**Mobilizing Heritage: Anthropological Practice and Transnational Prospects**.

Kathryn Lafrenz Samuels. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, 2018.

**Rachel Tough**

In *Mobilizing Heritage: Anthropological Practice and Transnational Prospects* Kathryn Lafrenz Samuels expands on her previous work exploring the potential for heritage to mobilize social change (2015) and contributes to broader discussions around how heritage functions as a metacultural tool – a mirror that society uses to understand itself as it develops and transforms. In contrast to the extensive body of literature in which heritage is monopolized by the nation state, this text focuses on its less-explored transnational instantiations.

Arjun Appadurai (1981), building on previous work by Cohen and Comaroff (1976) exploring the management of meaning, recognized the culturally variable social norms that govern debates of the past. In acknowledging that these norms allow for division and debate and that concessions to change are built in, Appadurai prompted decades of discussion around “the inherent debatability of the past in the present” (1981: 218) and the possibilities for social action that this presents.

*Mobilizing Heritage* extends these debates. The introduction outlines the book’s four aims: to review the anthropological foundations of heritage studies, to provide an updated discussion of the changing forms and functions of cultural heritage practice across borders, to assess the utility of anthropology for accessing these new areas of activity and to act a theoretical text for anthropological approaches to analyzing cultural heritage. The book is structured into eight further chapters. Chapters two and three provide the in-depth discussion of the anthropological roots of the field of heritage studies. Chapter four explains the rise of heritage development within large multilateral development banks and then charts its adoption by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), consulting firms and transnational advocacy networks (TANs). Nonspecialists seeking to learn primarily about the role heritage plays in practice in addressing major twenty first century global challenges might forego the earlier genealogical chapters and use chapter four as an alternative entry point. Subsequent sections explore the relationships between heritage and climate change (chapter five), democratic practice (chapter six), global justice (chapter seven) and heritage rights (chapter eight).

The author enters her review of the anthropological foundations of heritage studies (chapter two) acknowledging that her contribution is restricted to the vision of cultural heritage emerging from the American anthropological tradition. She skillfully traces a thriving vein of recent heritage research integrating archaeological and ethnographic approaches back to the Boasian tradition emerging from US four-field anthropology in which the discipline comprises the four sub-fields of archaeology, linguistics, physical anthropology and cultural anthropology. Chapter three then identifies a new field of contemporary US research on heritage that the author terms ethnoheritage - a product of current anthropological training in heritage that fuses the fields of sociocultural anthropology and archaeology.

Readers will understand the author’s decision to adopt a narrow, focused genealogy to limit the scope of discussions and allow her to demonstrate expert knowledge of the intellectual trajectory of the important North American anthropological tradition. However, despite the book’s concern for explaining the heterogeneous nature of global heritage and despite a widespread acknowledgement that many of the core ideas that shape the heritage field – including how culture is conceived of - are rooted in the West, Lafrenz Samuels does not problematize her own normative position and acknowledge how this limits the analysis in the remainder of the book. As the anthropological approaches she goes on to advocate emanate from one specific, privileged context - the US anthropological tradition - relying on them to explain diverse forms of heritage practice is not unproblematic. For this reason, it would have been useful to have an acknowledgement of the danger that these practices could be rolled out in normative ways across very different contexts and a discussion of how this could be avoided.

The author does a good job of structuring the analysis, using a dual focus to first look back to the anthropological origins of cultural heritage research before looking forward to emerging areas of practice. In chapter four, charting how heritage gained popularity in the biggest multilateral development banks allows the author to identify an important shift from a paradigm of preservation to one of development within heritage management practice. The inherent dangers for heritage include privatization, commodification and rent seeking and these are weighed against new opportunities for resistance. This chapter is pivotal as it allows readers to put the discussions of new forms of crossborder heritage practice in subsequent chapters into context. Chapter five highlights a relative lack of discussion around the non-environmental and non-biological impacts of climate change within transnational networks of heritage experts with the author labelling the examination of conflict as a social impact of climate breakdown a “looming lacuna” (2018: 88) in heritage research and management.

I came to *Mobilizing Heritage* wanting to learn more about heritage in action and the two case studies in chapter six are most useful in this respect. One looks at the transnational deliberative activity after ISIS destroyed cultural heritage in Syria, exploring both the actions of the United Nations, NGOs and the blogosphere. Another examines the deliberative process following the 2017 Charleston shooting. These controversial issues are covered in a detailed, yet accessible way and these discussions serve as a good counterpoint to simplistic analyses of the same issues in popular media. This section may appeal most to readers with a general interest in world affairs but new to the field of heritage studies. In chapter seven the author argues that social justice can be studied through social goods and relationships and in chapter eight she explores how a ‘heritage capability’ approach might add to the heritage rights field with these arguments likely of most interest to an academic audience.

Researchers attracted by the mention of anthropological practice in the book’s title should be aware that the book is not a guide for to how to ‘do’ ethnoheritage. Relevant chapters in the *Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Heritage Research* edited by Emma Waterton and Steve Watson (2015) may be more helpful for anthropologists working on the frontline of ethnoheritage disputes. Only short accounts of the author’s multi-temporal and multi-sited ethnographic research are provided in chapter three although a number of studies are usefully referenced in the text where anthropologists, scholars of memory and war, archaeologists and activists may gain further guidance for fieldwork. The book clearly meets its four aims, most notably through the forensic examination of the anthropological roots of cultural heritage that has won many plaudits in other reviews from scholars of heritage and anthropologists engaged in heritage research. Diverse ‘on the ground’ examples of heritage practice are brief but, taken together with the theoretical and historical chapters, allow readers to link cultural heritage as it is experienced to institutional forms and structural forces.

In conclusion the author urges scholars not to respond to emerging forms of cultural heritage by engaging anew in struggles over conceptualization (the *what* of culture), instead urging a focus on *how* cultural heritage functions in order to realize its transformative potential. The author envisages cultural heritage in a developmental vein - as a productive force for realizing social change rather than as a resource of the past or a mechanism for managing such change. But the very conceptualization of heritage as a tool to alter society in some way is another normative standpoint that is not questioned in the text. In debates over the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands/Las Malvinas particular narratives around national heritage have been deployed with some success by the Argentinian authorities. And several nations invoke national heritage when seeking public backing for their territorial claims to disputed islands in the south China sea. If the desired change is won in these cases, this may benefit some in society at the expense of others or it may even lead to wars. For these reasons, the potential drawbacks of instrumentalizing heritage should be considered alongside its transformative potential.

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Rachel Tough is a Doctoral Researcher in the School of International Development at the University of East Anglia (UEA). Her research explores debates over heritage and memory in Vietnam.