



Language

## [E. I. Africa - Sub-Saharan](#) [1]

*(North Africa is covered under E.V together with the Middle East, although naturally North Africa is included in some books below. As well as continental political and institutional links – for example the African Union – popular movements influence each other across the continent.)*

Many examples of mass popular resistance in Africa have been to colonial rule (see [Section B](#) [2]). The most famous struggle of all occurred in South Africa, where there were waves of resistance to various forms of racial discrimination throughout much of the twentieth century. The growing resistance to apartheid from the 1950s is covered in Section I below.

After achieving independence, many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa fairly soon became (for a number of political reasons) one-party states, or in some cases civilian government gave way to military rule. By the late 1980s, however, there was growing popular demand in many countries for free and fair elections with a genuine choice of candidates for both parliament and the presidency. This 'wave' of popular protest from 1988 to the early 1990s was quite often triggered by economic grievances, which then developed into political demands. It was also inspired by the movements of 1989-91 in the Soviet bloc overthrowing one-party regimes; the President of Gabon referred to the 'wind from the East that shakes the coconut trees'. Rulers were also encouraged by western aid donors to bow to popular pressure for constitutional change and elections. The role of western governments and bodies like the IMF and World Bank is extremely controversial, since they tried to enforce neoliberal economic policies of 'structural adjustment' at the same time as calling for multi-party elections. There was often popular resistance to the first, at the same time as there was a demand for the second. The literature specifically on the movements for electoral democracy is limited, but the broad process of democratization in this period (and its failures) has been quite well analysed (see [E.I.2.1](#) [3] below).

A second wave of protests (listed separately under [E.I.2.2](#) [4]) occurred after 2000, attempting to make political leaders honour their earlier promises of constitutional rule and in particular to demand that presidents did not exceed their constitutional terms of office. Most of these protests have been linked to specific elections, and often have been fairly brief. Only a few have been successful, but they have nevertheless been significant demonstrations of the popular demand for governments to be democratically accountable. Many of these protests have also highlighted the issue of political corruption. The most sustained campaign for political change has occurred in Zimbabwe since 2000, in opposition to the autocratic rule of Robert Mugabe, and this is also better documented in English than some of the other movements.

The popular resistance that began in Tunisia and engulfed much of the Arab world in 2011 also had repercussions across sub-Saharan Africa, although the full extent of this new 'wave' of protests starting in 2011 has yet to be assessed (see section [E. I.2.3](#) [5] below).

The literature specifically on unarmed or nonviolent action in Africa is (apart from South Africa) less extensive than that on many other parts of the world. One attempt to fill this gap is the series edited by: King, Mary Elizabeth; Miller, Christopher A., [Nonviolent Transformation of Conflict](#) [6] Addis Ababa, University for Peace Africa Programme, , 2006, pp. 140 .

One of the series offers brief descriptions of a range of nonviolent campaigns in Africa in different periods:

Engels, Bettina ; Branders, Nikolai, [Social Movements in Africa](#) [7], Stichproben, issue 20, 2011

Although mostly relevant to the second volume of this bibliography, it provides context for the movements against governments that are covered here.



George-Williams, Desmond, [Bite Not One Another: Selected Accounts of Nonviolent Struggle in Africa](#) [8], Addis Ababa, University of Peace Africa Programme, 2006, pp. 123

Since the 1990s there have been campaigns against multinational corporations, privatization and neoliberal economic policies in many countries – the Ogoni struggle against Shell in the Niger basin is particularly well known. For these protests see [G.7.](#) [9] of the original bibliography (available free on line at: [civilresistance.info](https://civilresistance.info) [10]).

### [E. I. 1. South Africa. Resisting Apartheid to 1994](#) [11]

Nonviolent resistance has a long history in South Africa, where Gandhi developed his methods of 'satyagraha' to assert the civil rights of the Indian community, and where the 'nonracial' (i.e. inclusive) African National Congress (ANC) was officially committed to nonviolence in its struggle against apartheid from 1912 until 1961. After 1945, as apartheid was strengthened, there were impressive strikes (for example the 1946 miners' strike), and acts of civil disobedience against apartheid measures, for examples Indians opposing discriminatory legislation in 1946. The 1952 'defiance campaign' demanded the repeal of unjust laws and called for nationwide non-cooperation. In 1954-55 there was resistance to the removal of squatters and boycotts of the newly-introduced 'Bantu' education system. The ANC sent 50,000 volunteers throughout the country to listen to people's grievances and their aspirations. These were then compiled into the set of demands for change – the Freedom Charter – which was adopted in 1955 and provided a platform for subsequent anti-apartheid movements. Nonviolent protest continued in the late 1950s. In 1960-61 resistance to the pass laws coincided with other demonstrations and a general strike.

Increasingly brutal government repression and the banning of opposition organizations convinced the ANC leadership to create an armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (the 'Spear of the Nation'). Initially, the emphasis was on sabotage rather than targeting people, and the ANC also remained committed to mass struggle. Mandela's speeches during the 1960 Treason Trial and his later 1962 trial, when he was condemned to life imprisonment, stressed commitment to a 'nonracial future'. The smaller rival Pan African Congress (PAC) – which differed from the ANC over association with the Communist Party and organized the fateful 1961 Sharpeville demonstration (when the police fired repeatedly and lethally into a peaceful crowd) – also created a military wing, which targeted both whites and African collaborators.

Mass popular protest did not occur again until 1976, when about 15,000 Soweto school pupils demonstrated against being taught in Afrikaans, a protest which extended to opposing the Bantu education system and the regime itself. Bloody police repression triggered school boycotts and mass protests throughout the country. Although the demonstrators adopted the tactics of civil resistance, they often fought the police with sticks and stones. Many children were killed or injured and the protests ended after six months. Funerals of those killed by the security forces remained a repeated focus for public defiance.

During the 1980s, protest revived in the form of consumer and school boycotts and student activism, independent grass roots 'civic' organizations and community activism spread. This gave rise to the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) – a coordination with 600 affiliates which grew out of the resistance to the apartheid constitution of 1983. Centrally involved were community, youth and women's organizations, although churches and unions were also affiliated. The UDF promoted 'people power', both in terms of making South Africa 'ungovernable' under apartheid and in terms of 'prefigurative democracy'. The trade unions consolidated their organization and their ability to conduct disciplined strikes, as in the 1979 Ford strike against relocation. In 1989 COSATU (the trade union federation) together with the UDF created the Mass Democratic Movement to organize nationwide defiance. During the protracted negotiations to end apartheid in the early 1990s, symbolized by Mandela's release in February 1990 and the ending of the bans on the ANC, PAC, Communist Party and other political organizations, 'people power' in the form of mass strikes and demonstrations backed the ANC



negotiators. However, despite considerable achievements in the transition, various analysts trace subsequent problems (such as the failure to redistribute wealth, corruption, and inadequate police reform – as indicated with the 2012 Marikana mine massacre) to the agreement to disband the UDF and to the ANC's general marginalisation of those who had stayed inside the country and their more decentralised and participatory modes of organising.

Internal resistance combined with international pressure. Apartheid was frequently denounced at the United Nations, and the isolation of South Africa was a central goal for the international anti-apartheid movement – symbolically through the exclusion of South African sports teams from international events. The Unesco-approved cultural boycott and a multi-level campaign against economic links grew over 30 years, gaining support from municipalities and some national governments. As well as boycotts, nonviolent actions – such as a wave of sit-ins at US universities in the 1980s – encouraged institutions to disinvest from banks and corporations engaged in South Africa.

There is a large literature on the long struggle against apartheid, with oral history and documentation programmes inside South Africa itself. The list below is highly selective, but covers major aspects of the struggle and key individuals. Special mention should be made of two ambitious history projects:

Karis, Thomas ; Carter, Gwendolen M. ; Gerhart, Gail M. ; Glaser, Clive L., [From Protest to Challenge: Documents of African Politics in South Africa 1882-1990](#) [12], [1973], 2010 , 6 volumes

– a six-volume series. Notably vol. 2, 'Hope and Challenge, 1935-1952', Thomas Karis, ed., 1973, pp. 550; vol 3, 'Challenge and Violence, 1953-1964', 1987, pp. 845; vol. 5, 'Nadir and Resurgence, 1964-1979', Thomas G. Karis and Gail M. Gerhart, eds., 1997, pp. 840; vol 6, 'Challenge and Victory', Gail M. Gerhart and Clive L. Glaser, 2010, pp. 816. 'Combines narrative with a wealth of primary source material.'

### Websites recommended

[South African History Online: towards a people's history](#) [13] - <http://www.sahistory.org.za/> [14] ,  
Has sections on people, places and timelines, plus links to SAHO Special Projects on Passive resistance, including Passive Resistance 1946: a selection of documents, compiled by E.S. Reddy and Fatima Meer.

#### [E. I.1.a. internal resistance](#) [15]

Adler, Glenn ; Steinberg, Jonny, [From Comrades to Citizens: The South African Civics Movement and the Transition to Democracy](#) [16], Basingstoke and New York, Macmillan and St Martin's, in association with the Albert Einstein Institution, 2000, pp. 272

Primarily on nonviolent action in townships during apartheid. Combines a national strategic overview by Jeremy Seekings of how the concept of civic struggle evolved in the period 1977-90 with detailed local accounts.

Baskin, Jeremy, [Striking Back: a history of COSATU](#) [17], London, Verso, 1990, pp. 488

Authoritative account of COSATU's early years by then National Coordinator.

Benson, Mary, [The African Patriots: The Story of the African National Congress of South Africa](#) [18], London, Faber and Faber, 1963, pp. 310 , [US title South Africa: The Struggle for a Birthright, 1966]



Covers the period 1910- 60.

Biko, Steve Arnold, Millard, [The Testimony of Steve Biko](#) [19], ed. Arnold, Millard, London, Maurice Temple Smith, 1978, pp. 298 , [US title: Black Consciousness in South Africa]

Biko, a key figure in the move to radical black consciousness, was killed while in custody by the security services.

Callinicos, Alex ; Rogers, John, [Southern Africa after Soweto](#) [20], 2nd edition, London, Pluto Press, 1978, pp. 246

Includes critical assessment of the 1960s campaigns and examination of trade union action in the 1970s.

Cobbett, William ; Cohen, Robin, [Popular Struggles in South Africa](#) [21], London and Trenton NJ, James Curray and Africa World Press, 1988, pp. 234

Includes chapters on political unionism, the township revolts, student politics (school and university). Earlier version of the much-cited article Swilling, Mark , [The United Democratic Front and the township revolt](#) [22] Durban, South Africa, South African History Archives (SAHA), , 1987, pp. 23 , reprinted here on pp. 90-113, are available online.

Drewett, Michael, [Music in the Struggle to End Apartheid: South Africa](#) [23], In Cloonan, Martin ; Garafalo, Reebee , [Policing Pop](#) [24] Philadelphia PA, Temple University Press, , 2003, pp. 153-165

See also Drewett, Michael , [Aesopian Strategies of Textual Resistance in the Struggle to Overcome the Censorship of Popular Music in Apartheid South Africa](#) [25] In Müller, Beate , [Censorship & Cultural Regulation in the Modern Age](#) [26] Amsterdam and New York, Rodopi, , 2004, pp. 189-207 .

Feit, Edward, [African Opposition in South Africa: The Failure of Passive Resistance](#) [27], Stanford CA, Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, 1967, pp. 223

A critical study of the 1954-55 campaigns.

Gasa, Nomboniso, [Women in South African History](#) [28], Cape Town, Human Sciences Research Council, 2007, pp. 456

Part Three – ‘War: armed and mass struggles as gendered experiences’ – includes Jacklyn Cock, ‘‘Another mother for peace’’: Women and peace building in South Africa, 1983-2003, pp. 257-280, and Janet Cherry ‘‘We were not afraid’’: The role of women in the 1980s’ township uprising in the Eastern Cape’, pp. 281-313, and Pat Gibbs, ‘Women, labour and resistance: Case studies from the Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage area, 1972-94’, pp. 315-343.

Good, Kenneth, [The capacities of the people versus a predominant, militarist, ethno-nationalist elite: democratisation in South Africa](#) [29], Interface: a journal for and about social movements, Vol. 3, issue 2, 2011, pp. 311-358

Contends that the ANC ‘showed an increasing intolerance for the values upheld by the UDF, like criticism and self-criticism of elites and nonviolence’.

Hope, Marjorie ; Young, James, [The South African Churches in a Revolutionary Situation](#) [30], New York, Orbis Books, 1981, pp. 268



Kuper, Leo, [Passive Resistance in South Africa](#) [31], London, Jonathan Cape, 1956, pp. 256 , [US: Yale University Press, 1957 and 1960]

Sociological study of the 1952 'Defiance Campaign'.

Lodge, Tom, [Black Politics in South Africa since 1945](#) [32], London, Longman, 1983, pp. 389

Covers key campaigns up to Sharpeville and the Soweto student rebellion.

See also Lodge, Tom , [The Interplay of Nonviolent and Violent Action in the Movements Against Apartheid in South Africa, 1983-94](#) [33] In Roberts; Garton Ash, [Civil Resistance and Power Politics: The Experience of Non-violent Action from Gandhi to the Present](#) [34] ([A. 1.b. Strategic Theory, Dynamics, Methods and Movements](#) [35])New York, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 213-230 .

Lodge, Tom ; Nasson, Bill, [All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s](#) [36], London, Hurst, 1992, pp. 400

Luckhardt, Ken ; Wall, Brenda, [Organize or Starve: The History of the South African Congress of Trade Unions](#) [37], New York, International Publishers, 1980, pp. 485

Luthuli, Albert, [Let My People Go!](#) [38], London, Collins, 1962, pp. 256

Autobiography of President of ANC from 1952 to 1967, and Nobel Prize winner.

Mandela, Nelson, [Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela](#) [39], London, Little Brown, 1994, pp. 768 , [and Abacus paperback 1995]

Includes views on nonviolence and support for the turn to violent resistance. Mandela's earlier articles, speeches and addresses at his trials are published in: Mandela, Nelson , [No Easy Walk to Freedom](#) [40] [1965] London, Heinemann, , 1986, pp. 189 .

Marx, Anthony, [Lessons of Struggle: South African Internal Opposition, 1960-1990](#) [41], New York, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 347

Examines relationship between strategies and different ideologies of resistance based on race, nation or class.

Meredith, Martin, [Nelson Mandela: A Biography](#) [42], London, Hamish Hamilton, 1997, pp. 596

Michelson, Cherry, [The Black Sash of South Africa: A Case Study in Liberalism](#) [43], London, Oxford University Press, 1975, pp. 204

Analysis of (predominantly) white women's organization publicly opposing apartheid since 1950, known especially for its vigils.

Mufson, Steven, [The Fighting Years: The Struggle for a New South Africa](#) [44], Boston, Beacon Press, 1990, pp. 360

*Washington Post* journalist, who was in South Africa 1984-86, interviewed leaders of banned organizations and more conservative Africans. Less strong on post-1986 period.



Neocosmos, Michael, [From People's Politics to State Politics: Aspects of National Liberation in South Africa](#) [45], In Olukoshi, [The Politics of Opposition in Contemporary Africa](#) [46] (E. I.2.1.i. General Overviews [47]), Uppsala, Nordiska Afikrainstitutet, pp. 195-241

Discusses the post-1990 statist supplanting of 'the popular emancipatory project'.

Presbey, Gail, [Evaluating the Legacy of Nonviolence in South Africa](#) [48], Peace and Change, Vol. 31, issue 2, 2006, pp. 141-174

Evaluates claims that 'nonviolence, if adhered to more resolutely, would have ended apartheid sooner', reminding readers of the high level of support for the ANC's armed wing. Suggests that despite some over-simplifications, the claims for nonviolence, though speculative, are plausible.

Scott, Michael, [A Time to Speak](#) [49], London, Faber, 1959, pp. 365

Autobiography of Anglican priest who took the case of the Herero people of South West Africa to the UN, opposing their incorporation into the Union of South Africa. Chapter 8 describes the Indian resistance to discriminatory legislation in 1946.

Seekings, Jeremy, [The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991](#) [50], Cape Town and Oxford, David Philip and James Currey, 2000, pp. 371

Authoritative organizational history (commissioned by the UDF at the point when it disbanded).

Seidman, Gay, [Guerrillas in their midst: armed struggle in the South African anti-apartheid movement](#) [51], Mobilization, Vol. 6, issue 2 (Fall), 2001, pp. 111-127

Smuts, Dene ; Westcott, Shauna, [The Purple Shall Govern: A South Africa A to Z of Nonviolent Action](#) [52], Cape Town, Oxford University Press and Centre for Intergroup Studies, 1991, pp. 165

Examples of nonviolent action from the 1950s to the 1990s. Brief extracts illustrate tactics such as boycotts, courting arrest, funerals, graffiti, ostracism, prayer, resisting removal, voluntary exile and 'wading-in' (against segregated beaches).

Suttner, Raymond, [Legacies and Meanings of the United Democratic Front \(UDF\) Period for Contemporary South Africa](#) [53], In Hendricks, Cheryl ; Lushaba, Lwazi , [From National Liberation to Democratic Renaissance in Southern Africa](#) [54] Dakar, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESIRA), , 2006, pp. 59-81

Suttner, Raymond ; Cronin, Jeremy, [50 Years of the Freedom Charter](#) [55], Pretoria, Unisa Press, 2006, pp. 246

Revised and updated from the banned book Suttner, Raymond ; Cronin, Jeremy , [30 Years of the Freedom Charter](#) [56] Johannesburg, Ravan Press, , 1986, pp. 266 . Recounts the process of formulating as well as discussing the political implications of the Freedom Charter adopted in 1955. (Part of Unisa's series 'Hidden Histories'.)

Tutu, DesmondAllen, John, [The Rainbow People of God](#) [57], ed. Allen, John, London, Bantam, 1995, pp. 286

Tutu influenced world opinion in the 1980s and 1990s and chaired the post-apartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission.





van Kessel, Ineke, [Beyond Our Wildest Dreams: The United Democratic Front and the Transformation of South Africa](#) [58], Charlottesville and London, University of Virginia Press, 2000, pp. 367

Uses three case studies to illustrate the complexity of the UDF. Addresses generational tensions and conflicts between belief systems that the UDF itself, and most studies of it, tended to ignore.

See also:

Kurt Schock, [Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies](#) [59], ([A. 1.b. Strategic Theory, Dynamics, Methods and Movements](#) [60]), pp. 56-68 on anti-apartheid struggle generally.

#### [E. I.1.b. external boycotts](#) [61]

Gurney, Christabel, [When the Boycott began to Bite](#) [62], History Today, Vol. 9, issue 6, 1999

Account by a key organizer of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement.

Hain, Peter, [Don't Play with Apartheid: Background to the Stop the Seventy Tour](#) [63], London, Allen and Unwin, 1971, pp. 232

Hanlon, Joseph, [South Africa: the Sanctions Report – documents and statistics](#) [64], London, James Currey and Commonwealth Secretariat, 1990, pp. 342

Lapchick, Richard, [The Politics of Race and International Sport: The Case of South Africa](#) [65], Westport CT, Greenwood Press, 1975, pp. 268

Orkin, Mark, [Sanctions Against Apartheid](#) [66], New York, St. Martins Press, 1989, pp. 328

Seidman, Gay, [Beyond the Boycott: Labor Rights, Human rights, and Transnational Activism](#) [67], New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 2007, pp. 176

Especially ch. 3, pp. 47-71, 'Monitoring multinationals: lessons from the anti-apartheid era'.

#### [E. I.1.c. resisting South African military policies](#) [68]



In order to shore up the apartheid regime, the South African government used its security and military forces to prevent majority African rule in other southern African countries such as Namibia. After Portugal agreed to decolonization in Mozambique and Angola, South Africa fomented civil war. Therefore conscripts were sent to fight in neighbouring countries, as well as there was growing resistance to conscription for either purpose, and draft resisters who went abroad also began to organize in the later 1970s.

Cawthra, Gavin ; Kraak, Gerald ; O'Sullivan, Gerald, [War and resistance: Southern Africa reports – the struggle for Southern Africa as documented by Resister magazine](#) [69], London, Macmillan, 1994, pp. 252

A compilation from the (London) Committee on South African War Resistance.

Clark, Howard, [When the Best Say No: Impressions from a Visit to South Africa in Support of War Resisters](#) [70], London, War Resisters' International, 1989, pp. 27

Cock, Jacklyn ; Nathan, Laurie, [War and Society: The Militarisation of South Africa](#) [71], New York, St. Martins Press, 1989, pp. 361

See also Nathan, Laurie , [Force of Arms, Force of Conscience: A Study of Militarisation, the Military and the Anti-Apartheid War Resisters' Movement in South Africa, 1970-1988](#) [72] M. Phil. Thesis Bradford, University of Bradford, , 1990 .

Nathan was a leading activist in the End Conscription Campaign.

Conway, Daniel, [Masculinities, Militarisation and the End Conscription Campaign: War Resistance in Apartheid South Africa](#) [73], Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2012, pp. 176

See also Conway, Daniel , [Contesting the Masculine State: White Male War Resisters in Apartheid South Africa](#) [74] In Parpart, Jane L.; Zalewski, Marysia , [Rethinking the Man Question: Sex, Gender and Violence in International Relations](#) [75] London, Zed Books, , 2008, pp. 127-142 .

Relations, Catholic Institute, [Out of Step: War Resisters in South Africa](#) [76], London, Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1989, pp. 141

Seegers, Annette, [South Africa: From Laager to Anti-Apartheid](#) [77], In Moskos, Charles C.; Chambers, John Whitelay, [The New Conscientious Objection: From Sacred to Secular Resistance](#) [78] New York, Oxford University Press, , 1993, pp. 127-134

Surveys development of conscientious objection from 1960.





### [E. I.2.1. Popular Movements for Multiparty Democracy: 1988-1992](#) [3]

There are several books that provide a general historical context and political and economic analysis relevant to the movements in this period, as well as useful (though condensed) information on protests in particular countries:

#### [E. I.2.1.i. General Overviews](#) [47]

Bratton, Michael ; van de Walle, Nicolas, [Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transition in Comparative Perspective](#) [80], Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 333

A broad-ranging analysis by two experts in the field, drawing on the democratization literature, but focused on African realities.

Diamond, Larry ; Plattner, Marc F., [Democracy in Africa: Progress and Retreat](#) [81], Baltimore MD, John Hopkins Press, 2010, pp. 360

Collection of relevant articles in the Journal of Democracy.

Gros, Jean-Germain, [Democratization in Late Twentieth Century Africa: Coping with Uncertainty](#) [82], Westport CT and London, Greenwood Press, 1998, pp. 162

Contributors to this book include democracy activists as well as scholars, who look critically at the process of democratization in: Malawi, Cameroon, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana and Gabon. The focus is not on institutions but on leadership, and also on the role of the military and churches in the reform process.

Ihonvbere, Julius O., [Where is the Third Wave? A Critical Evaluation of Non-Transitions to Democracy](#) [83], Africa Today, Vol. 43, issue 4 (Oct-Dec), 1996, pp. 343-377

Joseph, Richard, [Africa: The Rebirth of Political Freedom](#) [84], Journal of Democracy, Vol. 2, issue 1 (Fall), 1991, pp. 11-25

Joseph, Richard, [Conflict and Democracy in Africa](#) [85], Boulder CO, Lynne Rienner, 1999, pp. 527

Wide-ranging collection of comparative essays on democratic transitions, the state and economic and social



factors. Considers developments since the early 1990s and degrees of democracy achieved (in Benin and Zambia), continuing obstacles to democracy and 'second elections'.

Lemarchand, Rene, [Africa's Troubled Transitions](#) [86], Journal of Democracy, Vol. 3, issue 4 (Fall), 1993, pp. 98-109

Nugent, Paul, [Africa Since Independence: A Comparative History](#) [87], Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, pp. 620

especially ch. 9 'Democracy Rediscovered: Popular Protest, Elite mobilization and the Return of Multipartyism', pp. 368-433.

Olukoshi, Adebayo, [The Politics of Opposition in Contemporary Africa](#) [46], Uppsala, Nordiska Afikrainstitutet, 1998, pp. 328

Contributors assess the efforts and problems of oppositions in difficult circumstances, and also consider issues of leadership and organization. The book includes case studies of Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

#### [E. I.2.1.ii. Organizations and Movements](#) [88]

Before the 'third wave' of democratization, there was a background of popular protest in many African countries – especially in an urban context – by students, workers, professionals and, sometimes, civil servants, in response to economic and other issues. These protests included demonstrations, strikes and boycotts, as well as riots.

Anyang' Nyong'o, Peter, [Popular Struggles for Democracy](#) [89], London, Zed Books, 1987, pp. 288

Contributors provide case studies of Morocco, Uganda, People's Republic of Congo, South Africa, Ghana, Liberia, Kenya and Swaziland.

Gifford, Paul, [African Christianity: Its Public Role](#) [90], London, C. Hurst, 1998, pp. 368

Christian Churches have been important in quite a few African movements. This book analyses different churches – Catholic, Protestant (mainstream), Evangelical, Pentecostal and Independent – and their beliefs, and also assesses their role in the emerging of civil society. Case studies of four countries: Ghana, Uganda, Zambia and Cameroon.

Mamdani, Mahmood ; Wamba-dia-Wamba, Ernest, [African Studies in Social Movements and Democracy](#) [91], Dakar, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), 1995, pp. 636

Covers very wide range of 'movements', including trade unions, religious and gender groupings potentially relevant to nonviolent action, but also 'mafias'. Embraces the whole of Africa.



#### [E. I.2.1.a. Movements for Multi-Party Democracy in English-Speaking Countries](#) [92]

Very different conditions prevailed within the various Anglophone countries in East, West, Central and Southern Africa, and therefore the development of multi-party parliamentary democracy (and how far authoritarian government and/or extensive corruption flourished despite the growth of opposition parties) also varied considerably. There were popular protests and demands for political change in a number of countries around 1990 – five of which are covered below.

In addition, a strong women's movement, which had a significant impact later in the 1990s in securing greater gender political equality, emerged in Uganda – see:

- Tripp, [Women and Politics in Uganda](#) [93] ([E. I.2.1.a. Movements for Multi-Party Democracy in English-Speaking Countries](#) [92]) .

In Botswana women also began to mobilize, and the San (Bushman) became active in demanding their rights. Botswana had been a relatively stable country, in which the ruling party contested and won multi-party elections, but in 1995, when protests by school and university students were violently suppressed, the Trade Unions, the Coalition of Women's NGOs and the Catholic Church sided with the students. See:

- Good, [Towards Popular Participation in Botswana](#) [94] ([E. I.2.1.a. Movements for Multi-Party Democracy in English-Speaking Countries](#) [92]) .

Good, Kenneth, [Towards Popular Participation in Botswana](#) [94], *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 34, issue 1, 1996, pp. 101-129

Press, Robert, [Peaceful Resistance in Contemporary Africa: Nonviolent Social Movements in Kenya, Sierra Leone and Liberia](#) [95], Paper presented at the September 2-5, 2010 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., 2010

Press compares peaceful civil resistance in Kenya, Sierra Leone and Liberia to explore the impact of different levels of repression. In Kenya increasing open confrontation with the regime from the 1980s led to a 'culture of resistance' and the ousting of the ruling party in the election of 2002. In Sierra Leone activists faced both repression and the impact of the civil war. In Liberia, where repression was harshest, there was nevertheless resistance by journalists, women, students, the Catholic Church and others to both Samuel Doe and later Charles Taylor.

See also: 'Civil Resistance of Ordinary People against Brutal Regimes in Africa: Cases of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Kenya', International Center on Nonviolent Conflict.

<https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/civil-resistance-of-ordinary-people-against-brutal-regimes-in-africa-cases-of-sierra-leone-liberia-and-kenya/> [96]

This link offers a 56-minute video and transcript of the webinar led by Robert Press on the same topic.



Tripp, Aili Mari, [Women and Politics in Uganda](#) [93], Kampala and Wisconsin, James Currey, Fountain Publishers and the University of Wisconsin Press, 2000, pp. 336

#### [E. I.2.1.a.i. Malawi and Zambia: Opposition Leads to Regime Change](#) [97]

Two countries that had waged successful unarmed struggle for independence from the white-dominated Central African Federation (see Section B), Zambia and Malawi, also experienced effective campaigns to restore multi-party democracy and to change their leaders through elections – Zambia was a forerunner of the ‘third wave’ of democratization in English-speaking Africa. Church bodies as well as trade unionists and students played a significant role in both cases: see Nugent, [Africa Since Independence: A Comparative History](#) [87] ([E. I.2.1.i. General Overviews](#) [47]), pp. 402-407.

#### [E. I.2.1.a.i. - Zambia](#) [98]

Bratton, Michael, [Economic Crisis and Political Realignment in Zambia](#) [99], In Widner, Jennifer A., [Economic Change and Political Liberalization in Sub-Saharan Africa](#) [100] Baltimore MD, John Hopkins University Press, , 1994, pp. 101-128

Rakner, Lise, [Trade Unions in Processes of Democratization: A Study of Party Labour Relations in Zambia](#) [101], Bergen, Norway, Christian Michelsen Institute, CMI Report, 1992, pp. 6

Examines role of labour in the transition to multi-party democracy in 1991, and concludes that the trade union movement has remained autonomous from the state (despite efforts to incorporate it) and that this is the key reason why the unions led the transition.

See also:

Paul Gifford, [African Christianity: Its Public Role](#) [90], ([E. I.2.1.ii. Organizations and Movements](#) [102])  
Richard Joseph, [Conflict and Democracy in Africa](#) [85], ([E. I.2.1.i. General Overviews](#) [103]), which includes a chapter on the ‘second elections’ in 1996.

#### [E. I.2.1.a.i. - Malawi](#) [104]



Englund, Harri, [Democracy of Chameleons: Politics and Culture in the New Malawi](#) [105], Uppsala, Nordic Africa Institute, 2002, pp. 208 pb

This book explores how far the ending of one-man rule in 1994 had achieved wider economic, social and cultural changes and explores the continuing problems such as political intolerance and hate speech. The contributors, mostly from Malawi, criticize both 'chameleon' political leaders and aid donors for supporting superficial democratization.

Englund, Harri, [Democracy of Chameleons: Politics and Culture in the New Malawi](#) [106], Uppsala, Nordic Africa Institute, 2002, pp. 208 pb

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Englund, Harri, [Democracy of Chameleons: Politics and Culture in the New Malawi](#) [108], Uppsala, Nordic Africa Institute, 2002, pp. 208 pb

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Nowack, Daniel, [Process Tracing the Term Limit Struggle in Malawi: The Role of International Democracy Promotion in Muluzi's Bid for a Third Term](#) [109], Africa Spectrum, Vol. 55, issue 3, 2021, pp. 291-300

Nowack examines the struggle between 1999 and 2003 to prevent the President serving a third term contrary to the constitution. Drawing on newspaper reports and interviews he argues that a decline in party support and a strong civil society were key, conditions imposed by aid donors and international democracy promotion influenced both these internal factors.

van Donge, Jan Kees, [Kamuzu's Legacy: The democratization of Malawi](#) [110], African Affairs, Vol. 94, issue 375, 1995, pp. 227-257

See also:

Sam Mchombo, [Democratization in Malawi: Its roots and prospects](#) [111] In Gros, [Democratization in Late Twentieth Century Africa: Coping with Uncertainty](#) [82] (E. I. 2. 1. i. General Overviews [47])



[E. I.2.1.a.ii. Ghana and Nigeria: Constitutional Change but Leaders Remain in Power](#) [112]

These two former British colonies in West Africa had both engaged in forms of unarmed struggle under colonialism: Nigeria had a record of significant strikes and tax refusal, and the 'positive action' campaign in Ghana became a model of how to achieve independence through nonviolent struggle (see B). Ghana became independent in 1957 and Nigeria in 1960. By the end of the 1980s, however, both had experienced military coups and forms of military rule – in Nigeria the legacy of a bitter war for secession by Biafra 1967-1970, and the divisions between the Muslim North and the Christian South, created particular problems for political stability and democratization.

[E. I.2.1.a.ii. - Ghana](#) [113]

By the end of the 1980s, the Rawlings government in Ghana was under increasing criticism from the Bar Association for its human rights record and at odds with the churches and the trade unions. The Movement for Freedom and Justice (a broad opposition coalition) was formed in August 1990 to press for democratic change. The regime tried to maintain control through constitutional reform and finally legalised political parties to contest presidential and parliamentary elections in November 1992. Rawlings was returned to power with 58.3% of the vote (despite opposition claims of rigging, Commonwealth observers validated the result). However, at least a regular electoral process had been established with the right of opposition parties to contest elections.

Nugent, Paul, [Big Men, Small Boys and Politics in Ghana: Power, Ideology and the Burden of History, 1982-1994](#) [114], London, Frances Pinter, 1996, pp. 306

Oquaye, Mike, [Politics in Ghana, 1982-1992: Rawlings, Revolution and Populist Democracy](#) [115], Accra, Tornado, 2004, pp. 626

The author has been prominent in Ghanaian politics and a professor of political science at the University of Legon.

Panford, Kwamina, [Elections and Democratic Transition in Ghana: 1991-96](#) [116], In Gros, [Democratization in Late Twentieth Century Africa: Coping with Uncertainty](#) [82] ([E. I.2.1.i. General Overviews](#) [47]), Westport CT and London, Greenwood Press, pp. 113-126

See also:

Paul Gifford, [African Christianity: Its Public Role](#) [90], ([E. I.2.1.ii. Organizations and Movements](#) [102]), chapter on Ghana.





[E. I.2.1.a.ii. - Nigeria](#) [117]

Despite an unusually independent press and a strong civil society, Nigeria's transition to multi-party electoral democracy was effectively blocked in a period when many African countries were holding multi-party elections. General Babangida had ousted his military predecessor in 1985, promising a return to civilian rule, but preparations for a new constitution dragged on. The regime ensured that only two parties, which it created, could contest elections, and refused to release the results of the 1992 presidential election and sought support for Babangida to remain head of state. Widespread popular protest in the capital Lagos and in Yorubaland (a Yoruba politician appeared to have won the election according to unofficial results) included civil disobedience and riots. In this confused context the Minister of Defence, General Abacha, seized control of the government. Nigeria did not return to democratic rule until 1999.

Beckett, Paul A ; Young, Crawford, [Dilemmas of Democracy in Nigeria](#) [118], Rochester, University of Rochester Press, 1997, pp. 450

Multidisciplinary study by 13 Nigerian and 6 American political analysts of attempts at transition to democracy, including historical, social and economic as well as political factors.

Diamond, Larry ; Kirk-Greene, Anthony ; Oyediran, Oyeleye, [Transition Without End: Nigerian Politics and Civil Society Under Babangida](#) [119], Boulder CO, Lynne Rienner, 1997, pp. 516

Comprehensive analysis of the political fault lines, corruption and repression of Nigerian politics, and the failure to achieve a transition to democracy, including the role of the military, constitutional formulas and electoral administration. Chapters on political parties, the press and 'associational life'.

Edozie, Rita Kiki, [People Power and Democracy: The Popular Movement Against Military Despotism in Nigeria 1989-1999](#) [120], Trenton NJ, Africa World Press, 2002, pp. 205

Analyses critically the roles of several national pro-democracy groups in the 1990s, and their attempts to mobilize civil society to resist. Compares their strategies and activities and their role in promoting a democratic transition.

Ihonvbere, Julius O., [Militaryization and Perpetual Transition](#) [121], In Gros, [Democratization in Late Twentieth Century Africa: Coping with Uncertainty](#) [82] ([E. I.2.1.i. General Overviews](#) [47]), Westport CT and London, Greenwood Press, pp. 59-76

Olukoshi, Adebayo, [The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria](#) [122], Portsmouth NH, Heinemann, 1993, pp. 144

Includes assessments of the increasingly active role of civil society and relations with the state.

Osaghae, Eghosa, [Crippled Giant: Nigeria Since Independence](#) [123], London, Hurst, 1998, pp. 342



[E. I.2.1.a.iii. Kenya: Resistance to President Moi](#) [124]

When the founding father of Kenyan independence, Jomo Kenyatta, died in 1978, he was succeeded as President by Daniel Arap Moi, who at first initiated some reforms, but soon formalized one-party rule by the Kenyan African National Union (KANU) and became associated with corruption and ruthlessness against political opponents. By the late 1980s and early 1990s increasing disillusion with Moi brought growing resistance from Anglican, Protestant and Catholic churches, professional associations such as musicians, workers who defied the ban on strikes, and students. When prominent politicians called for reform they were detained in June 1990, and Foreign Minister Robert Ouko was murdered in suspicious circumstances. The opposition created a broad-based Forum for the Restoration of Democracy, and foreign aid donors brought pressure to bear for constitutional recognition of opposition parties. The resistance lost momentum, however, before presidential elections in 1992, and divided on ideological and ethnic lines, so that opposition parties fielded three separate candidates and allowed Moi to win with 36.4 per cent of the presidential vote.

Failure of newly-created (or recreated) political parties to coordinate their opposition to the ruling candidate and party, and problems arising from ethnic tensions, were not unique to Kenya. But the Kenyan case is of interest here both because of the significant resistance and because it has been treated as a case study of 'failure' of a nonviolent movement, see:

- Nepstad, [Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late Twentieth Century](#) [125] (A. 1.b. Strategic Theory, Dynamics, Methods and Movements [35]), 'Kenya's Struggle against the Moi Dictatorship', pp. 95-109.

Gustafson, Lindsey, [Kenya: The Struggle to Create a Democracy](#) [126], Brigham Young University Law Review, Vol. 2, 1995, pp. 647-651

Murungi, Kiraitu, [President Moi and the Decline of Democracy in Kenya](#) [127], Trans-Africa Forum, Vol. 8, issue 4, 1991, pp. 3-18

Press, Robert M., [Peaceful Resistance: Advancing Human Rights and Democratic Freedom](#) [128], Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006, pp. 227

Primarily with reference to Kenya, discusses interplay of human rights advocacy and democratic resistance in authoritarian state. Articles by Press on nonviolent movements in Kenya, Liberia and Sierra Leone can be downloaded from: [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/cf\\_dev/AbsByAuth.cfm?per\\_id=1319605](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/cf_dev/AbsByAuth.cfm?per_id=1319605) [129].

Sabar, Galia, [Church, State and Society in Kenya: From Mediation to Opposition 1963-1993](#) [130], London, Frank Cass, 2002, pp. 334

Explores role of Christianity in colonial and post-colonial society and shows the crucial role of the churches in promoting an alternative politics.

Throup, David ; Hornsby, Charles, [Multi-Party Politics in Kenya: The Kenyatta and Moi States and the Triumph of the System in the 1992 Election](#) [131], Oxford, Nairobi and Athens OH, James Currey, EAEP and Ohio University Press, 1998, pp. 660



See also:

Karuti Kanyinga, [Contestation over political space: The state and the demobilization of opposition parties \[132\]](#)In Olukoshi, [The Politics of Opposition in Contemporary Africa \[46\]](#) (E. I.2.1.i. General Overviews [47])

#### [E. I.2.1.b. Movements for Multi-Party Democracy in Francophone Africa 1988-93 \[133\]](#)

Many countries in French-speaking Africa were part of the movement across sub-Saharan Africa to oust long-standing corrupt and authoritarian rulers and to demand multi-party elections. Whereas movements in English-speaking countries demanded multi-party elections (which usually required formal constitutional amendment), opposition groups in Francophone Africa often focused their protests on an initial demand for an autonomous and 'sovereign' 'national conference', composed of representatives of all important social and political groups, with power to create a new constitution – a demand that echoed the calling of the Estates General at the beginning of the French Revolution. Multi-party elections in which the opposition could seek to overthrow the president and his party through the ballot box were a second stage in the process.

The way was led by Benin, where opposition groups succeeded in calling a national conference, creating an interim government and ousting the former ruler in elections. The movements for change in the People's Republic of Congo and Niger were also (at least temporarily) successful. Oppositions in many other countries followed this model of transition, but with varying degrees of success. Three (Zaire, Togo and Gabon) achieved the holding a national conference, but did not change their rulers. Some others gained multi-party elections, but rulers blocked demands for a national conference. In the Central African Republic the President cancelled elections in October 1992 when it became obvious that he would lose, but was forced to complete the electoral process in 1993, when he was beaten in the first round. In a few cases the initiative for constitutional change came primarily from above. But in several other countries – for example the Ivory Coast and Cameroon – presidents managed to hold elections but to remain in power.

Much of the literature is in French. Specifically on the protests see:

- Bourgi, Albert ; Castern, Christian , [Le Printemps de l'Afrique \[134\]](#) Paris, Hachette, , 1991, pp. 187 .

But there are some useful English sources:

Clark, John F. ; Gardinier, David E., [Political Reform in Francophone Africa \[135\]](#), Boulder CO, Westview Press, 1997, pp. 354

Chapters on all the relevant countries, but focuses on elites, parties and institutions rather than popular movements.

Decalo, Samuel, [The Process, Prospects and Constraints of Democratization in Africa \[136\]](#), African Affairs, Vol. 91, issue 362 (January), 1992, pp. 7-35

Comments on parallels with ex-Soviet bloc, noting that 'the sudden coalescence of a "critical mass" of pro-democracy pressures in Africa' was equally unexpected. (Decalo contributed the chapter on Benin in Clark; Gardinier, [Political Reform in Francophone Africa \[135\]](#) (E. I.2.1.b. Movements for Multi-Party Democracy in



[Francophone Africa 1988-93](#) [133] .)

See also:

Jean-Germain Gros, [Democratization in Late Twentieth Century Africa: Coping with Uncertainty](#) [82], ([E. I.2.1.i. General Overviews](#) [103]), for chapters on Francophone states.

The role of National Conferences in the transition to democracy has been analysed in several articles. Conferences were held in: Benin, Congo, Gabon, Zaire, Togo, Niger and Chad. See:

- Robinson, Pearl , [The National Conference Phenomenon in Francophone Africa](#) [137] Comparative Studies in Society and History, 1994, pp. 575-610 .

Begins with the Benin Conference in February 1990.

Two articles compare the success in Benin with the failure in Togo, where General Eyadema managed to retain control of the process, discussing broader reasons for the outcomes:

- Heilbrunn, John , [Social Origins of National Conferences in Benin and Togo](#) [138] Journal of Modern African Studies, 1993, pp. 277-299 .

Stresses the role of voluntary associations in Benin.

- Nwajaku, Kathryn , [The National Conferences in Benin and Togo Revisited](#) [139] Journal of Modern African Studies, 1994, pp. 429-447 .

[E. I.2.1.b.i. Cameroon](#) [140]

The villes mortes (ghost towns) movement in Cameroon was particularly impressive, although the opposition failed to win the elections it had demanded, The two-year movement looked likely to defeat President Paul Biya, but in the October 1992 elections the opposition was divided between two political parties, and electoral fraud gained Biya a narrow majority (40%) over the Social Democratic Front (37%). This struggle is also better covered in English than many movements in Francophone states.

Gros, Jean-Germain, [The Hard Lessons of Cameroon](#) [141], Journal of Democracy, Vol. 6, issue 3 (July), 1995, pp. 112-127

Includes comments on the role of the French government in supporting Biya.

Mentan, Tatah, [Cameroon: A flawed transition to democracy](#) [142], In Gros, [Democratization in Late Twentieth Century Africa: Coping with Uncertainty](#) [82] ([E. I.2.1.i. General Overviews](#) [47]), Westport CT and London,



Greenwood Press, pp. 41-57

Ngwane, Mwalimu George, [The Power in the Writer: Collected essays on Culture, Democracy and Development in Africa](#) [143], Bamenda and Oxford, Langaa and African Books Collective, 2008, pp. 196

Chapter 14, pp. 81-95, specifically discusses the electoral performance of the opposition and criticises its lack of internal democracy.

Nkwi, Walter Gam, [The Dilemma of Civil Society in Cameroon since 1990: Which Way Forward?](#) [144], In Nkwi, Walter Gam, [Voicing the Voiceless: Contributions to Closing Gaps in Cameroon History, 1958-2009](#) [145] Bamenda, Langaa, , 2010, pp. 137-149

Takougang, Joseph, [Africa State and Society in the 1990s: Cameroon's Political Crossroads](#) [146], Boulder CO, Westview Press, 1998, pp. 312

See also: Takougang, Joseph ; Mbaku, John Mukum, [The Leadership Challenge in Africa: Cameroon Under Paul Biya](#) [147] Trenton NJ, Africa World Press, , 2004, pp. 563 .

See also:

Janet Roitman, [Fiscal Disobedience: An Anthropology of Economic Regulation in Central Africa](#) [148], ([A. 1.c. Small Scale, Hidden, Indirect and 'Everyday' Resistance](#) [149]), chapters 1 and 2.

Paul Gifford, [African Christianity: Its Public Role](#) [90], ([E. I.2.1.ii. Organizations and Movements](#) [102]), case study of Cameroon.

### [E. I.2.2. Struggles to Maintain or Achieve Multiparty Democracy 2000-2010](#) [4]

By the beginning of the 21st century multi-party parliamentary democracy was not well entrenched in sub-Saharan Africa. Even some presidents brought to office thanks to popular movements have tended to indulge in serious corruption, and to show reluctance to step down after their allotted span of office. Moreover, in many countries where the 'third wave' protests had not fully succeeded, long-term autocrats remained in control. Therefore there was a renewed wave of protest across much of Africa contesting rigged elections – including in Cameroon. Most of these popular protests did not succeed. Opposition parties were not always willing to unite against the incumbent, and ethnic divisions were sometimes exploited and could lead to serious violence (often promoted by members of the ruling party, but also sometimes encouraged by opposition politicians – both were true of the massacre in Kenya's Rift Valley after the 2010 elections.)

Two victories for constitutional and electoral principles have, however, been achieved due at least in part to popular pressure.



#### [E. I.2.2.i. Zambia 2001](#) [150]

A coalition of major civil society bodies, internal party opposition and popular protest (combined with pressure from external aid donors) persuaded Fredrick Chiluba, who had won the Presidency in 1992, to abandon plans to run for an (unconstitutional) third term. Not well documented, but see:

Apawo Phiri, Isabel, [President Frederick Chiluba and Zambia: Evangelicals and Democracy in a “Christian Nation”](#) [151], In Ranger, Terence O., [Evangelical Christians and Democracy in Africa](#) [152] Oxford, Oxford University Press, , 2008, pp. 93-130

Dulani, Boniface, [Democracy Movements as Bulwarks against Presidential Usurpation of Power: Lessons from the Third-Term Bids in Malawi, Namibia, Uganda and Zambia](#) [153], Stichproben, issue 20, 2011, pp. 115-139

See also:

April Carter, [People Power and Political Change: Key Issues and Concepts](#) [154], ([A. 1.a.ii. Theories of Civil Disobedience, Power and Revolution](#) [155]), p. 140, for a brief summary.

#### [E. I.2.2.ii. Madagascar 2001-2002](#) [156]

Popular protests against President Ratsiraka in 1991 were crushed and troops fired at and killed demonstrators. After the Presidential election of December 2001 Ratsiraka claimed victory, but the opposition candidate Ravalomanana officially won 46 per cent of the vote and his supporters claimed that according to their electoral count he had won. Protests against the rigging of the election, including strikes by civil servants, lasted seven months. Ravalomanana began to choose a cabinet and set up a parallel government and his supporters effectively controlled the capital, Antananarivo, where he was mayor. This ‘soft revolution’ was primarily nonviolent, although violent clashes did result in a few deaths, and during the crisis commentators feared civil war (‘Vanilla Revolution’, *The Economist*, 7 March, 2002). This time, however, the army refused to back Ratsiraka, and mostly supported Ravalomanana when he eventually came to power in June 2002, now recognized internationally and with his electoral victory endorsed by a reconstituted Constitutional Court. Ratsiraka went into exile.

Radrianja, Solano, [Be Not Afraid; Only Believe: Madagascar 2002](#) [157], *African Affairs*, Vol. 102, issue 407 (April), 2003, pp. 132-146





See also:

Desmond George-Williams, [Bite Not One Another: Selected Accounts of Nonviolent Struggle in Africa \[8\]](#), ([E. I. Africa - Sub-Saharan \[158\]](#)), 'Madagascar; the Soft Revolution', pp. 75-79

[E. I.2.2.iii. Zimbabwe. Resisting Autocracy since 2000-](#) [159]

Since Zimbabwe achieved independence in 1980 after a bitter civil war, President Robert Mugabe and his ZANU-PF party have been in government and have suppressed or tried to neutralise opposition. From 2000 onwards Zimbabwe faced a mounting economic crisis, with thousands of people leaving the country. Mugabe – having failed to expand his presidential powers in a referendum in 2000 – tried to exploit the widespread popular resentment that most of the best farmland remained under white ownership. Authorizing 'war veterans' to attack white farmers and their African workers and seize the farmland, he has then redistributed it less to the landless poor than to his political cronies.

A new opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change, based on the trade unions, was prominent in defeating Mugabe in the 2000 referendum, Subsequently it organized a range of public protests, as well as contesting presidential and parliamentary elections, claiming that results were rigged by ZANU-PF (claims which were supported by some but not all external election observers). Impressive opposition to the regime from unions, professional bodies, community action groups and human rights organizations, and from the inspirational Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), developed along side party politics.

Crisis point was reached in 2008, both economically – with inflation rocketing – and politically, when Mugabe tried to rig the Presidential elections in June. MDC leader Morgan Tsvangeraai claimed victory, but Mugabe refused to concede until opinion in southern Africa also began to swing against him, notably among South African trade unions. Southern African leaders previously reluctant to join the west in condemning Mugabe pressured the MDC to join a coalition government with Mugabe to establish political and economic stability. This coalition did not stop Mugabe's supporters in the security services continuing to kill and intimidate opposition members, but by ending economic sanctions it did improve the economy, and gave some role to members of the MDC.

The coalition also negotiated a new draft constitution that was put to a referendum in March 2013, which will not affect past land seizures but offers safeguards for civil liberties and somewhat limits presidential powers, including the period in office for any president after Mugabe. Around half the electorate took part, nearly 95% endorsing the new constitution. Human rights groups reported harassment in the run-up to the referendum, even of groups recommending endorsement but critical of the constitution's shortcomings – for instance, WOZA, which succeeded in having 60 out of 82 of their proposals incorporated into the constitution. It remains to be seen how the constitution will be implemented, and whether there is again widespread intimidation during Presidential elections due to later in 2013.

Cherry, Janet, [Zimbabwe – Unarmed resistance, civil society and limits of international solidarity \[160\]](#), In Clark, [People Power: Unarmed Resistance and Global Solidarity \[161\]](#) ([A. 1.b. Strategic Theory, Dynamics, Methods and Movements \[35\]](#)), London, Pluto Press, pp. 50-63

Account written during the post-electoral negotiations in 2008, but primarily assessing the role of community-based organisations (unions, professional associations, urban community groups and women's groups) in the broad resistance movement. Draws on extensive interviews with activists. In the same volume see: Carter, April ; Cherry, Janet , [Worker solidarity and civil society cooperation: Blocking the Chinese arms shipment to Zimbabwe, April 2008 \[162\]](#) In Clark, [People Power: Unarmed Resistance and Global Solidarity \[161\]](#) ([A. 1.b. Strategic Theory, Dynamics, Methods and Movements \[35\]](#)) London, Pluto Press, 2009, pp. 191-192 .



Maclean, Sandra J, [Mugabe at war: The political economy of conflict in Zimbabwe](#) [163], Third World Quarterly, Vol. 23, issue 3 (June), 2002, pp. 513-528

Examines deterioration of governance in Zimbabwe since independence and the effectiveness of opposition since 2001.

Meldrum, Andrew, [Where We Have Hope: A Memoir of Zimbabwe](#) [164], London, John Murray, 2004, pp. 272

Personal account by *Guardian* journalist of Zimbabwe's politics and people since 1980. Chapters 12-19 (pp. 114-241) cover the rise of the MDC, the debate about the new constitution, resistance and repression, and Chapter 20 describes his own expulsion from the country.

Raftopoulos, Brian ; Sachinkoye, Lloyd, [Striking Back: The Labour Movement and the Post-Colonial State in Zimbabwe](#) [165], Harare, Weaver Press, 2001, pp. 316

The first chapter by Raftopoulos is on 'The Labour Movement and the Emergence of Opposition Politics in Zimbabwe'. Later chapters include criticism of the MDC from a socialist perspective.

Sithole, Masipula, [Fighting authoritarianism in Zimbabwe](#) [166], Journal of Democracy, Vol. 12, issue 1 (January), 2001, pp. 160-169

Windrich, Elaine, [Then and now: Reflections on how Mugabe ruled Zimbabwe](#) [167], Third World Quarterly, Vol. 23, issue 6 (December), 2002, pp. 1181-1188

Feature review of several books on Zimbabwe with historical analysis.

Wokoma, Iyenemi Norman, [Zimbabwe: Women of Zimbabwe Arise WOZA](#) [168], In George-Williams, [Bite Not One Another: Selected Accounts of Nonviolent Struggle in Africa](#) [8] ([E. I. Africa - Sub-Saharan](#) [1]), Addis Ababa, University of Peace Africa Programme, pp. 95-98

WOZA is one of the most imaginative and militant of the opposition groups and is also committed to nonviolence. See also Cherry, [Zimbabwe – Unarmed resistance, civil society and limits of international solidarity](#) [160] ([E. I.2.2.iii. Zimbabwe. Resisting Autocracy since 2000-](#) [159]) .

Zimbabwe Focus, [When to call black white: Zimbabwe's electoral reports](#) [169], Third World Quarterly, Vol. 23, issue 6 (December), 2002, pp. 1145-1158

Analysis of March 2002 Presidential election and conflicting assessments of its fairness from organizations within Zimbabwe and teams of electoral observers from the west and Africa.

### Websites recommended

[Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe \(GALZ\)](#) [170] - <http://galz.co.zw/> [171]  
[Sokwanele - Campaigning non-violently for freedom and democracy in Zimbabwe](#) [172] - <http://www.sokwanele.com> [173]  
[Women of Zimbabwe Arise \(WOZA\)](#) [174] - <http://www.wozazimbabwe.org/> [175]

See also:



Keith Goddard, [Inside Out](#) [176] In Ney, Chris, [Nonviolence and Social Empowerment](#) [177] London, War Resisters' International, , 2005

### [E. I.2.3. Third Wave of Protests: 2011 - 2021](#) [5]

The uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt at the beginning of 2011 not only reverberated throughout the Arab world, but encouraged popular movements across sub-Saharan Africa. Some of these campaigns were about land, food prices, living standards, and demands for higher pay. Others focused on demands for justice (Burkina Faso), freedom for an imprisoned opposition leader (Uganda), restrictions of the electoral rolls (Senegal and Benin), or demands for a change of regime (Gabon and Swaziland).

Just as the 'Arab Spring' of 2011-12 in North Africa drew attention to popular protest in Sub-Saharan Africa, the 'Second Arab Spring' of 2019' (See E.V.C.), and the impressive movements in Algeria and Sudan, encouraged discussion of unarmed protest in the rest of the continent.

Advocates of nonviolent action have also been particularly interested in the major struggle to achieve democratic government in Burkina Faso in 2014-15 (see references under [A.4.a. Resisting Military Coups](#) [178] and additional references below). Sadly, the political and economic success of Burkina Faso after 2015 has since come under a new threat: armed gangs espousing extreme Islamist ideologies invading from the north and east, and driving hundreds of thousands to flee these areas of the country. (See for example: Safi, Michael, 'Masked Men and Murder Threaten a Nation', *Guardian Weekly*, 27 March, 2020.)

Manji, Firoze ; Ekine, Sokari, [African Awakening: The Emerging Revolutions](#) [179], Cape Town, Dakar, Nairobi and Oxford, Pambazuka Press (imprint of Fahamu), 2011, pp. 234

These are largely contemporaneous accounts, lightly revised from Pambazuka News, Pan-African Voices for Freedom and Justice, <http://www.pambazuka.org> [180]. As well as interesting contributions on Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Algeria (noted again under [E.V](#) [181]), this book covers unrest in a number of Sub-Saharan countries:

'People's revolts in Burkina Faso', February-April 2011, involving students, the broad population and army mutinies (unfortunately the mutineers did not make common cause with the civilian protesters), pp. 131-46.

A 'Protest Diary' from Cameroon in February 2011, by presidential candidate Kah Walla, blogs about strictly nonviolent protests brutally suppressed (pp.107-10).

In Swaziland (pp. 155-169) the 12-15 April 2011 popular demonstrations went ahead in the face of roadblocks and despite the arrests of virtually the entire leadership of the democratic association, perhaps signalling 'the beginning of the end' for the absolute monarchy.

Marks, Zoe ; Chenoweth, Erica ; Okeke, Jide, [People Power Is Rising in Africa](#) [182], Foreign Affairs, 25/04/2019,

The authors argue that the movements in Algeria and Sudan are part of a wider trend across Africa, where since 2000 most popular uprisings have been unarmed.



Red Pepper, [African Awakenings](#) [183], Red Pepper, issue Dec/Jan, 2012, pp. 27-32

with articles by Firoze Manji, 'Hope for the Future'; Justin Pearce, 'Aspiring to Tahrir' and Tommy Miles 'After Gaddafi'.

Siegle, Joseph ; al., et, [Africa and the Arab Spring: A New Era of Democratic Expectations: Special Report](#) [184], Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2011, pp. 72

The paper argues that the Arab Spring encourages movements for greater democracy in Africa as a whole, but notes that some countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have already established democratic institutions, though others remain autocratic or are 'semi-authoritarian'. The Arab Spring has alarmed some dictators and prompted more than dozen demonstrations in capitals. The paper also examines other factors promoting popular opposition.

Tafadzwa, Maganga, [Youth Demonstrations and their Impact on Political Change in and Development in Africa](#) [185], Conflict Trends, Vol. 2020, issue 2, 2020

The author notes that almost 60 per cent of Africa's population was under 25 by 2019 and that they are deeply discontented due to unemployment and a sense of marginalization, and often very critical of governments. They are therefore prominent in political protests. This article examines both the causes and successes of these demonstrations since the Arab Spring of 2010, as well as drawing lessons from the movement in Sudan in 2019.

Wienkoop, ; Kathryn, Nina ; Bertrand, Eloise, [Popular Resistance to Authoritarian Consolidation in Burkina Faso](#) [186], Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2018

The article examines the popular insurrection in 2014 when President Compaore tried to consolidate his power by changing the constitution, as well as the resistance to his coup attempt against the transitional president in 2015. and considers factors in the popular success.

See also:

Hagberg, Sten, 'The Legacy of Revolution and Resistance in Burkina Faso', SIPRI: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 22 February, 2016.

Wilmot, Paul, [Prospects for Revolution in Africa's 55 Countries](#) [187], Waging Nonviolence, 20/03/2019,

Wilmot, director of 'Solidarity Uganda', which helps organize civil resistance in East Africa, provides an overview of movements for democracy in all Africa's regions. His survey also notes examples of growing authoritarianism, and stresses the diversity of the continent.

[E. I.2.3.a. Malawi, 2019-20](#) [188]



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