localisation to build on how African actors construct local interpretations of foreign ideas, as the typology of acceptance, challenge, and ambivalence inadvertently reifies top-down features of norm diffusion and leaves out how these acts and their associated micro-processes lead to the construction of routinised African practices and norms in global health governance.

Patterson engages in the tough task of highlighting the multifaceted nature of global health governance and contributes an empirically and theoretically sound account of how African actors navigate, respond and contribute to health outcomes. The book eschews notions of African dependency on Western countries and institutions and makes significant contributions to the growing empirical inquiry of African agency in global governance.

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Women and the Egyptian Revolution: Engagement and Activism during the 2011 Arab Uprisings by NERMIN ALLAM
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pp. 231. $29.99 (pbk).
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Egypt was on a political rollercoaster between 2011 and 2018. Democratic momentum grew during the 'Arab Spring' protests of 2011, reaching a climax when President Hosni Mubarak resigned. Then the country hurtled back into authoritarian rule under Mohammed Morsi, who was ousted in a coup d'état in 2013. Conservative, state-sponsored feminism supplanted progressive, grassroots feminism that was central in the 2011 revolution. For Egyptian citizens and foreign observers reeling from whiplash, Nermin Allam's new book provides timely analysis and reassurance that the ride to democracy is not yet over.

Drawing on sociological theories, Allam argues that the ongoing backlash to the 2011 uprisings is part of a 'cycle of resistance', not the end point. This thesis puts a scholarly spin on the famous words of Martin Luther King, Jr: 'The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice'. Barack Obama echoed, 'History doesn't always move in a straight line; sometimes it zigs and zags'. Like Obama and King, Allam challenges people to see a light at the end of the tunnel. Yet she is no Pollyanna, devoting much of the eight chapters in the book to substantiating her call for hope with compelling theories and empirical examples from 118 interviews of participants in the Arab Spring. We learn how activists adapted their strategies to tightening constraints on political organising. Their revolution continues, just in more pragmatic forms through art and debate, instead of mass mobilisation. Allam suggests that disappointment can thus have a positive influence on political engagement, like a broken bone that heals stronger. Her message offers solace to activists facing setbacks anywhere in the world, and makes a valuable contribution to the social movements literature, which tends to focus on other emotions such as courage, pride and solidarity.

Allam examines Egyptian politics with a 'gender-explicit approach'. She wants to amplify women's stories, which, as she details in Chapter 2, Egyptian

and international media often downplay or distort. By asking us to see women's agency and not just their plight, Allam joins a chorus of scholars who aim to decolonise research methods by eschewing 'pain narratives' in favour of 'desire-based frameworks'. Desire, as Tuck (2010: 644) explains, 'is not only the painful elements of social and psychic realities, but also the textured acumen and hope'. Allam deftly balances space on the page between pain and hope that women faced at key moments in Egypt's history: the 1919 nationalist uprising, the 1952 Free Officers' revolt and the 2011 Arab Spring. These periods illustrate a paradox: women achieved greater equality with male activists by framing their participation as nationalist instead of feminist, but this limited their rights after the demonstrations by concealing gender inequalities in political rights. *Women and the Egyptian Revolution* conveys level-headed ambivalence toward the power of women's movements.

Because Allam is a political scientist, her book might invite critiques for not adhering to the hyper-positivist methods and epistemologies currently fashionable in the discipline. She lacks an airtight strategy for identifying causal effects, and many of her data points consist of individual quotes from semi-structured interviews, which are difficult to generalise. However, Allam is unapologetic about having different objectives – namely to interpret events, affirm women's agency and theorise the very meaning of a women's movement (does one exist if women do not frame their actions as such or if they fail to win major concessions?). She peppers the text with references to Butler, Spivak, Gramsci and Derrida. Consequently, *Women and the Egyptian Revolution* may speak to sociologists, historians and critical theorists more than empirical political scientists. Empiricists nevertheless stand to learn a great deal from Allam's interdisciplinary, immersive treatment of the Arab uprisings. For example, those trying to estimate the systematic determinants of social movement success and failure could borrow Allam's expansive concept of success, which includes not just the immediate aftermath of protests but entire protest cycles. *Women and the Egyptian Revolution* can also inspire more ethical political science that ennobles research subjects – especially female ones – by casting them as agents rather than victims.

REFERENCE

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Bottleneck: Moving, Building and Belonging in an African City
by CAROLINE MELLY
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In a series of talks, articles and a documentary film, global 'starchitect' Rem Koolhaas did a good deal of thinking with Lagos's famed traffic jams. The