

to examine transgressions of the model of Islamic femininity founded on modesty through an alternative model of consumerist femininity. The consumerist model, which is characterised by the use of cosmetics and the wearing of designer brands, has become hegemonic. Another mode of transgression of the Islamic model of femininity is the *buyat* model, which simultaneously subverts the model of consumerist femininity. *Buyat*, framed as the ‘masculinization’ (p. 146) of young women, questions prevalent conceptions of gender roles and sexual practices. Yet, these new norms regarding femininities reflect new hierarchisations between those who conform and those who do not.

Overall, Le Renard argues the constantly changing urban spaces in Saudi Arabia are indicative of changes in governmentalities and significant in shaping a specific spatial economy of gender. Women find ways of transgressing official Islamic rules to resist constraints in the public sphere. Through daily repetition they steadily transform public order in Riyadh where not only inhabitants are compartmentalised according to nationality, income level and gender inequalities in access to public spaces, but also highly securitised closed spaces devoted to consumerism are expanding.

Le Renard’s engagement with the way young urban Saudi women transform Saudi femininities by inventing new lifestyles is a skilful, well-balanced first-hand account of a social setting to which only a few non-Saudi researchers are able to gain access. This highly comprehensible, well-reasoned book bears valuable insights for scholars interested in women and gender in Middle Eastern Islamic contexts, particularly the Arab Peninsula, and, beyond that, is highly informative to an interested public.

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Sanjek, Roger (ed.) 2015. *Mutuality: anthropology's changing terms of engagement*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press. 374 pp. Hb. US\$65.00/£42.50. ISBN: 978-0-8122-4656-8.

This book is a collection of essays reflecting on the conceptual and applied varieties of mutuality in anthropological research. Edited by Roger Sanjek, a socio-cultural anthropologist, the book contains contributions of seventeen anthropologists. The topics of chapters range across geographical contexts (Sudan, Panama, Micronesia, China, Peru, the USA) as well as thematic issues (race relations, health, arts, ethnic minorities, migration and diasporas). The essays are divided into four parts, each emphasising conceptual and practical issues of mutuality in anthropological research. Mutuality is an ideal phenomenological framework through which authors of the essays analyse their relations to scholarly work, values of the discipline as well as practical engagements such as publishing, funding and academic work environment.

Why do anthropologists do as they do and what place does mutuality take in anthropological research, Sanjek asks in his introduction, turning the spotlight to the everyday life of anthropology work. The question is neither new nor original in itself. Anthropologists have been actively rethinking the discipline in terms of their subject positions, expert knowledge and engagement with the public. To mention but a few: Mariannes Gullestad’s contribution in rethinking scholarly authority, Tomas Eriksons’ input on engagement in public anthropology and Victoria Sanford and Asale Angel-Ajani’s edited volume, *Engaged observer: anthropology, advocacy and activism*.

The value of this book comes from its collective effort to understand anthropology and anthropologists while analysing the relationships with their subjects of study and the outcomes of different ways of engagement. As the book contributions come from different experiences and anthropological arenas, the platform from which the scholars draw their understandings of mutuality is vast. It involves negotiation with their own academic egos and institutional demands, respect, patience, empathy, love, creativity and friendship. Although all of these dimensions of mutual engagement are used and experienced in their own contexts and subjective ways, they all convey the common idea that mutuality is an intrinsic part of anthropological research, whether used as a conceptual tool to think about the theoretical and methodological inquiries of the research (such as the level of engagement with the fieldwork) or to critically reflect on the discipline and scholarly work. Mutuality is not always symmetrical. For instance, the reoccurring theme of mutuality of shared knowledge between the researcher and subject communities raises critical questions such as who has the knowledge power, whose knowledge is 'right' and, after all, who gives a voice to whom? The book also challenges the principality of so-called expert knowledge by illustrating how active and close work with communities can produce interesting and valuable academic insights.

Mutuality is not only conceptual but also practical. It plays a significant role in engaging with the public, getting funding, finding suitable academic positions, meeting the demands for publishing, negotiating work and family, and the relation to the academic text. The examples of anthropological public outreach (such as the American Anthropological

Association museum exhibit 'RACE: are we so different?' project) raises important questions of how anthropological topics can be addressed publicly and what is at stake while integrating science and administrative needs of the funders and collaborating institutions. It also points to the need to change the academic writing format in order to achieve mutuality with the public, expressing criticism towards overly technical anthropological writing. Yet, the academic field of anthropology goes much beyond the published text. It is full of administrative demands, negotiations with personal life, experiences of being at the margins of anthropology and successes in finding suitable research positions. All of them speak to often unrecognised ways of negotiating mutuality with oneself and the institutional understandings of the discipline.

In the book mutuality goes hand in hand with reclaiming disciplinary identity and distinguishing so-called anthropological values, to the extent that to be an anthropologist somehow becomes a phenomenological quality and mutuality an exclusively personal value. In other words, what a conceptual anthropological understanding of mutuality that goes beyond the identity of *homo anthropologus* would be remains unclear. It is closely related with the criticism that discussion of anthropological knowledge and mutuality stays segregated as an exclusively mono academic discipline. In times of the importance of interdisciplinary research, more detailed discussion of mutuality between the discipline of anthropology and other academic disciplines is lacking.

Mutuality: anthropology's changing terms of engagement is certainly a valuable and interesting book for those who are interested in mutuality and engagement within the discipline. Its detailed accounts on everyday life anthropology-making and lessons learned should spark a special

interest in junior anthropologists, for whom the book could serve as a great moral support while entering the not always easy to navigate field of academia.

Reference

Sanford, V. and A. Angel-Ajani (eds.) 2006. *Engaged observer: anthropology, advocacy and activism*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

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Spencer, Jonathan, Jonathan Goodhand, Shahul Hasbullah, Bart Klem, Benedikt Korf and Kalinga Tudor Silva. 2015. *Checkpoint, temple, church and mosque: a collaborative ethnography of war and peace*. London: Pluto Press. 224 pp. Pb.: US\$17.50. ISBN: 9780745331218.

Checkpoint, temple, church and mosque: a collaborative ethnography of war and peace is an ethnography of the religious and political landscape of Sri Lanka towards the end of the 30-year-long civil war between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The book is co-authored by six researchers and is based on long-term fieldwork, carried out as 'an experiment in collaboration' (p. 13) between researchers based in the global north and researchers based in the south; it is a collaboration between academics and local practitioners who have different interdisciplinary backgrounds (anthropology, geography, sociology, development studies) but who all have an extensive first-hand knowledge of Sri Lankan society.

Given the current prevalence of 'religiously motivated' violence perpetrated by groups like Al-Qaeda and similar 'religious' conflicts in other countries across

the world, the book starts out with a timely question: is religion a cause of intractable conflicts? It then goes on to consider the role played by religious leaders in conflict mediation. The complex political and religious Sri Lankan landscape offers a fertile empirical ground for posing and theorising such questions. Sri Lanka is one of the most religiously diverse countries in the world, comprising Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Buddhist communities. As the authors write in the introduction (pp. 7–8), each religion is 'plural in itself'. For example, some Sinhala Buddhist monks advocate militant Sinhala Buddhist nationalism, whereas others distance themselves from such ideologies and want inter-ethnic co-existence; some Muslim groups struggle for political influence, while others struggle for believers and public space; and there are many different Christian denominations, such as Catholics and Methodists, and new arrivals of Pentecostal churches. Within the Christian denominations some factions welcome new forms of priesthoods whereas others are less accepting of controversial forms of priesthood. Against this background of religious diversity, the book sets out to explore the role of religion in the Sri Lankan civil war and to problematise the concept of pluralism and public action in a deeply divided society.

Critical of current understandings of conflict dynamics in Sri Lanka, the authors argue that there is a need to pay more attention to the political landscape rather than 'simply problematising the concept of religion and the religious' (p. 155). Based on interviews with members of the public and religious leaders as well as on descriptive case studies from a variety of religious fields, organisations and communities, the book highlights the contradictory role played by religion during the civil war. Religion (and religious leaders) has the potential to give one a sense of purpose in the face of adversity; conversely, religion can also