

to attempts to make sense of differing expectations around intimacy, Frohlick expertly combines rich ethnographic description with her own interpretation of the stories she is told. Frohlick powerfully demonstrates that despite many women's narratives of spontaneity, their experiences are deeply social and cultural and must be understood in relation to a broader set of forces, which include place and context. Frohlick's analysis of these relationships as socially and historically shaped is especially convincing.

Frohlick's book is both theoretically sharp and a pleasure to read. This excellent contribution of our understanding of transnational sexuality and intimacy should be read (and taught) widely by anthropologists, sociologists, geographers and those interested in tourism studies, gender studies and Latin American and Caribbean studies.

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**Fosshagen, Kjetil, ed.,** *Arab Spring: Uprisings, Powers, Interventions*. Critical Interventions: A Forum for Social Analysis, vol. 14, Oxford-New York: Berghahn Books 2014, 115 p.

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How can anthropologists write about a present that is constantly under construction? How can anthropology account for events in the *now* that are trajectories of past events, while also accounting for the past colonialism, decolonization, wars or partitions? What do anthropologists offer that could possibly be different from other social scientists? My answer is *definitely* a lot. Anthropological writing could engage with the ways people make and unmake sense of their lives or the way they tell their national story, while seeing their states and communities unfolding in front of their eyes or while witnessing the collective force of braveries emerging after years of suppression.

*Arab Spring: Uprisings, Powers, Interventions* (2014), volume 14, edited by anthropologist Kjetil Fosshagen of the series *Critical Interventions: A Forum for Social Analysis*, barely succeeds at bringing a new perspective on the revolutions in the Arab world. Since most contributors in this book are anthropologists, elaborate anthropological perspectives and explorations were anticipated, yet missed. However, what the book does succeed at is offering opinion essays, directed at both academic and non-academic audiences, and provoking possible questions for future anthropological research. Expecting immediate results in the Arab world, the essays in the book, as a whole, leave the reader with a slightly negative or suspicious feeling as to the ability of people in the Arab world to bring into being significant socio-political transformations. Although it is true that major structural powers were not radically overthrown, the revolutions in the Arab world have torn down the walls of fear in people's hearts and minds and made it possible to imagine a different future.

Fosshagen suggests a macro political-economy framework for reading the recent transformations in the Middle East and North Africa. He argues in the Introduction that despite the powerful and widespread protests, the "Arab uprisings," like

1848 Europe's Spring of Nations, did not produce radical political or social changes. The Arab uprisings, he claims, at best have pushed the governments to expand individual political rights, mostly among the middle classes. Fosshagen poses two crucial questions that one should keep in mind in relation to the Arab Spring. First, can these revolutions be considered "social revolutions in the historical and political sense, in that they promised and introduced a radically new social order?"; and, second, is there "a structure of social forces underneath the apparent chaos of the Arab Spring uprisings and their aftermath?" (p. 1).

Fosshagen attributes the heaviest weight behind the spark of the revolutions to the neoliberal economic policies that were introduced in the early 1980s, which included land reforms and the privatization of health care, education and industries. Reading Fosshagen's Introduction one learns that the Arab revolutions were mainly caused by economic and political frustrations. One also gets a strong impression that these revolutions failed or barely succeeded, as they were hijacked by (international) liberal forces.

While it is true that radical transformations did not occur over the short time of the past four years, mobilizing and protesting against state forces gave rise to the formation of other social radical spaces of activists who succeeded in addressing a multiplicity of issues that were crucial in imagining change in the midst of all the uncertainties. The best example is the powerful women's mobilization in Cairo against (military) sexual violence toward women (Assaad 2014).

Fosshagen's Introduction fails to locate the Arab world's revolutions in a wider historical context in the region. Such dehistoricization ignores the effects of almost 150 years of European direct and indirect colonization of the Arab world. A book on the current Arab revolutions should, instead of looking at Europe's 1848 Spring of Nations as a historical point of reference, compare today's events to previous historical revolutions in the region, such as decolonization revolts in the first half of the 20th century.

The first two contributions, by Paola Abenante, Pnina Werbner, Martin Webb and Kathryn Spellman-Poots, shed light on the marginalization within academic research of visual and performative art produced during the revolutions. The other four contributions explore the events in the region through a macro political and economic framework.

Abenante's piece focuses on Egypt's Tahrir Square reclamation and the politicization of the public space, specifically through the eyes and work of one street artist. Despite wide critique of the western singling out of the Tahrir Square site as the voice of the Egyptian revolution, which Abenante acknowledges, she nonetheless chose to look at Egypt's revolution through this same prominent urban square. Through the work of one artist, Abenante brings out a prevalent sentiment of Egypt's protestors, particularly that which reflects protestors' ambivalent relation to the state's military.

The chapter by Pnina Werbner, Martin Webb and Kathryn Spellman-Poots is an invitation for anthropologists to further research performativity and visual art in current global protests against neoliberal reforms. The authors suggest a comparative analysis of global protests drawing on the ways each national protest informs the other. What is missing from this invitation is a warning against falling into a comparative research that dehistoricizes local processes: Spain's and Tunisia's

protests may share similar characteristics, but they grew from radically distinct contexts and histories of colonial relations.

Michael Humphrey's piece provides an analysis of the international political forces at play in the latest transformations carried out by protests in the Arab world. Humphrey focuses on the uses of emergency law both at the hands of Arab dictators, claiming to protect the national security, and at the hands of U.S. and western powers, as a way of maintaining their war on terror overseas. His article exposes the extent of U.S. interest in oil access in the region, as well as the U.S. vision of creating a New Middle East that would enjoy normalized relations with the West and Israel. While it is important to map out the political forces intervening in the current Arab world revolutions, the author ignores the micro processes and dynamics, as well as local mobilization that is pushing forward an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist agenda, specifically in the case of Syria and Libya.

Sobhi Samour's essay lays out the promises and limitations of the economic protests in the West Bank against the Palestinian Authority's policies and the economic failures of the Paris Accords. The existence of Israel as a strong military power and the U.S.-backed governments in the Arab world, he argues, were not the only reason for the retreat of an emancipatory vision in the region. The failure to link political struggles with social emancipation was a crucial factor in the years of weak liberation streams in the region. An observation he makes is that in the midst of the revolutions in the region, a dominant sense of frustration with the political and economic conditions, post Oslo's catastrophic effects on Palestinian independence, took over in the Palestinian Occupied Territories. This frustration resulted in protestors taking over the streets for two weeks in September 2012 before it soon fizzled out. Samour's strongest argument is his connection of the past ten years of efforts among Palestinians to mobilize the international community in boycott, divestment and sanctions campaigns against Israel with the local 2012 protests against the Palestinian Authority's neoliberal agenda and normalization with Israel. The two fronts are equally necessary.

Declaring Bahraini revolution a failure, Thomas Fibiger titles his piece "Stability or Democracy? The Failed Uprising in Bahrain and the Battle for the International Agenda." This failure he attributes to the lack of support from the international community. The reason for crushing the protests, he claims, is the U.S.- and Saudi-backed regime in Bahrain. The majority of the population of Bahrain are Shi'a Muslims, while the governance is Sunni, which allows the Saudi and Bahraini governments, he writes, to claim that the desired reforms in Bahrain have an Iranian-Shi'a agenda. Bahraini protestors are proud Bahraini Arabs, Fibiger asserts, who have no affiliation with Iranian nationalism.

What I found frustrating in Fibiger's piece was the urgency to argue that the Bahraini revolution has failed and the expectation of radical changes in a short period. While people in Bahrain have not given up, the author provides us with a rushed judgment indicating otherwise. Instead, I suggest attention to the following questions to get at stronger insights: What are the transformations that the Bahraini revolution produced? How have Bahrainis shifted their relations to urban and public spaces/landscapes during and after the revolution? How did women's participation in the Bahraini revolution push social and political reforms in their relation to the state?

The book ends with Fosshagen's chapter criticizing debates in the U.S. administration and among Arab liberal circles that offer the Turkish state as an ideal model for the new Arab states in transition. Fosshagen's piece exposes U.S. discursive efforts to conflate neoliberal economic policies with liberal democratic change in the service of implementing the U.S. vision of the New Middle East. Turkey's friendly relations with the United States along with its Islamic neoliberal economic and social reforms promote a unique form of democracy in the region that could appeal to imperial forces.

Despite the economic growth that Turkey has experienced with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's government, the Gezi Park demonstration, Fosshagen claims, attempted to expose foreseen economic catastrophes. Agreeing with Fosshagen, I suggest expanding the anthropological curiosity and asking the following: What forms of nationalism are being challenged through the Gezi Park movement that could offer a possible future vision? How is the Turkish state's national exclusionism playing a role in the Kurdish question in the region?

The importance of exploring these questions emerges from empirical accounts of a wide range of protests that took place all over Turkey, including the Kurdish areas. In addition to protecting public spaces in urban settings, demonstrations in Turkey attracted radical left, feminist and queer movements demanding significant social transformation (Örs 2014). What Fosshagen misses, therefore, is Kurdish, queer or feminist voiced critiques that offer elaborate testimonies on why the Turkish state is a failed model for Turkey, let alone the Arab world at large.

## References

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Dave, Naisargi, *Queer Activism in India: A Story in the Anthropology of Ethics*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2012, 272 pages.

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Naisargi Dave's *Queer Activism in India* explores the shifting terrain of queer politics in India and the emergence of new forms of identification, belonging and loving in the wake of global campaigns for LGBT rights. Clearly written, with vivid and vibrant descriptions of intimacy between women involved in feminist and lesbian activism, the text grapples with the entanglements of affect and political engagement in a cultural context where challenges to normative configurations of gender