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Book Review: Ethnographies and Archaeologies: Iterations of the Past, edited by Lena Mortensen and Julie Hollowell

Christina J. Hodge

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this focus limits its usefulness to some degree, particularly in geographic locations that were settled much earlier. The title seems misleading – *Ceramic Makers' Marks* implies a comprehensive guide; perhaps *Ceramic Makers' Marks from California Archaeological Sites* would have been a more representative title. This volume is part of the Left Coast Press Guide to Historical Artifacts series and makes a nice addition to (but not replacement for) the standard ceramic identification references that should comprise any archaeological library's collections.

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Patricia Samford is the Director of the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, St. Leonard, Maryland. Her research interests include African diaspora archaeology in the American South and 18th- and 19th-century ceramics.

Patricia Samford
 Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory
 Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum
 10515 Mackall Road
 St. Leonard, MD 20685
 psamford@mdp.state.md.us

ETHNOGRAPHIES AND ARCHAEOLOGIES: ITERATIONS OF THE PAST, edited by Lena Mortensen and Julie Hollowell, 2009, *Cultural Heritage Studies Series*, University Press of Florida, Gainesville, 288 pages, 9 illustrations, \$69.95 (cloth).

Reviewed by Christina J. Hodge

Recent scholarship in archaeology (and museum studies) is clear: for some of us, a zeitgeist has gathered. Critical reflexivity is increasingly framed not as an admirable idea but as a fundamental of good practice. For archaeologists, the discussion is about not only ethics and engagement, but also the ability to achieve demonstrable worth in a competitive, capitalistic, postmodern world. Lena Mortensen and Julie Hollowell's excellent volume joins other edited collections and journal volumes exploring how we archaeologists do—and might do—public archaeologies, community collaboration, civic engagement, and applied anthropology. Most of these compilations overtly espouse ethnographic analysis and social intervention; what some label an “ethnographic turn.” The novelty of Mortensen and Hollowell's perspective in *Ethnographies and Archaeologies* is articulated in its Introduction: contributors knowingly deploy ethnography to “de-center or reposition the role of archaeologists and archaeological practice in the discussion of constructing the past” (p. 7). Contributing authors provide globally diverse perspectives, and they are mostly well known in this genre of reflexive study. Here, these scholars do *not* do ethnographies of archaeology or archaeologists; rather, they parse the ways *non*-archaeologists articulate with specific archaeological worlds. Contributors recognize that populations included in, and absented from, archaeology encompass a range of positions besides archaeologists and singular stakeholder communities. This is an edited volume for practicing archaeologists, relevant to anthropologists and heritage practitioners, about how others' “iterations” of the past enliven and constrain our present archaeologies.

Mortenson and Hollowell's Introduction provides a lucid review of reflexivity in archaeology, which they historicize within

ontologies of anthropology and see fulfilled in archaeology's current concerns for alterity, multivocality, and hegemonic challenge. The logic of the title is made explicit, as is a provocative claim: there are few, if any, people who have not been "archaeologized" in one way or another. But—every case study in the volume agrees—the discipline's transformative power, its clarion significance, does not and should not sit lightly on archaeologists' shoulders. Nor is this power universally acknowledged outside our community. Authors wrestle with the *absence* of archaeology (in mind, thought, and deed) as much as its presence—part of the volume's salutary de-centering. Figures are scarce or absent in most chapters; granted, providing iconic images of things described as manifold processes might be disingenuous. What the ethnographers and archaeologists who created this volume do offer is a series of potent case studies that are refreshingly narrative, on the ground, and messy. Archaeology is demonstrably out of archaeologists' control; but we learn myriad how's and why's and what we might, if we choose, do about it. We also learn, by example, that sometimes there is nothing to do but walk away and try to understand.

The volume is organized thematically, an effective choice that subverts the discipline's usual chronological and geographic rational. Part I opposes the local, the national, and the global, tracing "Official Narratives, Local Visions." Gastón Gordillo offers a sensitive meditation on geographies of poverty, class, and power in northern Argentina. Lisa Breglia frames local and external heritage discourses not as dominant and subaltern but as competing hegemonies in her exploration of the Chunchucmil site in the Yucatán. The local and the national are also at odds in Jennifer Jacobs and Benjamin Porter's chapter. They remind us that, in Jordan and everywhere, heritage is an individual experience. Helaine Silverman goes further, critiquing presentations of Mochica heritage as knowing, exploitative manipulations of ancient individuals—ancient bodies—for modern political ends. The loaded term "heritage" comes up often in Part I, as in the subsequent sections. Local/national/global heritage discourses are discussed as oppositions when they might be framed as co-dependent entanglements. I

agree with contributors, however, that heritage is a process living at the intersection of archaeology and the state, as well as of the local and the national. Commenting on Part I, Lynn Meskell concludes that archaeology inevitably edits heritage and simultaneously sanctions official and unofficial present pasts. The lesson: archaeological narratives, as they mingle with these competing discourses, are slippery and dangerous and not about archaeologists' own desires.

Where Part I focuses on competing boundaries of heritage, Part II directly probes discourses of power and control as manifested through archaeological sites. Quetzil E. Casteñeda introduces this section with an observation: there has been a shift in common understandings of heritage. It is not a static inheritance (local or global); rather, it has become a construction of identity, ownership, and control. Inspired by her work in Australia, Laurajane Smith argues that Cultural Resources Management, far from being a theoretical wasteland, is (or can be) on the forefront of articulating this shift. After working in the archaeologically-wayward community of Eastport, Maryland—where some embraced and others ignored historical archaeology and its potential—Christopher N. Matthews and Matthew Palus have a crisis of archaeological faith. They question archaeologists' self-legitimizing stance as arbiters of authenticity. O. Hugo Benavides also takes a dim view in the Ecuadorian Andes. He concludes that archaeology, as "heritage," contributes to nationalist hegemonies, which, through sophisticated discourses, successfully dominate local and indigenous interests. But Benavides also offers constructive advice. Archaeology always serves someone, he reasons, so those who practice it must be aware of whom and how, and they must use that awareness to question both official and unofficial discourses. Themes of access and authority unite Part II's case studies. The lesson: archaeology is not a universal good. It is inherently disruptive, and it is unlikely to be equally desired by all people it affects.

Part III picks up the theme of value. Notions of value always underlie archaeology and the fabrication of heritage. But value is slippery and multiple, crucial to demonstrate yet impossible to stabilize and define. Richard

Handler, prefacing Part III, queries why some pasts are manufactured into heritage and others are not; values are, in part, the answer. Lena Mortensen finds Copan's value is as a fantasy industry, producing modern and post-modern class relations at least as effectively as a Maya past. Other cases are inspired by North American indigenous populations and places. In Hawaii, repatriation under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act is notoriously fraught. Jon Daehnke provides a balanced summary of its history, as well as the competing visions of stewardship on display. He suggests we begin not with things, but with stakeholder perspectives on responsibilities to those things. This is Julie Hollowell's strategy as well. She traces a variety of positions on peoples' responsibility to excavated ivory and bone artifacts on St. Lawrence Island. Native Alaskan subsistence diggers, "raw material" traders, artists, and art and artifact dealers have strong, justifiable, and competing ideas of stewardship, none of which include archaeology. Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh also grapples with archaeology's marginalization, this time in the San Pedro Valley of Arizona. He views his work less as ethnography, more as a greater archaeological project: comprehending relationships between people and a natural/cultural place across time. The lesson: archaeologists must share their places and things, which always have and always will possess value outside the discipline's scope.

All authors wrestle with archaeological authority, the exercise of which can create so much angst. Issues of power, voice, and control, now familiar in the broader literature, are refreshed in *Ethnographies and Archaeologies* by shifting the viewpoint just outside the archaeological—that is, not taking it for granted that archaeology should or even can be done, let alone whether it should be a component of "heritage" or "value." It is not always clear how contributions are ethnography, as opposed to critical reflection, but framing them as such allows contributors to systematize their (in some cases self) studies and situates the entire process within larger anthropological traditions; I think justifiably.

At its core, this volume is about privilege—where it comes from (or not), what it does (or not), and what archaeologists can do about it

(or not). If it was ever in doubt, *Ethnographies and Archaeologies* proves unequivocally that, as series editor Paul A. Shackel states in the foreword, "the meaning and work of archaeology have lives beyond those given by archaeologists" (p. x). Claims of scholarly superiority and exclusive comprehension are rejected outright, correctly. Simultaneously, there is an abiding sense that archaeology is deeply misunderstood by the very communities archaeologists would serve, given the chance. Where does that leave our profession? We could, of course, "reflexivity" ourselves out of a job. Better we believe—cautiously and critically—in our contributions and ourselves. We can acknowledge our privileged positions while accepting, even challenging, others. Like other stakeholders, archaeologists have values to take or leave (along with peculiar ontologies, scholarly expertise, Western privilege, and postcolonial baggage). We bring them all to bear in negotiating heritage. These values may be irrelevant, unwelcome, or transformative within the larger social context, but we must make them explicit and accept some burden of authority to practice the profession and make present the past. We can demonstrate archaeology's value, acknowledge uneven power structures, and, perhaps, let some things go.

Christina J. Hodge is senior curatorial assistant at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology and lecturer on anthropology at Harvard University. Hodge currently lectures in the Department of Anthropology, where she team-directs the Harvard Yard Archaeology Project, and in the Harvard Extension School, where she teaches courses in museum studies. Hodge's research includes the colonial and postcolonial archaeology of New England, material culture studies, public archaeology, and the curation of museum collections.

Christina J. Hodge
Peabody Museum of Archaeology and
Ethnology, Harvard University
11 Divinity Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
chodge@fas.harvard.edu