

LEGRAIN, Laurent. *Chanter, s'attacher et transmettre chez les Darhad de Mongolie (Singing, Attachment and Transmission among the Darhads of Mongolia)*. Paris: Centre d'Etudes Mongoles et Sibériennes-Ecoles de Hautes Etudes, *Collection Nord-Asie 4*, 2014. 397 pages. CD. Paper, 27€.

Roger Vanzila Mushi

Legrain must have written this book out of his belief in the Darhad peoples' common assumption that the overly strong sense of attachment to songs, music, and sounds of nature has throughout the ages constituted one of the perennial and fundamental dimensions of Mongolness. Essentially this research monograph, a substantially revised and expanded version of the author's Doctoral Dissertation Research (Free University of Brussels, 2011), weaves its deft analyses and assessments around an understanding of the nature and extent of the Darhads' fondness for a *sound continuum*—a term aptly coined by Legrain to denote a fluid continuum of sounds from both the natural and social worlds. The publication is also accompanied by an illustrative audio CD containing examples of striking Darhad music recordings (with specific rhythm and tonal patterns) carefully made in the field by the author on various dates between 2001 and 2005, and some excerpts from the *First Mongolian Music Recording Seasons* performed in Moscow in 1935. Although there have been a number of empirical studies on this intriguing topic, the particular sample and context of this study give it a distinctive character.

The book is primarily designed to offer a contribution to the ethnographic analysis of the most important features of the Mongolian musical and sound world, whereby the very issue of 'attachment' is inscribed into contemporary questioning relative to knowledge, learning and transmission. The author focuses more specifically on the minority community of the Darhad nomadic shepherds, clustered around the Hövsgöl province in northern Mongolia, to forge a less explored crucial connection between their long-standing enhanced sentiments of attachment to song, music, and the sonority of nature, and the relevant mechanisms set in motion for the continuing transmission of their repertory. The nature of the two aims generated different approaches, thus making the use of a mixed methods approach appropriate. Readers are offered relevant secondary and ethnographic data gleaned periodically (1998-2014) from both Darhad settings (mostly the Rinčinlümbe District) and Ulaanbaatar—the national capital city located about 1,000 kms from the Darhad Basin. During the twenty-month period of his intensive fieldwork research for this book, Legrain lived mostly with the Darhads, whose music he studied,

and attended musical events, both participating in and observing them. This reviewer must duly praise the author for fully acknowledging, in his short sympathetic Preface (pp.7-11), the invaluable support he received during the course of the study from his host Monhbayar and his wife Davaasuren and more importantly, the very particular fact that his direct observations of their three children, Bambayar, Bumzayaa, and Boyuna over the years increasingly made him realize how they were naturally and cognitively “attached to the sounds of Darhad repertory, such as those produced by the rivers, wind, and songs expressed in their Darhad language lyrics” (p.7). Throughout the book, Legrain thus presents matters in a way that makes readers understand, from an anthropological perspective, this time-persisting attachment of the Darhad Mongols to sound art and music, and its significant role in the transmission of culture which is of special interest in the context of their post-socialist society.

My overall observation is that Legrain uses the right term and methodology by elaborating on the fascinating facets of folklore, tradition and intergenerational transmission (socialization and social learning) among the Darhad Mongols, who are particularly sensitive to their sound environment. Another immediate ‘scientific’ note is that the author vividly explains at the outset the reason for his title and then follows that title in his fine ethnographic narrative that includes a micro-analysis of the main integrated and interrelated themes of the volume: singing, attachment, transmission and *sound continuum*. The scope and detail of Legrain’s research is admirable. By virtue of its specific focus on the multiple dispositive sites that produce simultaneously features of a *sound continuum* and some specific sonic sensibilities, the book ultimately offers many new insights and links in Darhad musical conceptions that, to the best of my knowledge, have not previously been analyzed from a mixed methods approach. Similarly, this volume is most interesting, timely and valuable because it stands, as in the author’s previous works, at the intersection of several approaches including the anthropology of knowledge, apprenticeship, cultural transmission and some recent developments in psychology. Drawing upon the viewpoints developed by Bruno Latour (1999), Genevieve Teil (2001) and Antoine Hennion (2007) to name but a few, the book also advances further scholarly and practical understanding of the subject by intelligibly bringing the concept of *attachment* into anthropological debates on knowledge and transmission. In this very respect, Legrain’s research, analysis, and writing are wonderfully evocative. In the opinion of the reviewer, finally, the author—strongly inspired by Tim Ingold and James Gibson’s notion of the ‘education of attention’ has been successful in elaborating his analyses within both the long-term temporality of Mongolian socialist history (1921-1991) and the short-term temporality of infant socialization. Indeed, the first task Legrain undertakes in his accessible and insightful Introduction (pp.15-25) is to help readers to immediately gain an

understanding of his intrinsic motivation and the rationale for this study—which is very praiseworthy. Especially good are the lines: “This attraction to what persists (Berliner, 2010) often doubles as an ability to detect continuities where, for my part, I can only hear upheavals and transformations. Thus, the existing vocal or musical repertoires profoundly modified during the socialist decades are often perceived as preserving within them the “substance” (*mön čanar*) of what is and must be [thought of as] the [appropriate] Mongolian music. The absolute permanence of forms does not matter. The verb *damžuulah* (“to pass [something] on”) generally used to denote ‘transmission’ in fact puts more emphasis on the role of an intermediary or the indirect nature in which a particular object or message is being passed on to a given destination rather than merely on the permanence of its forms (p.21).”

It is all the more remarkable, according to Legrain’s sense from the field, that specific “forms of attachment that bind Darhads to songs can only be fully understood by anchoring them in their relations with the sounds of the world” (p.20). By adopting different perspectives, the author therefore sought to delve more deeply into a micro-analysis of this “reactive and creative ear at the same time (and it is in any case always educated) [...]” (Lortat and Rovsing Olsen 2004: 24, cited by Legrain 2014: 20) and of the “sounds that titillate it” (p.20). Throughout the narrative Legrain puts much effort into consistently and productively reconstructing this vital aspect of musical culture in greater detail while underlining at the same time its tight hold on Mongolian natural settings. In this regard, the author successfully takes his readers into his confidence within the Darhad minority community, interests them with apt and often striking illustrations, and above all, enhances their understanding of his subjects’ substantial critical attention devoted to singing, attachment, transmission and *sound continuum*. It is not possible to review all the details here. In what follows, however, I shall deliberately allude to the most relevant aspects (scientific composition, structure of the presentation, contents, and central message) likely to make it easier to read carefully and appreciate the essential considerations and results of this richly detailed and revealing work.

First and most obvious, in terms of general characteristics it seems fair to suggest that this substantive volume has been written from a technical perspective. Its extensive bibliography (over 250 titles) together with a general index and index of names and the accurate sub-paragraphs and tables of figures testify sufficiently to this. Moreover, the details and photographs of Darhad individuals and collectivities are attractively set out and form a useful reference. Acknowledgments included in the Preface inform us that the author’s research project was successively funded in part through a grant from the Leopold II Research Subsidy of the Natural Sciences Museum of Brussels (2001), National Scientific Research Subsidy (2005), French Community of Belgium (2008), and the

Foundation Wiener-Anspach (under the aegis of Mongolia & Inner Asia Studies). The Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (Free University of Brussels) also collaborated financially in the completion of this book. Yet mention might also be added here of the author's recollections of that multiple and versatile accompaniment of more than 10 years of doctoral studies which have to some extent enriched him (as he developed an extremely detailed understanding of the topic and framework of opportune areas and insights) and, along the way, contributed to filter his critical readings and his repeated field stays, without neglecting of course the generosity and acoustic support from Darhad individuals and households of which he benefited greatly.

The second characteristic of this book is found in its structure. The whole narrative is lucidly and logically organized in the light of thoughts, feelings, experiences, statements, meanings, perceptions, behaviors and (ethnically relevant) practices or folk activities of Darhads. Following the Introduction, the body of the text begins with Chapter I (pp.29-84) that minutely provides readers with important clues about the ethnographic setting of Darhads, and outlines the main features of their sound repertory. Important statements are made here (and reiterated later throughout the main text) in relation to the Darhads' growing concern for its transmission, even though this repertory reportedly tended to be preserved and transformed into the folklore of national tradition during the Soviet period, according to the commonly-known formula of Stalin: "National in form, socialist in content." The remaining text is then divided into two main parts, each consisting of two to three substantial and conceptual chapters that elaborate on the book's central themes, with relevant findings from in-depth case studies. Part I (Chapters 2 and 3) explores in vivid detail the processes that contributed to the joint installation of a post socialist repertory and a Darhad minority ethnic group, which is quite attentive to phonologic, stylistic and musical particularities of its popular songs. More interestingly in this sphere, Legrain presents us with a cogent account of how a man, Jaroslav, helped an ethnic minority people to focus on local culture surviving the prohibition or strict communist surveillance (Socialist occupation [1920-1966]). In this framework of analysis and referring to Lave and Wenger (1991: 47), Legrain asserts at most that the prevailing idea is that the socialist apparatus polished in its own way a folk repertory in the Darhad Basin before the arrival of the pioneer activists (p.23). Yet evidently, he aptly observes, the essence of the ancient music has filtered [deeply] into today's [refined] music (p.22).

Part II (Chapters 4 to 6), which takes up about half of the book, then unfolds over three substantive chapters covering the main theme of the book. More specifically, Legrain excels in giving fine interpretative accounts of the transmission process of this hybrid attachment to songs, music and *sound continuum* that have long permeated the Mongolian steppes. Perhaps most significantly, Legrain tries here to restore a field experience in

terms of research visits he made several times in the Darhad Basin, in northern Mongolia. One of the most striking details in this part of the author's narrative is the episode in which he managed to follow Darhad children around pastures and engaged with them in their singing and music exercises. Excelling in this arena, he was able to deliberately scrutinize the emergence of a heightened sensitivity to the sounds of nature, inflections of the human voice and melodies of songs. Equally interesting in this context is the author's statement that his host family (Monhbayar and his wife, Davaasuren, and their three children) as well as the singer and lyric poet Jaroslav and Dasah celebrations or residential processes together with *impromptus* accompanying of such ceremonies significantly served as a melodic incentive 'extending mutations of the world' (p.83). This piece of observation, if anything, reflects the general acknowledgement that the culture in the Darhad Basin is one of the most vibrantly traditional cultures in Mongolia. Indeed, ethnographic and historical records show that from time immemorial a great number of singers, poets, dancers and musicians remained the guardians of memory in this region. In a sense, the book's very short (but at the same time true and noteworthy) conclusion (pp.349-353) entitled "ethnography of contact points" makes some final arguments that provide readers with a useful holistic framework around which its micro-ethnographic analysis is structured. A cursive description of the *sound continuum* as a federator notion is provided at the end of the text (pp.357-363).

The central organizing thread or operational leitmotif of this book suggests the idea that the very notion of *attachment* (the epistemic space accorded to songs) itself calls for an ethnographic inquiry. It is precisely this Darhad specific notion of the *melodic continuum* that the author particularly reflects among many others in the following chorus: "*I love the melodies and songs echoing in equal steppe, I am a Mongolian*" (p.353). The analysis of this one poetical passage, to which others could be added, demonstrates the kind of powerful passions that the present-day Darhads hold with their songs and natural sounds. In a crucial sense, Legrain has made a valiant attempt at such characterization when he rightly states that it is by means of a liquid principle (shapeless, without form or sense) that Darhad Mongols realize the effect of the song and the poem on the mind, and its ability to both infiltrate and impregnate sensitivity. It transpires that text and music are also considered meaningful in this *sound continuum*. Here it is interesting to learn that one of the author's Darhad informants was bursting with enthusiasm and a desire to demonstrate this important aspect to him by lively and skillfully declaiming a poem and singing meaningless onomatopoeia in the same tone, then claiming that there was no difference there at all. It is thus evident to Legrain that this ethnography of devices and points of contact allows the identification of specific "ways in which individuals find some mediations, capture and link them to sequence of felicity of

contact points between humans and sounds” (p.353). Tellingly, this embodies a delineation of the original identity of Darhads in post-socialist Mongolia on melodic and performative levels. This is precisely the reason why the author has devoted considerable space to discussing specific social mechanisms of these most time-persistent musical patterns and conceptions that made the Darhad sound-culture possible.

With admirable insight Legrain then brings readers to consider further the ways that *tradition*—as the inheritance and identical perpetuation of concerned people—continues to play a significant role in this Darhad context. In this regard, his narrative is fascinating in teasing out the implications and enmeshments of the behavior and understanding surrounding the notion of *tradition* in the culture and society of the Darhad Mongols. These he fleshes out in more distinctive detail. It should be noted at this juncture, however, that the author does really help his case by stating that his subjects, with their particular embodied perspective, have over decades striven to retain their long-standing tradition and yet practice it with pride—a way of retaining their original identity as they face pressure from assimilation into the mainstream of Mongolian society. The central thesis and operational hypothesis of the book, thus appear to be formulated in the concept here: If seniors transform the rising generations, then the very fact of bringing to life the human being would in fact be for the author the basic meaning of the verb ‘to educate’ (*hümüzüüle*) in the Mongolian language (p.22). This meaning essentially goes beyond the general traditional concept of transmission of knowledge which is understood here as “a simple process of absorption of a given cultural ethos” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, 47—quoted by Legrain, 2014, 23). Consequently, as Legrain puts it, senior Darhads are not the only persons responsible for educating the child. Both the keepers of the livestock and custodians of all the artworks also play a significant role in the educational process (p.22).

More generally, it seems likely that folklore deployed during ceremonial feasts (Chapter 4) constitute a meeting place *par excellence*, whereby the Darhads’ commonest term *duu* carries the connotations of sound, (human) voice and singing. Very much in the vein of his analysis, the author seemingly provides readers with a broad picture of the Darhads whose worldview, consisting of ceremonies, protocols, teachings and knowledge of history, ensures continued existence through song and music. Substantial evidence has accrued that some of the Darhad songs pay tribute to or belittle people they know, characters who have lived among them and ultimately joined the collectivity. In that way, positive memories and connections are evoked and passed on through generations in eulogies or panegyric forms. It may well be true that the ongoing presence of the folk and popular songs in the region ensures that they are (still) remembered and persist in the social memory and narratives of the Darhads. Moreover, by reporting on this striking cultural aspect of the well-defined Darhad minority community, it is relatively certain, I

presume to say, that Legrain has in mind the assumption that, “although we normally think of tradition as something being handed forward from the past to the present, the appeal to the *authority* of tradition, something that is socially much more central, involves being handed back from the present toward an indeterminable past destination” (Bloch 2005: 131).

Another important theme covered in this book concerns the *shift from pastures to audiences*. A careful study of this thread (and of the research on which it draws the idea) reveals that the volume vividly glorifies an embittered patriotism, or so to say, a kind of ethnic pride and chauvinist attachment of the Darhad Mongols to their atavistic habits and customs. It goes almost without saying that Legrain succeeds in reconstructing here a repertory of songs hummed regularly in folklore and during ceremonies glorifying some remembered local events (Chapter 4). Of special note, however, is the author’s repeated recognition of the continued existence and implication of the aforementioned *duu*—a very general term used to denote a triple meaning: sound, voice and singing. Readers can infer how it is precisely around this specific term “*duu*” that the author cogently frames and elaborates in a wonderful fashion his crucial notion of *sound continuum* comprising the sounds from the natural and social worlds. Legrain could not have expressed the gist of the matter more sharply. In the spirit of previous seminal studies, he makes it amply clear that all the *duu* significantly “awaken human organs of hearing” (Ceval 1966: 213) and more importantly, transmit people’s attachment to local chants (Milton 2002) by captivating our attention. In this way, it seems quite beyond question that human beings, born insensitive to sounds, must be educated (Chapter 6) by reinforcing their interest in hearing the properties attached to sounds. As such, these properties are supposed to permeate all things. This is partly because the very *sound continuum* imposes itself on human ears over generations” (p.25). The underlying concept of ‘*sound continuum*’ as an undeniable reality of human beings of course alludes to an important acknowledgement. In a nutshell, Legrain further attempts to single out a ‘traditional direction’ of ethnography by aptly observing the lived experiences and behaviors of the Darhads, and by vividly describing the cultural dimensions of their existence: “From the study of the shepherds and music classes, I show that you can follow a work of mediation by which, in return, the sounds transform persons” (p.25; see also pp.350-353 passim). Along these lines, one therefore goes away from the illusion of a tradition without harmonics, a tradition whose vagaries of time and circumstances punctuate its evolution.

Finally and most importantly, we are left with the broad catch-all category of *transmitting a sound attachment*. By locating the issue within the short-term temporality of infant socialization, Legrain sought both to replace the emergence of a heady *sound continuum* and that of the Darhad individual sensibility to sounds, and to develop a

concrete description of its causes, appearance and effects. What the author clearly presents here is forged out of challenging efforts to explore the relevant processes set in motion by the Darhads in order to further orientate their children's attention towards the sound texture of the environment and the effect of their own voice on the inspiring natural world and people surrounding them. Indeed, it is clear that integrated facts and considerations are neatly put forward to demonstrate the Darhads' overly strong sense of attachment to songs and singing which developed over a long history, and their efforts to give these musical genres a new meaning in contemporary Mongolian settings. Obviously, Legrain's intriguing realization is that the Darhad minority nomads have long been displaying a heady *sound continuum* in which text and music are also considered meaningful; and those of us (anthropologists and ethnographers) trained in Asian area studies are, in my judgment, encouraged to accept this notion with the greatest of interest. Hence, the author has here the definite merit of integrating with expertise his analysis of salient local-level socio-cultural and historical details. This is a significant scholarly achievement.

Be that as it may, the praise bestowed by the author on education among the Darhad Mongols can raise more than one question. Is this Darhad ethnic minority so extraordinary both in this particular Mongolian region and around the world? Does their way of socialist 'transmission' of culture, as admired in the example of singers and shepherd children and of the 'revolutionary' Jaroslav, have nothing in common with other nationalist figures? For it is reported that the post-socialist structure of Mongolia emerged in the intertwined relationship of interdependence between national and local-level actors. To the first question, in a nutshell, the response needs to be nuanced, since any concrete identity (individual and collective) contains a non-replaceable originality. To the second question, the independent ideal also allows us to observe that there is no recognizable originality without some likeness of an 'activist' genre or species. Plausibly, this is because many present-day (de-) colonized people often subscribe to the belief that pre-and post-colonial periods are not alike nor are they totally different. On the basis of his findings and long-term field experience, Legrain, in effect, convincingly argues that "[t]he majority of the Darhad people I met do not think that the actual Darhad sound repertory is imposed by an urban and national culture. The prevailing idea is that the socialist apparatus polished in its own way a folk repertory in the Darhad valley before the arrival of the pioneer activists (p.181)". To a significant degree, this section of the book offers a fascinating account that leaves readers who are familiar with Mongolian historical literature, and the present reviewer, wanting more exploration of this aspect of the study.

It may be said that the analysis offered in this volume has the potential to extend our understanding of facets of the Darhad sound culture, including cultural exchanges and

transmissions through typical songs in the Post-Soviet Mongolian context, in which a number of alternative perspectives have emerged. One thing seems certain: “In post-socialist Mongolia, song forms and performers themselves have been shaped by the experiences of past socialist cultural policies and post-socialist relaxations in public cultural practice” (Plueckhahn 2013). There is a further aspect. In the light of Karl Raimund Popper’s statement according to which ‘there is no knowledge or truth without theory,’ it is readily apparent to readers that the study presented here significantly entails several theoretical assumptions that Legrain carefully relates to the ethnography of contact points. This is in fact echoed by its abundant bibliography. In a similar vein, readers should not lose sight of the author’s great efforts to follow the requirements of social and cultural anthropology. This is definitely a matter of carrying out in-depth fieldwork research in order to understand both the functioning of a given society and its peoples’ socialization. Equally significant, this approach provides anthropologists and ethnographers with many theoretical models of ‘intelligibility’ of the lived experiences, and the opportunity to learn about mechanisms of explaining and bringing closer specific behaviors in the culture and daily activities of communities and individuals under study. Briefly, such a more effective and actionable inquiry deploys a more genuine anthropological approach to culture that ultimately requires researchers to get to know and interpret important lessons from those persons who communicate with each other daily by organizing intelligible signs and mechanisms.

Closer reading of this volume can also raise a third crucial question. What really remains or survives by transmitting knowledge and values from one generation to another, even if the absolute permanence of the forms is irrelevant? Put differently (and more heuristically), of what does this ‘folk repertory’ in the cultural fabric of the people concerned really consist? Admittedly, the clues to identifying what persists in change by trans-forming and re-actualizing contextually, taking advantage of the circumstances, readily appear to re-structure themselves in the social regulation process. Even more, perhaps, this kind of “iron cage” (Max Weber) or identity ‘constructs’ itself over time and from the vagaries of public space. Consequently, its organization requires sometimes a very subtle but still dynamic cooperation, within a *structuring*, of practical responses to the challenges of daily life. What, then, does it mean for anthropologists? More usually, anthropologists describe, explain and interpret all this in terms of human behavior, not as single raw ‘facts’ or ‘stereotyped’ behaviors but rather as social phenomena. It is therefore possible, according to Legrain, to argue – perfectly validly, if not somewhat simplistically – that these social phenomena are very significant in that they serve as holders of expressed or latent intentions and values prized by a historical community according to certain standards of conduct promoting certain attitudes or execrating other different attitudes.

Given the simple fact that communities and individuals constitute all these values, it is therefore also particularly relevant to researchers to get an accurate grasp of the ways in which the subjects being studied try to communicate themselves verbally and symbolically by organizing intelligible signs and many other things in their social world.

One more point, however, is abundantly clear. To accomplish their task, scientific researchers focus their investigations according to the target area and the issues that they raise. Of course, social and cultural anthropologists do not escape this dual prerequisite that makes them persons of culture and persuasive communicators. While reading through Legrain's volume, we must acknowledge that he successfully excels in implementing ethnographic principles of social facts and behaviors. He does this, too, with complete faith in the methodological requirements of collection, classification, analysis, and explanation. What makes the author's discussion particularly interesting also is that he not only bears in mind the peculiar fact that the reality of social phenomena forms itself, but also gives due consideration to the better known and widely cited intriguing assumption of Bachelard (1993: 14) that: "For a scientific spirit, all knowledge is a response to a question. If there has not been a question, there cannot be any scientific knowledge. Nothing comes from itself [in science]. Nothing is given. Everything is constructed". Hence, any significant attempt to understand the functioning of society and its institutions would be contingent, of course, on that price. Granting this, Legrain's cogent argument gains added support from Francis Balle: A "song—as a social institution in which can develop and consolidate the socialist relationship—is one of the privileged places of learning, maintenance and updating of conscious identity" (Balle 1994: 36).

The present study certainly inspires and leads readers to value the scientific character and the successful outcome of investigations such as this, as well as underlining the pertinence of this volume for the inter-comprehension and peaceful rapprochement between peoples. We may conclude, as an epilogue, that every song *communicates* something specific; thus as "the cause of listening, communication accordingly not only leads to it but also conditions it. Just as listening is the consequence of communication, so too knowledge is the result of listening" (Palama 2014: 54). This becomes telling because one major finding of the author's previous study is this: The Darhad way of listening displays "a strongly territorialized musical ear intertwined with biographical memory and nostalgia for a lost golden age of the long repertory" (Legrain 2009: 335). The present reviewer was particularly impressed by the way in which Legrain has over the years experienced social and physical closeness with the Darhads in Northern Mongolia and discovered great benefits of diving into their fluidity. Truly, the author's field observation of the interaction between Darhad individuals and their respective society from a communication perspective is distinctively a promising approach that opens up relatively

first hand primary material for micro-analysis in exploring and giving accounts of the recent past in the Darhad region.

Finally, one might wish to argue that the more readers fit themselves into a balance between theories and conceptualizations offered by this volume the more they are encouraged to recognize and appreciate the value of multiple perspectives in understanding and interpreting meaningfully human communication in the present-day Darhad society. Interestingly enough, a series of carefully selected field examples and illustrations for which Legrain proposes a reflexive analysis, significantly enables readers to connect the book's main concepts and ideas to their personal experiences and concerns in Darhad settings. Nevertheless, what I do not fully understand is whether or not time-persisting patterns of strong attachment to songs and music (highly underscored in several ways in this book) vary, in a greater degree, from place to place both in the Darhad remote Shishged Valley and surrounding regions, where many other Mongolian pastoral nomadic communities most certainly share the same sound cultural tastes that were deeply rooted in their history. Legrain seems to have left such a single but important ethnographic question hanging in the air—the question, namely, of clearly tracing out the possible persistence and evolved connections of his subjects with neighboring communities. Moreover, it is noteworthy that Legrain's crucial concept of *sound continuum*—which emerges most clearly across multiple chapters—should prove to be a promising and little-discussed aspect of the Darhad's musical conceptions. Similarly, readers cannot help but be impressed by the consistency that is revealed in the author's detailed narrative regarding the active role played by this distinctive genre in combining the soul and tradition of the Darhads while representing at the same time their shared common values, cultural identity and cherished memories as well as their cultural destiny marked by socialist history. Admittedly, no account of the present-day Darhads, whether historical, sociological or cultural, would be complete without mention of their long-standing musical/sound culture and, more importantly, their overly strong attachment to songs and music. Fundamentally, the author's achievement is of a different sort. Ingenuity notwithstanding, it is the reviewer's contention that the intriguing concept of *sound continuum* intelligibly probed by Legrain still requires greater conceptual scrutiny and methodological reflection than has been possible here. Such a task can generate more systematic empirical data, which needs to be accompanied by developments in the way the relationships between 'singing, attachment, and transmission' and the emotive symbols embodied in them are conceptualized and understood in relation to their specific historical, religious and cultural settings. These two quibbles, however, do not detract from the overall success of the study. This book represents a real step forward in the development of

this particular facet of the subject. It is an important addition to the current literature in the field of Mongolian and Siberian studies.

References

BACHELARD, Gaston

1993[1938] *La formation de l'esprit scientifique. Contribution a une Psychanalyse de la Connaissance*, Paris: Vrin.

BALLE, Francis

1994[1980] *Médias et société*, Paris: Montchrestien.

BERLINER, David

2010 "Anthropologie et transmission", *Transmettre-Terrain* 55: 4-19.

Bloch, Maurice

2005 *Essays on Cultural Transmission*, Oxford & New York: Oberg.

CEVEL, Ya

1966 *Mongol helnii tovč tailbar tol'* [Dictionnaire explicatif et concis de la langue Mongole], Ulaanbaatar : Cellule directrice des publications d'Etat.

DASDORZ, D. & COODOL, S.

1971 *Ardyn duu hōgžim suu bilegtүүд* [Les sagesses de la musique et du chant populaire], Oulan-Bator: [*Mongolyn hōgžmijn zohiolčdyn holboo*] Union des compositeurs de musique mongole].

HENNION, Antoine

2007 "Those Things That Hold Us Together: Taste and Sociology", *Cultural Sociology* 1/1, March: 97-114.

LATOURET, Bruno

1999 "Factures/Fractures: From the Concept of Network to the Concept of Attachment", *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 36 (Autumn): 20-31.

LAVE, Jean & WENGER, Etienne

1991 *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge & New York: CUP.

LEGRAIN, Laurent

2009 "Confrontation on the River Ird, or, How Does Music Act in Social Life?" *Inner Asia* 11: 335-358.

LORTAT-JACOB, Bernard. & ROVSING OLSEN, Miriam

2004 "Musique et anthropologie", *L'Homme* 171/172: 7-26.

MILTON, Kay

2002 *Loving Nature. Towards an Ecology of Emotion*, New York & London: Routledge.

PALAMA, Bongo Nzinga François

2014 [Final Draft of Forthcoming book], *Ecoute en société et la quête du sens*, Paris-Saint Denis: Edilivre.

PLUECKHAHN, Rebekah.

2013 “The Power of Two Homelands: Musical continuity and change, the evocation of longing and an Altai Urianghai song”, *Humanities Research* 19/3 : 83-95.

TEIL, GENEVIÈVE 2004. *De la coupe aux lèvres*, Toulouse: Octarès.