

ate a more well rounded approach that considers the mutability *and* stability of identities as well as “the political and cognitive factors that account for the way people position themselves in respect to others” (22).

Throughout the book, Finke explicitly emphasizes the variations that being Uzbek take across the territory of Uzbekistan. This is the strength of his work and makes a valuable contribution to Central Asian studies. He is able to show that “being Uzbek” means different things to different actors across Uzbekistan. For those living in the oasis of Bukhara, for example, Finke speaks of a completely bilingual environment and an Uzbek-Tajik ethnic amalgam, in which families and villages can, over generations, switch from one to the other and back. For those living in the Ferghana Valley, however, Finke describes an environment with a stronger normative preference for Uzbek above other ethnicities and in which change of ethnicity moves one way – “almost always from Tajik or Kyrgyz to Uzbek, and not easily reversible” (190). Yet unlike Khorezm, and similar to Bukhara, the ethnicity of a child in the Ferghana Valley is not necessarily assumed to be the same as his or her father or parents. In the Ferghana Valley, paternity might be trumped by circumstance or the influence of the neighborhood community in these decisions. Ultimately, Finke asserts that “[w]hat unites the Uzbeks” (227) is their mutual recognition of one another as Uzbeks and the fact that “becom[ing] Uzbek has been, over the centuries, an attractive option to members of other groups” (227).

Finke’s insight on marriage patterns is fascinating and he succeeds in convincing the reader of the regional variability of Uzbekness. He likewise shows why in particular spatio-temporal locations, becoming or being Uzbek might have been an attractive option. His argument would have been more convincing however, if he would have provided a deeper and more sustained engagement with the recent anthropological literature on belonging and the making or doing of particular subject positions, including those referencing “the nation.” Moreover, his work would have been more persuasive in style, and analysis, had he taken his own critiques of the literature on ethnic identity to heart. Finke rightly argues that “[g]roups are not merely voluntary associations pursuing interests, but communities bounded by emotional attachments and sometimes forced upon its members by others” (22). Yet the emotion of his interlocutors and the texture of their lives and struggles do not sufficiently come through in his text. They too often become nameless “Uzbeks,” “Tajiks,” “Kazaks,” or “Karakalpaks” who marry off their children or choose schools for individual, calculated reasons. Understandably, Finke’s research and the way he wrote up his material were limited due to the strict controls of the Uzbek government and his need to protect the men and women with whom he spoke. But his authorial voice is too distant for the reader to feel an affective connection with his interlocutors and the emotional attachments and struggles of their lives.

Julie McBrien

Ford, Anabel, and Ronald Nigh: *The Maya Forest Garden. Eight Millennia of Sustainable Cultivation of the Tropical Woodlands.* Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2015. 260 pp. ISBN 978-1-61132-998-8. Price: \$ 34.95

In the archaeology of the ancient tropics and subtropics a major theme is to detail the relationships between these environments and the different trajectories along which human cultures have developed. Over the last couple of decades, much of this research has not solely addressed research problems particular to the specific culture’s historical context but, either explicitly or indirectly, addressed key issues pertaining to the broader sustainability discourse. Such issues include, for instance, the long- and short-term impacts of resource management on ecosystems and cultural and social responses to climate change. Within tropical and subtropical archaeology the study of socio-ecological sustainability, resilience, and vulnerability has become perhaps particularly prolific in the investigation of the pre-Columbian Maya lowlands. Owing to several quite dramatic episodes of social change over millennia of the pre-Columbian trajectory of Maya cultures and societies, researchers have particularly taken an interest in understanding processes of collapse and reorganization, investigating, for instance, processes of deforestation, top-soil erosion, food and water insecurity, sunk cost investments, political instability, and conflict as interrelated factors undermining resilience.

Archaeologists interested in issues of sustainability often tend to focus on social change and disruption and, therefore, to identify and explain how sustainability “failed,” but there are also factors that build resilience, that contribute to the longevity of social institutions. Perhaps seemingly paradoxical, in the Maya lowlands it is viable to study both factors that made societies vulnerable and those that built resilience. In this monograph, Anabel Ford and Ronald Nigh are focusing on the latter. Despite fundamental changes in the pre-Columbian Maya past, there is also evidence of considerable continuity through millennia of social change. Ford’s and Nigh’s main argument is that Maya farmers for millennia practiced, and still continue to do so, a form of agriculture that the authors label “the Maya forest garden.” Their central argument is that Maya farmers practiced a cyclic form of carefully managed swidden cultivation that, although focused on maize, at any one time maintained a series of plots, each in a particular phase of cultivation and regeneration that brought together and provided a diverse set of useful plants. They argue that this agroecosystem was strongly productive and did not only provide sustenance for the farmers themselves but also produced sufficient surplus to finance the development and maintenance of complex Maya societies. Following an introduction, this central idea is empirically substantiated by supporting archaeological, ethnographic, and botanic evidence over the book’s six chapters. The scope and point of their case is returned to throughout the book, reminding the reader where the argument is going and consistently situating each section in the overall argument.

Their historical ecological perspective internalizes the forest environment in an anthropocentric fabric of rela-

tions that rejects dichotomies such as field versus forest, settlement versus wilderness, and – ultimately – culture versus nature. In doing so on such a sound and innovative empirical basis, they not only make a fundamental contribution to our understanding of how Maya agrosystems functioned over the short-term, and how they did so sustainably over the long-term, but also further substantiates the critique of persistent Cartesian worldviews that still tend to bias explanations of a diverse range of phenomenon. Emphasizing skill, knowledge, and planning insight of these managers provide fuel for arguments against common vulgar, cyclopic misconceptions of traditional swidden agriculture as unplanned, unskilled opportunistic land grabbing and mismanagement. It is a brilliant example of the current emphasis in historical ecology on “knowledge of practice” and “communities of practice,” knowledge and practices that have developed over generations in dynamic interaction with local conditions, and yet provide innovative alternative solutions to the “agroindustrial mainframe” for sustainable resource management. Safeguarding knowledge and communities of practice in the way Ford and Nigh have done is not only an act towards maintaining and increasing bio-cultural diversity at the local and regional scales, but is a contribution to a diverse pool of agronomic knowledge to draw from in future practice.

This is the sixth volume in Left Coast Press’s innovative series *New Frontiers in Historical Ecology* (edited by William Balée and Carole Crumley) that since its inception in 2010 has been instrumental in both defining and pushing the boundaries of historical ecology as an interdisciplinary research program. Following several key tenets of historical ecology (e.g., the anthropocentric examination of the relationship between people and environment, detailing the short- and long-term consequences of anthropogenic environmental change, and highlighting how their research generate knowledge that provides practical insights for addressing contemporary challenges), this monograph is perfectly placed in the series. The authors are to be congratulated for contributing a book that not only forms a consistent historical ecological statement, but one that has an important message on sustainable management of the Maya forest environment particularly based in archaeological research, and that further has a great structure and sequencing of the narrative, and which is consistently and clearly argued in an accessible and engaging prose, is richly illustrated, and is relevantly referenced, providing ample suggestions for further reading and examination of the evidence. In addition to the obvious required reading for students and scholars of the Maya and of historical ecology as a research program, the volume will find an audience in a broad variety of disciplinary settings, including archaeology, anthropology, ethnography, history, geography, and ecology, as well as among students and scholars with an interest in the broader themes of sustainability science and environmental humanities.

Christian Isendahl

Frembgen, Jürgen Wasim: *Töchter der Steppe, Söhne des Windes. Gold und Silber der Turkmenen – Kostbarkeiten aus der Sammlung Rossmannith.* München: Hirmer Verlag, 2015. 144 pp. ISBN 978-3-7774-2413-2. Preis: € 29.90.

Schon der Buchtitel führt uns ein in eine von europäischen Reisenden des 18. und 19. Jh.s literarisch geschaffene, assoziative Welt von Freiheit, harten Lebensbedingungen und den dieser mithin vergangenen Welt zugeordneten, glänzenden Schätzen – dem Gold- und Silberschmuck der nomadischen Turkmenen.

Ausgangspunkt und materielle Grundlage des vorliegenden Buches von Jürgen Wasim Frembgen, Kurator der Abteilung Islamischer Orient am Museum Fünf Kontinente und Professor für Religions- und Kulturgeschichte des Islam an der Universität München, sind eine über 1000 Objekte umfassende Sammlung von *Ethnographica* der Turkmenen, die von den Sammlern Ursula und Kurt Rossmannith im Jahr 2002 an das Museum Fünf Kontinente in München als Schenkung übergeben wurden. Frembgen widmet sich insbesondere dem Schmuck, der mit 334 Objekten ein Schwergewicht der insgesamt 1000 Objekte umfassenden Schenkung ausmacht, ergänzt mit Ausführungen zur Frauenkleidung und zu den Knüpfarbeiten der Turkmenen. Das Buch entstand als Begleitband zur gleichnamigen Ausstellung des Museums, die vom 23. April 2015 bis 31. Januar 2016 gezeigt wurde.

Die Einführung (9) leistet eine kurze wissenschaftstheoretische Verortung der Analyse von Schmuck. Verstanden als nonverbale Sprache wird verdeutlicht, dass Schmuck vielfältigste Informationen mit sich trägt und dabei unterschiedliche wissenschaftliche Felder und Zusammenhänge berührt, wie den von Schmuck mit ethnischer Identität, mit Gender, mit sozialem Status oder mit Ökonomie, wenn in nomadischen Haushalten der Aspekt von Schmuck als ökonomische Wertanlage im Vordergrund steht. Frembgen konzentriert seine Analyse auf die drei Aspekte von Ästhetik, Symbolik und so genannte magische Praktiken.

In der sich anschließenden kurzen Vorstellung der Sammlung und der Sammlerpersönlichkeiten (11) erfahren wir, dass die Sammlung ab den 1980er Jahren aufgebaut wurde. Genauere Angaben zu den Erwerbungs Umständen werden leider nicht gemacht und finden sich auch nicht im ansonsten ausgezeichneten Katalogteil des Buches. Möglicherweise fehlen sie aus Platzgründen, aber zu einer umfassenden Sammlungsgeschichte sind Informationen zu den Erwerbungs Umständen unerlässlich, zumal einer Befragung der Sammler hier nichts im Wege steht.

Der eigentlichen Analyse der Objekte werden zwei weitere einführende Beiträge vorweg gestellt: Ein kurzer Abriss über die Geschichte der Turkmenen (13–17) bis in die Gegenwart, unter Berücksichtigung der jeweils spezifischen historischen Aspekte für die im heutigen Turkmenistan, Iran und in Afghanistan lebende turkmenische Bevölkerung und ergänzt durch kleine, aufschlussreiche Exkurse – hier und immer wieder im Buch – zur Rolle mystischer Orden in Politik, Religion und Gesellschaft der Turkmenen. Die darauf folgende Beschreibung der Lebensformen der Turkmenen (19–23) geht ein auf die