga* before the creation of the Ih Shav' (see Pedersen 2011a), the interventions of this ecclesiastical polity unquestionably pushed the shamans, and the spirits, further into the *taiga*. In this light, the main reason why Darhads are today keen on mapping their minds onto the landscape is that, in doing so, they are following in the footsteps of their formerly Buddhist masters in attaining a perspective from which the *taiga* zone appears as a residual repository standing in asymmetrical opposition to the purified enclosure demarcated by the natural contours of the steppe zone.

5. Tame from Within

Several scholars have remarked that it was somewhat paradoxical that “the Darkhad region, [as a] stronghold of shamanic traditions . . . was controlled by the Buddhist church” (Even 1991, 200) until the revolution. But perhaps it was not so surprising after all. For it should now be clear that, with the continual institutionalization of the Darhad Ih Shav' from 1757 to 1921, an entire shadow world – the taiga zone – came into being that was filled up with all the “black”, “wild” and shamanic stuff which could not, and oftentimes would not, fit into the “pure” and “yellow” cosmological form imposed by the Buddhist church. In that sense, as I have argued, the lamas from the Ih Shav' *needed* the Darhad shamans to resist them; for had these shamans not done so, then it would have been hard for the lamas to justify, to themselves and to others, their self-acclaimed role as protectors of “wild and savage” Darhads of the north. Thus, for the Buddhist monks, flying demons and unruly shamans presented not just a problem to be solved, but, above all, an opportunity to be grabbed, for without an black and savage side to these people and their land, why would they need any outsiders to turn them yellow and pure?

Yet, on the Darhads' own understanding, what took place was subtly different. For it was not simply that they asked to be protected by the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu. It was also that the latter was irresistibly attracted to the Shishged and its people. Consider the following story, told to me in several different versions during fieldworks in the Shishged Depression:

Many years ago, a Tibetan *lama* came to our land: he had been sent by the Bogd Khan [the 8th Jebtsundamba Khutuktu]. As the *lama* reached to top of Öliin Davaa he was breath-taken: so beautiful was the sight that met him.⁵ He exclaimed out loud: “This is a land of happiness. It is full of white merit (*tsagaan buyan*). This is because of the three Darhad White Animals: the Darhad White Sheep, the Darhad White Fish, and the Darhad White Horse”. The merit of the Darhad White Sheep comes from its special tail-bone, which is bigger than that of Halh sheep. The merit of the Darhad White Fish has to do with the healing powers of the water in the Shishged River. When one takes out a White Fish from the river, it will shine like gold. Also, the White Fish is very rare in the world.

This is the story about the Darhad White Horse. Once, there were two friends, and one was very ill. Shamans had been called in, but to no avail. Aware that his friend was about to go to Urga [present-day Ulaanbaatar], the sick man sent for him. “Take this gold and buy me medicine”, he said, handing his friend a muddy stone. The friend took the stone and went off to Urga. But no one wanted to sell him any medicine, for all he had to pay with was the stone. Desperate, he went to see the Bogd Khan. The Bogd Khan weighed the stone in his hands, knocked it onto the wall, and said: “yes, this *is* gold. I will now tell you the cure. Back in your country there is the Darhad White Horse. Your friend must drink a cup of mare’s milk three times a day and eat the mutton from the Darhad White Sheep. Then he will be cured”.

The friend gave the stone to the Bogd Khan and travelled back home. Arriving empty-handed, the sick man scolded him for not having brought the medicine. He told of the Bogd Khan’s advice, only to be met with the angry reply that the ailing person already had been drinking large amounts of fermented mare’s milk (*airag*), and to no effect. Some time now passed, and, as the sick man was feeling worse and worse, he decided to heed the advice. And indeed, after nine days he began feeling better, and after one month he had completely regained his health. His companion, meanwhile, had been worrying: might his friend be dead? One day, as he was sitting inside his *ger*, his children shouted from the outside: “three horsemen are arriving”. “Oh no”, he thought, “could they be coming after me?”. As he stepped outside his fears increased as he saw three proud men dismount and approach him. But, behold, it was his friend who was running up him, shouting: “the cure worked!”.

Note that neither the Tibetan *lama* nor Bogd Khan are bringing anything new to the Darhad people. The *lama* is only saying out loud what can already be found in the Shishged Depression, namely the sacred blessing (*buyan*) of the three Darhad White Animals. Similarly, the Bogd Khan is pointing to a cure that is already available, namely the healing power of

5 The Öliin Davaa is the most important mountain pass in the Shishged, and home to a very prominent *ovoo*.

the milk from the Darhad White Horse. The stone/gold contrast seems to carry the same message. Only the sick man (because he is near to death?) can apparently glimpse its hidden golden quality; his friend and everyone else needs the Bogd Khan to weigh it and knock it against the wall, and thus make its inner purity visible to the world.

How are we to interpret this? I would suggest that the core idea is one of attraction. The Shishged Depression was attracting the Buddhist church to come to it, for it contained a superior “whiteness” that proved irresistible to the Tibetan *lama* (and his many Mongolian successors). But the attractor may not be aware of its own attraction: it may need someone or something to bring about its irresistible appeal, like when a fish requires to be pulled out of the water in order to shine golden, or when a piece of gold is revealed behind its outer shelter only if adequately treated. Still, everything was there from the beginning. The “white blessing” *was* already in the animals, and the muddy stone *was* already made of gold; it was simply that these hidden qualities needed to be extracted.

In more general terms, we are here reminded about the association made by many Darhads between the steppe zone and various pure and healing life forms. It is true that, by its very nature, the White Fish is not confined to the steppe zone. In fact, according to Dioszegi (1993, 78–80), the Shishged River is also said to be the genius loci of Zönög Aav, one of the most prominent Darhad shamanic spirits. There is, however, an alternative conception according to which the Shishged river has healing properties. These powers are deemed especially strong around Tsagaan Nuur Rashaan, a mineral spring located near the Jargalant Ovoo (see also Bat-Erdene 1992). Indeed, some people told me, the spring is the very source of the Shishged River. It is likely, then, that the Darhad White Fish embodies the healing power of Tsagaan Nuur Rashaan in the above narrative.

As domestic animals, the blessing (*buyan*) of the White Horse and the White Sheep correspond univocally to the steppe zone. But the connection between purity and the nomadic landscape goes one step further. Thus the *airag* from Renchinlhümbe – the most centrally located of the three districts in the Shishged – is widely considered the best. This is so, I was repeatedly told, because it is the only place where the right grasses grow. Indeed, people went on, the Shishged is a like a “small Mongolia with Renchinlhümbe at the centre”. “Just take a quick look around”, a man eagerly explained, “All varieties of landscape can be found here. There are steppe and salt marshes. There are rivers, freshwater lakes,

and salt lakes. There is even desert and sand dunes. Even here, this far north, there is desert [*gov*]? Interesting!”

The overarching idea to be discerned here, it seems, is one of self-containment. Unlike what is commonly believed by non-Darhads, the Shishged contains everything one needs to be a “real Mongolian” – and then some. For this land also contains the Darhad White Fish (with its rare healing powers); the unique Darhad White Horse (with its tasty and purifying milk); treasure-like stones that are full of gold; and (most important of all!) unusually tasty sheep with bigger and fatter tails than the Halh sheep. Crucially, all these qualities are associated with the steppe zone; in fact, they are especially associated with the most central parts of this landscape. This is where Tsagaan Nuur Rashaan is located; this is where the right grass is growing for the White Darhad Horse; and this is where one finds all the “interesting” deserts and lakes. And, indeed, it is where one finds the Jargalant Ovoo – the panoptic centre of all Shishged centers.

What, then, happened to that “untamed wilderness” which needed to be “domesticated” by the Buddhist church? It is unquestionable that the aforementioned legend is concerned with the historical existence of the Darhad *Ih Shav’*. But, and crucially, according to this and other narratives, the Buddhist church did not bring anything new the Darhads and their land; it merely brought out a hidden quality which had always been there. On this perspective, then, the Darhads were not actually domesticated by the Buddhist church, for, a bit like the natural refuge demarcated by the steppe zone, the Darhads were already *tame from within*. Like the muddy stone with the golden cavity inside, or the potentially hardworking Darhads who become successful outside their homeland, the Darhads’ “white” or “yellow” side just needed to be extracted by a person, or a group of persons, who could sense this sacred attraction, and who had the unique capacity to make it visible. Invariably, in the different stories I have collected, this person was the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu (or various representatives of him).

6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored certain forms which Darhad persons assume when seen from particular points of view, or, to put it the other way around, certain perspectives which Darhad persons require to be seen from. My point has thus been that Darhad subjectivities are grounded

in concrete spatial vantages afforded by the topography of the Shishged Depression. The shamanic *taiga* is perceived as a zone of pure multiplicity and perpetual metamorphosis, which is asymmetrically contrasted to the Buddhist steppe as a zone of pure singularity and eternal sameness, and this centre–periphery spectacle has come into being through consecutive politico-religious interventions by first the Manchu imperial polity, later the pre-revolutionary Mongolian Buddhist church, and finally the socialist state. Thus the yellow and black side are immanent to all Shishged life: through a complex historical interplay between internal and external forces, and intended and unintended effects, they have become the two substances from which everything Darhad is made. This, of course, is not to say that this environment determines how the Darhads see themselves. It is only to suggest that the Shishged Depression, like any landscape, only offers certain “possibilities of form” (Ramble 1997, 134) and that it largely is *from within* these that Darhad concepts of themselves come into being.

In that sense, the Shishged is not just a landscape, and nor is its study only about how its people are perceiving their environment. For it is saturated with historically-cum-topographically generated perspectives, which elicit both individual bodies (persons) and social bodies (communities). Thus understood, Darhad identity is a “fractal” or “self-scaling” (Wagner 1991; Strathern 2004) phenomenon. Instead of being a single thing, or, conversely, a relative term constructed in opposition to a significant other (cf. Barth 1969), a Darhad person is an internally differentiated, “post-plural entity” (Holbraad & Pedersen 2009), whose paradoxical essence is to be both self and other at the same time. For, as we have seen, Darhadness is an uneasy and inherently unstable cocktail between the wild and the domesticated; between the most marginal, shamanic and least genuinely (Halh) Mongolian, and the most centered, Buddhist and most genuinely Mongolian. Darhad personhood, that is, amounts to a bifurcated inner topography comprised by wild, black, shamanic, and taiga-like components on the one hand, and domesticated, yellow, Buddhist, and steppe-like components on the other hand.

It is exactly this mutual folding of Darhad worlds, where the visible and the invisible are subject to constant figure-ground reversals so that concepts swim in and out of one another, palimpsest-like, which allows for a reconsideration of the seemingly obsolete binary between the wild and the tame within anthropology and cognate disciplines. For is the more general lesson that may be heeded from the present case study not that the concept of wilderness, for it to be theoretically progressive,

must itself be conceived of in a fractal or “post-plural” manner? Thus understood, the wild and the domesticated are “internally” as opposed as “externally” related, just as the relations between “the black side” and “the yellow side” were found to be in the Northern Mongolian context. Wilderness, that is to say, is neither an intrinsic property pertaining to some phenomena as opposed to others (*viz.* essentialism), but nor is it a social, cultural or political category that is arbitrarily ascribed to certain phenomena and not others (*viz.* constructivism). Rather, wilderness is an intensive capacity that is potentially present within all things, but which is only elicited or actualized via certain social practices and material forms, ranging from inter-ethnic banter to mountain rituals.⁶

7. References

- Badamhatan, S. BNMAU-in үндэстний ба угсаатни хөгжилин асуудалд. *Tүүхийн Судлал*, 9. Улаанбаатар 1980.
- Badamhatan, S. Les chamanistes du Bouddha vivant. *Études Mongoles...et sibériennes* 17, 1986.
- Badamhatan, S. & Banzragch. *Hövsgöl Aimagiin Tovch Түүх*. Мөрөн 1981.
- Barth, Frederik, ed. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. Boston: Little Brown 1969.
- Bat-Erdene, Baldangiin. *Hövsgөлийн Rashaan Us*. Мөрөн 1992.
- Bawden, Charles R. *The Modern History of Mongolia*. London: Kegan Paul International 1986.
- Blondeau, Anne-Marie & Steinkellner, Ernst, eds. *Reflections of the Mountain*. Vienna: Verlag der OeAW 1996.
- Bulag, Uradyn E. *Nationalism and Hybridity in Mongolia*. Oxford: Clarendon Press 1998.
- Charleux, I. “Padmasambhava’s Travel to the North. The Pilgrimage to the Monastery of the Caves and the Old Schools of Tibetan Buddhism in Mongolia”. *Central Asiatic Journal* 46, 2 (2002): 168–232.
- Dienberger, Hildegard. “Introduction: Mongols and Tibetans”. *Inner Asia* 4 (2002), 171–180.

6 It is important to emphasize that this “radically essentialist” (Henare et al 2007) or “post-plural” (Holbraad and Pedersen 2009) stance differs from other branches of contemporary social and cultural theory in a number of ways. On the one hand, it represents an empirical ambition of turning anthropology itself into a “science of the concrete” in Levi-Strauss’ famous sense by forging analytical concepts out of the ethnographic material generated from long-term fieldwork. On the other hand, it also represents a theoretical vision of adopting Boas’ equally famous definition of anthropology as “philosophy with people in it” by making ontological claims of the sort some might expect to be the sole responsibility of philosophers.

- Dioszegi, Vilmos. "Problems of Mongolian Shamanism". *Acta Ethnographica* X (1–2) (1961), 195–206.
- Dulam, S. "Darhad böögiin ulamjial. Ulaanbaatar: MUIS-iin Hevlel 1992.
- Even, Marie-Dominique. "Chants de chamanes de mongols". *Études Mongoles...et sibériennes* (1988–89), 19–20.
- Even, Marie-Dominique. "The Shamanism of the Mongols". In S. Akiner, ed. *Mongolia Today*. London: Kegan Paul International 1991, 183–205.
- Ewing, Thomas E. "The Forgotten Frontier: South Siberia (Tuva) in Chinese and Russian History, 1600–1920". *Central Asiatic Survey* 15 (3–4) (1981), 174–212.
- Hangin, John et al. *A Modern Mongolian-English Dictionary*. Indiana: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies 1986.
- Heissig, Walther. *The Religions of Mongolia*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1980.
- Henare, Amira, Holbraad, S. and Wastell, Sari. *Thinking Through Things. Theorizing Artefacts Ethnographically*, London: Routledge 2007.
- Holbraad, Martin & Morten Axel Pedersen. "Planet M. The Intense Abstraction of Marilyn Strathern". *Anthropological Theory* 9 (4) (2009): 371–394.
- Huber, Toni, ed.: *Sacred Spaces and Powerful Places In Tibetan Culture*. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives 1999.
- Humphrey, Caroline. "Chiefly and Shamanist Landscapes in Mongolia". In E. Hirsch & M. O'Hanlon (eds) *The Anthropology of Landscape. Perspectives in Place and Space*. Oxford: Clarendon Press 1995, 135–162.
- Humphrey, C. *Shamans and Elders. Experience, Knowledge, and Power among the Daur Mongols*. With U. Onon. Oxford: Clarendon Press 1996.
- Jagchid, Sechin & Hyer, Paul. *Mongolia's Culture and Society*. Boulder: Westview Press 1979.
- Lacaze, Gaele. *Représentations et Techniques du Corps chez les Peuples Mongols*. Ph.D. Thesis, Université de Paris-X 2000.
- Legrand, Jacques. *L'Administration dans la Domination Sino-Mandchoue en Mongolie Qalq-a*. Memoires de L'institut des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, Vol. 2. Paris: Collège de France 1976.
- Levi-Strauss, Claude. *The Savage Mind*. Chicago: Chicago University Press 1962.
- Macdonald, Alexander W. Foreword. In A. W. Macdonald (ed.) *Mandala and Landscape*. New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, V-XI 1997.
- Pedersen, Morten Axel. "At home away from homes. Navigating the taiga in Northern Mongolia". In P. Kirby, ed., *Boundless Worlds. An Anthropological Approach to Movement*, pp. 135–152. Oxford: Bergahn 2009.
- Pedersen, Morten Axel. "The Virtual Temple. The power of relics in Darhad Mongolian Buddhism". In I. Charleux, G. Delaplace and R. Hamayon (eds.) *Representing Power in Modern Inner Asia: Conventions, alternatives and oppositions*, pp. 245–258. Bellingham: Western Washington University Press 2010.
- Pedersen, Morten Axel. *Not Quite Shamans. Spirit Worlds and Political Lives in Northern Mongolia*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2011a.
- Pedersen, Morten Axel. "Non-identity Politics". *Common Knowledge* 17 (1) (2011(b)), 117–22.

- Pedersen, Morten Axel. "The Task of Anthropology is to Invent Relations: For the Motion" *Critique of Anthropology* 32, 1 (2012).
- Pegg, Carl. *Mongolian Music, Dance, and Oral Narrative*. Seattle: University of Washington Press 2001.
- Pozdneyev, Aleksei M.. *Mongolia and the Mongols*, Vol. 1. Bloomington: Indiana University 1971 [1892].
- Pürev, O. *Hövsgöl Aimgiin Ulaan-Uul Sum, Jargalant-Am'dral Negdel* (Tüühen nairuulal). Mörön 1980.
- Pürev, O. *Mongol Böögiin Shashin*. Ulaanbaatar: The Mongolian Academy of Science 1999.
- Ramble, Charles. "The Creation of the Bon Mountain Kongpo". In A. W. Macdonald (ed.) *Mandala and Landscape*. New Delhi: D.K. Printworld 1997, 133–232.
- Samuel, Geoffrey. *Civilized Shamans – Buddhism in Tibetan Societies*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press 1993.
- Sandschejew, G. D. *Darkhaty*. Leningrad: Ak. Nauk SSSR 1930.
- Sneath, David. *Changing Inner Mongolia – Pastoral Mongolian Society and the Chinese State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2000.
- Snellgrove, David L. *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism – Indian Buddhists and Their Tibetan Successors*. London: Serindia Publications 1987.
- Strathern, Marilyn. "No Nature, No Culture: the Hagen case". In *Nature, Culture, and Gender*, edited by C. MacCormack & M. Strathern, pp. 174–222. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1980.
- Strathern, Marilyn. *The Gender of the Gift. Problems with Women and Problems with Society in Melanesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press 1988.
- Strathern, Marilyn. *Partial Connections* (Updated Edition). Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira 2004.
- Tambiah, Stanley J. "The Galactic Polity in Southeast Asia". In *Culture, Thought, and Social Action – An Anthropological Perspective*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1985, 252–286.
- Tatar, M. "Two Mongol texts concerning the cult of the mountains". *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hung.* XXX, 1 (1976), 1–58.
- Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo. "Cosmological deixis and Amerindian perspectivism". *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 4, 3 (1998), 469–88.
- Vreeland, Herbert H. *Mongol Community and Kinship Structure*. New Haven: Human Relations Area Files 1962.
- Wagner, Roy. "The Fractal Person. In *Big Men and Great Men. Personifications of power in Melanesia*, M. Godelier & M. Strathern (eds.), pp. 159–173. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1991.
- Wheeler, W. Alan. *Lords of the Mongolian Taiga: An Ethnohistory of the Dukha Reindeer Herders*. MA thesis, Dep. of Central Eurasian Studies, Indiana University 2000.
- Zhamtsarano, Ts. "Ethnography and Geography of the Darkhat and other Mongolian Minorities". *The Mongolia Society, Special Papers* (8) (1979) [1934].

