In the face of increasing globalisation, and a collision between global communication systems and local traditions, this book offers innovative trans-disciplinary analyses of the value of traditional cultural expressions (TCE) and suggests appropriate protection mechanisms for them. It combines approaches from history, philosophy, anthropology, sociology and law, and charts previously untravelled paths for developing new policy tools and legal designs that go beyond conventional copyright models. Its authors extend their reflections to a consideration of the specific features of the digital environment, which, despite enhancing the risks of misappropriation of traditional knowledge and creativity, may equally offer new opportunities for revitalising indigenous peoples’ values and provide for the sustainability of TCE.

“This book is a very significant contribution to the question of protecting traditional cultural expressions. . . It is filled with fascinating ideas and perspectives that challenge the reader to rethink the law once again.’
– Jamil Ammar, European Intellectual Property Review

‘Legal protection for traditional cultural expressions is an area of contemporary policy making characterized by widespread concern and considerable controversy. Intellectual property scholars have a dire need for informed perspectives on the history of this subject area and the lucid commentary on its social and political implications that the authors of these cogent interdisciplinary essays provide. This impressive volume promises to be quickly acknowledged as an indispensable guide to the issues in this field.’
– Rosemary J. Coombe, York University, Canada

‘The first wave of scholarship on cultural appropriation was often better at denunciation than at grappling with the complexities of cultural heritage and its protection. Intellectual Property and Traditional Cultural Expressions in a Digital Environment launches a second wave: nuanced, interdisciplinary, looking past accusation toward flexible solutions. For all that, it is no less committed to social justice. By bringing together leading-edge scholarship from law, the arts, communications, anthropology, history and philosophy, the editors have taken research on heritage protection to the next level of sophistication.’
– Michael F. Brown, Williams College, US and author of Who Owns Native Culture?