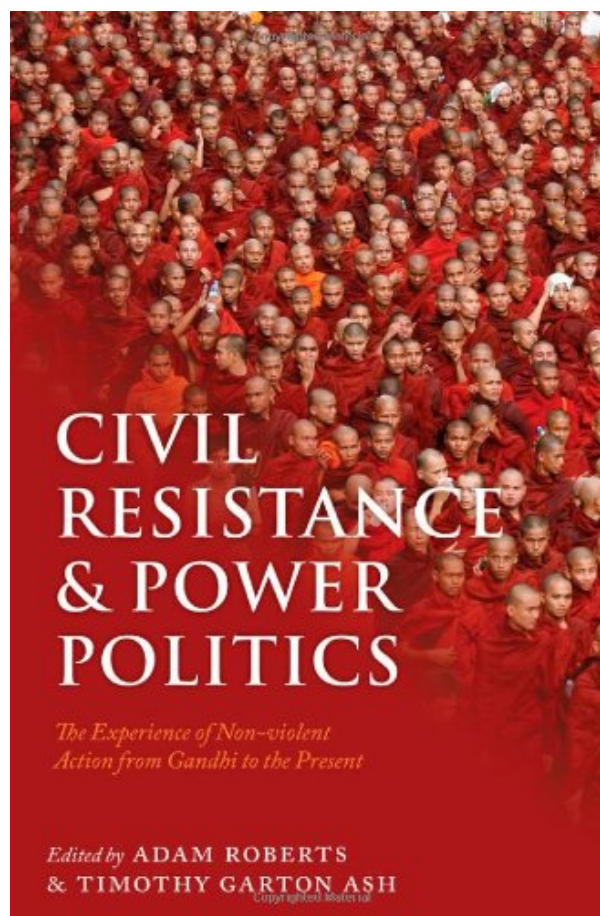
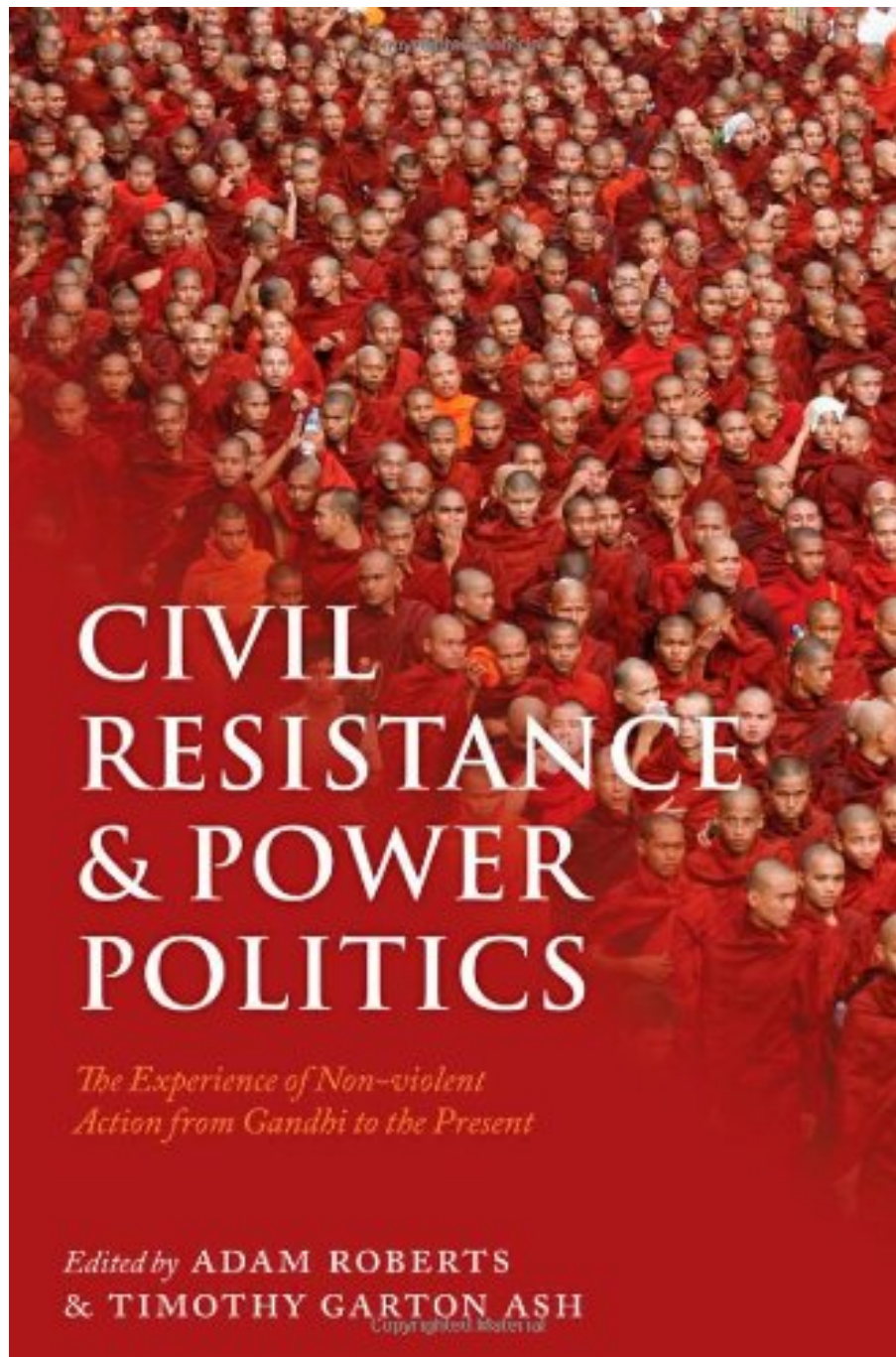


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"Highly informative compilation of different quests for political, economic, and social change over the past half-century. The great value of Civil Resistance and Power Politics is to provide relatively succinct accounts of these diverse events in such a way as to underline both their differences and their similarities."--New York Review of Books

"Roberts and Garton Ash succeed in their task magnificently. Seldom has a collective work displayed such coordinated research; seldom has the selection of authors been so successful...and seldom have the introductory and concluding essays in an edited work been so effective...indispensable book"--Survival

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"A book full of thought-provoking stories and arresting statistics...a valuable contribution to our understanding of a phenomenon that history has too often ignored--and a political tactic that looks set to become even more potent in the years ahead." --Sunday Business Post

About the Author

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This widely-praised book identified peaceful struggle as a key phenomenon in international politics a year before the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt confirmed its central argument. Civil resistance--non-violent action against such challenges as dictatorial rule, racial discrimination and foreign military occupation--is a significant but inadequately understood feature of world politics. Especially through the peaceful revolutions of 1989, and the developments in the Arab world since December 2010, it has helped to shape the world we live in.

Civil Resistance and Power Politics covers most of the leading cases, including the actions master-minded by Gandhi, the US civil rights struggle in the 1960s, the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, the 'people power' revolt in the Philippines in the 1980s, the campaigns against apartheid in South Africa, the various movements contributing to the collapse of the Soviet Bloc in 1989-91, and, in this century, the 'colour revolutions' in Georgia and Ukraine. The chapters, written by leading experts, are richly descriptive and analytically rigorous.

This book addresses the complex interrelationship between civil resistance and other dimensions of power. It explores the question of whether civil resistance should be seen as potentially replacing violence completely, or as a phenomenon that operates in conjunction with, and modification of, power politics. It looks at cases where campaigns were repressed, including China in 1989 and Burma in 2007. It notes that in several instances, including Northern Ireland, Kosovo and Georgia, civil resistance movements were followed by the outbreak of armed conflict. It also includes a chapter with new material from Russian archives showing how the Soviet leadership responded to civil resistance, and a comprehensive bibliographical essay.

Illustrated throughout with a remarkable selection of photographs, this uniquely wide-ranging and path-breaking study is written in an accessible style and is intended for the general reader as well as for students of Modern History, Politics, Sociology and International Relations.

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Review

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Academics, good subject but boring

By doug korty

Let's be honest, in general there is nothing worse than a collection of essays by academics on ANY subject. This book may be a bit better than most because civil resistance is more interesting than most subjects but these are still academics and they are paid to be boring. Read the book if you have to or if you have an extreme interest in this subject. Otherwise, take the afternoon off, go to a good movie.

I create and maintain educational websites, Midwest Independent Research. I have one on progressives, mwir-progressives.blogspot.com.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

A very powerful book

By ewaffle

This book describes and critiques non-violent civil resistance movements from throughout the world including those that succeeded - such as the struggle for Indian independence and the U.S. civil rights movement - as well as those that did not such as in Northern Ireland from 1967 to 1972 or the Tiananmen Square demonstrations in the People's Republic of China. The authors of the essays identify some of the more typical non-violent tactics, strategies and concepts which I will overly simplify into three areas.

First there is non-violence as a deeply felt commitment, as good itself and something to strive for no matter what the outcome. Gandhi in British India and Martin Luther King in the United States are two of the most obvious examples. Both men understood that the power of the repressive state rests on the obedience of their citizens (or subjects) and that the active withdrawal of this consent will cause increasing instability in the regime. The "Saffron Revolution" led by Buddhist monks in Burma may be the purest example: Theravada Buddhism, followed by 90% of the Burmese population, permits only a non-violent approach to problem-solving. Monks are instructed that any word they speak and any action they take not only does no harm to others but also can bring about a positive change in reaction in even the most implacable enemies.

Secondly is non-violence as a tactic that had to be adopted due to a precarious military, economic or political situation. Lech Walesa in Poland understood that surrounded by Warsaw Pact troops and with the 1968 intervention into Czechoslovakia fresh in memories throughout eastern and central Europe that he and the strikers at the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk had to walk a very fine line to keep the tanks on the other side of the Polish border. They succeeded although they had to endure the imposition of martial law by Polish general Wojciech Jaruzelski which resulted in the extra-judicial incarceration of many Solidarity leaders and cadres but which a majority of people in Poland still think was the only way to stop intervention by surrounding troops. Northern Ireland in the years prior to the 1969 decision to send the British Army into Derry and Belfast was a very different story. Inspired by the U.S. civil rights movement the non-IRA resistance in Northern Ireland tried marches, demonstration, sit-ins and strikes but the fierce opposition of the entrenched establishment to any change and that of the Provisional IRA to anything other than immediate and complete change meant they would fail. The numbers tell the story: in 1967 no one was killed in Ulster as a result of political violence; 497 people were killed in 1972 in the conflict.

The third reason for non-violent resistance to an oppressive regime is as part of establishing a moral basis for a new society. This takes an even longer view than the first two, projecting past the end of the oppressive government to its replacement with a more just society with guarantees of individual rights. Chile from 1983 to 1988 is a good example. Chile has been committed to the rule of law and a robust, independent civil society since independence in 1830 with elected civilian governments interrupted only twice--from 1927 to 1931 and then in 1973 when Pinochet overthrew the socialist government. The Communist Party and the Socialist Party put aside their differences in the face of the extreme repression and terror from the Pinochet military rulers when the economy shuddered to a halt in 1982. They mobilized their constituencies among workers, students and professionals while working with grassroots organizations created by the Catholic Church during the worst of the security crackdowns following the coup, creating a very broad base for elections which the government called and that, to its dismay, lost. The coalitions that were built during the underground and then open organizing were the basis of a policy of truth and justice for crimes committed during the Pinochet administration for the elected governments that came after the end of the dictatorship.

These three sets of concepts and strategies of non-violent resistance are not, of course, exhaustive or mutually exclusive but are methods and reasons for opposition to repression that were identified by the authors of the essays in "Civil Resistance and Power Politics". It is a book well worth owning for its breadth of coverage, hitting not only the most famous rebellions but others that we can learn from such as the Carnation Revolution in Portugal of 1975 that ended several decades of fascist rule or the unusual intersection of ethnic nationalism and peaceful protest in the Baltic nations during the breakup of the Soviet Union.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Great Resource

By Harvest McCampbell

I find that I generally don't agree with the conclusions drawn in this book, but it provides many resources of other relevant material that should prove very fruitful for anyone studying nonviolent resistance. Generally speaking, instead of comparing non-violent resistance to other forms of resistance in judging its effectiveness, it judges these resistance movements against an idealized outcome of the writers own imagination. This narrative tends to minimize the over all goals and visions of these movements and their leaders and focuses instead on short term political outcomes only. While thought provoking, the analysis thus provided is flawed at best. I knew all this before I purchased the book. The works cited, further reading, and bibliography are worth the cost of a good used copy.

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