is stated, pseudo-kinship is vertical as well as horizontal and it comes into play in intra- as well as interethnic contexts. The author seems unaware of studies of the intra- and interethnic systems of homology between clans. Throughout the book, one notices a tendency to use sources without citing them appropriately; and the bibliography, largely based on that of the doctoral dissertation, is not up to date. By not questioning the limits of her fieldwork methodology, the author has been led to generalize from localized family histories.

Reading this book imbues us with an idealized vision of multiethnic solidarity. By adopting a view opposite the long tradition of writings on the "Pygmies" that have overemphasized – or even been obsessed by – "relations of domination," other social and political possibilities are overlooked. The author seems to have erred in the contrary direction, by focusing exclusively on solidarity. Relations with elites and the latter's role in local politics go unmentioned. The comparison with existing studies of Central African elites would have been useful for shedding light on the mechanisms of exclusion that turn the "Pygmies" into outsiders, unable to enjoy the monetary, material, and symbolic advantages generated by institutions active in the fields of development and conservation.

On account of the large place given to deconstructing academic and institutional stereotypes, this book might be seen as a state-of-the-art publication on the relations between hunter-gatherers and their neighbors. Its contribution is novel, even innovative, yet it somehow inadvertently illustrates how hard it is to switch from the stereotypes conveyed in the old corpus of culturalistic studies to the ideas to be gleaned from the hunter-gatherer revisionist debate (e.g., Headland, Revisionism in Ecological Anthropology. *Current Anthropology* 1997.38: 605–630).

Daou V. Joiris

Rydstrøm, Helle (ed.): Gendered Inequalities in Asia. Configuring, Contesting, and Recognizing Women and Men. Copenhagen: NIAS, 2010. 303 pp. ISBN 978-87-7694-047-8. Price: $ 37.00

How can scholars bring fresh perspectives to the study of femininity and masculinity in Southeast Asia? This question, posed by Aihwa Ong and Michael Peletz in "Bewitching Women, Pious Men. Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia" (Berkeley 1995), has not lost its relevance considering the proliferation of (edited) books on the complexities, (in)equalities, and interconnectedness of gender with politics, power, sexualities, modernity, globalisation in the Asian context during the past decade. Many of these volumes reiterate Ong and Peletz' argument that gender is "a fluid, contingent process characterized by contestation, ambivalence and change" (1995: 1), and that this becomes all the more apparent in "the context of capitalist development, nation-state formation, and globalization" (1995: 8).

"Gendered Inequalities in Asia. Configuring, Contesting and Recognizing Women and Men" is here no exception. On the back flap we can read that "[g]lobal processes with flows in money, commodities and people have made it increasingly varied and blurred in what it means to be female or male in Asia today." In her introductory chapter, the editor Helle Rydstrøm highlights two notions as central in the analysis of gender in this volume. The first is equality, "in terms of recognition and social justice for both women and men" (2), whereby the focus in the book is mostly on the misrecognition of women, or gender-specific subordination in terms of access to political and religious power, occupational and health inequalities, hierarchical orders in the family, and sexual practices. The second notion is intersectionality, or polytopicality, which refers to "the multitude of factors involved in the ways in which women and men – and their bodies, sexualities, colours and abilities – become males and females" (8).

While these notions do not contribute to a new perspective to the study of gender in Asia, the volume contains several interesting chapters that illuminate the interlinkages between politics, religion, family life, and gender and how these shape inequalities – based on gender as well as class, ethnicity, or caste. The book is divided into three parts: Part I discusses "The Global and the Local," Part II focuses on "Contesting Family Life," and Part III pays attention to "Masculinities." There is no space here to elaborate in detail on all chapters, so I will pay a bit more attention to contributions and insights that I found most illustrative for the analytical approach proposed in the introduction.

Nguyen-vo Thu-huong's chapter sheds light on the intersections between governance, gender, and class inequalities as well as between orientalist notions of femininity and the neoliberal order in contemporary Vietnam. Nguyen-vo explores the gendered consequences of the contradictions in governance, promoting on the one side global exchanges and on the other side advocating a conservative, inward-looking traditional cultural and political line and looks particularly at governmental approaches to (commercial) sex and desire after the transition from a centrally planned to an open market economy (*Đổi mới*). The neoliberal freedoms on which this new economy relies has been constitutive for the important role of commercial sex in business. Government interventions against this "social evil" are therefore careful not to influence the flow of commerce, and instead create a citizenry differentiated by class and gender. By calling upon "traditional" Vietnamese culture and women's role in the family and society, middle-class wives are encouraged to make domestic sex more appealing to satisfy the natural desires of their husbands – and thus protect them from the diseases transmitted by the "dangerous" bodies of the prostitute, while lower-class sex workers are taught in rehab camps about their true place in society and the new economy – far from a world of glamour, money, and sex in order to take up a position of dexterous, docile, patient piece-rate workers.

Although in a different setting, i.e., postcolonial India, Sidsel Hansson and Catarina Kinnvall similarly focus on the contradictory processes that make "women" into symbols of a true tradition and the essence of the (Hindu) nation and that at the same time refute the very existence of the category of "women" due to multiple identities. The

authors link India's policy of secularism to multicultural policies in the West and discuss the problematic consequences of these policies for the fight for women's rights (such as alimentation after divorce) as such fights become hijacked by (Hindu) nationalists as well as compromised in order to give way to religious (Muslim) minority concerns. While throwing light on the intersections between gender, nation, and religion and how these foster inequality between men and women, Hansson and Kinnvall also see in the very process of religious identity construction a possibility for the contestation of meanings and definitions of gender relations in India.

The possibilities for contestation and (female) agency are explored in more detail in the second part of the book. The chapters by Alexandra Kent, Monica Lindberg Falk, and to a lesser extent Kristina Göransson describe how women may find ways to try to break free of social patterns of misrecognition. Kent does so in an interesting chapter on Buddhism in Cambodia and how women negotiate and also invert gender ordering in ways that are transformative, emancipatory, and healing. Lindberg Falk looks at women's role in engaged Buddhism in Thailand. Göransson discusses the reinterpretation of filial piety and gender among Chinese Singaporeans. Rydstrøm's chapter focuses instead on the misrecognition of women in Vietnam against the background of a revitalisation of Confucian ideals and explores how propagated ideals of the happy and harmonious family impact realities of husband-to-wife violence.

Since the majority of the book focuses on women, it is important that the last two chapters address masculinities. Elin Bjarnegård seeks to make the male norm visible in Thai politics and analyses the factors contributing to male dominance in Thai politics. Basing her analysis on the 2001 and 2005 elections, Bjarnegård refers to the importance of networks, cliques, connections, and trust in Thai politics, which are, however, arguably also the very factors contributing to Thailand's first female Prime Minister to come to power in the 2011 elections. Ulf Mellström wrote an ethnographic chapter on the cultural construction of masculinity among working-class Malaysian Chinese. Although the virtues that make a "good man" – hard work, moral behaviour, honesty – could similarly be used to describe the virtues of a "good woman," Mellström points at their masculine importance as a way to balance man's "natural" drives to gamble, womanise, and drink. This indicates that the above-mentioned blurring of what it means to be female or male does not mean a blurring of gendered identities and expectations.

As is often the case with edited volumes, one would like to see some more connections and discussion between the different chapters. I was not really sure how to interpret Maila Stivens' critical review of the (un)usefulness of the concept of gender in the Asian context in view of the ease with which women, men, and gender are used as categories of analysis in the rest of the book. Anne Jerneck's description of livelihood practices in relation to labour and migration patterns of poor female workers and vendors in Vietnam would have benefitted from a more in-depth discussion on how these practices relate to the kinds of gendered patterns of (mis)recognition described by Nguyen-vo and Rydstrøm. Another question that came up relates to Kent's discussion of the contingent and flexible codes of conduct or moral norms versus the relatively immutable sacred postulates or final truths which women may draw upon to gain access power from which they are normally excluded. What does this mean for the codes of conduct and ideologies described in the other chapters? To what extent can or do, for example, Vietnamese women make use of the contradictory moral norms and/or higher levels of meaning in communist, neoliberal, Confucian ideologies for recognition and self-realization?

All in all, "Gendered Inequalities in Asia" gives insight into the many dimensions involved in construction and deconstruction of gender identities and will provide an interesting read for students and scholars interested in the ongoing individual and collective configurations and contestations of gender in Asia. Annuska Derks

Salime, Zakia: Between Feminism and Islam. Human Rights and Sharia Law in Morocco. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011. 195 pp. ISBN 978-0-8166-5134-4. (Social Movements, Protest, and Contention, 36) Price: $ 22.50

The dominant view of women's movements in Morocco is primarily articulated through language of opposition and polarization, a portrayal in which feminist and Islamist women's groups are seen as diametrically opposed forces. In "Between Feminism and Islam," Zakia Salime offers a nuanced critique of this perspective, arguing that a polarized depiction of the women's movement is not only disabling but also inaccurate and incomplete. In contrast, this work aims to show that there is a "process of exchange, not uniquely of opposition, between Islamist women's groups and feminist movements" (xxiv). To do so, Salime traces the Moroccan feminist and Islamist women's movements over the past two decades, showing how each has informed, mediated, and reformed the boundaries of the other.

A central argument of the book is that feminist and Islamist movements influence and engage with one another, often in ways overlooked by the media and academic scholarship. To highlight these interactions, the book makes the case that two concurrent processes have taken place over the past twenty years: an *Islamization* of feminist movements, and a *feminization* of Islamist women's movements. An incisive analysis, informed by participant observation, interviews, archival research, and discourse analysis, this book succeeds in showing how feminist and Islamist women's movements inform, engage, and influence one another as "interdependent trajectories" (xiv).

The bulk of the book is structured around three specific *movement moments*, a term used to refer to the disruptive time-events in which the connections between feminist and Islamist discourses and practices become more accessible to sociological analysis. Specifically, the book looks at three such moments related to the reform of the *mudawwana*, the sharia-based family law which regulates the relationships between men and women within