

auseinander, um anwendungsbezogene, praxisnahe, erfahrungsgesättigte und lösungsorientierte Antworten auf gesellschaftsrelevante Fragen aus dem Bereich Flucht und Migration zu geben. Nachdem die Grundüberzeugungen und das Selbstverständnis des kollaborativen Forschens umrissen und die ideologische, soziale und professionelle "Positioniertheit der Forschenden" (113) kritisch befragt wurden, wird der ethnografische Ansatz mit seinen partizipatorischen, empathiegeleiteten und herrschaftskritischen Zügen als idealer methodischer Zugang charakterisiert. Danach präsentieren Elena Fontanari und Nina Violetta Schwarz ihre im Stile der *action anthropology* durchgeführten Forschungsprojekte, die sich in Brandenburg und auf Zypern sowohl mit den transitorischen und prekären Lebenswirklichkeiten von Flüchtlingen beschäftigen als auch zur praxisnahen Verbesserung der Lebensumstände jener Menschen einen Beitrag leisten wollen, die angesichts hegemonialer Machtstrukturen zu einem zeitlich unbestimmten Verweilen in einem "dauerhaften Provisorium" (Zygmund Bauman) gezwungen werden. Aufschlussreich zur Geltung kommen bei den beiden hier präsentierten Untersuchungen die selbstreflexiven methodischen Überlegungen. Insbesondere die Doppelloyalität als Aktivistin und Wissenschaftlerin sowie die während der Feldforschung bzw. beim "Prozess der Wissensproduktion" (119) in den Lagern für Geflüchtete in Brandenburg zum Vorschein kommenden Machtasymmetrien zwischen "fremder" Forscherin und den Untersuchungsobjekten hebt Elena Fontanari hervor. Nina Violetta Schwarz, die für ihre am Institut für Europäische Ethnologie der Humboldt-Universität Berlin entstandene Master-Arbeit eine mehrwöchige Feldforschung über das "Warten" (122) bei inhaftierten MigrantInnen durchführte, legt angesichts des für Außenstehende nur sehr eingeschränkt zugänglichen Untersuchungssettings einen Schwerpunkt auf die Kontaktaufnahme und die Kommunikationsweisen mit den Forschungsobjekten. Bei beiden Unterfangen zeigte sich, dass es beim kollaborativen, solidarischen und egalitären Forschen stets zu einer Überschneidung der Verstehens- und Präventionsperspektive kommen kann, wenn die ethnografischen Wissenskenntnisse einer breiten Öffentlichkeit zugänglich gemacht werden.

Der letzte Beitrag steht ganz im Zeichen der Unterstützung der Berliner Mieterinitiative Kotti & Co, deren AktivistInnen gegen die mit der Privatisierung städtischen Wohnraums einhergehende Gentrifizierung des Berliner Stadtteils Kreuzberg aufbegehren. Die AutorInnen dieser Stellungnahme weisen nicht nur auf die parallelen Entwicklungsprozesse zwischen Stadtgeschichte und Migrationsgeschichte hin, sondern erkennen ferner beim Zugang zu Wohnraum, dass sich MigrantInnen unverhältnismäßig oft Formen des institutionellen Rassismus hilflos ausgesetzt sehen. Steigende Mietpreise in Berlin-Kreuzberg seien der Auslöser für neue Formen der Segregation, die unweigerlich zur Herausbildung von affluenter Parallelgesellschaften führen, Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund im urbanen Raum in die gesellschaftliche Peripherie abdrängen und das demokratische Prinzip der Hauptstadt aufs Spiel setzen würden.

Angesichts der neuen theoretischen und methodischen Perspektiven auf die moderne Migrations- und Integrationsforschung sowie aufgrund einer kritischen Selbsthinterfragung des überlieferten Begriffsinstrumentariums der Untersuchungen zum Thema Mobilität liefert die vorliegende Publikation mehrere frische Denkanstöße, die eine gesellschaftlich relevante und überkommene Gewissheiten dekonstruierende Debattenkultur im Einwanderungsland Deutschland auslösen kann. Dem Heft 65 der Berliner Blätter wünsche ich deshalb eine breite, über die Grenzen der Europäischen Ethnologie/Empirischen Kulturwissenschaft hinausgehende Leserschaft.

David Johannes Berchem

**Lentz, David L., Nicholas P. Dunning, and Vernon L. Scarborough** (eds.): *Tikal. Paleocology of an Ancient Maya City*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 357 pp. ISBN 978-1-107-02793-0. Price: £ 65.00

We learn from "Tikal. Paleocology of an Ancient Maya City" that this area was once a diverse flourishing patchwork landscape of natural resources from the forest, cultigens from complex orchards and fields, and sophisticated water management. David L. Lentz, a biologist, Nicholas P. Dunning, a geographer, and Vernon L. Scarborough, an archaeologist, edit the data-packed 13 chapters and 29 contributors. Explicitly interdisciplinary, the goals to investigate the land, water, and forest are based on the University of Cincinnati Archaeological Project at Tikal.

I found this volume provocative, a valuable compendium of materials on the Maya of Tikal, particularly the data and interpretations on soil and vegetation. Original information is presented with illustrations, maps, tables, tabulations, lists, and summaries. These include characteristics of soil, volumetrics of water flows to reservoirs (*aguadas*), extensive  $C^{14}$  dates, and complementary ancient and modern plant species. Also, there is an overview of the artifacts derived from excavations. Important innovative methods are explored, including coring of *aguadas*, experiments of georeferencing, valuations of forest trees, assessing above ground biomass, sediment analyses, and estimating resource consumption, specifically to assess the environmental impacts of ancient Maya on their environment.

Settlement distribution and population, vegetation and habitat, as well as identification of volcanic ash were developed in specific chapters. References that could greatly support conclusions are left unincorporated, basic foundations for population estimates and habitats are contradictory among chapters, nomenclature inconsistencies are evident, and the discussions of volcanic ash are vague and unconvincing. In addition, references are missing and the index has discrepancies and is very brief. Below, I highlight some of my reflections based on select chapters.

Population and residential distribution are innovatively developed in Webster and Murtha's chap. 10. Presented at the end, it could serve well as an initial orientation. Recognizing the basics behind habitat and agriculture, the

article features soil change, its diminishment, transport, concentration, and enhancement. They also devote attention to a critique of population estimates with respect to resources, requirements, and impacts. They conclude, as the volume is concluded, that the Maya sealed their own fate. Competition and rivalry lead to mismanaged agrarian landscape and to collapse.

The illuminating results on the Maya forest vegetation of Thompson and others in chap. 7 looks at dominant trees in the contemporary forest and their archaeobotanical collections reflecting ancient Maya use. Based mainly on upland habitat plots, the preferential location of Maya settlements, they document that trees in the archaeological record match the contemporary tree distribution, arguing a direct relationship between the past and present. They tantalizingly conclude the Maya forest today serve as a “partial proxy” for understanding ancient Maya plant use. This is significant.

Population, land use, and resource exploitation are the core of volume and the feature of chap. 8 by Lentz and others. This complex chapter grapples with issues to address sustainability. Considering settlement and population levels by habitat, the authors estimate daily resources requisites and present a long-term millennial multicomponent land use model tied to diverse plant remains including cacao presented in Table 8.4. Further, they infer little erosion based on isotopic enrichment of C<sub>4</sub> plants around *aguadas*.

Despite the compelling evidence of skillful management in ancient times, this chapter concludes that this elegant sophisticated enduring system, for which they have gathered mounting evidence, was undermined in the end by drought. This is hard to appreciate if the complex subsistence system present in this and other chapters evolved in the context of the annual droughts and fueled the development and maintenance of *aguadas*! There is no doubt that drought is harsh on any farmer and many instances are recalled by master Maya farmer, yet they admonish that it is not so much the annual *quantity* of precipitation but the *timing* of delivery. The year 2008 was very wet, but the delivery of the rain was exactly at harvest and everything was ruined. It is just as dicey to have too much rain as too little.

The discussion of volcanic ash in chap. 9 by Tankersley and others interprets volcanism based on analyzed clay deposits of *aguadas*. Clay, dominated by silica, is composed of degraded volcanics. The data, however, as presented, are hardly evidence for catastrophic volcanic events. The comparative data sources for XRF are murky, characterizing volcanoes by regions (Mexican, Guatemala, El Salvador, Fig. 9.5), disregarding the compositional diversity of major and trace elements that cannot be averaged together meaningfully.

The volume offers great detail, and we have an overall picture of locations of residential excavations, *aguada* coring, field mapping, and material collections. Sadly, there is no easy means to understand the connections of these topics (a table coordinating the locations and results presented on soil, chemical, isotope, tree, biomass, etc.). Only the most assiduous reader would take the list

of operations in the introduction to compare with maps and profiles in chaps. 2 and 6, cross-reference the relative dating presented in chap. 11, associate the absolute dating and stable isotope data in chap. 9, or question the provenience for plants presented in chap. 8. The index does not help in associating excavation data and results among chapters (e.g., soil descriptions, *aguada* tests, collections). These shortcomings affect the value of the data.

Taken as a whole, the results are fascinating. The forest habitat data are important and the attempt to balance resource needs and population is critical to isolating variables that impact sustainability. Views and interpretations throughout are valiant and groundbreaking. There has been no equivalent effort, including the University of Pennsylvania project, to synthesize Tikal data and results.

The research results demonstrate that the development of the Maya was integral and embedded in the Maya forest. Innovations in water management are clearly connected to a landscape that naturally absorbs rather than retains water. Diversity of archaeological uses of forest resources is shown to be a mirror of the forest today. Complex land uses are connected to a wide variety of plants and isotopic plant signatures. These results point to a sustainable environmental context of growth and development. Yet, the conclusions that are drawn are unrelated to these results. Somehow, the finale is that the collapse was a result of resource overexploitation.

Examining the data presented in “Tikal. Paleocology of an Ancient Maya City,” an alternative scenario can be evoked, one that should be considered seriously. The forest is replete with all the requisites to manage daily life. The ancient Maya emerged in this rainforest adapting to annual droughts. Upland settlements are never far from lowlands and wetland resources and, therefore, accessible to diverse resource zones. That the ancient monumental architecture was neglected and fell into disrepair is obvious, but if this occurred over several generations, would it be a drama? Perhaps the fractious farmers slowly disengaged with the maintenance regime and simply continued to farm, co-creating the Maya forest garden we know today.

Anabel Ford

**Lewis-Williams, J. D.:** Myth and Meaning. San-Bushman Folklore in Global Context. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2015. 249 pp. ISBN 978-1-62958-154-5. Price: \$ 79.00

Lewis-Williams is professor emeritus at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. He is the founder and former director of their Rock Art Research Institute and has authored over 120 articles and 19 books. Much of Lewis-Williams’ work concerns his influential proposition that southern African rock art is overwhelmingly attributable to the ancestors of the San or Bushmen hunter-gatherers of southern Africa and in particular to their shamans. In his interpretation, the images and motifs of southern African rock art are profoundly related to the experiences of shamans, their control of “supernatural potency” and their social roles amongst the San and wider African peoples.