

brushed or sprayed such as heads or masks, single figures, composite beings, lizards, marsupials, or marine fauna. The framing of sites to “east” and “west” also begs the question, what about the rock art sites of the “south,” that is, Arnhem Land in Australia, where we do have contact with cultures from the Indonesian islands reflected in the rock art?

The volumes rely heavily on J. Röder’s observations and frameworks published between 1883 and 1959 and say surprisingly little about more recent research explaining rock art in island Southeast Asia and western Melanesia. A striking example is the missing discussion on C. Ballard’s Austronesian painting tradition hypothesis, lately restated in the journal *World Archaeology* of 2003, which associates rock art with the distribution of Austronesian speaking peoples and funerary symbolism; this tradition fits well into the characteristics described as “eastern” rock art sites by the authors. However, we note that these two volumes form only half of a four-volume work, and look forward to seeing those interpretations discussed in the latter volumes, which are supposed to come out in 2015.

Some minor editorial errors should be noted: a few typographical errors can be found in volume 2, but these do not detract from the overall scholarship. The 24–29k date attributed to Lene Hara in East Timor is an outlier date that may represent an early painting episode, but the visible paint layer dates to earlier than 6,300 years old. Given that archaeological work in East Timor has been ongoing in the last decade, it would have been preferable to use images from those sources rather than citing an online photo album whose links appear to be no longer functioning.

All in all, we think this is one of the most comprehensive and updated visual resource for rock art research in Indonesia and sets the bar for Southeast Asia. The dynamics of research will see that some of the interpretations put forward by the authors might be revised and relooked at in a future time when better dating possibilities can be applied, but the visual data provided by these volumes will ensure that these will always remain useful references. One final critique has to do with the language; in the international academic community as well as for the locals a publication in German is an obstacle. Thailand, which leads in Southeast Asia for published rock art research, have a wide range of published material in Thai, but most volumes at least have several pages written in English to reach a larger international audience. The publication is well done, costly produced and of high quality but it is doubtful if the local population are able to read this kind of valuable academic literature on their heritage. It is hoped that a paperback edition in Indonesian or English can be published in the near future to spread the deserving documentation of these important sites.

Noel Hidalgo Tan and Mai Lin Tjoa-Bonatz

**Marx, Emanuel:** *Bedouin of Mount Sinai. An Anthropological Study of Their Political Economy.* New York: Berghahn Press, 2013. 195 pp. ISBN 978-0-85745-931-2. Price: \$ 75.00

The author examines fieldwork accomplished from 1972 to 1982 – during the Israeli conquest – from an anthropological point of view, explaining economic sources and foundations among the Sinai Bedouins, who number about 10,000 persons. He challenges several theoretical hypotheses of the anthropology of nomads, according to the new meaning of such basic concepts of Bedouin life as “kinship” and “pastoral nomad.”

The author’s chief question throughout the book inquires “how the state’s praxis of ruling, misruling, or neglecting the Bedouin is connected with their political economy, and especially with the various ways the Bedouin “eke out a living” (9). Proceeding through the successive chapters, the reader is exposed gradually to the multilayered tribal, social, and political features that structured Bedouin economy during those years. Elsewhere, the author reveals how this economy affects Bedouin family and gender issues.

The underlying contention is that political circumstances, a lack of nearby basic infrastructures and services, and a low population density force the Bedouin to “continually adapt to new exigencies and to switch from one livelihood to another” (10). This approach deconstructs several basic assumptions regarding the Bedouin as a nomadic pastoral people dependent on agriculture and livestock raising only (chap. 3), instead describing a wide range of urban occupations available to them that are linked to the modern global world and to urbanism (chap. 6), including various land uses (chap. 3), labor migration (chap. 4), and drug smuggling (chap. 5).

The definition of the term “pastoral nomads,” as defined conventionally by anthropologists, is challenged in chap. 2, “The Political Economy of Bedouin Societies.” The author redefined the concept, claiming that “nomadic peoples ... become pastoral nomads only in a limited sense and at particular times” (38). This new definition perceives the pastoral economy as dependent on political, environmental, and ecological factors, some engendered by urban life and others by tribal surroundings, affecting the Bedouin’s social fabric as well as their economic activity. The author’s point of departure regarding Bedouin economy declares that the lack of formal skills, the disparaging attitude displayed by the authorities, and the absence of year-round productive natural resources cause extended economic insecurity among the Bedouin, who consequently exploit every natural, human, or political resource to supplement whatever they already possess. As such, the pastoral economy is not dependent on natural and agricultural resources alone, nor is it based exclusively in the desert, as it also derives from settled regions.

As Bedouin occupy expansive, uncontrolled parcels of land and their mobility is difficult to supervise, they are perceived as unproductive and treated as second-class citizens – a closed, traditional society with little government interference. Thus, the Bedouin’s pastoral contribution to the economy is not greatly appreciated by the authorities and is considered only as an attempt to evade civic obligations such as taxes and military service. One of the book’s most significant contributions is its revelation of Bedouin participation in the life and economy of the urban sector.

A major insight into Bedouin economy that recurs throughout the book is the interplay of pastoralism, horticulture, and labor migration, that may be understood against the background of uncertain ecological, geographical, and political circumstances, subject to sudden changes and crises. Bedouin are thus compelled to adjust to available economic resources and seek cash income that might help them achieve at least short-term economic security. The book offers the novel suggestion that urban life is an integral part of the Bedouin economy.

The economic activity of the Sinai Bedouin also manifests certain genealogical aspects. Those who participate in labor migration or urban markets are usually young men (married or single). Once they reach the age of 50 and their sons are old enough to take over for them, they return home to their family and relatives and enjoy the social security net provided by those circles. They continue to earn their livings primarily in agriculture, maintaining their connection to the market economy through their sons.

One interesting aspect of Bedouin life that the book addresses is shared by other pastoral groups in the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa), namely the power of women within the family and the household when their spouses are not present. While the men are away, usually the result of labor migration, women assume responsibility for the household, crops, and flocks. They gain “considerable power” (35) mostly through their interaction with members of their own circle and with outsiders, such as tourists. They also maintain control of spending.

Another concept that this book evokes is that of “tribal affiliation” or “kinship.” The author noted that while the Negev Bedouin base their society on kinship ties, the Sinai Bedouins do not. Although many of them are related as kinsmen, they act as partners in an egalitarian corporate group that dealt with defined issues: “The Sinai Bedouin forced me to discover the many varieties of corporate groups that were operating all around me ... and functioned mainly as imaginary links between households and the territorial tribe” (26).

Tribal membership appears to be very important to members of the tribe and essential to their economic survival as an alternative source of secure income amid insecure political and ecological circumstances. As elaborated in chap. 7, tribal affiliation is of territorial, political, and administrative significance to tribe members and is further strengthened through personal and tribal pilgrimages.

Finally, one cannot ignore certain minor reservations, such as the study’s time frame – its inception and termination: As the author begins by framing the study timeline with that of the Israeli occupation, one might assume that the congruence between them is the primary theme of the book. Nevertheless, the occupation is only mentioned on several occasions and is not an integral part of the discussion. Furthermore, the book concludes with a brief glance at the economic development that the author noticed during his last visit to Sinai in 2009, especially the tourism industry in which Bedouin are partially involved. Contemporary changes in this industry might well serve as a springboard for future in-depth research.

In conclusion, this book will be most valuable to researchers studying nomadic life and its challenges as well as those requiring more information about anthropology and its ethnographic interpretation tools.

Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder

**Meij, Th. C. van der, and N. Lambooj** (eds.): *The Malay Hikayat Mi‘raj Nabi Muhammad*. The Prophet Muhammad’s Nocturnal Journey to Heaven and Hell. Leiden: Brill, 2014. 210 pp. ISBN 978-90-04-27761-8. (Bibliotheca Indonesica, 37) Price: € 92.00

Diese Textausgabe, die als 37. Band in der Reihe *Bibliotheca Indonesica* des Forschungsinstituts KITLV (Königlich Niederländisches Institut für Südostasien- und Karibikstudien) erschienen ist, betrifft hauptsächlich eine Transkription (25–109) samt englischer Übersetzung (113–191) einer islamischen malaiischen Handschrift, welche die abenteuerliche Wundergeschichte der Himmelfahrt des Propheten Muhammad beschreibt. Die Einführung ist sehr kurz gehalten (3–22), während das Werk abschließend eine (notgezwungen provisorische) Liste zu *Mi‘raj*-Handschriften in diversen indonesischen Sprachen (195–198), eine Bibliografie (199–205) und Indices (206–210) enthält.

Nur äußerst knapp und eklektisch wird auf Erzählungen über Himmel und Hölle in anderen indonesischen Literaturen hingewiesen (13f.). Zwar wird erwähnt, dass “many stories relate excursions into heaven and/or hell” (13), konkret werden jedoch nur einige nichtislamische Beispiele aus dem balinesischen und altjavanischen Bereich herangezogen. Auf andere, geradezu muslimische Texte, die über Himmel und Hölle handeln, vor allem aus der malaiischen Literatur, wird überhaupt nicht weiter eingegangen. In der Einführung lamentiert Th. C. van der Meij, dass vieles noch nicht erforscht sei, wobei die (an sich berechtigte) Klage zugleich als Anklage an andere Forscher zu fungieren scheint: Dieser und jener habe in seinem Werk der malaiischen *Mi‘raj*-Erzählung ungenügend Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt (9f.), “with the exception of Van der Meij who wrote an article on Malay and Javanese versions in 2004, J. Millie also in 2004, and a team from the Pusat Penelitian IAIN Walisongo in Semarang in 2006” (10). Umso mehr fällt es deshalb auf, dass in der Einführung zwar viele ungeklärte Forschungsfragen in den Raum gestellt werden, die Herausgeber selbst keinen einzigen davon annehmen, sondern andeuten, sich bloß auf ihre selbstgesteckte Hauptaufgabe beschränken zu wollen, nämlich “to present a text and a translation for others not versed in Malay to peruse, study, explore, and explain” (9).

Praktische Überlegungen dürften eine entscheidende Rolle gespielt haben, warum gerade Cod. Or. 1713 der Leidener Universitätsbibliothek als Leithandschrift gewählt wurde, da sie den Herausgebern als Fotokopie zur Verfügung stand: “Without this tool this book could never have been written, as it is the product of evening and weekend labour when the manuscript department of the library is unfortunately closed” (ix). Zusätzlich wurde KITLV Or. 61 als “Manuscript B” verwendet, um bei