

Reviews

**Natsuko Akagawa, Laurajane Smith (eds.):
SAFEGUARDING INTANGIBLE HERITAGE. PRACTICES
AND POLITICS. London-New York: Routledge, 2018,
260 pages, ISBN 9781138580749**

This volume examines the implications and consequences of the idea of intangible heritage to current international academic and policy debates about the meaning and nature of cultural heritage and the management processes developed to protect it. It provides an accessible account of the different ways in which intangible cultural heritage has been defined and managed in both national and international contexts, and aims to facilitate international debate about the meaning, nature and value of not only intangible cultural heritage, but heritage more generally.

Intangible Heritage fills a significant gap in the heritage literature available and represents a significant cross section of ideas and practices associated with intangible cultural heritage. The authors brought together for this volume represent some of the key academics and practitioners working in the area, and discuss research and practices from a range of countries.

The volume consists of over 200 pages. The Safeguarding Intangible Heritage Practices and Politics contains 18 articles written altogether by 19 authors. The contributions are organised in two parts.

The first part, *Legal administrative and conceptual challenges*, chapters reprise and review the status and achievements of the ICH. They specifically assess the Convention's policy impacts at national and international levels, and begin to consider whether and how the original aims and visions for the Convention are being met and the ways the ICHC frames the interplay of States Parties, sub-national communities of interest, NGO's and other communities of expertise.

The second part of the volume, *The complexities of safeguarding*, chapters review a range of case studies that analyse the way in which ICHC and more exactly the idea of safeguarding, have been implemented at national and subnational levels. Underlying these discussions is the question indeed challenge, voiced by Kirshenblatt-Gimblett at the beginning of the ICHC journey, that the Convention could become just another list. Thus the central questions implicitly or explicitly addressed here include: What impact has the ICHC had on knowledge bearers and their communities? What are the implications of the experiences to date under ICHC for developing policies and practices in relation to the safeguarding of ICH? What impact, if any has the concept had on the way the way heritage overall has been understood and conceptualised? In what ways has the convention framed and limited this debate within national contexts?

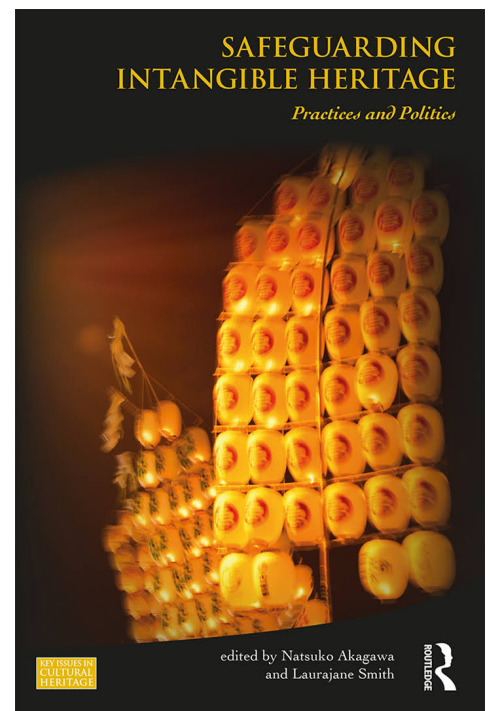
The contributions to this section describe a broad range of examples of the impact of ICHC in terms of the expressions, governance and / or safeguarding of ICH within a number of national contexts: Indonesia, Korea, Botswana, Zimbabwe, China, Japan and Kyrgyzstan. Each case highlights different aspects of the implementation of the Convention.

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The volume attests the idea that there is a range of ways that safeguarding can be preserved but requires a sense of flexibility and engagement by the academics and practitioners. If they are allowed, they will encourage

new ways of engaging, thinking about practicing heritage management and conservation not only in relation to intangible heritage, but all heritage in its many forms, expressions and meanings.