III

SPECIAL SECTION: THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF PROTEST

Introduction

Performance, Power, Exclusion, and Expansion in Anthropological Accounts of Protests

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ABSTRACT: This introductory article offers a theoretical frame for the current special section, discussing protests' value for analyzing performance, power, expansion, and exclusion, and contributes its own case study from the ongoing anti-logging protests in Estonia. While arising from power imbalances, protests hold powerful tools for achieving their aims. The introduction considers protests' ability to expand in space, through time, and beyond topics, and to capture wider support, creating communities in the process. At the same time, considering the contexts of protests, it also demonstrates how such movements get caught up in the normative features of human sociality, reproducing the existing power relations, including those the protests aim to challenge. The Estonian case study enables further insight into this by analyzing dispossessions that protests both aggravate and suffer from.

KEYWORDS: environmental movement, neoliberal capitalism, performance, power relations, protest communities, protests, social dispossession

From Max Gluckmann's (1954) work on rituals of rebellion to more recent work on such protest movements as Occupy (Graeber 2009) or the Arab Spring (Bayat 2015), anthropology has sought to analyze dissent as a process of collision with existing social order, be the end result actual change, resolution and upkeep of status quo, or profound destruction of the opposition. The fascination with protest, even if relatively uncommon among the anthropologists (Edelmann 2001: 287), is driven as much by the quest for understanding its reasons and dynamics as it is by the wonder about human aesthetic inventiveness in expressing discontent (Juris 2008; Werbner et al. 2014) and coaxing change out of those in power. Further, protests show human ability to see beyond the present circumstances and anticipate what needs changing today. Protests are the sites of becoming-other-than-it-is-now (Razsa and Kurnik 2012), and shift focus to human agency and subjectivity (see Kurik 2016).

This introduction lays out the theoretical contributions that the articles in this special section offer to the study of protests and protests' role in the modern advanced economies. In an

era when protests have rapidly increased in occurrence across the world (Youngs 2017), we are offering this topical special section to analyze protests through an ethnographic lens. Concentrating on power and performance, the articles consider the matrix within which the protests emerge—the time and space, the historic and social context—framing their performative dimensions and channeling the related hierarchies, creating the in- and outsides, communities and outcasts, hidden inclusions and exclusions. We will consider how the protest worlds are built, and how the meanings and significance for both the participants and the bystanders are established, capturing attention, time, and space and moving beyond the immediate topics that appear on banners or calls of the protesters. The contributors define protests in a broad sense following Verta Taylor and Nella van Dyke's approach of "tactical repertoires" in which actual protests are identified as "sites of contestation in which bodies, symbols, identities, practices and discourses are used to pursue or prevent changes in institutionalized power relations" (2004: 268). Understanding the protests as a broad range of intentional practices and discourses driven by their aims allows us to see them as exceptional, intense events where protesters share the actual physical space with their bodies, in small or large numbers, but also include periods and presences of (relative) calm, possibly in the virtual space of awareness and witnessing. Our combination of focuses and cases reveals the expansive and restrictive qualities of protests. The value the contributors place on understanding protests' context—expanding methodologically, theoretically, and empirically beyond the immediate performances of protests—expose effects that protests have on the wider social relations.

I will first present and analyze the research brought together into this special issue. All but one of the cases—Belarusia—come from what could be called neoliberal capitalist societies, but even Belarusia is heavily influenced by this global context, in fact throwing a particularly clear light on the financial dimension of protesting. The Belarusian case study by Alena Minchenia offers an insight into the phenomenon of professional protesters caught in between promoting democracy and struggling against authoritarian rule. The author approaches the case from the theoretical angle of performativity to capture the hopelessness of the struggle against unflinching authoritarianism. Placed in the context of foreign aid to promoting democracy, the protests are revealed to be undermined as well as exclusionary toward most of the protest community. The case study by Jocelyn Avery considers the protests against governmental efforts to establish a disability justice center for the "mentally impaired accused" in an Australian marginal neighborhood. With its theoretical focus on spatiality, Avery extricates the connections between the normalization of the spatial rejection of the disabled as "matter out of place," and the simultaneous disjunctures (Amit 2012) and struggles against disjunctures of the marginalized groups. With this, she is able to reveal the production and construction of inequalities through protests against unequal control over space. The third case, by Tim Heffernan, discusses the long-term dynamics of protests in Iceland. These have downscaled from mass protests aiming to enforce democratic change, to small-scale performative witnessing and creative and reflexive engagement with protest and the emergence of new critical discourses. The routinized knowledge production, displayed in protest signage where mockery and satire combine with responsibility and solidarity, enables a persistent, even kin-like community of protests—which, once more, turns out to be exclusive.

Second, in addition to combining and analyzing the set of articles brought together, my introduction offers another ethnographic case with its particular contribution to the analysis. Based on fieldwork in the region (participant observation, interviews, and online ethnographies) between 2003 and 2004 and since 2012, as well as on a more focused interest on the topic since 2017, I analyze the protests around logging and clear-cutting in Estonia, consisting largely of widespread online activities, lobby and legal efforts, and some performative events. In combination with the rest of the articles in this special section, I focus on the capacity of protests to expand and extend

beyond their immediate performative actions, protest-worthy causes, and participants, creating communities as they unfold, as well as on the exclusions and absence of some of the groups affected sometimes more severely by the very same issues against which protests have emerged.

Expanding and Extending Exceptional Events

In late June 2017, Estonian police gathered around a tree near a road building site of Õismäe, a late Soviet residential district of Tallinn, the capital. "Come down from there!" one officer yells in a mild tone. The tree is wrapped in a slightly shabby Estonian flag. A woman lies on the ground with her head between protruding tree roots. A police officer holds her hand and tries to gently detach her from the tree while speaking to her calmly. Their communication is filmed by several camera operators from various angles. Another officer explains with a slight irritation in his tone the nature of the committed transgression and gives her two minutes to leave, or she will be removed by force and charged for her offence. The woman asks for the documents that justify this action and explains in a very flat tone that she is exercising her constitutional right to protect the nature. Meanwhile, two men who have climbed the tree are whistling and calling out loudly: "Estonian peee-oople! Come protect the naaaa-tuuure!" Two minutes have passed, and the police officers have lifted the woman off the ground and carry her away. A rescue service crane moves in while a group of protesters behind the metal gates surrounding the site sing folk songs to the rhythm of a drum. One young man appears to pray. The men on the tree continue their negotiations. One of them is told: "Come down calmly, nobody is going to jail you. You have made your point very clearly."

The protest against cutting down the white willow that was in the way of the new road development was an initiative of the civic group Eesti Metsa Abiks (Estonian Forest Aid—EMA; the acronym means "mother" in Estonian), active since 2016 to protest excessive logging and clear-cutting of Estonian forests. The white willow initiative was an exceptional event that lasted two weeks amid media furore (and some ridicule), as well as strong criticism from local inhabitants and some other local groups who welcomed the new road development. While this road development in fact saw the removal of 1,300 trees along its path, the willow protection campaign in particular was the most spectacular and long-lasting, achieving considerable public attention and becoming one of the highest profile protests against logging in Estonia. Historically, several efforts of protecting sacred forest sites and trees have taken place throughout the country before this event, but perhaps one of the most politically charged of these was saving a protected *Ginkgo biloba* tree in central Tallinn during the late Soviet period.

Expanding beyond Real and Imaginary Borders

Those days, the protests were clearly about more than protecting a tree, as the reason for cutting it—building plans for a new opera house—was considered to have been part of a Soviet propaganda campaign (see also Magnus and Sander 2019). Today, although most of the media attention concentrated on the specific events around the willow tree, its protection appears perhaps a little less political, and a little more environmental, as the protest resisted the relentless advance of car-driven developments in the country's capital. Both those struggles, however, demonstrate protests' capacity to expand their causes beyond the confines of a particular realm—political or environmental, economic or moral. In the process, these borders between realms are revealed to be imaginary. The activists relate their efforts to far more than protecting one tree or even trees in general, announcing the protest, for example, like this (Väli 2017): "We are saying—the

mother tree must stay. EMA stands in front of the tree, Mothers stand in front of the mother trees. Mothers stand in front of the mother trees everywhere all over the country and the forests will be saved and our country will be saved, and eventually even the young people will return from abroad and life in Estonia becomes livable again."

In a similar vein, the protests against incarceration units in Australia, described by Avery, expose the muddled borders between political parties and their progressive or conservative principles. By being brought into the open through the protests, the claims for political dividing lines vanish, naked power can be forced into the open, and the actual blatant desire to remain in power, rather than promoting particular ideas and values, becomes obvious. Conversely, failed dissent may equally reveal the dysfunctional innards of the protests themselves, as Minchenia's account of the Belarusian activists demonstrates: incapable of fulfilling the role of exposing power because of the restrictive authoritarian rule, the protesters themselves become confined within imaginary borders between oppositional groups, and clash over their performative choices. Rather than revealing the face of power, such choices are only about revealing the weakness of the opposition.

Protests expand beyond topics and ideological or realm-specific borders. They are also capable of expanding in space. On the surface, exceptional events occupy space exceptionally: for a time, places with no immediately obvious political alignments take on new meaning (see also Brown et al. 2017; Koopmans 2004). Streets and squares with or without a history of protests fill with people, opinions, and banners—with desire for change. Emotions until now confined to private spaces and qualms expressed in close circles are brought out into the open; oppositions—between protesters, approaches, or with state and public—unfold not only in discursive but also physical space. Obtaining presence in physical space is the ultimate test of exceptionality. The dissenting idea escapes into the open, pours onto the streets, shakes the society, brings trouble to the authorities. The spatial presence of protests is very intense, triggering also keen interest from anthropological and political studies of protests (e.g., Brown et al. 2017; Davies 2009; Jansen 2001; Juris 2012).

Many protest locations are of highly symbolic value, and protesters are drawing attention to the exact political, economic, or other source of their qualms, such as the White House, or the Keystone XL pipeline in Texas. Protesters might sometimes aim to get into the very heart of these sources as part of their actions; for example, during the 2019 protests in Hong Kong against legislative changes, students broke into the legislative buildings. However, protestable causes frequently trigger an expansion from their focal points. To a degree, this is purely practical: often, protests cannot take place on the actual sites where the problems have arisen. In the case of the Estonian forest protests, the extent and frequency of logging, and a lack of information on such protestable activities means that most of the time, the majority of the protesters cannot be present on the actual sites of logging. Their witnessing role is possible via their devices and the social media space, recording the acts that they protest against. The space of activism is digital—yet another expression of protests' ability to expand—and the physical space of the logging activities becomes a point of reference for the protests. As Paddy Scannel (1996: 76) notes, with mediated events, a doubling of space occurs. Possibly, this could be in fact more than doubling: the protestable acts, the protests, and the mediation may all occur in different places, especially for large-scale events such as climate change. Also, all forest cover in Estonia is the spatial ground of EMA's attention. Thus, fluid, generalized protests emerge with reference to all forests—which may come at the expense of specificity of targets of protest.

These protests are in fact not only about expansion of protestable space to everywhere the protesters can reach—in this case, within the national borders affected by the changes in practices, traditions, and law—but, simultaneously, a type of protection of space, as protesters

demand the forest cover and its availability to diverse wildlife stay intact. This protection of space may express a fear of expansion, a process always capable of exclusion: of "invasion," destruction, contamination, and capture by forces and bodies, institutions, and developments that are seen as dangerous. The anti-logging protesters lament the change beyond recognition of forests as shared space across the country, brought on by permissive laws and invasive forestry practices. Avery describes fears that the planned disability justice center would contaminate the space of the already stretched neighborhood, turning it into the "dumping ground," evoking danger and insecurity. Protesters stand in between these future developments and the endangered spaces, and may approach it through conflating rather than inflating in space: their aim, as Avery demonstrates, may be simultaneously to keep people out of the protected space, and to keep them in their place. In Estonia, the hated heavy machinery and destructive mentality of the loggers is to be kept out of the forests, confined by law and regulations. In doing so, the protests draw the spatial borders of their interests.

Extending Protests

Aside from expanding in space, as they aim to force home a point that needs political engagement, the protests also extend in time—way beyond the exceptional moments of performative events (see also Koopmans 2004; Snow et al. 2004b). Primarily, such extensions refer to the future, but sometimes also past or present. The contributors to this special section demonstrate how protests center around the potential future dangers (Avery) or, in contrast, visions of a better future (Heffernan). The protests aimed at protecting forests carry an intensifying message about the potential loss of not merely particular sites but of future itself, through collapse of life-sustaining systems. Past, on the other hand, is present in unfulfilled promises from Icelandic governments after the 2008/2009 financial crisis, as well as the shock from a sudden loss of shared identity based on a cherished bygone era, as Heffernan reveals in detailed contextualizations of the protests in Iceland over the past decade.

Just as they are often about more than the particular protested change, the protests themselves extend though continuity and repetition of the exceptional events. On the one hand, the repetitive nature of protests is planned, as it is expected that the singular events will not have a sufficient effect for achieving change, such as the various Occupy (see Graeber 2009; Razsa and Kurnik 2012) and squatting practices (Apoifis 2016; Palacios-Valladares 2016), or the recent Extinction Rebellion and Fridays for Future events. Often, however, such recurrence is inadvertent, as our contributors demonstrate: events planned as one-offs endure as protesters simply refuse to leave the protest sites. This is beautifully captured in Minchenia's description of the young protesters going against their very leaders calling off the protests after yet another pointless round of doomed election rallies. Heffernan details how anniversaries of protests trigger memories and bring people back together, especially if the original demands have not been met; resurfaced protestable plans renew the same activism, as Avery demonstrates in the Australian case. Understanding the impact of continuous presence in the protest space on protesters, their causes, and the surrounding society is crucially important. Indeed, while the exceptional, powerful, dramatic protests reach the public and have a significant impact on their emotions, protests are rarely focused, "active time" events (Krøijer 2010). The amount of apparent passivity in the timeline of a protest, let alone of a movement, is considerable—routine, even, as Heffernan reveals through an examination of habitual claims-making and routinized protest in Iceland.

Yet, within this apparently passive, "dead time" (Krøijer 2010), something brews, not only in preparing for the events but in the continuity itself. Although the emotions of an intense event are clearly powerful, even overwhelming, a rather different set of emotions and relations

emerges as this exceptional time is extended (see also Palacios-Valladares 2016). The EMA Facebook page sees a daily, continuous flood of small acts of outrage against yet another example of protestable logging: experiences of losing familiar sites, outpourings of emotions, calls for signing petitions or joining remembrance events, coupled with pictures of destruction, loss, and death. Together, those daily objections create a long timeline of protests against the changes and against the move toward unacceptable prospects. Their timeline stretches, thus, through all those small moments, uploaded for witnessing, and reaches the future, laying bare the choice that must be made in the now: continuing the activities people protest against with terrible future consequences, or finding a way to stop the unfolding of the objectionable future (see also Nugent 2012). The anger persists, feeding the flame despite the passing days, weeks, months or years. But continuity is not only a tool that empowers and maintains the passion. Minchenia's attention to Belarusian activists reveals a different, disempowering outcome of the continuing need to protest: the activists end up worn out. This echoes Indira Palacios-Valladares's (2016) description of the alienating, boring, exhausting effects of prolonged occupying protests. The replacements that emerge in Belarus, however—professional protesters—bring along professionalized protests, and with them, suspicions, accusations, and loss of trust toward politics in general.

EMA's main activities in the protection of the forests concentrate on lobbying against clear-cutting and for a halt to logging during the nesting season, raising awareness of the harm caused by excessive or badly timed loggings. The persistent remonstrations in EMA's Facebook group against such activities extend the protests in time, and such non-active yet protracted protest does not bore the participants but creates an impression of persistent citizen attention. On the other hand, it is a testimony of the disheartening lack of success of the protests. The continuing need for anguished attention is a proof of the relentlessness of the advance of the problem. The torment of the forests unfolding before the eyes of the EMA followers reveals an increasingly bleak, monotonous, ravaged vista, and with it, a positive future already nearly unachievable. An invitation from Ahto Kaasik (2019), a well-known Estonian expert in sacred places and a prominent Estonian neo-paganist, to a trip to remember the logged Aburi sacred forest words any remaining hope in a very low key: "[In] the Aburi sacred site, [all that remains is] devastated land, killed birds, and souls of the trees. Come to witness what has taken place, to demonstrate and to gather knowledge and experiences. Maybe it is still possible to [at least] save the sacred forest hills of Ebavere and Äntu." The extended timeline of continuous grieving may be long and potentially instructive on power, but it is also one of loss, and of surrendering hope to the power of irrevocable damage.

Witnessing the Change

Although far removed from the original exceptional events, protests of this kind offer the participants the mission of witnessing, in itself an activity enabling temporal, potentially spatially remote partaking in something exceptional. Heffernan offers an example for this task of the protests. Activists, as well as those alerted to an issue by the protests—a policy change, a lack of policy change, or other events and practices having some kind of an impact on various groups—are, generally speaking, all witnesses. Active, exceptional protests increase the visibility of an issue, as well as the ability of anyone capable of witnessing to be alert and identify concerns.

However, as demonstrated earlier, the continuing task of witnessing can also amount to a chore. Witnessing the impotence of protesting creates alienation and passivity, as is evident in Minchenia's case of Belarusian activists and professional politicians. The online timeline of witnessing the logging events is disheartening, even hopeless. Two concerned members of the EMA Facebook group discussed offline the continuing, even intensifying logging and harmful legal changes, pointing at some telling parallels with the Soviet era:

Anne: "I don't know, it really feels like it's just the same, like in the Soviet time—all you do is sit around the kitchen table and air your exasperation there, and nothing is getting better."

Maie (chuckling): "Only that it is actually different now, you know—now you leave the kitchen table, go out, protest—and still nothing changes!"

Bearing witness to protestable change means standing on the spot—either remotely and via digital devices, or physically—at a point in time where the past no longer appears to logically connect to the future. Here, redefining either history or the present identity becomes necessary, sometimes reconciling the previously disconnected moments in time or in national mythology. Avery describes how the protest against the new prison facilities in her field location drew on the convict history in Australia and the colonial legacy of the country to highlight the new injustices in the planned changes for the affected areas. The changes people protest go against the expectations based on local or national histories, or the assumed identities. Protests in Iceland were triggered not only by the financial crash and a political upheaval but, more fundamentally, by the collapsing images of the shared idols and along with it, the new vulnerability of Icelandic identity and national definitions of belonging.

Similar questions are present in the protests against forest logging. Estonians often self-describe as "the forest people" (see also Remmel and Jonuks 2020), considering forests to have played a vital part in the population's history. In this light, the fact that this "forest people" has allowed considerable destruction to unfold invites introspection of what such complicity might mean. The forest protesters in Estonia continuously refer to Estonians as "forest people," to invite returning to the true but lost identity, but also to reveal its falsity: "Many Estonians appear to love the benefits that forests bring, but not the forest itself, how else would such mindless abuse of the forest, in such extent and magnitude be possible" (Palo 2018).

Identity is present also in the witnessing that Heffernan discusses. As the demonstrators return to the sites of protests of 2008/2009 nearly a decade later, they cannot reach the numbers that made history in the initial "active time" of protesting. Yet, the protesters bear witness to the future, and in doing that, this shared witnessing becomes productive in a different way: strong bonds form among those taking on the task of witnessing for the future. Their emphatic collective solidarity forms communities—just like the painful witnessing of the loss of forest cover enables a sense of communal sharedness among the EMA members.

Community, Performance, and Power

"In the middle of a marsh island in Hüpassaare, surrounded by the stunted marshland pines in Soomaa National Park, a group of EMA activists gathered for the First Forest Song Festival. Singing runic songs, story-telling and chanting aimed to remind us that we are forest people—indigenes [pärismaalased] whose perception of the world is strongly connected to nature" (Vainu 2019). Such events assume a certain shared acceptance of particular ways of celebrating the forest, as well as the view that the participants are representing Estonians as innately forest people, which needs to become (again) part of Estonianness. The day of singing, drumming, and togetherness joins the participants into a tight, mutually supportive group.

Performative acts, although often studied as the center of the protests, are crucially also the center of community-making, establishing the character of the group, as well as who would be ready to join. The decision on what kind of performative activities are befitting for the participants, or capable of "amplifying the reach and tone of local protests" (Fuentes 2017), is often invisible to the general participants in the protests; usually not part of crafting the actual per-

formance, they either go along or feel somewhat alienated and keep to the side. While studies often concentrate on the emotions sweeping over the participants and gluing them to the protest *communitas* via "affective solidarity" (Juris 2008) or daily practices and joys (Werbner et al. 2014), awkwardness and its role in performative community remains an unexplored emotion. Yet, deciding to go along creates a certain vulnerability, which in itself has considerable implications in how people participate in protests. As Anne, an EMA Facebook member in her forties, confided: "I've always felt there is a disconnect between what I believe in—that nature is hugely important, deserves protection, the lot—and what kind of people tend to be active in nature protection. I don't know whether it's just me but I don't feel comfortable with a lot of the tree-hugging activities."

Heffernan's vignette of his discomfort in holding a placard might be more than the discomfort of a fieldworker participating where he would rather only observe; it might be the sharedness and emotions of performative events that come with exposure of earnestness about one's ideals, as well as of belonging, in itself an identifier. Owning up to the identity of being a supporter of a cause means also accepting the particular performative form of protest—and one might not translate into the other very easily. Hence, this conversion between the two brings a multitude of mixed emotions and demands decisions from the participant, furthering the bond with the community and its cause—or detaching and removing them. Minchenia's conceptualization of the involvement in protests as protest subjectivities is helpful here, offering the specific actions leading to "prefigurative subjectivity" (Kurik 2016: 60) a more general footing: involvement, whether in joy, grief, or certain ungraceful self-consciousness, adds in itself a layer to people's lifeworld that was not there before, carving out a variety of sometimes contradictory subjectivities coming together in moments of protest.

Going along with what the organizers of protests have thought up is thus not a straightforward act of throwing oneself into a principled, courageous act of protesting, but instead steeped in vulnerability and exposure. If it is then smoothed over by togetherness, it would seal the members into a tight group, strengthened by empathy as well as in resolve before those who are rejecting, ignoring, or even mocking their cause. In EMA's case, this has come in the form of standing up to the "bullying" by the representatives of the forest industry at the discussions of the Forestry Development Plan 2030 (Alvela 2018), but also in the anger and ridicule from the locals who have sold or aim to sell their forests, (social) media commentators such as user did_279838 (2019) painting the protesters as worthless wannabe hippies, and the general public's lack of concern.

Communities of protest come in a variety of forms, and togetherness may be sparked through both intense, emotional events and perseverance through passing time. Heffernan's account, as well as mine, details the power of the combination of witnessing, creating new kind of sharedness, beyond active time and exceptionality, and emotional performative events. On the other hand, there may be a unique communal existence already in place unifying people to face the reason for protesting together. In such cases, the emotional burden of emerging identity—becoming a member, recognizing belongingness—is lower. A neighborhood resisting a disability justice center (Avery) draws from already established belonging and offers a sense of protecting the community.

Expanding the Community

As the togetherness in these exceptional events, as well as in the wider cause, triggers or strengthens the community, another feature of the protests and their consequences becomes clearer. Just as the protests expand in time and space, they also aim to expand their community base and make a more general claim for change capable of reaching out of the specificities of the

particular protest. The Icelandic protests are a case in point (Heffernan): the direct task of the protesters is to appeal to the wider needs of the democratic society. The protesters are not merely protesting against something specific they feel strongly about. By calling for the still-absent new constitution to be inclusively created to avoid blunders that the elite had previously made, they are in fact bringing forth and contributing to the (re)creation of democracy itself, often lost under the minimality of voting or long-term financial pressure.

Thus, such a community aims at major inclusiveness, putting its activities forward as the ultimate example of democracy, and calling for a full adoption of the same actions across the society for its own good and for the good of the democratic ideals (see also Razsa and Kurnik 2012). EMA activities offer a similar example of striving to achieve not merely a small, parochial victory, but a victory that would bring value to the whole society. In EMA's (2020) rhetoric, it is not just its members and those who participate in performances who want change: it is "the people" who call for a logging halt. Furthermore, the whole nation, given all "indigenes" are "forest people," ought to be behind the same cause. EMA's awareness-raising thus aims to awaken the mentality of the "forest people" amid the lost souls currently still denying the pain and torment of tolerating the mindless logging. Belarusian opposition's calls for a protest march strive toward the same aims, as it laments the "'preoccupation with small deeds' a danger for the health of the whole nation" (Minchenia, this issue). From something specific rises something universal: from food riots, the issue of human dignity (Bush 2010); from protests against phosphorite mining, the quest for independence (Auer 1998); from local needs, "big issues of austerity and neoliberal politics" (Lauth Bacas and Näser-Lather 2018: 13).

Performative protests depicted by Avery demonstrate how a neighborhood comes together in the face of anticipated wrongs. Doing that, they point to not only the issue at hand but also the underlying inequalities and hence, appeal, even if indirectly, for universal fairness. It is also an example of how easy it is to miss the universal in certain types of protests—and yet, it is there. This is most obvious in the case of protests against certain perceived or real privileges or new accesses of other groups. On the surface characterized by rejection of certain groups, there is nevertheless often some grain of universality, the dismissal of which may be at the heart of increasingly forceful protests. As Hilary Pilkington's (2016) ethnography of the English Defence League demonstrates, seemingly inward-looking protest movements are calling, for example, for the recognition of the universal freedom of speech and for political representation.

Performance and community are, thus, strange bedfellows, as participating in performative actions with a protest group may trigger awkwardness and expose vulnerabilities. Yet, aligning with a group can both trigger emotional exposure as well as form a community to offer protection from the surrounding critique, ridicule, and rejection, ultimately strengthening the protesting capacities, and even creating kin-like relations (Heffernan, this issue; Pilkington 2016). Likewise, as these performances emphasize the protest-worthy causes and the separation into protest communities, focused on concerns they recognize as "theirs," they also call for wider unity around these issues, to bring the rest of the society on board. Maybe as a feature of this capacity, protests can include outsiders. In the case of the Haabersti protests, some dedicated participants were foreigners. Outsiders can bring in a wider view, skills, or dedication with a support base away from the gaze of the national law enforcement. However, the final parts of this introduction consider the opposite feature, shared across the articles: capacity to exclude.

The Power to Change, the Power to Exclude

Whether or not protests explicitly call for the recognition of certain universal aims, all protests are about grievances, and the right of these grievances to be recognized and to have an impact

in the society. It is for this aim—ultimately, for achieving change—that people come together in protest. As such, all protests are clearly about power: more precisely, about tilting the balance toward groups and/or issues previously neglected or ignored. While many studies consider power in protests, most famously perhaps James Scott (1985, 1990), protests are logically seen as a contest between two parties with one holding, at least initially, greater, and the other—protesters—lesser power. It is this setup that creates the particular kind of tension characteristic to all protests, which is certainly worthy of attention. The standoffs between the state or other powerful structures and the protesters are represented in all our cases in this special section. In Iceland, this came in the form of a concourse between the protesters and the state dragging its feet and lacking progress in increasing accountability (Heffernan); in Australia, the protesters collided with the state imposing a detention center onto the neighborhood (Avery); in Estonia, the protesters challenge the state aligning with the logging companies pursuing a policy considered harmful, rather than recognizing other legal measures, such as the obligation to protect biodiversity (see also Mazullo 2013); in Belarus, the protesters struggle against the authoritarian government (Minchenia).

It is equally important to understand the internal divisions in protests, an increasingly important part of protest research, as diverse examples from Northern Irish or Bulgarian protests and counterprotests (Maguire 1993; Tsoneva 2017) to Israeli Tent protests' internal power imbalances (Gordon 2017) demonstrate. Similar internal divisions are visible also between activists and professional protesters in Belarus (see also Simiti 2016). As the first half of this introduction demonstrated, protests are tools of power capable of expanding spatially and topically, and of extending in time, creating communities, and captivating wider audiences across the borders of protest communities. In the rest of this introduction, the emphasis will be on protests as tools of power capable of impacting not only the institutions and structures, laws and realities protested against, or even on the people and factions within the protest movements themselves, but also the adjacent social context.

Turning blind spots of attention into witnessing a protestable reality, bringing it to the forefront of the public eye, and reacting to it with physical, bodily actions is a process of power at its every stage, whether or not each stage is successful, whether or not the surrounding response is supportive, mixed, dismissive, or condemning. The power of protest needs to be analyzed without exoticizing or pathologizing (Theodossopoulos 2014), pointing out how it is capable of occupying the time and space around it, focusing minds and using bodies. At their most powerful, protests are known to have toppled governments, shaken up social order, triggered civil wars—their potential cannot be overrated.

Protests' tools of power—their skills in activating the communities, in summoning time and space for their cause—are doing more, however, than simply resisting the powerful and moving the protests' cause forward. As tools of power, protests are capable of shifting around, reshaping, or reinforcing the existing positions, strata, and power relations in the society. All protests have impacts that reveal something about the social order—most interestingly, perhaps, about its ability to stay intact, to retain its main hierarchies even as the base of its present structure is being challenged. Even rebellion contributes into existing power relations—and fails to brave the fundamental processes of exclusion in place.

First, of course, the protests may indeed be directly about excluding certain groups, as many accounts of the anti-refugee (e.g., Hasbún López et al. 2019), anti-Muslim (e.g., Pilkington 2016), or anti-gay (e.g., Gunther 2019) protests illustrate. Avery's account of protests protecting the neighborhood space from the "contamination" brought by the ultimate outcasts—prisoners and "mentally impaired accused" who lack adequate facilities while awaiting trial—is an example of a similar direct exclusion of a group of people. This case is particularly poignant, as it offers a

detailed account of how, despite fighting for contrasting aims, both the local government and the protesters actually contribute to marginalizing an already excluded and marginalized group in the process. It also further substantiates the significance of expansion in space as the tool of power used in protests: the protesters declare the neighborhood space as theirs—as their home place—and expect a particular sanitized version of it. This expansion is used to exclude those who are defined as "the other," defining the possible addition of the disability justice center as unwanted place. Recognizing the relatively low socioeconomic status of the neighborhood, the inhabitants struggle themselves against being excluded from the decision-making and the incontrovertibility of their right to a "sanitary"—contaminant-less—neighborhood space. However, they do so by creating further exclusions of the most powerless individuals in the society. Expansion and exclusion appear here, as well as in Heffernan's account as part of the pulse of protest, as those involved—and involveable—recognize the unacceptable expansion of an issue, respond to it by a further process of expansion, and in doing so, search for ways to exclude both the existing, protestable course of action, as well as some of the other actors.

As one dispossessed group goes against another, a process described also, for example, by Leo Howe (1998) with reference to the unemployed in Northern Ireland, in contrast with Michael Herzfeld's "fellowship of the flawed" (2005: 29), we can see struggles characteristic to neoliberal realities where fear of further dispossessions is entirely justified (see also Knight 2013; O'Brien 2006). An even more direct link between the exclusionary capacity of the protests and the neoliberal realities comes from Minchenia's account of the Belarusian opposition. This example demonstrates the effects of neoliberal commoditization of protest activities within foreign-funded protest economy, and a difference in the protest subjectivities between the professional protesters and the activists. Unequal resource distribution in the context of a robust authoritarian regime limits access to defining and formulating the protests and their performative shape, as some protesters are incapable of sustaining their presence in the protest environment or having a say in matters where decisions need to be backed by money. At the same time, the symbolic value of the professional protesters' views is low, as their authenticity is doubted. As a result of those processes, democracy itself becomes distrusted, and a cynical, depoliticized, and financially focused view of fundamental freedom of speech and decision-making is formed.

Heffernan describes a further kind of rejection occurring in response to a deviation from the protest narrative. Protests' scripts not only create divisions between those who feel at ease in joining in and those who hesitate and pull out. In fact, even protests that are related to the general theme of the protest may be considered unbefitting if they deviate from the established performative norms and are presented by an outsider. As a result, and a further example of the expanding/excluding pulse of protests, a protester tried to bring to the event her own experience of the effects of social cutbacks caused by the same financial crisis that had brought together the protests. Yet, other protesters rejected this expansion of examples, and the protester was excluded, not invited into the emergent "kin group" that had formed around the protests. Cold-shouldering those seen to be unbefitting performatively reinforces the borders of protest community. While some may challenge it without even expecting to be rejected, others recognize they do not belong to the protest discourse and practices—even if their marginalization can be related to the same issues the protesters are protesting against. Heffernan offers an example of the local rough sleepers who abandoned their usual spot for daily socializing to make way to the protests. As protests expand in space and win over hearts and minds, they do not include whoever is in their way.

These examples speak also of a wider feature in protests: despite their expansive capacities—their power in drawing attention to the protestable issues and connecting past and future, their underlying universal concerns and ability to create protest communities—larger societal power

structures still often get the best of the protests and protesters, as they become part of reinforcing certain fundamental inequalities and exclusions in the society.

Power relations, in particular regarding the most disenfranchised and marginalized groups, come, however, with a cost for the protests themselves, as they stop short at the most fundamental challenges to the status quo. They are unable to use the potential of all stakeholders—their reasons for objecting to the same realities or futures, their creativity, their entirely different and unusual angles of seeing the problems. The complexity that the cold-shouldered protesters or the rough sleepers could have brought to the protests in Iceland might feel intimidating but could also hold the key to pushing the protests over the threshold of becoming truly widespread, inclusive, and successful—capable of expanding across divisions and realms. Instead of rejecting the Australian disability justice center as something unwanted, campaigning for a more just and humane solution to the problem could have alleviated the community's concerns and upheld the human rights of the accused, revealed the exclusions in the society, and forced more fundamental change. The Belarusian protests must navigate between the expectations of foreign funders on fighting for democracy and the need to adapt to the limited confines provided by the Belarusian state. International structures produce exclusions by mistrusting local actors and replacing them with nonlocal implementers who consume most of the funds. In response to such structural confines, oppositional activities are kept away from anything revolutionary and instead go for the safest choices to be able to report accomplishments. It would require a serious self-reflection from those international bodies into their local impact to make a shift in this protest site.

Communities and Loss

Rein, a small man in his fifties, lives a strange life of random jobs, from ditch digging and house demolishing to pig slaughtering and grass cutting. He can do everything and a bit more; the only skill he has and can no longer use is driving, as he lost his license for repeated drunk driving, and now has to cover long distances on his bike or by foot. By foot, he traverses the forests. There, he picks berries and mushrooms and takes them to collection points where wholesalers pay by kilo for those hours that Rein and others like him—often men of similar circumstance—have spent in the forests. The pickers may earn up to €1,500 per year, but Rein has never been so lucky. What he gets is nevertheless a good supplementary income from his viewpoint, even if it comes with many days out picking and no luck in finding the best crop. Rein still looks forward to the summer, when forests have unfailingly provided at least one of the usual staples—bilberries, chanterelles, or loganberries. If there is less, there is some hope that the price goes up and the kilos he must take to collecting points at the bus stops or shop fronts of the emptying Estonian countryside will be worth more.

But there has been a change recently. Forests are receding under the force of huge and relentless machinery, from harvesters to tractors with skidding grapples, capable of entering the forest anytime during the year and bringing out logs of any size. Some of Rein's younger acquaintances have gotten that job nowadays. He cannot do that, of course. Along with many like him—without a driver's license, without skills for operating the complex machinery, without even the basis from which to learn such skills—he looks on as his summer income shrinks. Bilberries and loganberries vanish soon after the clear-cutting. Sometimes they are replaced by wild strawberries, the real delicacy of the Nordic forests. Picking and transporting these delicate things is much more difficult, however. And no one buys the wild raspberries that eventually take over the cleared sites. It takes up to 20 years for a destroyed forest floor to recover enough to start growing the bilberry plants again. Some of the mushrooms are still there a year after clearing— but how to get to them through the rubble left behind? Even traversing the rest of the forest is

now neck-breaking, as the heavy machines leave behind deep trenches, sometimes half a meter or more in depth. Rein's summer income has taken a direct hit from the logging, as have his legs.

Rein and many like him are the direct victims of the intensified logging practices, a phenomenon that along with the rapid stratification of the Estonian countryside is a result of the success of neoliberal ideology and practices in Estonia (see also Annist 2011, forthcoming). People like Rein belong to the most marginalized groups in the society. Long-term unemployed men, earning from odd jobs and foraging practices, frequently with an alcohol problem, and on various, very meager disability benefits, are deemed to be undeserving, inadequate, and valueless, barely considered full members of society. The still transforming relations between emerging classes in post-socialist countries are built on shame and scorn. Interactions also within classes are fraught with difficulties, which drives people to distance from each other (see also Annist 2011). Embarrassment over lack of personal success contributes into social disintegration in those regions and makes people unable to come together for protests—rather conveniently for the increasingly established stratified status quo.

This reality is reflected in the lack of any connection between the forest protests and the people depending on the forests, affected by the logging most directly. Although two sides of the same neoliberal coin, such people have not become part of protesters' calls for changes in laws and regulations concerning forests. This is particularly striking considering that the pickers' knowledge of picking sites, immediate and long-term effects of logging (see also Remm et al. 2018), and skills in using the forests and its crop may be the closest anyone is today to the ideal of "forest people" that EMA and other forest protesters hold dear. Nevertheless, such groups are so far removed from the protesters' circles, however deeply involved in forest-related topics, concerned about its fauna and flora, that such marginalized people are not involved in the protests. Considering that EMA attracts and includes people from quite a variety of backgrounds, with many living near the forests or working and/or spending leisure time in or around forests, pickers cannot be an unfamiliar group to them. Yet, the existing power structures, as well as the social dispossession (Annist 2015, forthcoming) of the pickers ensures that their inclusion in forest related protests would be out of the question. While Western environmentalism may be characterized by juxtaposing "people" and "environment," EMA forest protesters do not demonstrate such tendencies. Indeed, Estonian environmentalists tend to see the indigenous past (and its remnants in the present) to be close to the nature, suggesting that sharp division between nature and culture is not predominant. Therefore, the fact that the practical connection of the "pickers" to the forest is hidden from the forest protesters' gaze has to do with their social marginality. Their voice and experiences are silenced—and to come together, to traverse the borders erected by social hierarchies, is a magnanimous challenge that protests often fail to meet.

Conclusion

The articles in this special section spring from a broad understanding of protests covering both the performative exceptional events and their wider contexts. Supported by my own empirical data, as well as the data and analyses from the other contributors to this section, this introduction has considered the various tools of power and capacities of protests. Through their focus on particular causes, the protests can expand the significance and position of particular realms, and thus challenge the imaginary borders, for example, by revealing the environmental topics to be political or economic issues to be moral, or by demonstrating similarities across political divisions. Prolonged lack of democracy can inhibit this capacity, however. Protesters may, in such cases, become confined within their own imaginary dividing lines within the protest movement.

Expansion in space that protests can perform starts from the conversion of the idea and the private qualms into the public and physical space. Once there, protests may be able to capture any space that is relevant to the cause, from all the forests in a country, or the whole globe, if such global issues as climate change are at stake. However, spatial grounds of the protests may also display elements of inversion and efforts to protect the "owned" place, and to contain feared contamination or invasion. Furthermore, protests' expansive capacity includes also their exclusionary features, suggesting a certain pulsating character where (perception of) exclusion is followed by protests, an expansion, in turn followed by exclusion of those considered irrelevant or compromising to the cause.

Protests also extend in time beyond the exceptional moments of performative events, as they are repeated or sprawl out from the original protests. With reference to the future, as well as past, protests are moments of struggle in between the past and its accessories—such as identities, either revered or problematic—and the future, anticipated to be in some way unacceptable or disappointing without the protesters' demands being met. This continuity in time is not only empowering, however, and can disempower the exhausted protesters as change fails to materialize and as examples of the continuing problem keep on coming. Witnessing the continuation of protestable issues drains the protesters, their hope, and the trust in the existing structures and mechanisms, including democracy itself. It is such continuity that forces the protesters as witnesses to redefine, reconcile, or antagonize the past or the relevant identities.

In the process of doing this, and sharing the continuous task of witnessing, the protests emerge into protest communities, or even kin-like relations. Either succumbing to awkwardness and abandoning the protests, or accepting the particular ways of presenting the protests performatively, participants' subjectivity as protesters is established, exposing their involvement and making them potentially vulnerable to various outside threats as well as to burnout. Communities of protest offer togetherness and empathy to face up to such challenges. Protests do not stop at expanding in time and space and across realms. They also reach out of the borders of the community to capture an even wider audience and appeal to the wider needs of the society. Referring to such universal aims as democracy, freedom of speech, or equality, evoking the deep-seated local identities, protests move way beyond their original beneficiaries and aim to appeal to the society as a whole.

Simultaneous creation of vulnerability and security, participation and separation reveals protests to be the sights of contradictory processes with potential for both detachments as well as reconnections. While instigating power struggles between the protesters and the institutions protested against, as well as within protest communities themselves, such potential must be placed into the wider context of the particular societies. The protests not only are powerful tools of challenging the status quo but also reinforce it by excluding parts of the society, reproducing social hierarchies of the challenged structures and reinforcing underlying struggles for resources and fears for further dispossessions characteristic to neoliberal societies.

Offering a comprehensive treatment of protests, from rural marginal groups—the specialty of the early anthropology of resistance (e.g., Scott 1985, 1990)—to urban protests such as those studied in the present (e.g., Graeber 2009), this introduction proposes to consider the power in the protest in greater depth than such research has afforded so far, finally, by detailing how performative scripts create rejections. Through that, social as well as political dispossessions blind protest participants to potential collaborators and alliances, even if these could open the eyes of the society to the most fundamental issues. As a result, existing power relations are not challenged but instead reinforced. Even if, on the surface, the protest is to contest normative expectations and to confront the society's rules and regulations, it also reflects and reinforces prevailing divisions, expectations, and norms. Like the *travesti* in Don Kulick's (1996) colorful

essay, the commotion that the protesters cause embodies simultaneously the struggle within as well as against the existing power structures, challenging and re-creating these while excluding other(nes)s that their own expanded messages and community would actually call for.

Ultimately controversial, protests often remain limited in their ability to embrace all affected groups and interested individuals—either because their contributions are awkward or they themselves feel awkward, because of financial restrictions, because the exclusion itself is the whole point of the protests, or because certain groups are so invisible that even highly relevant struggles they could contribute into the protest movement are left unused.

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