

1. Rethinking heritage, but ‘from below’

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INTRODUCTION

There is, really, no such thing as heritage. (Smith 2006, p. 11)

As counterintuitive as this statement may sound, the basic idea introduced by Laurajanne Smith (2006) in her much vaunted *Uses of Heritage* is the starting point for this collection. Indeed, for all its grand pronouncements, within national(ized) canons, global heritage lists, tourism brochures or the agenda of organizations such as the European Union (EU), or when mouthed from the lips of laypeople asked to define their respective identities, ‘heritage’, even as it owes its lineage from historical events, is nothing more than a manipulation of the past. Thus, it should not surprise that critical heritage scholars have largely engaged with the idea of ‘heritage’ not as a priori, or fixed in its essence, but as a process folded into the service of the present through what Harvey (2001, p. 332) refers to as ‘heritage-isation’. In line with this idea, Smith (2006) also coined the term Authorized Heritage Discourse (hereafter AHD) to describe how the past is mobilized to attain socio-economic and political objectives, and how audiences are persuaded to accept particular versions of the past as true, even as these may be nothing but strategically selected narratives of people and events belonging to another time.

There is now a burgeoning amount of work centred, implicitly if not explicitly, on the political and cultural issues associated with AHD, especially as these are undertaken as part of nation-building or nation-alistic projects. Yet, there is comparatively lesser attention on heritage as a process understood, practised *and experienced* on the ground by the people themselves. This includes heritagescapes (or heritage landscapes) spearheaded by non-elites, and the ways in which these same actors may engage heritagescapes in more affective ways, thus exercising their own agency as both producers *and* consumers of ‘the past’. What we would like to emphasize in the critical reading of heritage proposed by this book is the

fact that heritage(scapes) are fashioned not only in spectacular manners, or even in highly public spaces; they may also be materialized ‘in the shadows’ by individuals and communities within erstwhile everyday spaces, or manifested in more embodied (*vis-à-vis* emplaced) ways (see Connerton 1989). We also believe that not enough focus has been given in the relevant literature to how individuals themselves engage ‘heritage’ on a more personal register, cognitively and emotionally, regardless of mandates of official ‘top-down’ heritage(scapes). These two aspects constitute how we will conceptualize Heritage from Below (hereafter, HFB) in this collection, deliberately building upon how Iain Robertson introduced the concept in his path-breaking book with the same title (2012, see also 2008).

Moreover, while cases of HFB do occasionally rear their heads in scholarship, they are often framed as checks to AHD, such as in the shape of counter-narratives of what constitutes one’s heritage (see Hoelscher and Alderman 2004 for a review). These counter-narratives, so the argument goes, are particularly useful in revealing the biases, partiality and selectivity of official versions of the past, hence turning them on their heads, or in representing counter-sites of memory and heritage as necessarily reviving what AHD has forgotten (see, among others, Legg 2005a). Yet, even as it has become almost a truism to say that, regardless of what is formally presented, people engage heritage in their own ways, there is a tendency in the literature to romanticize alternative heritage formulations, even as many of these formulations may also be subservient to dominant official discourses, be driven by only a select grassroots, or even have their own hidden agendas. For sure, if *all* ‘heritage’ is nothing more than the past as imagined from the perspectives of the ‘here and now’, it is perhaps too simplistic to frame AHD as a process of strategic forgetting and HFB as a positive process of collective memory recovery; things, we suggest, are far more complex even when the past is actualized ‘from below’. Accordingly, one of the aims of this book is that of questioning all forms of heritage produced ‘from below’, while maintaining a critical stance towards AHD. As much as we like to read in a critical perspective all formal renderings of heritage(scapes), we also believe that such a critical perspective should be applied to cases where individuals and groups manifest alternative forms of ‘heritage’, thus problematizing the myriad ways the past may be subsequently engaged, both personally as well as collectively.

The purpose of the edited collection is thus two-fold. First, to unravel some of the blind-sights of scholarship centred on a critique of AHD, but also to reflect on how a critical positioning of HFB may look like. Specifically, this involves seeking out heritages(scapes) beyond that which is formalized, visual, tangible, spectacular and spatially bounded, to also include those that are made, unmade and remade within the present but

within the vernacular and the everyday, frequently motivated by more than just the desire to revive the reified past. In other words, every form of heritage valorisation, from the 'top down' to the 'bottom up', is inherently selective and responds, in various degrees, to the position of the respective promoters and advocates. There is therefore no neutral ground out there to stage an apolitical and objective actualization of history. Secondly, the book departs from interpretations based on the overtly simplistic binary of 'AHD-evil'-'HFB-good'. Drawing on critical heritage studies (Winter 2013), this book thus argues for pathways in and through which HFB and AHD should not necessarily be seen as antithetical but possibly complementary to one another.

In what follows, the chapter does some conceptual ground-clearing. It first examines the idea of AHD (Smith 2006) and its limitations. The chapter then presents what we understand by HFB and why there should be more emphasis on studying it. Drawing on recent debates (see Winter and Waterton 2013), we also explain how we envision taking HFB in more critical directions, not only to enhance our understanding of what heritage is *or does*, but also to take better account of *individual practices of heritage-making and engagement*, particularly those situated in less conspicuous forms and spaces. Indeed, as Halbwachs (1925 [1992], p. 51) once said of memory, equally valid for considerations of heritage:

[Even as a] man must often appeal to others' remembrances to evoke his own past . . . , one remembers only what he himself has seen, done, felt and thought . . . our own memory is never confused with anyone else's.

Through this book therefore we seek to also incorporate the individual – with its imperfections and imperiousness – back into the heritage process (see Crane 1997), and to show how HFB may be seen as a missed opportunity for AHD. Finally, we provide a summary of the chapters composing the book and propose how to read them together.

'FROM AUTHORIZED HERITAGE DISCOURSE . . .'

[H]eritage, far from being fatally predetermined or God-given, is in large measure our own marvellously malleable creation. (Lowenthal 1997, p. 226)

'Heritage' is defined in this book as elements drawn from the past seen as valuable to be preserved within the present for the benefit of current and future generations, where 'the present selects an inheritance from an imagined past for current use and decides what should be passed on to an imagined future' (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996, p. 6). While this may

also refer to 'natural' elements, the focus in this edited book is extracted from the cultural realm – such as in the form of material artefacts, rituals, practices, customs, traditions, as well as memories of what transpired before – that have survived the winds of time and are part of the lived or represented realities of contemporary societies. Thus, although many of these expressions of heritage may have been hitherto co-opted in the form of material artefacts within museums, choreographed heritage festivals, cultural theme parks and hardy monuments (Hardy 1988; Young 1989; Harvey 2001), others may also refer to aspects of everyday life not yet marked as 'heritage', despite having deep roots in the past. Furthermore, heritage may be 'tangible' or 'intangible', the latter standing for *meanings* behind the tangible and for heritage as 'practised' (i.e., as embodied, for instance, in story-telling and dance).

Taken in this way, 'heritage' can be anything and everything. This is why critical scholars of heritage have tended to home in less on what constitutes 'heritage' – as heritage practitioners, such as policy makers and curators are more inclined to do, sometimes unquestioningly – and more on *what* heritage is meant to achieve and *how* the past is crafted to achieve objectives set for it (Hanna et al. 2004). Usually done by elites (including the heritage practitioners mentioned earlier, but also national governments and supranational organizations such as UNESCO), it is to these crafted forms of dominant heritage-making that Smith (2006) applies the idea of the AHD. Highly presentist in nature, AHD is often perceived negatively in terms of how it privileges certain interpretations of the past, but marginalizes others when these do not conform to its overarching purpose (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996; Crampton 2003; Muzaini and Yeoh 2005; Graham and Whelan 2007). The need for heritage as pushed by AHD is also often couched in the need to salvage the past as bulwark against the harm of conflicts and threats such as modernization, exploitative urbanization, unmonitored tourism trends and the socio-cultural impact of prevailing economic crises (see also Winter 2013).

Since hegemonic discourses about heritage seek to influence the way 'we think, talk and write about heritage', Smith (2006, p. 11) focuses primarily on the tendency for AHD to *naturalize* the practices (and products) of preserving a certain interpretation of the past by obscuring the 'work' that goes into its making, expressing it as 'common sense', reliant:

on the power/knowledge claims of technical and aesthetic experts, and institutionalized in state cultural agencies . . . This discourse takes its cue from the grand narratives of nation and class . . . privileges monumentality and scale, innate artefact/site significance tied to time depth . . . social consensus and nation building . . . to establish claims about itself that make it real.

Such is the anointing of narratives and understandings of the past as the 'right' heritage, even as this suppresses other aspects, other narratives, other understandings rendered 'invisible' by 'hegemonic conceptualizations of history and identity' (Dwyer 2000, p. 661; see also Leib 2002; Dwyer 2004; Hoelscher and Alderman 2004). Furthermore, AHD is conceived as 'a discrete "site", "object", building or other structure with identifiable boundaries that can be mapped, surveyed, recorded' (Smith 2006, p. 31), often freeze-framed as it was in the past to render it 'more authentic', even as this may alienate it from the masses. One may recall how the appropriation of *Sukhotai*, an ancient temple complex in Thailand, as AHD had not only meant the removal of newer temples and settlements established since the period of the ancient kingdom, but also the displacement of rituals seen as incongruent with the status of the site of 'national' heritage and of tourist attraction (Byrne 2014). Taken this way, hence, 'heritage is not simply practised but also authorised and ascribed with value, legitimacy and social and cultural capital', such that what is seen to not align nicely with AHD is erased (Roberts and Cohen 2014, p. 243).

Some scholars, geographers in particular, have also intimated how this sleight of hand – where the value of heritage is determined by a small elite group appointed as its stewards, even as it is expressed as being for the betterment of many – is done spatially, since memory, as even historian Nora (1989, p. 9) has famously averred, 'takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects' (in geography, see Edensor 1998; Johnson 1999, 2011; Crampton 2003; Gough 2004; Hoelscher and Alderman 2004; Tolia-Kelly 2010). These sites of heritage are then packaged in ways that hide their partiality. Far from being representative of the views of the people for whom one specific heritage is meant, AHD is forged out of the mills of politicians, archaeologists and historians who are 'speaking for' rather than 'speaking from' the platform of the masses. The privileging by AHD of the materiality of heritage also implies that their intangible elements – even as these have increasingly been recognized, by nations and supranational organizations (e.g., UNESCO) alike, as important to consider as part of heritage to be preserved (Harrison 2013) – often fall by the wayside either in the interest of secularizing discourses (so as not to interest some groups more than others, thus appealing to more visitors) or ensuring that visitor behaviour and action does not threaten the integrity of preserved heritages (Byrne 2014).

AHD strives to naturalize its formally appointed version of the past so that this is accepted by the people unquestioningly. Thus, ironically, while this is meant to be the heritage of many, it is often an inherently distancing reconstruction of the past, according to which visitors are often told what to remember and what they can or cannot do while at heritagescapes. As a

result, they tend to be fundamentally estranged from the ‘work’ that goes into the making of heritage, its selection, interpretation, value. As Smith (2006, p. 31) proceeds to say:

AHD constructs heritage as something . . . engaged with passively – while it may be the subject of popular ‘gaze’, that gaze is a passive one in which the audience will uncritically consume the message of heritage constructed by heritage experts. Heritage is not defined . . . as an active process or experience, but rather it is something visitors are led to, are instructed about but are then not invited to engage with more actively.

Although this has changed with the shift towards more participatory, consensus-building and ‘community-based’ approaches to heritage-making (see Dicks 2000; Atkinson 2007; Smith and Waterton 2013), this has at times been found to merely pay lip service (what Smith 2006, p. 38 refers to as ‘gestural politics’) or done in a way in which ‘the expert’ still reigns supreme (on this, see Waterton and Watson 2011). While laudable in how excluded groups may, in this way, be recruited into existing practices of valuing the past, unfortunately it is merely a case of co-opting vernacular heritage without effectively challenging the status quo of the day.

Having said that, AHD is not always embraced by those for whom it is intended. Realizing how ‘[o]fficial memorials . . . [may] not simply testify a “real” history but rather represent what some want to believe, or what some want others to believe, in the monument’ (Tyner et al. 2012, p. 856), scholars have highlighted how individuals may show up, and speak against, the partiality that surrounds the formal constitution or re-enactment of the past. Curthoys (2000, p. 129), for instance, has shown how indigenous populations of Australia have critiqued national historiography as having excised their own stories within the white settler society (see also Johnson 1999; Leib 2002; Dwyer and Alderman 2008), while Enloe’s work (1998, pp. 51–2) has put the emphasis on how official war remembrances have tended to be biased against representations of women’s war experiences given ‘it had been men whose ideas and actions had been crucial shapers of [memory] processes’, thus showing AHD as not only racist but gendered (see also Dwyer 2002). Gough (2004, p. 238) also illustrates how the hegemony of formal heritagescapes may be offset by the lack of patronage on the part of the people themselves, such that: ‘without frequent reinscription, the date and place of commemoration fades away as memory atrophies [and] the commemorative space loses its potency to reinvigorate memory’.

The key thing to note here is that there is never only one ‘heritage’ but many. If indeed there is no such thing as an a priori heritage, and heritage is what is inherited and then valued about the past within the present, then there may be as many ways of ‘valuing’ heritage as there are individuals in

any given society. While interpretations about the past – both AHD and those produced by the masses at large – may coalesce such that they serve to consolidate a particular understanding of history, in other contexts they may collide, for instance when AHD is resisted by alternative ways of interpreting history, hence giving rise to its contested nature (Hewison 1987; Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996; Leib 2002; Hoelscher and Alderman 2004; Legg 2005a; Graham et al. 2016; Muzaini 2016a). It is in this sense, then, that AHD can work to undermine ideas about 'heritage' that may be seen to go against presentist objectives such as nation-building and tourism. Consequently, AHD may also result in saturating public expressions of place attachment, leading to a sense of dispossession and alienation (Smith and Waterton 2013).

‘... TO A HERITAGE FROM BELOW’

To look only at large scale and/or commercial and tangible sites is to place limits on the counter hegemonic possibilities written into the expression of the past at these sites. (Robertson 2012, p. 13)

While the scholarship pertaining to the politics of heritage-making that emphasizes the contentious interplay of heritage-making has provided us with much fodder with regards to revealing the appropriative politics of 'top-down' heritage-making (Harrison 2013), there exists a lacuna in terms of considering heritage made 'in the shadows' and away from the public eye, as well as how individuals themselves experience heritage at the more local level. In this regard, Robertson's (2008, 2012) work on HFB has clearly paved the way. As Robertson (2012, p. 6) puts it himself:

[D]iscussion of the manifestations of heritage at the local scale has been somewhat superficial despite the fact that it is in the local context that the relationship between heritage and identity establishment and maintenance is often most meaningful.

In his reckoning, heritage is not just something political, commodified and spectacular, but also something personal, sometimes invisible – 'a sense of inheritance that does not seek to attract an audience' (Robertson 2012, p. 2) – although still pertinent for a more complete understanding of the past. Here, he points to the need to recognize the value of popular heritage crafted by the ordinary people themselves, as active agents in their own right such that they become not only consumers of heritage but also makers/keepers of their own pasts.

In doing so, it becomes possible to overcome the elitism of history and

refocus towards what may be called unofficial histories, especially those which may not be overtly presented as ‘counter-memory’ (Legg 2005a) or even remotely interested in engaging with AHD. Indeed, as much as heritage may be used to serve the realm of politics (i.e., nation-building) or to serve more economic imperatives (i.e., tourism) ‘from above’, they can also be ‘cultural resources for counter hegemonic expressions’ (Robertson 2012, p. 1). Having said that, HFB can also function beyond these explicitly incited purposes to include more implicit intentions to, as Muzaini (2012, p. 216) puts it, ‘mak[e] memories our own way’. In his work, Muzaini directs attention to how non-elite individuals in Perak, Malaysia, have sought to recuperate memories sidelined by formal heritage-makers by materializing their own memorials and through their own practices of ‘story-telling’ to overturn the biases of AHD. Furthermore, there are also times when it is inappropriate or even unsafe to make personal or community heritages public especially when these pertain to sensitive histories (Muzaini 2012).

This is not to say, however, that there has been complete paucity in the critical scholarship interested in how heritage has survived in these less palpable spaces, shapes and forms. In fact, there have been many studies that have taken into consideration often overlooked ways of remembering that had served as ‘anti-hegemonic possibilities . . . [and] resources for expressions of identity and ways of life that run counter to the dominant’ (Robertson 2012, p. 2). Examples of these would be Legg’s (2005a) investigation of sites of counter-memories in India, where the formally marginalized past has been found to still play important roles in the everyday practices of locals, Tolia-Kelly’s (2004, 2010) work on how South Asian migrants preserve their heritage in Britain, Atkinson’s (2007) reflections on the retention of everyday, ‘kitchified’, social memories in the docklands of Hull, as well as Byrne’s (2014) ruminations on the ‘numinous’ in Asian forms of heritage-making (see also Alderman 2003; Hebbert 2005; Crooke 2007; Alderman and Campbell 2008; Lin 2011; Waterton and Watson 2011; Robertson 2012; Byrne 2013; Muzaini 2014, 2016a, 2016b; Drozdzewski 2016). Of note here is how HFB may emerge not only as reaction to AHD but also for many other reasons, albeit in less visible fashion and spaces. Even as such heritage may be, as Tyner et al. (2012, p. 854) put it, “‘hidden in plain sight’”: those places that are not commemorated through official channels . . . [but] experienced on a day-to-day basis’, they may still have an impact especially on those who know of the stories (see also Till 2005). In these regards, the concept of HFB thus rests on the idea that, as much as it is important to consider forms of heritage-making (and resultant heritagescapes) that are ‘top-down’, high profile, bounded and representational, we should also seek out those that are ‘from below’.

In line with what Robertson and Webster (2017, p. 313) refer to as 'the turn towards the exploration of heritages that are local, particular, mundane', Robertson (2012, p. 2, see also Robertson 2015) has conceptualized HFB as 'an expression of, and draws on, the ordinary and quotidian that [. . .] is underscored by *embodied practice*', highly personal in its 'assertion of a right to dwell: an engagement with and expression of landscape as an enduring record of the lives and works of past and present generations who have dwelled within it' (emphasis added). This calls for more attention to be paid to how the people themselves engage with heritagescapes on a more intimate register. With reference to Angkor Wat in Cambodia, for instance, Winter (2004, p. 337) speaks of how popular understandings of the site's heritage are never fixed or dormant; rather, heritage sites are constantly reinterpreted (and therefore rejuvenated) by the people themselves who use and claim it as their own 'living heritage' – in an 'interweaving of leisure, tourism and religion as visitors continually move between swimming, picnicking, temple visits and prayer' – thus making their own experiences even as these may collide with the mandated status of the temples as a revered heritage site (see also Muzaini 2012).

For Byrne (2013, p. 603), despite the suppression of public commemoration of the killings in Indonesia by the government of General Soeharto in 1965–66 to purge the country of (alleged) communists which led the deaths of at least half a million people, the island of Bali is 'replete with reminders, for those left behind, of the cataclysm and those who perished with it', in the form of memories embodied not in stones and plinths but in the individuals themselves. Here, Byrne (2013, p. 597) insists on how memories may at times survive not in the physical landscape but 'are constituted in the sensory, the emotional and the imaginary. . . steeped in affect'. This emphasis on 'affect' draws from the cognate field of cultural geography (see Lorimer 2005; Thrift 2008) that considers heritage(scapes) as more than just what it (they) represent but also how they make us feel, the emotions they incite, and how they are reproduced, sometimes unwittingly, within our own persona. This literature tends to shift emphasis on heritage-making from just the ways in which heritagescapes are to be 'read' to, as Lorimer (2005, p. 84) puts it, 'how life takes shape and gains expression in shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, precognitive triggers, practical skills, affective intensities, enduring urges, unexceptional interactions and sensuous dispositions' (see also Crang and Tolia-Kelly 2010; Park 2010; Jones 2011; Muzaini 2016b).

In previous work, again Muzaini (2016a, 2016b) reported on how visitors sometimes engage in their own chosen routes, movements and behaviours within carefully scripted cultural theme parks, thus 'making their own heritage', or have memories triggered at war memorial sites that can

escape the messages intended by the sites' initiators and managers, some not even related to the past itself. In fact, much production of heritage and its related practices may be missed, especially if one is not deliberately seeking them or if the respondents simply do not care to bring these up in interviews. Central to the approach guiding this book, therefore, is the extent to which our experiences of formal as well as informal heritage sites are frequently influenced not only by the carefully choreographed routes and narratives of heritagescapes, but also by the material surroundings and by our own positionalities, which then form an ever transient and evolving assemblage determining how we feel and what we think at any given time (Muzaini 2015). Our aim here is thus to capture the more fluid ways in which individuals and groups not only participate in the production of, but also engage with, heritagescapes that may be overlooked in more conventional ethnographies of (sites and practices of) heritage.

For sure, there is much more to heritage than the AHD, and the practice of making and consuming heritage extends beyond the efforts of elites – be it of the state, representatives of the UNESCO World Heritage committee, or similar – to include non-state individuals and groups seeking to create public heritage in their own private capacities (Dwyer and Alderman 2008). In fact, practices of heritage-making, and the wide range of ways in which people can engage with them, vary tremendously. While the literature on the politics of heritage may give some clues as to the existence of discourses counter to AHD, the 'ocularcentrism' (Harvey 2001) of much heritage studies tends to obscure heritagescapes that may not be visible (or kept obscured by the community themselves), as well as perpetuate that tendency for AHD to be centred only on the spectacular. Further, there is also the inclination for many studies to be focused primarily on bounded sites. This might be attributed to the work of early thinkers such as Halbwachs (1925 [1992]) and Nora (1989), whose emphasis upon *sites* of memory provided a convenient *entrée* for geographical studies. However, as Atkinson (2007, p. 523) reckons, 'an excessive focus upon bounded sites of memory risks fetishizing place and space too much [while] obscur[ing] the wider production of social memory throughout society'.

Another theme pertinent to the discussion developed in this book, and in our view lacking in Robertson's early conceptualization of HFB, is the role of technology and the extent to which this has allowed for HFB to get a more public presence, and how this has impacted upon AHD. Living in an age of advanced computer-mediated communication (CMC) and Web 2.0 technologies as well as its tools (first and foremost, the Internet), it is inevitable that this would play a role in how heritage is made/unmade within societies today. Affordances that such technologies have given rise to – in terms of increasing the extent of memory to be virtually preserved,

allowing for contact without geographical propinquity, and democratising heritage-making such that it is no longer just the purview of elites but for anyone with a computer and something to say! – have definitely served to provide a platform in which alternative interpretations of the past can emerge and AHD be subverted (Muzaini and Yeoh 2015). Having said that, such technologies have also been co-opted by elite heritage-makers in terms of ensuring not only the increase of (right and accurate) information to be disseminated, but also the added possibility to reach an even wider audience, for instance, via the online presence of, or the use of audio-guided trails within, formal heritagescapes (Reading 2003).

Yet, the Internet has also translated into a portal through which ordinary men and women may voice their views, thus allowing for a certain 'democratization' of memory and heritage-making, even if these may go against official heritage discourses and practices, such as in the form of e-memorials or social media (see, for sampling, Drinot 2011; Blackburn 2013; Muzaini and Yeoh 2015). For others, the Internet has also been a means through which heritage formally excised may find sanctuary, and also where otherwise alienated individuals may be brought together and united in the reproduction of HFB. For sure, regardless of how watertight an AHD may be, once it has entered the realm of cyberspace it becomes hard to put it down, hence indicating how the new technologies may actually serve to impede AHD (Muzaini and Yeoh 2015). More than that, it has also given rise to questions related to how heritage may be consumed differently – at times antagonistically – by the public at large, particularly as the past is now represented not in the physical forms of memorials, museums and monuments, but fashioned as Instagram photographs, web dialogues or virtual memory communities (de Vries and Rutherford 2004; Hess 2007; Maddrell 2012). Thus, in *After Heritage*, we consider not only how virtual platforms may allow for HFB to perpetuate itself, but also the ways in which they play out the challenges and contestations as embodied by their physical counterparts.

TOWARDS A MORE CRITICAL HFB

It is evident heritage studies has embarked upon a critical turn, and the question thus arises, what should 'critical' mean precisely? (Winter 2013, p. 532)

In the light of the discussion so far, it would be tempting to consider HFB as a champion of different forms of heritage – more 'authentic' and idealized versions of the past – that have been marginalized or even excluded within AHD, thus offering vast possibilities for subversion. However, it

is salient to note that, even as informal interpretations of the past may emerge as necessary checks to AHD, or provide a space where individuals and groups may engage with history in their own unique ways, they should not be romanticized. In fact, HFB may also serve to (sometimes inadvertently) reproduce dominant official discourses or even be motivated by hidden agendas (Aigner 2016). Some work has indeed shown how, in cases of 'difficult heritage', individuals too may seek to play down or forget altogether the past (see Till 2005; Dwyer and Alderman 2008; MacDonald 2010; Muzaini 2014, 2015). Witcomb and Buckley (2013, p. 563), for instance, suggest for us to 'move away from the idea that critique should only come from the bottom up', lamenting the lack of concern for the fact that HFB as 'critique does not need to be accountable to issues concerning its implementation'.

Thus, far from privileging the extent to which HFB may resuscitate suppressed histories and memories, such as within ordinary rituals and spaces (Muzaini 2012), the book seeks to interrogate how these too may be influenced by their own ulterior motives as much as they may also be constrained by AHD. Often manifested as criticism to how formalized heritage has led to the marginalization or, worse, erasure of the past, leading to disenfranchisement of certain individuals or collectives, HFB, as crafted by non-elite actors, may easily be seen as the last bastion before the eventual demise of societal memories perceived as superfluous or antithetical to dominant discourses and, thus, discarded. Framed this way, it is therefore hard to see these actors as anything but acting against the evils – of selective remembering – as committed by states (and corporations). Yet, one should not forget how states and heritage practitioners are also increasingly seeking to incorporate people's everyday and community heritages into their formal heritage-making, even if their efforts may not be as inclusive as they seem (see Atkinson 2007; Crooke 2007; Smith and Waterton 2013). Furthermore, HFB, like AHD, may also serve their own economic and political functions (e.g., in strategies of ethnic revivalism) such that it too can be selective, biased and partial to the actual past itself.

Additionally, it is also important to note that, while HFB's versions of the past may be framed as being 'more inclusive' or 'less biased' than what formal AHD offers, support for HFB from the masses is far from unequivocal. Given that there can be as many alternative interpretations of the past as there are interpreters, HFB can also be responsible for having its own preferred heritages (as defined by a few, driven by their own motives) such that it too may be culpable, as AHD, of playing down or eliding altogether elements of the past. It is not uncommon to find, for instance, examples of visitors to a heritage site who do not want to hear stories that diverge from rehearsed, 'well-known', narratives about a

particular past, or situations in which the public may be divided in terms of how they feel the past should be represented (Dwyer 2000; Smith 2006; Muzaini 2015). There are also those who feel that, while everyone may have a personal story or understanding of the past, these stories are not always to be emphasized since they may risk bringing up unwanted and traumatic memories (see Muzaini 2012, 2014). As such, HFB is not only something frowned upon by AHD, where, as Robertson (2012, pp. 19–20) writes, '[o]fficial recognition of, and support for heritage from below therefore remains fleeting at best and oppositional at worst . . . [given how it] is often itself oppositional and is often best expressed in the illusive, ephemeral and everyday', but also something that can invite dissent among non-elites with respect to physical heritagescapes and in the virtual world (Drinot 2011).

In this regard, the contributions to this book offer a novel way of interrogating informal 'heritagescapes' that intends not merely to react to (or critique) 'top-down' AHD, but also to cast a critical eye on these so-called alternative forms of heritage-making. More fundamentally, however, our conceptualization of HFB also raises the question of what 'heritage' actually is. Inspired by early thinkers such as Halbwachs (1925 [1992]) and Nora (1989), heritage and heritage-making in the modern age is frequently seen as something that is distanced from, and external to, the body – as 'sites of memory' – such that 'we have to some degree divested ourselves of the obligation to remember' (Young 1993, p. 5; see also Hewison 1987). Yet, the past may also survive in more embodied, even ephemeral, ways. For example, Küchler (1999) demonstrates how, during the Malangan ceremony in Papua New Guinea, the act of remembering the ancestral dead entails the iconoclasm (vis-à-vis the retention) of 'traces' of the dead, while Legg's (2005b) work shows how the past can reside in the embodied actions, rituals and practices of the people rather than in the form of 'sites of memory' (see also Bender 1993; Muzaini 2012, 2014; Byrne 2014). Thus, central to this book is also the aim of decentring what we mean when we say 'heritage'. For sure, it is too simplistic, not to say Western-centric, to focus on heritage as what is (in)tangibly *presenced*, or instrumentalized towards the achievement of certain objectives; heritage may also be marked by *absence* (or the absence of physical reminders), perceived in this case in ways that have less to do with valuing something as heritage, but reproduced as part of daily life, where it is more salient what we seek not to forget than what we remember (Tyner et al. 2012).

Finally, the chapters collected here also seek to position critical perspectives of HFB in relation to heritage-making on other scales, including that of the dominant 'national' (when heritage is nationalized) or 'global' AHD (such as promulgated by the work of UNESCO). For sure, the 'local' here does not exist independently from these other scales of heritage-making,

where HFB may often be limited in what it can or cannot actually do by actors and narratives operating at different scales. Formed on the bedrock of discussions related to ‘alternative’ or ‘peripheral’ critical geographies generally (see Minca 2003; Berg 2010) and critical heritage studies specifically (Winter and Waterton 2013), the ‘critical’ in the subtitle also relates to the undoing of the binary that often pitches AHD as ‘bad’ and HFB as ‘good’. What clearly emerges in the chapters that follow is that the two are at times almost impossible to disentangle, especially when AHD seeks to (or at least appears to) co-opt HFB for its purposes (Blackburn 2013), or where HFB may rely heavily on what AHD affords it in order to do its tasks, such as to achieve more visibility (see Johnson 2011; Muzaini 2015).

Stemming out of this, the primary idea that we seek to unpack in *After Heritage*, therefore, is that there is no clear line in these days to separate what is AHD from HFB, be it in terms of what of the past is made valuable or who is doing the valuing. In fact, they often overlap and constantly interact with one other, such that clear-cut distinctions are frequently blurred. Having said that, while recognizing that HFB may be seen as a threat to AHD – especially when it disrupts or destabilizes the version of history that has been authorized as heritage, or when it reveals how it is categorically impossible for AHD to ever be fashioned in a way that will please everyone – HFB is nevertheless pertinent to understanding how the people themselves value, appreciate *and practice* heritage. This is why we think it is more instructive to do away with a hierarchical view of heritage from the ‘top down’ (AHD) or the ‘bottom up’ (HFB): after all, and here we go back to the quote from which we started: ‘[t]here is, really, no such thing as heritage’ (Smith 2006, p. 11). Rather, all heritages are constructed and crafted; and what is important is to what purpose they are activated and reproduced.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

Following this introduction, **James A. Tyner**’s chapter juxtaposes official heritagescapes with the recollections of ordinary individuals to compare how the actions of the brutal regime of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia are memorialized by the state as well as the population at large. He argues how the formal memorialization related to events that led to millions massacred – primarily signified by the S21 Museum and the killing fields of Choeung Ek – may be criticized as partial, although the people themselves have sought to ensure that formal memory erasure is incomplete, not by building their own physical memorials but merely by ensuring that they do not forget. Through an account of what he refers to as HFB ‘hidden

in plain sight', Tyner demonstrates how people in Cambodia subscribe to an alternative idea of how to remember, where it is less important to materially *presence* the past (as formal heritage-making, that is AHD, tends to do) than to honour memories in more intangible ways (such as through oral histories) even as the sites of atrocity themselves have been destroyed, remain unmarked or have erstwhile been rehabilitated to more modern uses.

This is then followed by **Jamie Gillen**, whose chapter highlights the ways in which the motorbike, despite its ubiquity and relatively recent emergence on the country's roads, has been adopted by many ordinary Vietnamese as part of their identity, even as the automobile has become the vehicle of choice for many today. Using the concept of 'aspirational heritage', and comparing the motorbike with other modes of transport, he discusses HFB as something that is defined less by the past, or even by formal policy makers in the country, than by how it fulfils needs within the present and the future in Vietnam. More importantly, this chapter shows clearly how heritage should not only be seen as something 'local' to be protected 'from above' but also something that is 'lived' and claimed by the people themselves although this is often overlooked and not acknowledged by AHD. More than that, Gillen also highlights the provisional status of HFB, as something evolving along with societal trends and aspirations. In other words, far from 'fixed', heritage should be seen as always in a process of becoming.

While the first two chapters focus on some of the mundane ways in which HFB has been interpreted and materialized (or not) by local people, which do not outwardly challenge or resist AHD, the next chapter by **Ana Aceska and Claudio Minca** shifts the attention to the erection of the Bruce Lee monument in the city of Mostar, in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Here, the authors reflect on how the statue dedicated to the *kung fu* star is not only one initiated 'from below', but also a statement to the failure of AHD to bridge the physical and symbolic barriers that separate Muslims and Catholics in the post-war city. Yet, while there are locals who embraced the value of using a popular icon as a means to bind the divided city, there are also others who reneged against it, revealing how the statue does not necessarily receive the support 'of the people' despite it being proclaimed as being 'for the people'. In doing so, Aceska and Minca reflect on the partiality and biased agenda underlining this HFB initiative. While it may be seen to represent the 'voice' of the people on the ground, it is still, at the end of the day, the efforts of a select group of elites purporting *to speak for* the masses, hence a reminder of how HFB should never be overly romanticized even as it may emerge out of the failure of AHD.

The following chapter by **Richard Carter-White** reprises the idea of heritage-making as a contested process, with the case of visitors who have

turned to Instagram as a way to memorialize their time in the former concentration camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau in Poland. Here, the emphasis is on the ways in which images taken at what are perhaps the most sacrosanct sites of the Holocaust were uploaded on the social media platform and how this has resulted in ambivalent responses, thus showing how support for HFB can be varied; while some responses serve to destabilize institutional scripting of AHD, others show how heritage as crafted within social media 'from below' may also be a platform for reproducing, and even extending the reach of, dominant elite narratives. Ultimately, Carter-White demonstrates not only the extremely blurred lines that exist between AHD and HFB but, more broadly, the ways in which technology has reshaped how societies relate to 'the past' and how, due to the algorithmic logic of Instagram and arguably all forms of social media, one should never overstate the role of technology in reckoning an era of more democratic heritage-making.

Also building on the theme of technology, **Matthew Cooke and Amy Potter**'s chapter focuses on how social media, films as well as the practice of tour guiding in former plantations where slavery was practised, have provided spaces where individuals can 'speak against' AHD in the United States, that is, in a context in which narratives of slavery have often times been underplayed or silenced at such formalized heritagescapes writ large. More significantly, their work reveals how such alternative interpretations are not always well accepted on the ground, especially by the visitors who seek to avoid difficult conversations related to the country's history of slavery, thus showing how popular attitudes to HFB are far from unequivocal. More than that, through rich interview materials with memorial entrepreneurs working at the plantations, Cooke and Potter also reflect upon the labour and difficulties that are faced in initiatives to revise dominant narratives of slavery in sites of national history.

The next two chapters then narrow down the emphasis to heritage-making on the more personal and intimate level of the individual. **Danielle Drozdewski**, for instance, focuses on the ways in which the Holocaust is memorialized in Berlin albeit not through its well-known, AHD-driven Topography of Terror, and Memorial to the Murdered Jews in Europe, but by the ubiquitous Stolpersteine, small plaques emplaced in everyday spaces within the city, to commemorate named individuals who lost their lives during the tragic event. Unlike the conspicuous Bruce Lee statue in Mostar, the Stolpersteine may be easily missed; in fact, they are often overlooked, stepped on rather than engaged with. Yet, they undoubtedly hold very personal meaning for the families who commissioned them, and are capable of 'stickily' and deeply affecting others who do encounter them. Despite how the Stolpersteine may be seen to counter the deindividualizing

tendency of AHD in Berlin, Drozdewski reflects on how these 'stumbling stones' remain symbolic; while they ensure memorialization of some individuals who died during the German Third Reich, they do not memorialize all, hence pointing to its selectivity. More than that, she also shows how this effort to manifest heritage 'from below' is not always appreciated such as by those who seek not to associate the city with the past.

In the penultimate chapter, **Meghann Ormond** considers the phenomenon of personal heritage of her own mother who sought to investigate her genealogy as a child adoptee. Here is a case of heritage that does not seek an audience but simply aims at recovering one's history, where Meghann's mother used both AHD (e.g., public records) and HFB (e.g., in the form of 'search angels', genealogical associations and commercial organizations) to put together the jigsaw puzzle that was her life prior to adoption; even as she managed to achieve a measure of success, however, this was not accomplished without hurdles and difficulty. This again demonstrates how we should not see AHD and HFB as pitted against one another; they should instead be seen as different elements of a whole that can be drawn upon in constructing a personalized heritage. More than that, Ormond's chapter also reflects upon how challenges faced by both her and her mother may emerge not only 'from above' but also 'from below'.

Rounding up *After Heritage* is the Afterword by **Iain Robertson** who provides concluding notes to what he understands about HFB as conceptualized in this book, particularly since this relates to his own work that has highly inspired the collection. Additionally, Robertson charts some of the ways in which further research on HFB should proceed moving forward.

What ties all the chapters is our interest in investigating how HFB may be seen to be giving voice to the people even if it too may just be responsible for being partial to history. Indeed, while HFB is often framed as a check to AHD, it is also a process that can sow discord, especially when it privileges some readings of the past and not others. In fact, what the chapters show is that, regardless of heritage as spearheaded by elites or non-elites, it is more important to consider how selected histories are actualized in terms of today's practices, since each actualization, either of the AHD or HFB variety, is nothing more than an attempt to force a specific coding on the past to achieve contemporary objectives. The chapters here also make evident how AHD and HFB are, more often than not, overlapping and intertwined, such that it is problematic to pit one against the other; rather, we should seek to refine their relationships and promote their collaborations towards mutually beneficial purposes. However, what is most salient to recognize is that *people do remember different pasts*, and experience or are affected by heritage in highly subjective ways. This, we argue, is possibly the true value of HFB, in terms

of unravelling how individuals read, understand and practice heritage *at the more personal level*, so we can ensure that whatever heritage is produced it can resonate with, and serve the needs of, those for whom 'heritage' is intended.

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