



Language

An important role for unarmed resistance has been for people to mobilize in defence of their existing government against illegal attempts by military and political groups to seize power. Key examples have become part of the literature on civil resistance – for example the civilian mobilization on behalf of the socialist government in the newly created Weimar Republic in 1920. Whilst unarmed resistance to coups is sometimes treated as part of a wider debate about the possibility of defending existing governments and society against military attack, its importance is in many ways distinct from the case for abandoning weapons for national defence, and can be seen as central to debates about democratization.

Frank, Dana, [The Long Honduran Night: Resistance, Terror and the United States in the Aftermath of the Coup](#) [1], Chicago, IL, Haymarket Books, 2018, pp. 344 pb

The immediate popular resistance to the military coup in 2009, that ousted the democratically elected President Manuel Zelava, did not defeat the coup, but a sustained and impressive movement continued under the National Front for Popular Resistance, which brought together trade unions, church leaders, academics and teachers and others, despite violent repression by the military and police. Frank also examines the role of the US government in supporting the coup and describes the support offered to the resisters by the US organization she founded.

See also: Main, Alexander, 'Honduras: The Deep Roots of Resistance', *Dissent*, Spring 2014,

<https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/honduras-the-deep-roots-of-resistance> [2]

Focuses particularly on role of the National Front of Popular Resistance in creating in 2011 a new political party Liberty and Refoundation with the aim of winning power and creating a new constitution. Main sets this development in the context of socialist parties winning power through elections in other Latin American countries.

See also: Portillo, Suyapa, 'Honduran Social Movements: Then and Now', *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, 28 September 2020.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9781190228637.013.1774> [3]

Examines historic bases of social movements: political parties, both moderate and radical unionism and land struggles, the reaction against neoliberal economic policies of the 1990s undermining earlier economic and political gains. The article concludes by assessing the remarkable mobilization against the 2009 coup by almost all sections of society, including feminists, Black and indigenous groups.

Gorbachev, Mikhail, [The August Coup: The Truth and the Lessons](#) [4], London and New York, Harper Collins, 1991, pp. 127

Gorbachev's own brief account of the attempted coup against him and his reformist programme in August 1991, with some appended documents.

Griffen, Vanessa, [Social Defence Against Coups: The Case of Fiji](#) [5], In Martin, [Nonviolent Struggle and Social Defence](#) [6] ([A. 1.b. Strategic Theory, Dynamics, Methods and Movements](#) [7]), London, War Resisters' International, pp. 59-67

Harsch, Ernest, [Unsung Hero: Popular Resistance Key to Defeating Burkina Faso Coup](#) [8], World Politics Review, 06/10/2015, pp. 1-8



The attempt by the previous president, Blaise Compaore (forced to resign a year earlier) to topple President Kafando. was defeated within a week. The role of neighbouring states, the African Union and UN in condemning the coup and threatening sanctions played a part. But the immediate resistance by young people and civil society groups, together with unions calling a ten day general strike, played a key role. (For further analysis of wider struggle for democracy in Burkina Faso see Vol.1. E.1.2.3.)

Martin, Brian, [Lessons in Nonviolence from the Fiji Coups](#) [9], Gandhi Marg, Vol. 10, issue 2 (Sept), 1988, pp. 326-339

(also in Martin, [Nonviolent Struggle and Social Defence](#) [6] ([A. 1.b. Strategic Theory, Dynamics, Methods and Movements](#) [7])), Ch. 5.

McCaughan, Michael, [The Battle of Venezuela](#) [10], London, Latin America Bureau, 2004, pp. 116

Examines thwarting attempted coup by the right against Hugo Chavez in 2002. (See also the works under Venezuela in [E.IV.12](#) [11])

Norden, Deborah L., [Military Rebellion in Argentina: Between Coups and Consolidation](#) [12], Lincoln, NE, University of Nebraska Press, 1996, pp. 242

Studies military rebellions after return to civilian government in 1982.

See also: Lopez Levy, Marcela , [We Are Millions: Neo-Liberalism and New Forms of Political Action in Argentina](#) [13] London, Latin America Bureau, , 2004 . Includes brief reference to millions demonstrating in support of President Alfonsin after a military uprising in a barracks in Argentina, Easter 1987, against trials of military for the 'Dirty War' (pp. 41 and 122), and explains broader context.

Remnick, David, [Lenin's Tomb: The Last Days of the Soviet Empire](#) [14], Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1994, pp. 586

Part 4, pp. 433-90, covers the August Coup, emphasizing popular support for the resistance as well as the mistakes of the plotters. For a contrasting interpretation see:

Roberts, Adam, [Civil Resistance to Military Coups](#) [15], Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 12, issue 1, 1975, pp. 19-36

Discusses resistance to Kapp Putsch in Germany 1920 and attempted coup in France by generals based in Algeria in 1961.

Sharp, Gene ; Jenkins, Bruce, [The Anti-Coup](#) [16], Cambridge MA, Albert Einstein Institution, 2003, pp. 64

Summary analysis of potential for popular nonviolent resistance to defeat coup attempts, recommendations for organised strategy and advance preparations to prevents coups, and with very brief description of resistance to Kapp Putsch in 1920, the Algerian Generals in 1961 and to attempt to overthrow Gorbachev in 1991.

Steele, Jonathan, [Eternal Russia: Yeltsin, Gorbachev and the Mirage of Democracy](#) [17], London, Faber and Faber, 1994

Chapter 4, pp. 59-70, gives an eye witness account of the coup and stresses the inefficiency of the plotters and the limited popular response to Yeltsin's call for popular defiance and a general strike.



Talbott, John, [The War Without a Name: France in Algeria 1954-62](#) [18], New York, Alfred Knopf, 1980, pp. 305

Ch. 9 examines the generals' putsch in 1961 and notes responses to it both by the left and by De Gaulle, and their conflicting claims to have quashed the coup.

Taylor, Richard, [Training Manual for Nonviolent Defense against the Coup d'Etat](#) [19], revised edition with introduction by Hardy Merriman, Washington DC, Nonviolence International, 2010, pp. 76

Zunes, Stephen, [Civil Resistance against Coups: A Comparative and Historical Perspective](#) [20], ICNC Monograph Series, Washington D.C., ICNC, 2017, pp. 104 pb

Zunes provides detailed case studies of civil resistance to military coups in recent decades. His aim is to advance an analysis of the role of civil society and nonviolent movements in resisting such takeovers, and the role of international pressure and solidarity by both governments and activists. Eight coup attempts defeated by popular resistance are analyzed, including Bolivia, 1978, the USSR 1991, Thailand 1992 and Burkina Faso 2015, as well as four in which resistance did not succeed. Available in PDF

at: <https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ICNC-Mono...> [21]

See also Vol.1. E.II.1.c. Burma: Resisting the 2021 Coup, which covers the mass popular mobilization against the February 2021 coup by the Burmese military junta.

See also:

Adam Roberts, [Civil Resistance in the East European and Soviet Revolutions](#) [22], ([C.I.2.c.i. Comparative Studies](#) [23]), Includes brief assessment of the August 1991 coup attempt in the Soviet Union and popular resistance to it.

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A. 4.a. Civil Resistance to Military Coups

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