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# Recovering

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# Nonviolent

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# History

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Civil Resistance  
in Liberation Struggles

edited by  
Maciej J. Bartkowski



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## Recovering Nonviolent History

*Maciej J. Bartkowski*

*The violence of the few does not withstand the quest for freedom of the many.*

—former German President Christian Wulff,  
speaking on the anniversary of the construction  
of the Berlin Wall, August 13, 2011

Most people look to historical accounts to understand how their own nations emerged and fought for their freedom. Such explanations, whether found in books or imparted through public ceremonies and national memories, often tell of violent battles and insurrections, victories and defeats in wars, and fallen heroes in armed struggles. These narratives support the common belief that violence is the indispensable weapon to win freedom from foreign subjugation, but they ignore the power and historical role that nonviolent civilian-led resistance has played in many national quests for liberation.

This book brings to light the existence and impact of nonviolent organizing and defiance where it has not commonly been noticed. It argues that a number of historical struggles for national self-determination might not necessarily, or even primarily, have been won through violence. Instead, these struggles were decisively waged through diverse methods of nonviolent resistance led by ordinary people.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, during the unfolding process of civil resistance, it was often the force of population-driven, bottom-up, nonviolent mobilization that shaped nations' collective identities (i.e., nationhood) and formed nascent national institutions and authorities (i.e., statehood). These processes were critical for an independent nation-state—more so than structural changes or violent revolutions that dominate the history of revolutionary struggles and nation making.

## **Recovering Civil Resistance**

This book reveals little-known, but important, histories of civil resistance in national struggles for independence and against foreign domination throughout the world in the past 200 years. Often, these histories have been misinterpreted or erased altogether from collective memory, buried beneath nationally eulogized violence, commemorative rituals of glorified death, martyred heroes, and romanticized violent insurrections. In recovering hidden stories of civil resistance that involve diverse types of direct defiance and more subtle forms of everyday, relentless endurance and refusal to submit, this book shows how the actions of ordinary people have undermined the authority and control of foreign hegemons—colonizers and occupiers—and their domestic surrogates. Despite extreme oppression, the repertoire of nonviolent action has often helped societies survive and strengthen their social and cultural fabric, build economic and political institutions, shape national identities, and pave the way to independence. The narrative of the book contains a heuristic inquiry into forgotten or ignored accounts of civil resistance, showing how knowledge about historical events and processes is generated, distorted, and even ideologized in favor of violence-driven, structure-based, or powerholder-centric interpretations.

Glorified violence in the annals of nations, the gendered nature of violence wielded by men, state independence that is seen as having been founded largely on violence (the view reinforced by a state monopoly on violence as a way to maintain that independence), and human attention and media focus (both centered on dramatic and spectacular stories of violence and heroic achievements of single individuals) all dim the light on the quiet, nonviolent resistance of millions. This type of struggle neither captures the headlines nor sinks into people's memories unless it provokes the regime's response and, more often than not, a violent one.

The outcomes of seemingly violent struggles with foreign adversaries have depended to a large degree on the use of political—nonviolent—means rather than arms. Materially and militarily powerful empires and states have been defeated by poorly armed or even completely unarmed opponents not because they met irresistibly violent force, but because the nations found another source of strength—a total mobilization of the population via political, administrative, and ideological tools. Thus, political organizing has been the key ingredient in the people's revolutions that have helped the militarily weaker successfully challenge powerful enemies. Examples include, among others, the Spanish insurrectionists against Napoleon, the Chinese revolutionaries against the Japanese Army, and the North Vietnamese against the United States and its South Vietnamese allies. In all of these supposedly violence-dominated conflicts, military tools were sub-

ordinated to a broader political struggle for the “hearts and minds” of ordinary people.<sup>2</sup>

By recovering the stories of nonviolent actions, this book goes against a tide of prevailing views about struggles against foreign domination that fail to recognize and take into account the role and contribution of civil resistance.

## **Power, Structure, and Agency**

The study of civil resistance presented here represents a paradigmatic shift in the understanding of national struggles and the making of nation-states, which moves away from the traditional focus on structures, conditions, processes, military power, violence, and political elites. This investigation approaches historical knowledge in a novel fashion, recognizing that the force that shapes nations and propels their resistance lies in the organized, purposeful, and defiant actions of an unarmed population. Its nonstate alternative to understanding political power goes against the established Weberian canon of political authority that is top down, centralized, static, material, and elite or institution centric. Instead, the people power perspective emphasizes the fragility and diffused nature of political power, its outside-of-the-state origin, and the agency of ordinary people. Regimes are sustained not merely by their material power, including mechanisms of coercion, but also or primarily by the apathy or ignorance of the common people. The dormant people power becomes apparent with a sudden or gradual collective withdrawal of consent and mass disobedience. This force, according to Mohandas Gandhi (Mahatma), gains its strength from the fact that “even the most powerful cannot rule without the co-operation of the ruled.”<sup>3</sup>

This book shows various mobilizers of the power of agency in liberation struggles. First, there are powerful resources for the emergence and conduct of resistance that lie in culture and are used by local people to resist subjugation. They borrow from existing symbols, rituals, and customs to devise ever more effective strategies and tactics against an oppressor, particularly a foreign one. Religious or cultural ceremonies become occasions to gather and organize in a space not fully controlled by a regime. While engaging in culturally infused resistance, people also create new understandings, meanings, and identities that in turn reinforce unity and resilience of a given collective, mobilize others and spread consciousness, and help nation-building processes. Second, people have the power to independently activate existing or create new nonstate or civic institutions (e.g., religious groups, labor organizations, educational institutions, and civil society associations). These structure-building processes turn out to be a potent weapon of ordinary peo-

ple in waging a protracted struggle for the transformation of their society and its eventual liberation from the control of a foreign oppressor—often without directly challenging the latter or raising unnecessarily its ire until the moment of the movement’s own choosing. Although the book emphasizes the role and impact of agency, it does not disregard structures as they may constitute a crucial part of nonviolent strategies. However, structures remain important insofar as the actions of agency are taken into consideration. At the same time, civil resistance, its trajectories, and even its outcomes are not circumstantial. They are driven and shaped by people’s decisions and actions.

### **The Main Inquiries in This Book**

The case studies in this volume shed light on many key questions, including: What kinds of nonviolent tactics were used in national struggles? What made some nonviolent campaigns successful despite unfavorable conditions and what made others fail or achieve only partial success? What was the impact of diverse acts of civil resistance on the further unfolding of a conflict and its eventual outcomes? How did collective nonviolent actions influence nations, their collective identities, or socioeconomic and political institutions that evolved during the national struggles? Did civil resistance have longer-term consequences on the historical development of these countries? Finally, why do the annals so often ignore the presence and role of civil resistance?

By identifying episodes, periods, and specific campaigns of nonviolent resistance that at particular points in time either constituted a dominant or a sole ingredient behind a national liberation struggle, the case studies answer these questions and so encourage new conversation about the nature, place, and role of nonviolent resistance in state and nation formation.

### **Civil Resistance as Nonviolent Political Contestation**

This book uses the terms *civil resistance*, *nonviolent resistance*, and *nonviolent struggle* to refer to the same basic phenomenon defined as a form of political conflict in which ordinary people choose to stand up to oppressive structures—be it occupation, colonialism, or unjust practices of government—with the use of various tactics of nonviolent action such as strikes, boycotts, protests, and civil disobedience.<sup>4</sup> Such methods include not only overt confrontational actions, but also more subtle forms of cultural resistance or seemingly apolitical work of autonomous associations and parallel institution building. Whether overt or tacit, nonviolent forms of resistance

are a popular expression of people's collective determination to withdraw their cooperation from the powers that be. People can refuse to follow a coerced or internalized system of lies and deception and, thereby, intentionally increase the cost of official control. They also can encourage divisions within an oppressor's pillars of support (e.g., in the ranks of its security forces and military) and exploit the consequences of repressive violence against unarmed resisters by turning them into a strategic advantage for a movement.

Related to its nonviolent nature comes the concept of civil resistance as a separate form of political contestation. This is because action takers wage a battle of ideas in which a movement tries to win popular legitimacy while the authorities struggle to maintain the loyalty of security forces and the neutrality or apathy of the population. The causal ideas behind civil resistance are thoughts and expressions of one or more concrete grievances and demands articulated in articles, pamphlets, leaflets, sermons, speeches, social media, or other means of communication. The ideas and the movements that propagate them may galvanize mass public support, but also face brutal suppression, including physical force wielded by the army or security apparatus of the regime. In that contest, to paraphrase the writings of some authors in this volume, it remains to be seen whether a nonviolent resister such as a writer or a painter can be mightier than the tyrant under whose yoke the population lives.

## **Weaving Together a National Fabric**

Through various creative nonviolent actions aimed at resisting foreign domination, a painstaking process of autonomous state building occurs—both underground and tacit as well as overt and explicit with the skillful use of allowable and available legal and political space. A multitude of repeated acts of participatory and constructive disobedience practiced by ordinary people creates and re-creates a territory-wide architecture of cultural, social, economic, and political alternative practices and norms, often accompanying and supporting more direct and coercive forms of nonviolent tactics.

Next to state building, the practice of civil resistance stipulates yet another transformational force, namely, reimagining communities and awakening them to their shared values, common history, collective understanding, and unifying vision of their cultural, linguistic, social, and political roots as well as a communal life and destiny in a defined public space. Civil resistance is thus an instrument—not necessarily visible to the foreign occupier or well understood by those who practice it—that helps develop people's sense of patriotism and their attachment to their newly invented interwoven time line of memories, relations, and events that sew the fabric of an imagined nation.

## Liberation Struggles Through Civil Resistance Campaigns

This book looks at cases that can be classified as *popular liberation* or *self-rule struggles*, which include struggles for independence or self-determination and against occupation, colonial control, or foreign domination—the latter often represented by an indigenous government subservient to outside interests. These cases might otherwise share common issues (e.g., mobilizing unarmed people and challenging oppressive and violent systems) with *rights-based* or *rule-of-law struggles*—but covering these two types of struggle that also include recent anti-dictatorship upheavals in the Arab world is beyond the scope of this book.<sup>5</sup>

Historically, liberation or self-rule struggles in which civil resistance is a predominant method of waging resistance have been uncommon. For example, as of this writing, the most systemic and methodologically rigorous dataset on civil resistance cases that allows for scholarly validation and transferability—Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO 1.0)—identifies 106 mass-based nonviolent struggles against dictatorships, occupation, and self-determination that occurred between 1900 and 2006.<sup>6</sup> Of this number only twenty-one campaigns can be classified, according to the criteria of this volume, as belonging to popular liberation or self-rule struggles. This book describes in detail four of these twenty-one cases, and, in addition, includes a number of other, lesser-known, instances that date as far back as the eighteenth century, through undertaking in-depth analysis of sometimes decades-long, country-specific nonviolent resistance campaigns. What emerges is a collection of culturally, religiously, temporally, and spatially diverse cases in which the role and impact of civil resistance have historically been understudied and poorly understood.<sup>7</sup>

The thematic coverage of this book goes beyond single disciplinary boundaries and its research speaks to a number of scholarly streams. It examines the cases through analytical and empirical lenses of the history of revolutionary and independence struggles, nationalism studies, the sociology of social movements, comparative and contentious politics, and strategic nonviolent conflict. This book is intended for students and scholars interested in accounting in their research for the purposeful agency of ordinary people who organize social movements and the strategic dimension of the use of nonviolent action in political conflicts. In addition, this volume will be of interest to policy professionals, practitioners, activists, and nonspecialists who look for a greater historical understanding of the phenomenon of popular nonviolent uprisings in order to better comprehend the major unarmed upheavals of recent years and search for inspiration and lessons that can be derived from the nonviolent history of their own or other countries.

## **The Structure of This Book**

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 considers how mass-based nonviolent resistance can create and re-create national identities and how existing collective identities can enhance or constrain a movement's repertoire of nonviolent tactics. While focusing on the interrelationship and mutually influencing effects of nonviolent resistance and the process of national identity formation, the chapter bridges two distinct and typically segregated disciplines: those of social movements and strategic nonviolent conflict.<sup>8</sup> This leads to fifteen empirical cases assembled by major geographical regions: sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, Asia and Oceania, Europe, and the Americas. The cases within each region are presented chronologically.

The choice of case studies emphasizes historical examples that have been relatively underresearched from the perspective of civil resistance. This is why there is no chapter on the independence struggle most commonly associated with nonviolent resistance, namely, India. That is not to say that the Indian independence movement does not warrant further study,<sup>9</sup> but the authors of this volume came to believe that lesser-known instances of nonviolent resistance need to be brought to light in order to inform and expand empirical and theoretical knowledge and identify areas for further inquiry. Other cases of nonviolent independence struggles not present in this book include those of the Baltic countries, whose national resistance against Soviet occupation has been described elsewhere.<sup>10</sup> Latin America—Cuba apart—also remains underrepresented in this book and there is an obvious need for future research to ascertain the role of nonviolent resistance against colonialism and during independence in that region. Yet another study not included in this volume but important to consider for future research—given continued violence in the region—is that of the Pashtuns who, under the leadership of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, organized an unarmed militia of one hundred thousand people known as “Red Shirts” (from the color of their military-like uniform) that fought the British nonviolently throughout the 1930s in what is now the western tribal areas of Pakistan.<sup>11</sup>

Another important criterion used for case selection in this book was the presence in a given society of narratives that glorify military might and violent insurrection. Several chapters refer to the presence of an exaggerated narrative of violent resistance as a significant reason explaining the historical oblivion to which many stories of nonviolent resistance have been relegated. The consequences of such marginalization and amnesia surrounding nonviolent history were apparent when a respected mainstream media columnist sincerely, though naïvely, offered his recommendations about nonviolent resistance to none other than the Palestinians<sup>12</sup>—a population



that, as Chapter 9 shows, has a rich tradition of popular nonviolent struggle and a much longer historical experience with peaceful resistance than many contemporary commentators who were mesmerized by the 2011 Arab Spring realize. Chapter 9 on Palestine and Chapter 12 on West Papua stand out as representing ongoing conflicts with largely hidden records of nonviolent resistance. West Papua warrants further comparative analysis with other struggles for independence from Indonesia, notably in East Timor and in the Aceh region.<sup>13</sup>

The cases in this book were also selected in an attempt to represent major geographical areas, historically different periods, diverse cultures, distinct religions, and varied systems of governance and political control ranging from the dominance of an ethnic group within a multiethnic state to countries that were subject to conquest, colonialism, occupation, partition, foreign domination, and indirect forms of foreign rule through co-opted or coerced domestic proxies.

Last, the conclusion expands on the insights derived from the empirical studies beyond the ones mentioned in this introduction, including the issue of masculinity, transnationalization, and dynamics of nonviolent resistance and forward-looking arguments about the role, impact, and development of civil resistance as a practice and a field of study. The appendix that follows the conclusion includes conflict summaries that list methods and impact of nonviolent actions discussed in the chapters.

## **An Overview of the Case Studies**

### *Sub-Saharan Africa*

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 on Ghana, Zambia, and Mozambique, respectively, touch briefly on a diffuse Africa-wide, anticolonial, decades-long movement known as pan-Africanism, which was instrumental in raising consciousness about imperial oppression, advocating for national liberation of colonially subjugated peoples, and creating a transnational platform of conferences where topics such as strategies and tactics to achieve independence were discussed and formulated. During the Fifth Pan-African Congress in Manchester, England, in 1945 the African participants, including Kwame Nkrumah (the leader of Ghana's independence struggle and its future president), called for mass-based, popular actions as the first and most appropriate means to fight for independence. Pan-Africanism and the solidarity and support that it engendered played an important role in popularizing nonviolent means of resistance and underscored the struggles for self-determination of the African nations.<sup>14</sup>

In Ghana, Zambia, and Mozambique an important element of nonviolent defiance, which often preceded more open and direct forms of nonviolent resistance, was grassroots organizing in the form of voluntary and professional self-help associations, cooperatives, and unions. Even during the national struggle in Mozambique, seemingly dominated by armed insurrection, the Mozambican Liberation Front (FRELIMO) pursued broad, mass-based strategies of organizing and building institutions that were implemented in the liberated zones. The origin of these activities can be traced to the decades of nonviolent civic mobilization, direct action, and use of parallel institutions in the form of mutual aid cooperatives that preceded armed resistance. Chapter 3 on Ghana and Chapter 4 on Zambia acknowledge the important role of their leaders and subsequent presidents, Kwame Nkrumah and Kenneth Kaunda, in ensuring nonviolent discipline and carrying out mass-based nonviolent tactics, but they emphasize even more so the collective actions led by hundreds of thousands of ordinary people that gave thrust to the work of revolutionary leaders.

#### *North Africa and the Middle East*

“Many Arabs,” Ralph Crow and Philip Grant note, “think of their tradition as valuing chivalry, courage, and the open confrontation of opponents, [and therefore] they wonder how a system of resistance that rejects the use of arms can be considered part of their heritage.”<sup>15</sup> In fact, Chapter 6 on Algeria and Chapter 7 on Egypt show the extent to which nonviolent resistance has been a recurrent feature of Arab life that is compatible with various forms of Islam and an indispensable element of the struggle against foreign invaders. Furthermore, the most recent popular revolts, now commonly referred to as the Arab Spring and the earlier Green Movement in Iran, underscore the continuing relevance of historical precedents from Egypt, Algeria, Iran, and Palestine that are reexamined in this book. Indeed, these historical examples help open up a further understanding of the regime’s current politics as well as civilian organizing despite inhibiting conditions.

In Iran, a glorified narrative of political violence propagated by the Shah’s regime and Islamic Republic and their censored media has reinforced a general lack of recognition in the Iranian historical and political discourse of legitimate means of struggle other than violence. Nevertheless, ordinary Iranians have frequently resorted to the use of popular nonviolent resistance. This has occurred recently (such as in the Green Movement or the 1979 Iranian revolution) as well as nearly a century earlier in the tobacco movement of 1891–1892 and the constitutional revolution of 1905–1907 to oppose foreign domination and the rulers’ lack of responsiveness to people’s demands. As in other struggles, many Iranians drew inspiration for

their peaceful resistance from religious influences. They used nonviolent actions in a deliberate, planned form to facilitate coalition building and forge unity across sects, professions, and classes to annul tobacco concessions for foreigners and later to press for broader political and constitutional changes.

Chapter 9 on Palestine challenges conventional wisdom by showing that nonviolent resistance against occupation required not only obtaining the support of international third parties, but also inducing political and social changes in the opponent (i.e., the Israelis). As the first Palestinian intifada illustrates, an opponent's lack of constructive response can undermine advocates of nonviolent actions and strengthen the appeal of violent forms of struggle. Thus far, John F. Kennedy's famous warning that "those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable"<sup>16</sup> has not been fully learned. On May 15, 2011, the Palestinian Nakba Day (day of the catastrophe) that marks the Israeli Independence Day, masses of unarmed Palestinians marched to the Israeli border from Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip only to face violence. Violent response can backfire against the perpetrators—as a number of examples in this volume show—but believing that nonviolent actions cannot change opponents' policies can lead to disillusionment among nonviolent activists and give more importance to advocates of armed struggle. In many nonviolent struggles, the intransigence of an opponent and the obduracy of third parties who support the opponent provide fuel for those who favor armed resistance. The issue is further complicated in situations where advocacy of nonviolent struggle might (sometimes willfully) be misinterpreted as denial of a population's right to choose its own means of struggle. Chapter 9 shows the relative effectiveness of nonviolent strategies compared with military action, particularly when framed in terms of community self-governance and basic human rights.

The narratives and images of venerated wars of independence—recounted in Chapters 5, 10, 11, 15, and 16 on Mozambique, Burma, Bangladesh, Kosovo, and the United States, respectively—have shaped thinking and writing about the Algerian self-determination struggle introduced in Chapter 6. The history of the Algerian resistance lies hidden in subtle forms of nonviolent defiance such as social boycotts, individual and collective withdrawal from the public sphere, autonomous cultural and religious activism, and more visible and direct forms of nonviolent resistance that were used by the population well before the independence war. Through the pursuit of nonviolent action and despite extremely unfavorable conditions Algerians—like Poles—managed to preserve and expand their distinctive culture and develop a sense of "Algerianness," even though—similarly to Mozambique, Kosovo, Iran, or the United States—nonviolent resistance was shunted aside by armed struggle.

When the January 25, 2011, nonviolent revolution in Egypt—using strikingly similar methods of nonviolent resistance as the forerunners in 1919–1921—brought down a dictator, the history of the Egyptian resistance against foreign domination and British colonial occupation became a more significant and symbolic legacy. Important practices of nonviolent action used by ordinary Egyptians to challenge oppression and resist colonization were apparent throughout the nineteenth century. As various forms of Christianity (e.g., in Zambia, Ghana, and West Papua) have offered either inspiration (e.g., the image of Christ who struggled nonviolently against injustice) or normative foundations (e.g., the call for equality regardless of race, color, or ethnic heritage) for nonviolent defiance, similarly Islamic teaching has played a part in shaping nonviolent resistance in countries such as Egypt, Algeria, and Iran. While describing various nonviolent tactics and their outcomes, Chapter 7 on Egypt—in the same vein as various other chapters—highlights the potential formative impact of civil resistance on Egyptian national identity and statehood.

### *Asia and Oceania*

As described in Chapter 10, to boost its own credibility, the ruling Burmese military junta has glorified the role of the military and armed resistance in the historic anticolonial, nationalist movement against British rule. This process has been seen elsewhere, such as in the propaganda of the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN) that invoked its victorious armed struggle to legitimize continued, undemocratic leadership. However, often overlooked is the way that Burmese nonviolent campaigns and constructive programs undermined British colonial rule from 1910 to 1940 and shaped Burmese national identity. People in Burma were inspired by and continued their activities in emulation of the Indian independence movement led by Gandhi—a fact that remains relatively unknown in Burma. Burmese, like Indians, spun and wore their own native cloth (*pinni*), a symbol of resistance against British rule. In India, Gandhi referred to homespun cloth as “the livery of freedom” because he wanted to unify all Indians in the independence struggle, including the poorest. This was also the case in the Burmese anticolonial struggle as well as in West Papua and, indeed, much earlier in civil resistance of the American colonists against the British. The Burmese national resistance in the 1920s and 1930s had also been waged with the use of a repertoire of nonviolent tactics strikingly similar to those deployed by the Burmese opposition against the military dictatorship since 1988.

The case of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) in Chapter 11 offers accounts of civil resistance movements that remain relatively unknown to non-Bengali readers. Until the nine-month-long bloody war that captured the attention of the world and led to the liberation of Bangladesh in December 1971, the

struggle for the right to national self-expression and self-determination was fought through the use of civil resistance methods and strategies. Two nonviolent struggles are particularly notable for their impressive mobilization and impact, namely, the Bangla language movement in the 1940s and 1950s and the March 1971 nonviolent national uprising. The language movement increased Bengalis' national awareness and fueled their continued resistance while less than a month of nationwide civil resistance in the form of civic organizing, demonstrations, strikes, and mass civil disobedience in March 1971 led to the de facto independence of East Pakistan prior to the outbreak of war—a result similar to the outcomes of the American nonviolent struggle against the British.

Chapter 12 on West Papua provides an altogether fresh venue for resistance on behalf of self-determination. Contrary to a romanticized “Avatar” vision of an indigenous population equipped with primitive weapons taking on the modern machinery of the Indonesian police and military, West Papuans developed a philosophy and practice of resisting injustice and fighting for greater autonomy and independence using nonviolent means of action. This culturally validated resistance has been fed and reinforced by the West Papuans' sense of national identity. Similar to Chapter 9 on Palestine, the West Papuan case shows that, if nonviolent resistance for independence is framed in terms of universal democratic values and human rights, it can have a stronger resonance with civil society and human rights advocates in the occupying countries as well as with the international community. This, in turn, helps the oppressed population build solidarity with other groups and empathy for its struggle.

### *Europe*

Chapter 13 describes the Hungarian resistance against the Austrian Habsburg Empire during the 1850s and 1860s that took the form of a nonviolent, though active and coercive, national confrontation. This reality contrasts with the term *passive resistance* that had been commonly used—sometimes in a derogatory way—to describe this struggle. As in Ghana and Zambia, the case of Hungary highlights the role of a national leader—Ferenc Deák—in articulating, mobilizing, and sustaining nonviolent resistance. Even without Deák's leadership Hungarians would in all likelihood have waged a nonviolent struggle, although his guidance helped the internal integrity of the movement and ensured its robust, multiyear nonviolent discipline. The strength of the Hungarian defiance came precisely from the fact that the resistance was mass based, decentralized, and without a singular operational leader whose arrest would have jeopardized the movement's survival. Just as Ghana's nonviolent struggle enthused other African nations, the Hungarian nonviolent resistance for an equal political status in the Habsburg Empire became a transnational

cause célèbre for other nationalist movements, ranging from Ireland and Finland to India.

The Polish case presented in Chapter 14 addresses a common theme of nonviolent resistance beneath valorized violence and makes explicit a truth that many chapters in this volume reveal—that formation of a nation, particularly under occupation, partition, or colonialism, is not a predetermined process. Denationalization by externally imposed partitioning—when three empires (Prussia, Austria, and Russia) divided Poland among themselves—failed because people decided to resist through sociocultural organizing and educational and commemoration campaigns, along with direct action such as petitions, civil disobedience, strikes, and demonstrations. As is apparent in examples from Africa, the United States, and Asia, civil resistance was used strategically to defend Polish society, reinforce social solidarity, and strengthen the process of national identity formation and state building.

Similar to the struggles in Mozambique and in Algeria, Kosovo's national resistance described in Chapter 15 is selectively remembered for the armed struggle led by the Kosovo Liberation Army. Yet nonviolent resistance prevented the outbreak of war at the time when it would have been most disastrous—before the other wars of Yugoslav succession and when Kosovo was internationally isolated. During their decade-long nonviolent resistance, Kosovo Albanians were able to maintain their own community in the face of Serbian repression and educate international opinion about their rights. As in Cuba, Bangladesh, and Palestine, the nonviolent resistance practiced in Kosovo laid the foundation for the emergence of civil society and a fledgling democratic culture, notwithstanding the fact that these achievements were rapidly undermined by a shift from collective nonviolent action in favor of armed struggle. Though, given the Serbs' military superiority, it is doubtful that violence by the Kosovars alone could have achieved independence if not for military intervention by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Furthermore, the rise of independent Kosovo through violent insurgency and war brought tremendous political and socioeconomic challenges. Mozambique, Algeria, and Burma saw similar postconflict problems.

### *The Americas*

Chapter 16 on the United States and Chapter 17 on the Cuban independence struggles address a mythologized and glorified violent version of history that suppresses narratives about the role and importance of nonviolent forms of resistance. In the case of the American Revolution, emphasis on armed struggle has largely hidden from view the reality that there was a decade-long civil resistance against British taxes and edicts that preceded the outbreak of violence. In Cuba, the exaltation of heroic guerrilla warfare led civilian reformist movements to be labeled as reactionary, lacking patriotic

virtues, and undermining the cause of the armed uprising. Both chapters highlight civil and nonviolent cultural, social, economic, and political mobilization as well as the use of direct collective actions such as popular disobedience, boycotts, public processions, celebrations, demonstrations, and other acts of defiance. In the United States, these actions were effective in liberating most of the colonies from British control before the war broke out and helped to lay the basis for future political and civic institutions in the postindependence era. In the case of Cuba, such actions achieved greater constitutional rights and political autonomy, and laid important foundations for the emergence of a resilient civil society. In both examples, the successes associated with grassroots nonviolent resistance were undermined by violent revolutionary fervor that often weakened popular participation, polarized the society, and produced far more casualties and material destruction than nonviolent resistance.

### **The Book's Contributions**

The chapters in this book make important academic and intellectual contributions in several areas:

1. *Civil resistance*, including its small acts of resistance, less visible forms of defiance through institution building, and the interplay among direct and indirect methods of nonviolent action;
2. *Liberation struggles*, including a critical analysis of violence-centric narratives of the quest for independence and consequences of romanticized violence;
3. *National identity formation and state making*, through the inclusion of a conceptual framework of civil resistance.

This book also raises a number of other, no less important, considerations and issues. Described in greater detail in the concluding chapter, these include the agency of unarmed people that overcomes adversarial conditions with nonviolent actions, the dominance of masculinist narratives that occlude the role of civil resistance and women in particular, the impact of third parties and transnational networks, the historical diffusion of knowledge about waging nonviolent conflict, the diversity of tactics and tactical innovation, the enduring impact of civil resistance, and the emergence of civil resistance as a new field of study.

### *Civil Resistance Study*

The practice of civil resistance has opened new and more versatile opportunities for political change that regional experts and other political theorists

have excluded or repeatedly failed to anticipate—as with the Arab Spring—because the possibilities of people’s collective action have not been treated seriously.<sup>17</sup> In that sense, the fact that the phenomenon of civil resistance has been increasingly acknowledged in recent years is a triumph of reality over preconceived elite- or structure-based or violence-centric notions that usually define traditional social science disciplines.

In the period since the publication of Gene Sharp’s seminal work *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* in 1973,<sup>18</sup> the literature on nonviolent conflict has expanded considerably. A select bibliography of English-language publications on civil resistance and related subjects is included at the end of this volume. Partly, this growth in publications is a response to events: Roberts and Garton Ash’s *Civil Resistance and Power Politics* (2009)<sup>19</sup> contains numerous case studies of civil resistance in the 1990s and 2000s, yet since then the unarmed challenges to autocracy in North Africa and the Middle East have created a need for further inquiries into cases in the new decade.

Certain salient themes have been developed in greater depth—the study of strategy, tactics, and organizing in nonviolent resistance;<sup>20</sup> historical case studies and narratives of nonviolent movements;<sup>21</sup> the mechanisms by which repression backfires against those in power and how resisters can magnify its impact despite their opponents’ attempt to attenuate it;<sup>22</sup> and the forms and role of transnational solidarity.<sup>23</sup> Additional recent research has covered the quantitative study of the relative effectiveness of nonviolent and armed campaigns;<sup>24</sup> the qualitative and comparative analysis of both failed and successful nonviolent movements;<sup>25</sup> and the disciplinary gap between social movement theory and nonviolent action analysis.<sup>26</sup>

The book contributes to this body of literature in a number of ways, including by emphasizing the role and impact of indirect and nonpolitical forms of civil resistance on national struggles. The lessons from the case studies reveal a complex picture of the way that people challenged oppressive foreign influence and presence. Their resistance was not always about open, direct forms of contention, but often about less glamorous, less spectacular, and sometimes indiscernible-as-resistance actions that relied on seemingly unchallenging, low-profile, everyday sociocultural activities that did, in due course, erode and shake up predatory rule, no matter how violent or thorough it was.

*Indirect and direct methods of resistance.* Careful analysis of the methods of nonviolent resistance found in each case study in this book uncovers rich, but subtle, methods of defiance often hidden in everyday life—a seemingly ordinary type of human action that can represent a powerful form of rejection of a dominant political reality. Many populations have resisted cultural domination and denationalization through tactics that could be described as antlike, stubborn endurance to ensure collective survival in the midst of severe oppression, within a limited public space for independ-



ent political activities. This attitude is equivalent to what the Palestinians refer to as *sumud*—steadfastness and perseverance or what is known as “existence is resistance”: merely staying in place or on the land in the face of oppression becomes itself a form of defiance.<sup>27</sup> This subaltern type of resistance—as highlighted in a number of chapters—has often been confined to private, family, and individual spheres of life or has taken the form of less risky, lower-profile, and seemingly nonpolitical and benign actions such as celebrations of cultural figures; wearing homemade cloth; organizing street theater, public performances, artistic exhibitions; or setting up and running economic, cultural, mutual aid, sport, music, or literary clubs and circles.<sup>28</sup> Some observers describe this type of actions as “everyday forms of resistance” or “small acts of resistance.”<sup>29</sup>

One version of this form of defiance is known as Svejism—named after the actions of a fictional character of the Czech soldier Svejik enlisted in the Austro-Hungarian Army. The comedy of his botched implementation of orders, with its ambiguity between incompetence and disobedience, has given its name to the small-scale, hidden defiance of people working in political and military institutions.<sup>30</sup> Another version of everyday resistance is seen in colonized Egypt and Algeria where the seemingly innocent act of wearing a veil became a powerful symbol of enduring opposition against foreign authorities. In the essay “Shooting an Elephant,” George Orwell—who held little faith in the power of nonviolent actions<sup>31</sup>—recounts, as it appears, his personal experience of living in Burma in the 1920s. As a British police officer, he was the subject of exasperating small acts of resistance that often took the form of contemptuous and mocking verbal exploits. The “natives,” in the words of the essay’s narrator, “baited whenever it seemed safe to do so.” Orwell explains further:

When a nimble Burman tripped me up on the football field and the referee (another Burman) looked the other way, the crowd yelled with hideous laughter. This happened more than once. In the end the sneering yellow faces of young men that met me everywhere, the insults hooted after me when I was at a safe distance, got badly on my nerves. The young Buddhist priests were the worst of all. There were several thousands of them in the town and none of them seemed to have anything to do except stand on the street corners and jeer at Europeans. [Later in the text, the narrator concludes,] and my whole life, every white man’s life in the East, was one long struggle not to be laughed at.<sup>32</sup>

Decades later and in a different country, ingenious benevolent protests of everyday defiance are taking place on the streets of Minsk against the authoritarian regime of Belarusian president Aleksandr Lukashenko.<sup>33</sup> Silent and do-nothing gatherings, public clapping, phone beeping set for specific times, and stuffed rabbits and bears holding protest signs at a bus stop in the country’s capital or falling down from the sky are all expressions of dissent that have provoked surreal police action (e.g., arrests of protesting

teddy bears) against harmless and mundane activities, making the authorities look absurd and lose legitimacy. While striving to maintain nonviolent discipline (later overtaken by violence) and diversify their civil resistance strategies and tactics, Syrians undertook creative and lower-risk activism in the form of dyeing public fountains red to symbolize the blood of the civil protesters killed across the country since the uprising began in March 2011, releasing balloons with freedom messages, or gluing the door locks of government offices.<sup>34</sup> Across the world, in the more open societies of Chile and the Philippines, young people are demonstrating against their government by carrying out mass kiss-in protests, jogging around the clock, circling the presidential palace, or planking highways and state institutions.<sup>35</sup>

In normal times these types of action would not be considered resistance. Yet under circumstances of oppression, such obvious but non-provocative defiance can demonstrate deep and persistent opposition and put the government in a dilemma because suppressing the actions will expose the brutality, abnormality, and autocracy of those in power. Despite their importance and force, memories of these kinds of action fade and, as Chapter 6 on Algeria emphasizes, they have left few historical records. This may be partly because these everyday forms of hidden nonviolent rebellion are often tails of the dog that did not bark and, thus, lack the overt contestation, drama, and spectacle of violent struggle.

An important element of the indirect form of resistance described in a number of chapters was the development of an autonomous society with every aspect of self-rule well before a formal independence was achieved. Often, it took the form of society's own schooling system, self-managed economic cooperatives, social services organizations, and judicial or quasi-governing institutions. The idea was not to take the fight directly—with the use of collective actions—to a more powerful and brutal adversary but rather to transform the society first and, through that transformation, liberate it from the control of the foreign occupier. This was a stealth resistance more than an open confrontation. Society was seen as a social organism that could grow, defy foreign authorities, and defend itself via its own self-organization, self-attainment, and self-improvement. Such nonviolent resistance was forceful, but gradual and protracted. It thus not only could be measured by the outcomes of undermining its adversary, but also by the process of societal work through alternative institution building that instills greater unity, solidarity, mobilization, and resilience in the society. This type of indirect resistance, through the creation and seemingly apolitical work of numerous legal, semilegal, or banned grassroots institutions in the economic, social, judicial, or educational spheres became the type of silent but salient resistance akin to Assef Bayat's notion of "quiet encroachment of the ordinary."<sup>36</sup> They were coercive, but nonviolent acts, in the protracted struggle of the destitute population against foreign powers, its domestic surrogates, or both.

This type of alternative institution building or associationalism has often helped to create sounder ground for waging more direct nonviolent actions against a more powerful enemy that required greater mobilization and unity. In that sense, indirect resistance through institutions of societal development and education became a tool that a well-known, nineteenth-century, Syrian-born Arab reformist, Abd al Rahman al-Kawakibi, regarded as the necessary step for setting up appropriate conditions before a fully fledged peaceful resistance takes on despotism.<sup>37</sup> This was also the means for civil resisters to redress a huge asymmetry of force between themselves and their adversary by rendering its military superiority useless when confronted by a withdrawn, self-organized society. Yet another feature of indirect resistance of self-organized alternative institutions was a creation of an organic link between ordinary life and work on one hand and resistance on the other. There was no life beyond resistance and no resistance beyond life. Often, a sense of people's own prospects was fused with the prospect of the movement and the struggle, creating an existential unity between the two. Finally, indirect acts of resistance in the form of self-managed institutional life that empowered people and engendered the resistance in the fabric of a nation played an important role in turning the victims of oppression into self-conscious individuals aware of their powers and the sources of their captivity. Al-Kawakibi believed that people "themselves are the cause of what has been inflicted upon them, and that they should blame neither foreigners nor fate but rather ignorance (*al-jahl*), lack of endeavor (*faqd al-humam*), and apathy (*al-taw kul*), all of which prevail over society."<sup>38</sup> This echoes the views of al-Kawakibi's older Polish contemporary, the philosopher Józef Szujski, who points out that the guilt of falling into the predatory hands of foreign powers lay in the oppressed society and, thus, the solution and liberation need to come from that society transformed through its work, education, and civility. Victims and the seemingly disempowered are thus their own liberators as long as they pursue self-organization, self-attainment, and development of their communities.

The chapters in this book also show an interesting dynamic between direct forms of resistance and more subtle forms of defiance, whereby everyday and barely noticed acts of civil resistance were closely intertwined with or paved the way for more direct and demonstrable forms of nonviolent actions. The latter development often exhibited a growing consolidation of national identity, a realistic assessment of costs and risks of disruptive activities, and better skills in planning and collective organizing as well as reflected the memory of lost armed insurrections, emerging new opportunities due to external geopolitical changes (i.e., regional or global wars) or development and popularization of new means of communication (at various times, print technology, the telegraph, and radio well before the communications revolution of recent years). Helped by these shifts, people have begun to devise and plan methodically and, thus, develop more direct and

forceful actions in order to put overt pressure on the authorities. These more confrontational engagements often involved ever-growing participation of wider swathes of the society who directly and immediately challenged the authorities and their control over land and population. In this way, nonviolent struggle expanded beyond subtle forms of social organizing and campaigning for greater autonomy and political freedoms to encompass mass-based actions that were filled with explicit nationwide demands for self-rule and independence.

### *Study of Liberation Struggles*

This book offers insights into the historical study of liberation and independence movements by discussing the relationship between armed and unarmed struggle during the fight for statehood.

Armed struggle and civil resistance have had different relationships in different contexts and in different phases of conflict. In some cases, both types of resistance coexisted such as in Algeria after 1952 and Mozambique after 1960. In cases of Cuba, Iran, and Egypt, civil resistance was interrupted intermittently by outbursts of violent insurrection. In Hungary, Poland, and West Papua, armed struggle was replaced by civil resistance while in the United States, Burma, Kosovo, and Algeria civil resistance preceded and was overtaken by violent rebellion. Thus, far from decontextualizing nonviolent forms of contention from violent resistance, this book offers a more nuanced and realistic perspective on nationalist movements and liberation struggles. These movements and struggles relied on an impressive repertoire of civil resistance campaigns that were sometimes interspersed temporally or spatially with violence but, in other cases, were in competition with or opposed to armed insurrection.

One groundbreaking quantitative study on the comparative efficacy of armed struggle and civil resistance evaluated the outcomes of violent and nonviolent campaigns for independence, secession, and anti-dictatorship struggles between 1900 and 2006. It found that the rate of success of civil resistance campaigns was more than two and a half times higher than the rate of its failures and more than twice as successful as their armed counterparts.<sup>39</sup> Those data, together with the qualitative studies included in this book, challenge a common, often exaggerated and glorified perception about the role of arms in winning a country's freedom—one borne of the influence of military historians on the nationalist imagination, the enduring legacy of Homeric literature on Western-educated political establishments, and the classism of elite refusal to acknowledge the influence of ordinary people on pivotal events in national histories.

Often, once statehood has been achieved, martyrology of violent struggle has served victorious military and political forces to amplify their own role in bringing about independence and to justify their ascent and tenure in

power. However, even if martyrology has been closely linked with armed struggle, the past and present reality is more complex since the eulogization of life sacrifice may also be part of civil resistance. For example, as Chapter 11 on Bangladesh shows, the unarmed activists of the nonviolent Bangla language movement who were killed while defending their right to use Bangla became immortalized in national annals as martyrs. Nowadays, Palestinians, Egyptians, Syrians, Bahrainis, and Yemenis want to recognize their fallen nonviolent activists as martyrs. Martyrology can be seen both as a strategy to mobilize supporters and as a human, emotional response to recognize and value the courage of ordinary people who fought—whether with arms or nonviolently—against a more powerful and ruthless foe and, thereby, inspired others to rise up.

*National liberation through violent contestation.* Many chapters in this book suggest that national historical narratives, discourse, and commemorations fail to acknowledge the role of civil resistance in movements for self-determination. Struggles for independence against occupation or foreign control have been inextricably linked with the rise of nationalism-fueled violence, venerated military heroes, and mythologized chronicles of victimhood and glorified martyrs who fought against brutal and usually more powerful foes.<sup>40</sup> This, in turn, has reinforced the rarely questioned popular assumption that armed force must have been the dominant or decisive means of waging independence struggles. In addition, the tendencies to use the term *revolution* as a synonym for independence struggles and to identify revolution with violence (even some popular academic encyclopedias define “revolution” as a “fundamental and violent change”<sup>41</sup>) suggest a revolutionary hegemonic heritage that leads to a willful amnesia of the existence and denial of the legitimacy and viability of an alternative means of struggle other than violence. Where and when civil resistance has emerged during nationalist struggles, it often has been viewed as a somehow less manly, less consequential, and less patriotic endeavor than armed insurrection. This deprecating view of civil resistance has by no means been limited to violent revolutionaries. A prominent political theorist, Michael Walzer, for example, openly criticizes and devalues nonviolent resistance as “a disguised form of surrender” and “a minimalist way of upholding communal values after a military defeat.”<sup>42</sup>

Therefore, it should not be surprising that mainstream media unintentionally or otherwise often propagate violence-focused interpretations of independence. For example, a columnist from a newspaper as reputable as *The Guardian* who, in defense of his argument that independence comes on the eve of important political rather than legal developments, stated that “In 1776, American independence came at the muzzle of a musket, not in the form of a lawsuit against George III.”<sup>43</sup> Providentially, Chapter 16 on the United States addresses this common misconception by showing that, in

reality, most of the American colonies gained their de facto independence before the war began through reliance on and use of nonmilitary actions of resistance. These actions were not lawsuits—the British Crown in fact considered them illegal—but neither were they shoot-outs or violent battles: they involved effective mass nonviolent noncooperation with British laws and customs and the establishment of new associations and institutions.

The conventional wisdom is that, in the struggle for statehood, there is much at stake for the local indigenous population as well as for a foreign occupier or hegemon. The former fights for its own country while the latter wants to maintain its territorial integrity and imperial dominance. An independence struggle is thus a maximalist or existential conflict for the occupied people who are fighting for their own survival against potential cultural or political, if not physical, annihilation. Conversely, a foreign power historically has invested so much of its own political capital, economic resources, and human lives in occupying or indirectly controlling a country that it perceives possible withdrawal or loss of influence over the territory as an intolerable national humiliation and a threat to global or regional hegemony that could encourage others under its colonial control to rebel. With such intense and vested interest, violence instigated and perpetrated by both sides is expected; it is common and inevitable. Because independence movements encompass such an enormous capacity for militancy, and because violence is often viewed as the strongest expression of that militancy, it is difficult for some to shift their intellectual and ontological paradigm away from violence toward the presence of nonviolent resistance and its potential historical impact.

Moreover, the cases included in this volume point to the conscious application and strategic use of nonviolent resistance, which long preceded its use by Gandhi. Many natural civil resisters before the twentieth century demonstrably understood—through their choice of nonviolent means of struggle—the futility or dire consequences of armed uprisings while also sensing the benefits of relying on nonviolent methods of struggle at a specific time of their nation's history.

*Dangers of violent struggle.* As a matter of fact, violent insurrections are more likely to have lethal consequences for purposeful causes than nonviolent resistance. The former has often hijacked and compromised what civil resistance had previously achieved. When military options have supplanted or supplemented nonviolent resistance, adverse consequences have included an increasingly militarized and polarized society, a destroyed socioeconomic infrastructure, weaker political institutions, and a culture of violence impregnated in politics and society during the struggle that persists even if a government transition is achieved. Armed resistance can quickly undermine nonviolent mobilization across and solidarity between various societal groups, endanger economic and

social progress, and hinder or regress development of nascent autonomous democratic institutions and civil society (Cuba, Kosovo, Algeria, and Palestine). In addition to its economic toll, the human and social costs of violent struggle in many cases greatly surpass those of civil resistance (the United States). Insurgent violence also provides justification for and reduces the political legitimacy costs of repression perpetrated by a movement's adversary. Moreover, in the name of military necessity, armed struggles often abandon the very values (e.g., representing and being accountable to the nation's people) that ostensibly inspire them. This in turn engenders the type of behavior and practices conducive to the emergence of authoritarian regimes (Burma, Algeria, and Mozambique). Those who turn to violence rarely analyze dispassionately the risks and costs of their methods and fail to recognize that it is much harder to end an armed struggle than to begin one. Sometimes they mistakenly see arms as a shortcut and lack an appreciation of what has already been achieved through civil resistance: for example, the remarkable degree to which nonviolent actions have liberated societies from the control of occupiers (the United States, Bangladesh, and Burma).

Some of the case studies point to the possibility that civil resistance was also used instrumentally—at times instinctively and at other times deliberately—as a prelude (as in Poland and Kosovo) or complement (as in Mozambique and Algeria) to armed resistance. Even in such circumstances, however, the impact of civil resistance should be recognized. In some cases, civil resistance had a direct role in forcing foreign authorities to grant these countries formal independence (Ghana, Zambia, and Egypt) or equal political status within an empire (Hungary). More often, it accelerated the gradual process of liberation from foreign domination relative to the outside-imposed subjugation that the populations endured earlier (as in almost all cases included in this book). The point of these histories is not to suggest that the countries could not have gained independence without nonviolent struggle or that civil resistance alone was responsible. Rather, independence came as soon as it did—and often the societies and nascent civic and state institutions had been developed and thus were better prepared for independence—partly because of reliance on civil resistance, which had a profound effect on nation and state building. (For illustrations of the latter point, see the following subsection on national identity formation and state making; the analysis of the impact of civil resistance on collective identities in Chapter 2; and Chapters 14 and 16 on Poland and the United States, respectively, among others.)

### *National Identity Formation and State Making*

In addition to explaining the dynamics of civil resistance in liberation struggles, this book also analyzes its impact on nation building.<sup>44</sup> The power of



nonviolent conflict must be understood broadly since civil resistance itself is more than just a set of physical or material techniques or the instrumental use of certain tactics. The experience of waging nonviolent struggle can itself be a transformational societal force on multiple levels: economic, social, political, cultural, and psychological. Furthermore, resisters often devise nonviolent actions instinctively while relying intuitively on their knowledge, experience, and interpretation of the society that surrounds them—thereby making their resistance even more organically connected with the people who rally beside them. This noninstrumental view of civil resistance, ontologically embedded in a social environment yet autonomous and constitutive, is essential in understanding its influence on collective consciousness and national identity.

The emergence of new nation-states has been associated with either great and volatile upheavals or long-term structural changes. Accordingly, some modern nation-states were formed through violent state implosions—revolutions, foreign invasions, wars, or the decline or breakup of empires. Others were created as a result of the cumulative effects of industrialization, urbanization, the development of capitalism, mass migration, and the invention of new communication and transportation technologies. Still others came about as a result of internal domestic policies such as universal conscription, free compulsory education in a national language, the buildup of national bureaucracies, or functioning party politics.<sup>45</sup>

However, such nation-forming forces have often been seen as macro level, top down, elite driven, and almost deterministic. In contrast, the empirical chapters of this volume suggest that a number of subjugated nations underwent often unnoticed, but no less significant and transformative, bottom-up changes driven by continued overt or tacit civilian-based mobilization, organizing, and activism despite direct or indirect foreign domination, ethnic or cultural denationalization, and forceful integration or assimilation. Under the heavy weight of foreign domination, nation formation was far from being a forgone conclusion, as the nationalist-boosting processes such as raising a national army, building a national bureaucracy, or developing national education were often banned by foreign powers while nationalist advocates were killed, imprisoned, or exiled. Under such oppressive conditions, subjugated nations could have simply disappeared, as indeed was the fate of many first nations. Through mass-based civil resistance, ordinary people (more so than abstract or imperceptible forces) performed and created a sense of state-ness. They bestowed their collective legitimacy on new forms of alternative cultural, social, economic, and political activities and organizations, thus wrenching political control out of the hands of foreign states or their local surrogates. They created greater awareness about and ownership of a common national collective with a strong belief that they could develop and prosper only in an independent state free of foreign intervention.



Thus, through the deployment of a rich repertoire of nonviolent tactics, the resisters engaged in challenging the powerholders that be. And by doing so, they solidified a sense of the national selfhood, created autonomous institutions, and established quasi-independent structures often outside the purview of foreign forces. Mass nonviolent mobilization and participation enabled societies to reject foreign dominance and indoctrination while practicing self-governance and building the nucleus of a new civil society. Through civil resistance, people became vividly conscious of their belonging, identity, language, and culture—the process that George Lakey, a leading educator in nonviolent social change, has referred to as “cultural preparation,” or, translating from Paolo Freire, “conscientization” through which personal destiny becomes interwoven with that of a collective life.<sup>46</sup> In this sense, civil resistance, through its transformative force, functioned as an instrument of state making often long before such states were formally open for business. It laid foundations for the emergence of a nationally conscious and politicized citizenry and nationwide institutions of economic, civic, and political governance necessary for running a country after its independence, even if democratic changes in these newly independent states might have left much to be desired.

Civil resistance contributed to and shaped national identity during the spread of nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The nonviolent strategies used to defend society and undermine foreign oppression and control reinforced people’s own affinity with their yet-to-be-independent nations, which in turn strengthened their collective resistance. Chapter 2 elaborates on this mutually recursive relationship, which has in some cases also inadvertently paved the way for a narrower, ethnically focused, and exclusive understanding of nationhood. Examples include the nation of Poles, but with restricted political rights for Ukrainians, Jews, or Belarusians; the nation of Kosovars, but without Serbs; the nation of Hungarians, but with exclusion of other ethnic minorities living in the Austro-Hungarian Empire; the nation of American colonists that had little room for Native Americans; or the nation of Bangladesh with a limited public space for Hindu or Christian minorities and the continued *de facto* disenfranchisement of most Biharis.<sup>47</sup> Nonviolent methods of resistance such as nationalist education, setting up ethnic organizations, or the surfeit of national commemorations and celebrations often promoted and exalted the culture, language, and history of the suppressed nation as well as glorified its military past. According to some chapters in this book, this inadvertent impact of civil resistance can be paradoxically blamed for suppressing stories of nonviolent resistance.

Would national identities in these nations have developed without recourse to the methods of civil resistance? Perhaps, but the process would have taken longer and its final outcome been less certain in the face of the forces of denationalization unleashed by dominant foreign powers. This

book offers an important, but still a preliminary, study of the historic role of civil resistance—as a sort of mnemonic device—that helps restore full national consciousness and consolidate collective identity.

The nonviolent upheavals in North Africa and the Middle East that began in Tunisia in December 2010 make this volume even more timely and relevant because it offers readers historical lessons about the timeless use of civil resistance against brutal powers. In practice, civil resistance does not know cultural, ethnic, geographical, or temporal barriers. It has proved to be as equally effective against occupiers and colonizers as it now is against ruthless domestic authoritarian rulers and dictators. Thus, to understand the events of the Arab Spring and, generally, contemporary nonviolent resistance, readers are encouraged to venture into the often forgotten and hidden past of civil resistance.

## Notes

1. The terms *nonviolent method* and *tactic* are used interchangeably and are understood as a limited plan of action developed and carried out to achieve a specific goal as part of a broader strategy of a nonviolent campaign.

2. Jonathan Schell, *The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People* (New York: Henry Holt, 2003), in particular 63–99.

3. “Russia and India” in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 5, November 6, 1905–November 3, 1906, 8, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/49842274/Collected-Works-of-Mahatma-Gandhi-VOL005>, accessed November 13, 2012.

4. In this book, the term *nonviolent* refers broadly to the absence of collective acts intended to use violence against an adversary or, more specifically, to a method of deliberately eschewing physical harm to an opponent. Two cases, Zambia and Egypt, also include property destruction, itself only one among a vast number of nonviolent actions identified in these chapters. The specific act did not aim to kill or maim anyone, but rather to cripple an adversary’s material resources and, thus, raise the costs of political control over the territory by, for example, cutting down communication or transportation lines.

5. *Rights-based struggles* include democratic rights campaigns against dictatorship; movements for minority, labor, women’s, and indigenous people’s rights; and environmental campaigns and livelihood struggles for access to water and land or against deforestation. Examples of *rule-of-law struggles* are popular anticorruption, anti-mafia, or anti-gang violence campaigns. Despite the differences in the target of the popular resistance, anti-dictatorship campaigns have an interesting similarity with self-rule struggles. As Annyssa Bellal and I have argued elsewhere, anti-dictatorship resistance tends to define a dictator as an occupier and aggressor against whom the population needs to defend itself, thus extending the right of self-rule to people who struggle equally against foreign and domestic oppressors. See Maciej Bartkowski and Annyssa Bellal, “A Human Right to Resist,” *Open Democracy*, May 3, 2011, <http://www.opendemocracy.net/maciej-bartkowski-annyssa-bellal/human-right-to-resist>, accessed May 15, 2011.

6. Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO 1.0) dataset, <http://www.du.edu/korbel/sie/research/civilresistanceproject.html>. Global Nonviolent

Action Database at Swarthmore College includes more than 600 cases of civil resistance campaigns as of the end of 2012, but only a dozen cases of nonviolent struggles against foreign domination. See <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/>.

7. For example, despite its comprehensive nature, NAVCO 1.0 does not include some major nonviolent campaigns from the past that are described in this book: Bangladesh between 1948 and 1952 and in 1971, Egypt 1919–1921, Burma prior to World War II, or the Iranian constitutional revolution, among others.

8. In his book *Unarmed Insurrections*, Kurt Schock integrates sociological insights from the political process theory and the dynamics of nonviolent action approach in an attempt to overcome the disciplinary divide. Clearly, much more research of a similar nature is needed to better understand points of interconnections and bridge the existing disciplinary gap between the social movement literature and civil resistance studies. See Kurt Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), particularly chapter 2.

9. For example, the forthcoming book by Mary King, *Conversion and the Mechanisms of Change in Nonviolent Action: The 1924–25 Vykom Satyagraha Case Against the Caste System* (Freedom Song, [http://maryking.info/?page\\_id=168](http://maryking.info/?page_id=168)), suggests that there remain unexplored areas of research on the Indian national movement and nonviolent actions.

10. Mary King, *The New York Times on Emerging Democracies in Eastern Europe* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2009); Mark Beissinger, “The Intersection of Ethnic Nationalism and People Power Tactics in the Baltic States, 1987–91,” in *Civil Resistance and Power Politics: The Experience of Non-Violent Action from Gandhi to the Present*, ed. Adam Roberts and Timothy Garton Ash (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 231–246; Lester R. Kurtz and Lee Smithey, “‘We Have Bare Hands’: Nonviolent Social Movements in the Soviet Block,” in *Nonviolent Social Movements*, ed. Stephen Zunes, Lester R. Kurtz, and Sarah Beth Asher (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 96–124; Olgerts Eglitis, “Nonviolent Action in the Liberation of Latvia,” Einstein Institute Monograph Series No. 5 (Boston: Albert Einstein Institution, 1993), <http://www.aeinstein.org/organizations22f6.html>, accessed February 6, 2011; Grazina Miniotaitė, “Nonviolent Resistance in Lithuania: A Story of Peaceful Liberation,” Einstein Institute Monograph Series No. 8 (Boston: Albert Einstein Institution, 2002), <http://www.aeinstein.org/organizations9997.html>, accessed February 5, 2011. See also the documentary, *The Singing Revolution*, directed by James Tusty and Maureen Castle Tusty (Sky Films, 2006), about the cultural resistance of the Estonians who opposed denationalization policies of the Soviet occupiers through collective folk singing, [www.singingrevolution.com](http://www.singingrevolution.com), accessed August 5, 2011.

11. For an excellent account of this subject see Mukulika Banerjee, *The Pathan Unarmed* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

12. See Thomas Friedman, “Lessons from Tahrir Sq.,” *New York Times*, May 24, 2011, and a response by Peter Hart, [www.commondreams.org/view/2011/05/26-9](http://www.commondreams.org/view/2011/05/26-9), accessed June 5, 2011.

13. Maria Stephan, “Fighting for Statehood: The Role of Civilian-Based Resistance in the East Timorese, Palestinian, and Kosovo Albanian Self-Determination Movements,” *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 30, no. 2 (2006): 57–79. See also Maria Stephan, “Nonviolent Insurgency: The Role of Civilian-Based Resistance in the East Timorese, Palestinian and Kosovo Albanian Self-Determination Movements” (PhD dissertation, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy 2005).

14. For more on pan-Africanism and nonviolent resistance, see Bill Sutherland and Matt Meyer, *Guns and Gandhi in Africa: Pan-African Insights on Nonviolence, Armed Struggle and Liberation in Africa* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2000).

15. Ralph E. Crow and Philip Grant, "Questions and Controversies About Non-violent Political Struggle in the Middle East" in *Civilian Jihad: Nonviolent Struggle, Democratization, and Governance in the Middle East*, ed. Maria J. Stephan Palgrave Macmillan Series on Civil Resistance (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 32.

16. John F. Kennedy, president of the United States of America, address to Latin American diplomats during the first anniversary of the Alliance for Progress at the White House, March 13, 1962.

17. Various contributors to this field of study have used different terms to refer to the same phenomenon of mass-based, organized unarmed contestation: *nonviolent struggle* and *nonviolent action* (Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Power and Struggle [Part One], The Methods of Nonviolent Action [Part Two], and The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action [Part Three]* [Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973]); *nonviolent conflict* (Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict* [New York: Macmillan, 2000]; and *civil resistance* (Roberts and Garton Ash, *Civil Resistance and Power Politics*).

In addition, the societies that practiced civil resistance often introduced their own terms to describe their collective nonviolent actions: *social self-defense* (Polish Solidarity movement), *people power* (Philippines), *popular resistance* (Palestine), *nonsubmission* (Spain), *political defiance* (Burma), and *positive action* (Ghana).

Gandhi began to use the term *civil resistance* after he realized that neither "passive resistance" used by Hungarians to describe their nonviolent struggle against Austrians (see Chapter 13) nor "civil disobedience" introduced by Henry David Thoreau in his 1849 essay of the same title properly reflected the nature of the resistance that Gandhi and many of his Indian compatriots waged against the British and earlier against the apartheid regime in South Africa. In his letter to P. Kodanda Rao, dated September 10, 1935, Gandhi wrote, "The statement that I had derived my idea of civil disobedience from the writings of Thoreau is wrong. The resistance to authority in South Africa was well advanced before I got the essay of Thoreau on civil disobedience. But the movement was then known as passive resistance. . . . When I saw the title of Thoreau's great essay, I began the use of his phrase to explain our struggle to the English readers. But I found that even civil disobedience failed to convey the full meaning of the struggle. I therefore adopted the phrase *civil resistance*" (emphasis added).

18. Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*.

19. Roberts and Garton Ash, *Civil Resistance and Power Politics*.

20. Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*; Anders Boserup and Andrew Mack, *War Without Weapons: Non-Violence in National Defense* (Berlin: Schocken Books, 1975); Peter Ackerman and Christopher Kruegler, *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: The Dynamics of People Power in the Twentieth Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994); Robert J. Burrowes, *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense: A Gandhian Approach* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996); Robert L. Helvey, *On Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: Thinking About the Fundamentals* (Boston: Albert Einstein Institution, 2004); Gene Sharp, ed., *Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20th Century Practice and 21st Century Potential* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 2005).

21. Stephen Zunes, Lester Kurtz, and Sarah Beth Asher, eds., *Nonviolent Social Movements: A Geographical Perspective* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999); Ackerman and DuVall, *A Force More Powerful*.

22. Brian Martin, *Justice Ignited: The Dynamics of Backfire* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007).

23. Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan and Thomas Weber, eds., *Nonviolent Intervention Across Borders* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000); Howard Clark,

ed., *People Power: Unarmed Resistance and Global Solidarity* (London: Pluto, 2009); Véronique Dudouet and Howard Clark, *Nonviolent Civic Action in Support of Human Rights and Democracy* (Brussels: Directorate-General for External Policies, European Parliament, 2009), [www.nonviolent-conflict.org/images/stories/pdfs/est25679.pdf](http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/images/stories/pdfs/est25679.pdf), accessed December 5, 2010.

24. Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, *How Civil Resistance Works* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

25. Sharon Erickson Nepstad, *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late 20th Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

26. Kurt Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections*; see also Chapter 2 in this volume.

27. For example, see Jillian Kestler-D'Amours, "In the Jordan Valley, Existence Is Resistance," *Al Jazeera*, July 29, 2011.

28. These tactics of nonviolent resistance stand in stark contrast to the words of Mao Zedong, according to whom a revolution was "not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous." However, the revolutionary struggles for statehood described in this volume were often carried out in the very form of actions that Mao Zedong so casually discarded: from festive parties, public but often banned ceremonies in the memories of significant historical figures and events, literary discussion circles and journalistic writings, poetry, and prose to historical and satirical paintings and drawings, street theater, artistic exhibitions, or indigenous cloth spinning and wearing traditional or national dress.

29. James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); James C. Scott, "Everyday Forms of Resistance," in *Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, ed. Forrest D. Colburn (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1989), 3–33; James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Steve Crawshaw and John Jackson, *Small Acts of Resistance: How Courage, Tenacity, and Ingenuity Can Change the World* (New York: Union Square Press, 2010).

30. Jaroslav Hasek, *The Good Soldier Svejk: And His Fortunes in the World War* (London: Penguin Classics, 2005).

31. See Ralph Summy, "Nonviolence and the Case of the Extremely Ruthless Opponent," *Pacifica Review: Peace, Security and Global Change* 6, no. 1 (1994): 1–29. In the article Summy quotes George Orwell who expressed his doubts about the power of a nonviolent movement, particularly if this type of organizing faces a brutal opponent.

32. George Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant" (London: New Writing, 1936), <http://eslreading.org/shootinganelephant.pdf>, accessed March 20, 2011.

33. Ellen Barry, "Sound of Post-Soviet Protest: Claps and Beeps," *New York Times*, July 14, 2011; Ilya Mouzykantskii, "In Belarus, Just Being Can Prompt an Arrest," *New York Times*, July 30, 2011; Michael Schwirtz, "Teddy Bears Fall From Sky, and Heads Roll in Minsk," *New York Times*, August 1, 2012.

34. Basma Atassi, "A Colourful Uprising in Damascus," *Al Jazeera*, December 13, 2011.

35. Alexei Barrionuevo, "With Kiss-Ins and Dances, Young Chileans Push for Reform," *New York Times*, August 4, 2011; Carla Obs, "Philippine Students Are Lying Down to Stand Up for What They Believe," *France 24: International News*, <http://observers.france24.com/content/20110928-filipino-students-lying-down-planking-education-budget-cuts-philippines-manila-university-congress>, accessed

October 1, 2011. In reference to civil resistance “planking” can be defined as organized, often collective, actions of lying still and face down in strategically selected locations to protest or disrupt.

36. Assef Bayat, *Street Politics: Poor People’s Movements in Iran* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

37. Ryuichi Funatsu, “Al-Kawākibī’s Thesis and Its Echoes in the Arab World Today,” *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 7, no. 2 (2006): 30–32.

38. *Ibid.*, 31.

39. According to the study by Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, civil resistance campaigns succeeded in 53 percent and failed in more than 20 percent of their analyzed cases in comparison with 26 percent successes and more than 60 percent failures for the violent campaigns. Chenoweth and Stephan, *How Civil Resistance Works*, particularly the tables on 8–9; Maria Stephan and Erica Chenoweth, “Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict,” *International Security* 33, no. 1 (2008): 7–44.

40. Jørgen Johansen, for example, noted that violent upheavals usually gain greater scholarly and media attention than nonviolent political and territorial changes. For example, hundreds of books have been published in English about the violent breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s while far fewer have been written about the peaceful dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1992–1993. Jørgen Johansen, lecturer and nonviolent trainer, personal communication with the author, West Bank, October 15, 2010.

41. “Revolution,” in *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 4106.

42. Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust War: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 332.

43. Simon Tisdall, “The End of the Battle for Kosovo,” *The Guardian*, July 22, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/jul/22/serbia-battle-for-kosovo>, accessed August 1, 2010.

44. Others have already pointed out that nationalism can be viewed as a form of contentious politics and, thus, its development and impact can be studied through the analytical lenses and practice of collective actions. However, in contrast to this volume, previous analysis has not focused explicitly on *nonviolent* movements and actions or their role in nation making or identity formation. See Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 227–263.

45. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

46. George Lakey, *Strategy for Non-Violent Revolution* (London: Housmans Bookshop, 1969), 1; George Lakey, *A Manifesto for Nonviolent Revolution* (Philadelphia: Movement for a New Society, 1976); Paolo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th anniversary ed. (New York: Continuum, 2000).

47. For example, through nonviolent participatory activities in newly established economic, social, and educational associations in the villages, the national awareness of Polish peasants increased but often in opposition to ethnic others (i.e., Jews that ran village taverns or Ukrainian or Belarusian peasant neighbors). See Keely Stauter-Halsted, *The Nation in the Village: The Genesis of Peasant National*

*Identity in Austrian Poland 1848–1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001). Heeding history's lessons, in the conclusion of Chapter 12 of this volume, Jason MacLeod warns the West Papuan nonviolent movement against an exclusivist nationalist concept of a pro-independence struggle to the detriment of a more general discourse and actions focused on defending human rights.